

<https://runningmagazine.ca/trail-running/karel-sabbe-and-jenny-hoffman-win-fkt-of-the-year/>

# CANADIAN Running

## Karel Sabbe and Jenny Hoffman win FKT of the Year

Two transcontinental efforts received the honours for 2023's top FKT



Photo by: Instagram/@KarelSabbe

MARLEY DICKINSON JANUARY 9, 2024

On Jan. 5, two incredible athletes were [named recipients](#) of the FKT of the Year award by the *fastestknowntime.com* website for breaking barriers in individual pursuits in 2023. Among the 55 nominees, American **Jenny Hoffman's** transcontinental run across the U.S. and **Karel Sabbe** of Belgium's new FKT on the Pacific Crest Trail stood out as the pinnacles.

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Our 2023 FKT of the Year goes to... Jenny Hoffman for the TransCon USA and Karel Sabbe for the Pacific Crest Trail!! Listen to them on the latest FKT podcast to hear about their thoughts on this tremendous accomplishment! [fastestknowntime.com/podcast/218-20...](https://fastestknowntime.com/podcast/218-20...)



10:23 AM · Jan 5, 2024 

## Female winner: Jenny Hoffman (U.S. transcontinental run)

Hoffman, a 45-year-old mother of three and a Harvard University physics professor from Cambridge, Mass., etched her name in U.S. distance running history with her [record-setting transcontinental run](#). Hoffman covered an astounding 3,037 miles (4,888 kilometres) from San Francisco to New York City between September and October. She completed the journey in a mere 47 days, 12 hours, and 35 minutes. Her feat was seven days faster than the previous women's record, and just five days shy of the overall record set by [Pete Kostelnick](#) in 2016.



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Day 45: hills & horses

Today started early with a good climb up to 2500 ft through Black Moshannon State Park. In the misty rain (yes, more rain!) my headlamp gave me only ~10 ft range of vision, so I couldn't visually parse the slope in front of me, and I barely realized I was climbing. Mid-day I climbed up and over Mt. Nittany near Penn State, and at the end of the day I climbed over a small pass in "Hairy John State Forest" (I wonder who he was?) Total elevation gain for today was similar to my first 2 days in Pennsylvania, but today felt much easier because the climbing was divided into

these 3 big climbs, with long flat(ish) sections between, instead of yesterday's short steep ups & downs all day.

In the afternoon, I ran through beautiful Amish country. An advantage for me is that the shoulders are wide, to accommodate the horse & buggies. But I also spent many miles dodging horse-poo in the shoulder. I am jealous of the horses - if I could just take care of my 8000 calorie/day output while running, instead of visiting all the cornfields, I would probably be in New York already!

We have been doing this for 45 days, and we are tired. Crewing is exhausting, all-consuming work just like running. Some say that CREW stands for Cranky Runner, Endless Waiting - but for a trans-USA run (as opposed to an organized race) all that waiting time is also filled with logistics of checking mileages and turns, finding turnouts and gas stations, finding campsites, filling and dumping the RV, doing laundry, coordinating with visiting runners, managing social media, and a hundred other tasks. I cannot put into words how grateful I am for all of my crew: Sydney, Grace, Michelle, Yan, Cinder, and particularly Jill who has been with me as faithful crew chief since the beginning. Jill has generously and lovingly dispensed wisdom, hugs, and logistical support, while shielding me as completely as possible from every stress other than putting one foot in front of the other. Today, my husband Daniel (who has been doing all the routing behind the scenes) drove out to give Jill a short rest and help crew for the last few days (see Facebook post for remaining

Hoffman's detailed planning allowed her to average almost 100 kilometres a day, surpassing her two previous attempts. Despite setbacks in 2019 and 2022 due to knee and hamstring injuries, she took another shot at her goal, and her perseverance prevailed. Reflecting on her journey, Hoffman wrote, "This has been decades in the making, fueled by gratitude for the beauty of this country and the freedom it affords to dream big, work hard, and achieve audacious goals."

## **Male winner: Karel Sabbe (Pacific Crest Trail)**

Sabbe's achievements in 2023 were nothing short of amazing. The Belgian dentist and ultrarunner known for [conquering the Barkley Marathons in March](#) added another impressive accolade to his name with his speed record on [the Pacific Crest Trail](#) (PCT). Sabbe completed the 4,270 km (2,653 miles) trek from the U.S. border with Mexico to the Canadian border in Manning Park, B.C., in just 46 days, 12 hours and 50 minutes, smashing the previous mark held by ultrarunner **Timothy Olson** from 2021 by five days.

The Pacific Crest Trail is renowned for its challenging mountain terrain in California, Oregon, and Washington, and its FKT stands as one of the most prized achievements in ultrarunning and hiking. Sabbe previously held the PCT FKT from 2016 to 2021 until it was [broken by Olson](#) in 2021.



karelsabbe  
Manning Park, BC

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18,413 likes

karelsabbe

Pacific Crest Trail, you are the most beautiful, epic trail in the world.  
Reached the Canadian border 46 days, 12 hours and 50 minutes after leaving the Mexican border, breaking the record by 5 days 4 hours 🚀.  
Average miles per day: 58.1  
Average kms per day: 94

Sabbe now holds two-thirds of the North American “Triple Crown” of thru-hikes, having conquered the Appalachian Trail in 2018 and now reclaiming the PCT in 2023. He is the only runner to hold both the PCT and Appalachian Trail speed records simultaneously. The only FKT of the Triple Crown that Sabbe is missing is the Continental Divide Trail (CDT), which is currently held by American **Brendan Hickman**.

Three Canadian women were among the 28 female nominees for the award. Ontario's **Chantel Demers** was nominated for her new FKT on the Caledon Hills portion of Ontario's Bruce Trail, while Squamish, B.C., duo **Jenny Abegg** and **Sarah Hart** were nominated for their FKT on Mount Tantalus near Squamish. Neither effort [was named a finalist](#).