

*Est. 2013 - 5 Years & Running Strong*

# THE ULTRA RUNNING COMPANY

## Monthly Newsletter | FEBRUARY 2019

Happy New Year! We're excited about the possibilities for 2019, and can't wait to hear about your plans for the year. Charlotte is currently in the middle of the winter season, and that can be one of the very best times of year to run in the Queen City! Our series of weekly road-running groups have kicked off with a bang, and dozens of folks are joining us each week for fun and unique experiences at both URC stores.



This is the season when folks get excited for *Couch to 5Ks* and set new fitness goals, and we're more than excited to be a part of so many New Year's Resolutions! The Monday night **P.U.B Runs** at *URC-SouthEnd* have been going well, and we owe a huge thanks to *Black Men Run* for showing up every Monday night to really make it worthwhile for everyone who participates.

The Tuesday night **Exploration Eastover** runs at *URC-Myers Park* have been going strong all year, and we're upping our Fabulous Valueless Prize game in '19! Join us for a virtually car-free experience in the winter and the cooling experience of almost 100% tree cover in the summer. We really appreciate the support from the *Charlotte Running Club* for their dedication to the store and can't wait to see what the spring brings!



Need some additional inspiration? We know not everyone is active on social media, but take a minute to sign up for updates - we're constantly spreading daily news on these platforms, and the drone video we posted about SouthEnd was exactly what we needed to get ourselves out the door on some of these cooler days!

# Nathan's Notes

As always, I want to start out my comments with a huge "Thank You"! Thank you to everyone who has contacted us with comments, questions and feedback from our first few newsletters, and thank you all for the fantastic suggestions on how to make it better. I've written before that this newsletter is about YOU, and anything you can think of to improve the experience is greatly appreciated and will likely be incorporated!

Now, I'd like to ask you to go a step further. If I'm totally transparent (and I try to be), I have to admit we've really never figured out the whole "marketing" thing here at URC. We just don't spend money trying to get the word out about the *Ultra Running Company*, for better or for worse. We prefer to focus relentlessly on investing in the people who work here, on bringing in the newest and best products we can find, and on improving the stores themselves. This approach allows us to provide our customers the very best value, and it has tended to work out pretty well: we get to come to work at a place we love, provide the very best products available on the market, and spend time with the people who resonate with our unique approach!

What that means is that even after being open for five years, a LOT of people simply don't know we exist. We've done our best to change this, supporting our customers outside of our four walls through race donations, event participation, and charitable giving. We work really hard to be an asset to the folks who come in our doors, hoping that honest support of those who support us will create the kind of virtuous cycle that builds and maintains both a store and a movement. And that's where we need your help.

We hope you'll tell a friend about your experience at the *Ultra Running Company* and encourage them to come in. So many of you already do this today, and every single time you share your opinion with a friend or acquaintance is appreciated. If you can take it one step further and share your experiences with the community as a whole through the use of "social media", we would appreciate it all the more. As crazy as it sounds, reviews on sites like *Google*, *Facebook*, and even *Yelp!* truly make a difference in the number of folks who come to us for their running and walking needs. Good folks like you have made us the *highest rated running store in the country(!)*, and every single review matters. We read every comment, and have found that people searching online often do as well. We don't let our employees or relatives leave comments (don't laugh...it happens more than you think!), so it's YOUR voice that defines how we appear to the world. Your experience may be the one that makes a difference to the next reader, and we truly appreciate it!

I say it almost every day: I'm always excited when people are willing to give us a shot and walk in our doors in Myers Park or SouthEnd. Remember: We love customers of ALL types - running their first mile, finishing their first 5k, and taking the time to join us on our weekly group runs. You don't have to run long to be "Ultra" ...you just have to love running!

As always: Watch. This. Space.



- Nathan Leehman, Fellow Runner, Owner, The Ultra Running Company

# What's New At URC?



Join our ULTRA MILES Rewards Program Today!

If you've shopped with us since our 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary sale in December, we've probably already mentioned our new *rewards program*, which we're officially launching in February. We've experimented with a ton of different discount programs, promotional strategies and customer recognition ideas over the past five years, and we're really excited to be able to introduce *Ultra Miles* as the fairest, most rewarding program in Charlotte running.

*Ultra Miles* are actually super simple: for every \$1 you spend, you receive 1 point. Those points can be saved up and, over time, can add up to some very real savings. Use them right away, or hold onto them to really build up your benefits. The basic format is as follows:

200 Miles = \$10 off your next purchase

500 Miles = \$50 off your next purchase

1000 Miles = \$150 off your next purchase ( \*GASP\* : That's **15%** of your total purchases!!)

What this means is you can choose to use *Ultra Miles* to build up the biggest percentage discount in Charlotte: no other store we know of offers more than a 10% discount, and they kind of pick and choose who gets that (or you have to pay for the honor of being in their "club"). We're rolling all of our other discounts\* up into this program, so everyone will be treated fairly and equally! Come on in, sign up, and start earning rewards now!!

*Side note:* We'll also be adding cool opportunities for bonus points periodically, but you 'll need to be in the program and/or following us on social media to find out about these events. Be social by "liking" us on *Facebook, Instagram, Twitter* and more - it can't hurt, and you may like the surprises!

\**Important Disclaimer:* We're keeping our "Hero" discount in place, It's the right thing to do. If you 've represented our country in the military, police or firefighting professions, you get to double dip. It's our program, and we do what we want. THANK YOU for your service!

## January Shoe Releases:

We started the new year with a TRAILPALOOZA at our Myers Park location, where we have the largest variety of trail shoes in the Charlotte area. The updated **HOKA One One Stinson 5**, **Challenger ATR 5**, and **Speedgoat 3** are in stock, complemented by the radically redesigned **Altra Zero Drop Superior 4.0** and the hot new **Terraventure 2.0** from **Topo Athletic**. Here are some quick shots at each, but please be sure to check out our YouTube page for some of the most honest and in-depth reviews in the country. Better yet: swing by and check them out yourself!



The **HOKA Stinson 5** really didn't change much in comparison to the 4. One noticeable difference is the change of the material used on the upper, an effort to provide a bit more security to the foot while off-road. For all intents and purposes, the underfoot feel remains the same.

The **Challenger ATR 5**, on the other hand, is a complete upgrade vs. its predecessor, the **Challenger 4**. **HOKA** has changed the upper material and added a new tread design. The fit seems to be dialed in slightly as well. Most significant: **HOKA** has also finally made it available in a WIDE width for men and women.



When it comes to the **Speedgoat 3**, let's just say **HOKA** was probably scared to mess with a good thing - if you liked the 2, you'll be even happier with this evolutionary design. NO changes to the cushion, but the upper leverages a higher quality mesh to eliminate some troublesome flex points from the previous version..

Now the **Altra Superior 4.0** is a complete overhaul. It's now one of the lightest trail shoes in the market, providing excellent underfoot feel, a removable rock plate, and solid traction without all the weight traditionally associated with such features. A one-piece "burrito" tongue and an extremely breathable upper complete what we believe is a very appealing package.



**Topo's Terraventure 2** is definitely an aggressive second iteration, taking the opposite approach as the Superior 4 and creating a highly desirable shoe in the process. There's been an upgrade in the tread, design and the material. Yeah, that's pretty much everything...a complete reconstruction but still a boss shoe focused on technical capability, solid good looks, and a shape that fits real feet without feeling AT ALL sloppy!

## February Shoe Releases:

February is starting out with a BANG - perhaps it's the starting gun at a road race? We're seeing some amazing new road running shoes come through the door, and if you enjoy shoes with shockingly light weight, breathable materials on the upper portion of the shoe, and *just enough* cushion to get you through your race (no matter the distance), you're going to get very excited by the Spring 2019 lineup. Here's a preview:



The **Saucony Kinvara 10**: We were with an awesome “throwback” version on January 1<sup>st</sup>, and loved seeing the modern take on a vintage color scheme. Now it’s time for the official rollout. This is a franchise shoe for Saucony, which means they’re going to go to extremes to not mess anything up. With that intention, the 10 may be their best version in years. The upper is whisper-soft, and the cushion (while not known for its long life) combines traditional lightweight rubber with a thin layer of “Everun” material to make it feel more cushioned than ever. The Kinvara 1 was the original “mainstream minimalist” shoe, and we think it retains the light weight, ground feel and good looks necessary to build on the legacy.



The **HOKA FLY Lineup**: **HOKA** has been working hard to categorize their shoes into groups, and in that context “FLY” means lightweight, springy, and fast. The shoes in this category are generally designed to counter the traditional “over cushioned” pigeonholing. This spring, all three have updates, and we think they’re all positive:

**HOKA Cavu 2**: Generally speaking, this is a cosmetic update. They tweaked the aesthetics of the cushion design (adding a few more curves to it) and improved the upper material. Otherwise, it’s the same shoe. With that said, the result is something greater than the sum of its parts. We have a comparatively low cushion shoe that is comfortable to run and hang out in, that looks great and sports a low cost (\$110).



**HOKA Mach 2**: A complete reimagining, and our early impression is it’s a winner. You get fantastic ground feel, nice pop, and a generally roomy forefoot, all in a shoe that fits like a glove. This is an upscale “tempo” type shoe, capable of running a fast 5k and durable enough to hold up for an entire marathon. We’re excited to get some more miles on this one.



**HOKA Hupana EM**: We’re not going to pretend this is a reimagination, a reworking or even much more than a refresh of the Hupana we introduced to the country two years ago. It’s not. It’s the same formula with a fantastic sole, a super-comfortable knit upper, and the ability to go from good-looking lifestyle shoe to casual runner at a moment’s notice. We’ve always loved this as the swiss army knife of HOKAs, and see no reason to change that opinion now. You’ll see these on our feet...☺



**And for something COMPLETELY different:** We submit for your consideration the **HOKA EVO Rehi**. It's a racing flat for folks who like cushion, and we loved putting it on for a quick run on the treadmill the day they arrived. It's good looking and the lowest profile road running shoe HOKA has ever made, and we can't wait to start playing with it in the coming months. This is a race season shoe, and we're stoked.



**And if you still want to run TRAILS:** Concerned the perfect minimal trail shoe hasn't been introduced yet? Don't miss the **Saucony Switchback**, which JUST arrived at URC this past Monday! This is a low-profile (re: low cushion) trail shoe with one of the most innovative lacing systems on the market (hello, BOA! We've been



waiting for you!). It's built on the same platform as the road-oriented *Freedom ISO*, a shoe we just flat out love. We think this may be one of the most exciting new products to hit the store, and we'll be sure to share our opinions once we've put them through their paces!



Thank you for being a part of the **Ultra Running Company** community! If there is any additional information you would like to see in our newsletter or you'd just like to give us some feedback on what we're doing well/failing miserably at, please don't hesitate to send us a note. We read every single message we get at [info@ultrarunningcompany.com](mailto:info@ultrarunningcompany.com), and we'd love to hear from you!!

