

2021 Relay Team Profile: Lethal Weapons

Lethal Weapons may conjure fierce battle, and this would not be inaccurate for the spirit of challenge brought together by the Penn State NROTC relay team by that name.

The history of active participation by Penn State NROTC relay teams in the Tussey Mountainback 50 Mile Relay and Ultramarathon had a hand in this team's creation.

During the period from 2001-2007 alone, six NROTC teams took on the 50-mile loop in central PA's Rothrock State Forest, with a best time of 5:36:22. Several runners have also taken on the ultramarathon challenge.

"We found out about this event through NROTC members who have raced this event in years past," said the team's captain, Brendan Murray. "This includes Brent Czajkowski, Charles Hickey, and Carl Hill. We decided to put together a ROTC team to expose ourselves to the ultra endurance community as we all look to pursue similar races in the future, with racing this event solo in mind."

Murray acknowledged that no member of this year's team has run this event before.

"This will be our first experience with a race like this."

A clear penchant for physical challenges unites the members of this team.

"In addition to the training we do together, we are all avid runners/triathletes outside of the unit,"

said Murray. "Often times we go on long runs together in our spare time. There hasn't been any formal training workup for us as a team. We have members in our team coming off of other races and marathon events, as well as an Ironman."

This race presents a new opportunity for the members of the Lethal Weapons team.

"This weekend we are really looking to have a great time and enjoy a fun, competitive atmosphere on the course as we try and push the pace and fellow racers!"

The seven-member team includes a range of experience running in the race's forest venue.

"Our team has a mixed bag of experienced Rothrock runners, from novice to weekend warriors," said Murray. "Some of us enjoy running the trails nearly every weekend and throughout the week. For some, though, this will be their first experience out in the beautiful forest away from campus."

The Mountainback event welcomes both recreational and competitive runners to participate on relay teams of 2 to 8 runners, as well as offering the solo ultramarathon option.

Proceeds from this year's event will support CommonFood Centre County, a non-profit, all-volunteer group whose key mission is to resource underserved and under-employed elderly, single parent families, and low-income families in Centre County and neighboring areas with nutritious food and related services.