

JASON MILLSTEIN



KAREN MINOT

In Sandy, Oregon, a runner hands off the wrist wrap to his teammate.

## Relays for walkers

In addition to Hood to Coast, other long-distance running relays have divisions for walkers. Here are a few in the Northwest. Distances may seem daunting, but remember: Relays mean you walk only a portion of the course; support vans carry you the rest of the way.

**Hood to Coast Relay.** The running race covers 195 miles; the walkers' division totals 126 miles. *Aug 23–24.* (503) 292-4626 or [www.hoodtocoast.com](http://www.hoodtocoast.com).

**Klondike Road Relay.** From Skagway, Alaska, to Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, this 109-miler follows the trail of gold rush stampedes over the White Pass—the landscape featured on a Canadian postage stamp. The walkers' division covers the first 45½ miles of the course. *Sep 6–7.* (867) 668-4236 or [www.sportyukon.com](http://www.sportyukon.com).

**Mt. Rainier to the Pacific Relay.** This 152½-mile trek cuts through farmland and forests from Ashford to Ocean Shores, Washington. Walkers travel the last 100 miles of the course. *Jul 12–13.* (206) 782-6547 or [www.ontherun.com/rtp](http://www.ontherun.com/rtp). ♦

# Teamwork with a twist

The Hood to Coast Relay shows off Oregon scenery and spirit

By Michael Yessis

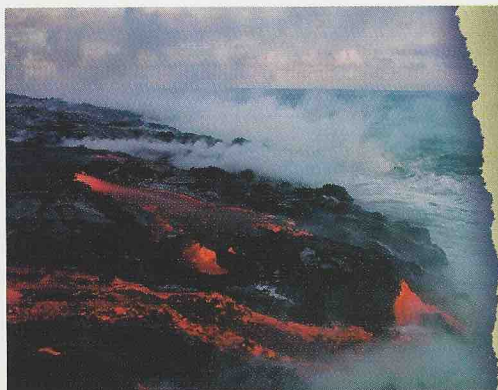
Traveling on foot 195 miles from Mt. Hood to Seaside, Oregon, relay-style with 11 other people, may sound warped—but that hasn't stopped the Hood to Coast Relay, which takes place annually in August, from becoming the Northwest's premier event for walkers and runners.

Though it's technically a race, participants have embraced HTC for its traveling-circus tendencies. Members of more than 1,400 12-person teams—400 of which enter the Portland to Coast walking category—sign up every year, and most seem to be trying to outdo each other with costumes and clever team names. The Twelve Elvises recently ran dressed as the

King. The Banana Striders tossed bananas to fellow racers.

Racers tend not to sleep much in the 24 hours it takes an average team to finish; there's too much roadside cheering to enjoy and too much to see. Beginning at the Timberline Lodge, 6,000 feet up Mt. Hood, the course winds down through the heart of Portland and into the thick forests of western Oregon.

Spectators can best catch the action near the start and at the finish, where a party greets finishers in Seaside. In downtown Portland, pick out a spot at Exchange Point 12, outside the Old Spaghetti Factory. There's plenty of parking. Plus, it's a good place to start loading carbs for next year's race.



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