Scoutmaster's Moment
Spring Court of Honor – June 1, 2026
Written and delivered by Troop 150 Scoutmaster Todd G. Bolick

Achieve Your Marathon

Setting: Three Scouts, varying age, will be pre-selected to come up near the end of this Scoutmaster Moment, to share what their personal Scouting marathon is. After, the Scoutmaster Moment, the PLC will pass out a small paper, printed with a writing prompt, for each Scout, asking them what their Scouting marathon is.

One of the greatest tests of human athleticism is the marathon, a long-distance race, inspired by the ancient Greek story of Pheidippides. In 490 BCE, Pheidippides was dispatched from the battle of Marathon, to share news of the Greek's triumph, over the invading Persians. He ran, without stopping, the approximate 25 miles to Athens, and burst in to the ancient Greek assembly proclaiming, "Nike!" which means Victory!

When the modern Olympics were started, one of the preeminent events was the marathon. Official race records for the marathon started in 1908, when it was standardized at 26.2 miles and the first official record holder was American runner, Johnny Hayes, with a time of 2.55.18.4. In the 118 years since then, the record has continually grown faster, but there was a barrier that seemed nearly impossible, and that was beating two hours. However, for the first time ever, on April 26th, Kenyan runner, Sebastian Sawe, ran the marathon in an incredible 1.59.30! That is nearly 56 minutes faster than Johnny Hayes!

In order to put his incredible achievement in perspective, think about your fastest mile time. This is something that each of you have done when working toward the rank of Tenderfoot. For many, it was an honorable 7 or 8 minute mile.

My mile record time was 5.24 in High School, and I suspect some of our Scouts, maybe Eli, Mason, and Owen, are far faster. Sebastian Sawe ran the marathon with an average pace of 4.33 per mile, for 26.2 miles!

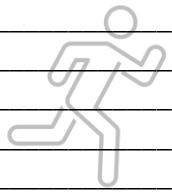
In order for this achievement to be done, an astronomical amount of scientific study went into every component of his world breaking marathon attempt. Everything from the ingredients of the food he consumed, to the materials of his shoes, and to the support of his team, was deeply examined and planned. However, in an article written about the record-breaking run, sentiments shared by former American Olympian distance runner, Dathan Ritzenheim, are highlighted saying, "there's one more glaring difference that…[he] sees between the marathoners that he once competed against and those who he now coaches. "Mindset," Ritzenheim says, "is probably the last key component." With super shoes on their feet, high-carb gels in their system and hundreds of miles of training building their endurance and mental toughness, today's marathon runners are more confident going for it early in a race. They have trained their brains to allow their bodies to push the limits of what's possible." While study and planning are a part of success, so is the mindset and the hard training!

Our Troop 150 marathon is just around the corner! Soon we will be rolling across the Goshen Scout Reservation dam, in our bus, gazing upon the glorious banks of the Camp Bowman waterfront! We will be embarking on a week of cooking meals over campfires, earning merit badges, working in our patrols, building fantastic campsite improvements, and enjoying all of the opportunities of summer camp. Furthermore, we will strive to earn the Honor Oar and the demanding Camptime Adventure Award, and we will do all of this in the midst of un-predictable weather, schedule constraints, and possibly cranky Patrol Leaders!

I know that each of you have your own Scouting marathon that you desire to achieve. It may seem daunting, and hard to reach, but if you pour your Scout Spirit and you dedicate yourself to being prepared and working hard, you can cross that finish line! This is something I know each of you can do, and when you achieve your goal, I want to hear you shout, "Nike" in declaration of your victory in your Scouting marathon!

I now ask _____, _____, and _____ to come up and share what their Scouting marathon is. [allow each to share]. Excellent, thank you all! Now, our PLC leaders are going to distribute a paper for you to write what your Scouting marathon will be. It may be something at Goshen this year, or it could be something even larger, that you aim to accomplish from Scouting, in general. I challenge each of you to think hard, and then write it down, and share it with your parents and leaders. Thank you and let's be victorious in our Scouting marathon!

Answer Scoutmaster Todd's challenge, what is your Scouting marathon? Share this with your parents, friends, leaders, and Scoutmaster Todd!



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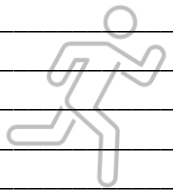

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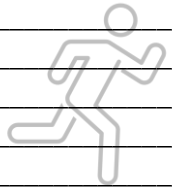

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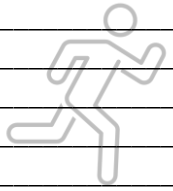

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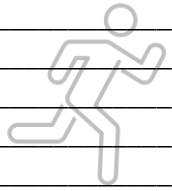

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