

READINGTON

Running with the Balloons 5K offers unique experience at festival

Community Bulletin

The New Jersey Lottery Running with the Balloons 5K provides participants with the unique opportunity to race through the largest summertime hot air balloon and music festival in North America as up to 100 hot air balloons are inflating and flying overhead.

Runners are excited to return to outdoor racing. This year's 11th annual race at the New Jersey Lottery Festival of Ballooning will take place Sunday, July 25, at 8 a.m. at Solberg Airport in Readington.

Combining the elements of cross-country with a traditional road race, this flat, fast, low-impact course features a mix of surfaces. Runners start on a grass field near the Festival's Family Fun Center and race past the balloon launch field while Sunday morning's mass hot air balloon ascension takes place.

The course takes them along different surfaces including a dirt road around Solberg Airport and finishes on pavement in the heart of the festival.

The race begins when human cannonball David "The Bullet" Smith, Jr. gets shot out of a cannon. Runners may have a hard time keeping up with him; he goes from 0 to 60 m.p.h. in less than a second.

The experience doesn't end there: the top male and female winners each receive a free ride in a hot air balloon.

"Everything about this 5K is unique; the layout of the course, running on multiple surfaces, and racing around and through the largest festival of its kind in North America with hot air balloons in the sky

above you," said Festival Executive Producer Howard Freeman.

Presented by the New Jersey Lottery with the SNY television network returning as a partner and Total Life Changes, this USATF-NJ sanctioned race is worth 500 points towards the New Jersey Grand Prix.

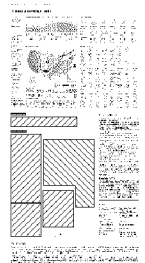
All runners' entries include free all-day admission into the festival, free parking with advanced registration, lawn seating to Sunday afternoon's concert by Styx, and access to both that morning's and evening's scheduled mass hot air balloon ascensions. The top three overall male and female finishers each receive non-cash prizes.

A portion of the proceeds benefit the Girls on the Run, a 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to creating a world where every girl knows and activates her limitless potential and is free to boldly pursue her dreams, and the Children's Miracle Network.

The 38th annual New Jersey Lottery Festival of Ballooning takes flight July 23-25, and features up to 100 hot air balloons taking flight twice each day; live concerts; fireworks; a nighttime hot air balloon glow; and affordable family entertainment and attractions in a safe, outdoor environment spread across Solberg Airport's 744 acres.

Advance registration is strongly suggested for the Running with the Balloons 5K. For registration information, visit balloonfestival.com/entertainment/5k/.

For more information on the festival, visit balloonfestival.com.





Participants get a view of ascending balloons during the New Jersey Lottery Running with the Balloons 5K. The 38th annual New Jersey Lottery Festival of Ballooning takes flight July 23-25.

Courtesy