

## BLOWN AWAY



Photos by Katherine Lacaze/EO Media Group

LEFT: The finish line at the Hood to Coast and Portland to Coast relays last Saturday, before the windstorm. RIGHT: After the storm.

## Strong windstorm produces sweet and sour reviews of an 'unforgettable' Hood to Coast

By KATHERINE LACAZE  
EO Media Group

Hood to Coast brought several customary sights to Seaside last Saturday. Throughout the day, runners and walkers could be spotted traveling their last leg along 12th Avenue, crossing a pedestrian bridge over U.S. Highway 101 and heading to the Prom.

Vans were decked out in team spirit and decorated with messages about the race, such as "Beer Garden or Bust" and "HTC 2015." Flocks of people filled downtown.

What was not expected was a finish line, which took about six days to set up, that turned into a treacherous mess when winds up to 85 mph hit the North Coast.

Some tents were completely knocked over. Others timidly held ground but were seen flapping and quivering in the wind, threatening to collapse any minute.

There would be no rambunctious celebration, no music and no beer garden. At about 8 a.m. Saturday, organizers for the Hood to Coast and Portland to Coast relays sent out alerts that the traditional finish party on the beach was officially canceled.



Runners made the best of the day as they hit Seaside.

### Makeshift after-party

Participants were advised to use extreme caution and put safety first.

Because the tent city was in shambles, runners were di-

rected to a revised finish line on Broadway and funneled into downtown.

At the Shilo Inn on Broadway, teams were provided some refreshments, first aid and an opportunity to take

team pictures downstairs in the crowded Whale Banquet Rooms. Portland Running Co. had a pop-up store inside the hotel lobby Saturday afternoon.

Of course, the contingency

plan offered a vastly different atmosphere from the traditional beach party with lights, live music, multiple vendors and the Seaside Chamber of Commerce's Beer and Wine Garden.

**'It's part of living on the Oregon Coast.'**

— Doug Barker  
event coordinator, Seaside Chamber of Commerce

When comparing this year's event to those of previous years, members of Fever Fighters, a team from Portland, referenced the lack of an authentic finish party and the temperamental weather as the primary discrepancies. The weather along the nearly 200-mile route from Portland varied from thunderstorms, wind and rain to muggy and hot.

Some people made the best of the situation, taking an additional sense of accomplishment from surviving the storm. On the official Hood and Portland to Coast Relays' Facebook page, participants talked about dodging fallen tree limbs and debris and battling wind and rain to run uphill. Several described their experiences as "epic," "a year to remember" and "unforgettable."

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