

RUNHOLE REVIEWS:

Brooks Caldera

BY JON NICHOLSON



Brooks is here with their first real offering at a maximal cushion trail running shoe.

A maximal cushion trail shoe with a 4mm drop from Brooks?
I just peed a little. I know we all did.

If you want detailed specs, go somewhere else. Here's the most detail I can provide: They are \$120-\$140. Lots of room in the toe-box, but I have an anatomically perfect foot by all historical standards so if you're a wide-footed cro magnon (or cro magnon-ette?) maybe check with one of those people on fit.

They have built in gaiter velcro on the back. NICE.

They are VERY comfortable. Cushion-game is strong, even without a rock-plate.

They also have a lace-garage if you're into that kind of thing. (Not that there's anything wrong with that.)

I was prepared to begin a long and fruitful relationship with this shoe. UNTIL....

....UNTIL I ran in them.

We're on the BeastCoast. Pennsylvania is dominated by rocks, roots, slop, and gnarly climbs. It's how we roll here.

The tread is visually impressive, but here's the problem: the tread is shallow and hard as steel. What does this mean?

Issue #1: Rocks

Even on dry ones I felt a significant slip. Just the hardness of the tread opposed the rock and I immediately and consistently slipped.

Issue #2: Mud

After running some very technical trail I moved over to a flat soft single-track trail. It was compacted but damp. After three steps the tread pulled up a small layer of mud, filling in the gaps between the tread and creating the running equivalent of Chevy Chase's industrial spray for his sled in Christmas Vacation.

Constant slipping and sliding like I was on a wet banana. And this is a FLAT trail. I was forced to run off-trail to keep from falling and finished my run with existential disappointment and a consolation Milky Way bar.

Final Verdict:

If you run in a dry, rock-free environment (we're sad for you) these may be ideal. I may keep them for the odd race that fits this criteria as they ARE comfortable. But for \$100+ this shoe is piss-poor in less than ideal conditions and we have to pass on becoming BFFs. Boooo!



2.5/5 Runholes: A solid "MEH"