

THE VO2 CUP

200 PEOPLE • SIX MONTHS • \$50,000 GRAND PRIZE



OFFICIAL RULES / REVISION A

THE RULES OF THE RACE.

THE CORE RULE

The participant with the highest final age- and reference-sex-adjusted VO2 percentile wins a \$50,000 grand prize.

UP TO 200 PEOPLE / \$500 ENTRY / ONE STANDARDIZED FINAL TEST

SAN FRANCISCO / FINAL TEST AND CELEBRATION IN FEBRUARY 2027

These Rules become effective when the Sponsor opens paid enrollment.
meaning.co / pablo@meaning.co

[READ THIS FIRST](#)

RULES AT A GLANCE

This page summarizes the competition. If a summary conflicts with the complete Rules, the complete Rules control.

SPONSOR	The Meaning Company of California LLC
FIELD	Up to 200 accepted, paid participants
ENTRY	\$500, after application acceptance
ENROLLMENT	Through September 30, 2026, unless extended or filled earlier
OFFICIAL TEST	One covered treadmill CPET in San Francisco, January-February 2027
WINNING SCORE	Highest final age- and reference-sex-adjusted VO2 percentile
GRAND PRIZE	\$50,000 cash or \$50,000 toward a new Tesla, winner's choice
FINALE	San Francisco, February 2027; exact date and venue to be announced

IMPORTANT PRIZE CONDITION

The Sponsor may cancel the VO2 Cup before the official testing window if enrollment, funding, safety, insurance, testing capacity, or other operational conditions are insufficient. If the Sponsor cancels, paid entry fees will be refunded in full. If the competition proceeds, the Grand Prize will be awarded under these Rules.

What the entry includes

- One covered final treadmill cardiopulmonary exercise test, commonly called a lab VO2 max test.
- Access to the private participant community during the season.
- Admission to the closing celebration in San Francisco.
- Eligibility to compete for the Grand Prize, subject to these Rules.
- Planned group workouts, expert sessions, guests, and swag, which may change based on availability.

This is an ability and endurance competition, not a random drawing. Training may begin at any time. Improvement from a baseline score is not used to determine the winner.

01 SPONSOR AND ACCEPTANCE

1.1 Sponsor. The official sponsor and administrator of the VO2 Cup is The Meaning Company of California LLC (the Sponsor). The Sponsor may use contractors, testing providers, venues, and other vendors to administer the competition.

1.2 Effective date. These Rules become effective when the Sponsor opens paid enrollment. Publishing an application or waitlist before that time does not obligate the Sponsor to operate the competition or accept any applicant.

1.3 How entry becomes official. An applicant becomes a Participant only after the Sponsor: (a) accepts the application in writing; (b) receives the full \$500 entry fee; and (c) receives every required electronic acceptance, waiver, and consent.

1.4 Agreement. By completing paid enrollment, each Participant agrees to these Rules and to the good-faith decisions of the Sponsor and approved testing provider. A separate participant agreement, assumption-of-risk waiver, and testing consent may also be required.

1.5 No affiliation. Tesla, Slack, the FRIEND Registry, the authors of the reference standards, testing vendors, venues, and event speakers are not sponsors of this competition unless the Sponsor expressly identifies them as such in writing.

02 WHO MAY ENTER

2.1 Basic requirements. A Participant must: (a) be at least 18 and no more than 89 years old on the official test date; (b) be legally able to enter a binding contract; (c) be able to attend the official test in person in San Francisco or another approved Bay Area location; (d) be willing and reasonably able to attend the closing celebration in San Francisco; and (e) satisfy the testing provider's health and safety requirements.

2.2 Application discretion before payment. Before accepting payment, the Sponsor may accept or decline an application in its reasonable sole discretion for any lawful reason. Competitive-balance considerations may include professional or elite athletic history, prior VO2 results, prior VO2 Cup results, safety, testing suitability, capacity, or the overall composition of the field. An applicant who is declined owes no entry fee.

2.3 Locked eligibility after payment. After a Participant is accepted and pays, the Sponsor will not create a new eligibility restriction and apply it retroactively. A Participant may still be disqualified for false or omitted application information, misconduct, failure to satisfy an existing Rule, or another ground expressly stated in these Rules.

2.4 Ineligible people. Pablo Hansen; the Sponsor's employees and contractors who materially administer the contest; testing personnel with access to results before rankings are final; and the immediate family or household members of those people may not win the Grand Prize. Materially involved sponsor employees are also ineligible unless the Sponsor publishes a written exception before they enter.

2.5 Accurate information. Applicants and Participants must provide complete and accurate identity, age, reference-category, health-screening, and eligibility information. Material falsehoods or omissions may result in rejection or disqualification.

03 ENROLLMENT, SEASON, AND INCLUDED BENEFITS

3.1 Capacity and deadline. The field is capped at 200 paid Participants. Enrollment is scheduled to close September 30, 2026, or when the field fills, whichever occurs first. The Sponsor may extend the deadline by written notice posted at meaning.co and emailed to accepted applicants.

3.2 Entry fee. The entry fee is \$500, paid once after acceptance. Entry is personal, nontransferable, and may not be resold. Payment processing fees, if separately disclosed at checkout, are part of the amount charged.

3.3 Season. Training may begin at any time. For administration, a Participant's season begins when paid enrollment is completed and ends when that Participant completes the official test or becomes unranked. The winner is determined solely from the final official test; no baseline improvement score is used.

3.4 Community and programming. The Sponsor intends to provide a private Slack community, accountability, group workouts, expert sessions, and a closing celebration. The exact frequency, speakers, guests, schedule, swag, food, venue, and format may change and have no separate cash value.

3.5 Notices. Official notices may be sent to the email address used at enrollment and posted in the participant community. Participants are responsible for keeping their contact information current and reviewing time-sensitive scheduling notices.

04 REFUNDS, CANCELLATION, AND OPERATIONAL CHANGES

4.1 Ordinary refund window. The Sponsor will disclose a refund deadline at checkout. That deadline will not be earlier than September 30, 2026, unless the Participant enrolls after that date, in which case the Participant will have at least seven calendar days after payment to request a refund.

4.2 Full refunds. A full entry-fee refund will be issued if: (a) the Sponsor cancels the entire competition; (b) the approved testing provider refuses to test a Participant for a genuine medical or safety reason not caused by dishonesty, noncompliance, or misconduct; or (c) applicable law requires a refund.

4.3 No-refund circumstances. After the ordinary refund deadline, no refund is required for voluntary withdrawal, loss of interest, insufficient training, a missed or invalid test, dissatisfaction with a score, inability to attend caused by the Participant, or removal for serious misconduct, except where applicable law requires otherwise.

4.4 Sponsor cancellation. Before the official testing window begins, the Sponsor may cancel because enrollment, funding, testing capacity, insurance, safety, legal, venue, or other operational conditions are insufficient. The Sponsor does not promise that 200 people will enroll. If the Sponsor cancels, it will refund paid entry fees in full; refunds are the Participant's sole contractual remedy for cancellation to the fullest extent permitted by law.

4.5 Substitute provider or location. If a provider, location, or scheduled date becomes unavailable, the Sponsor may use a materially equivalent provider, location, protocol, or testing window, with reasonable notice.

4.6 Finale cancellation. If the closing celebration cannot occur but valid testing and scoring can occur, the competition will continue and the Grand Prize will still be awarded.

05 THE OFFICIAL TEST

5.1 Test type. The official test will be a maximal, treadmill-based cardiopulmonary exercise test using direct breath-by-breath respiratory gas analysis. The approved provider will report relative peak oxygen consumption in milliliters of oxygen per kilogram of body mass per minute (mL/kg/min), together with the information needed to determine test validity and the applicable reference group.

5.2 Provider and locations. The Sponsor will announce the approved provider, location or locations, scheduling process, and detailed protocol before testing begins. The Sponsor intends to use one provider and one locked protocol. Multiple Bay Area locations may be used only if the Sponsor and provider determine that equipment, calibration, personnel standards, and protocol are materially equivalent.

5.3 Testing window. The official testing window will occur during January and/or February 2027. Exact dates will be announced with reasonable advance notice. Each Participant receives one covered official test.

5.4 Scheduling. Participants must book and attend an offered appointment within the testing window and comply with preparation instructions. The Sponsor and provider may offer rescheduling when capacity permits but do not guarantee a preferred date or time.

5.5 Valid maximal effort. The approved provider decides whether a test is medically appropriate, safely completed, and technically valid. A peak respiratory exchange ratio of at least 1.10 is expected for consistency with the selected FRIEND reference cohort, although the provider may use other accepted maximal-effort criteria where clinically appropriate. The provider may stop any test for safety.

5.6 Retests. A retest is allowed only if the approved provider documents a technical failure or determines that the test is invalid for reasons not caused by the Participant's intentional conduct. A Participant may not retest merely because the Participant dislikes a valid score.

5.7 Missed or invalid result. A Participant who does not complete a valid official test during the testing window is unranked and ineligible for the Grand Prize.

5.8 Data transmission. Each Participant authorizes the provider to give the Sponsor the minimum information reasonably required to validate and score the result, including identity, test date, age, provider-assigned reference category, relative VO2 result, and validity determination.

06 HOW THE WINNER IS CALCULATED

6.1 Winning criterion. The eligible Participant with the highest final age- and reference-sex-adjusted VO2 percentile wins. This is not an improvement contest. Starting fitness, training volume, body composition, race performance, and subjective effort do not independently affect the ranking.

6.2 Reference standard. The Sponsor will use the 2022 United States treadmill reference standards from the Fitness Registry and the Importance of Exercise: A National Database (FRIEND), using the standards based on maximal tests with peak respiratory exchange ratio of at least 1.10. The threshold values frozen for this competition appear in Appendix A.

6.3 Age. Age is measured in completed years on the Participant's official test date and placed into the applicable 10-year bracket. Because the selected published standard begins at age 20, Participants who are 18 or 19 on the test date will be scored in the 20-29 bracket.

6.4 Reference category. The selected standards publish separate male and female reference groups. The approved provider will assign the applicable reference category under its clinical and administrative policy. The Sponsor will not independently make a medical classification.

6.5 Calculation. The Sponsor will compare the reported relative VO2 result with the applicable Appendix A threshold vector. Percentiles between adjacent thresholds are calculated by linear interpolation. Ranking uses the full-precision interpolated value; public results may be rounded to one decimal place. Values above the 99.8th-percentile threshold score 99.9, and values below the 0.2nd-percentile threshold score 0.1.

6.6 Technical authority and finality. The provider's validity determination and reported lab result control. The Sponsor applies these Rules and makes the final competition decision in good faith. There is no participant appeal or right to submit an outside test. Before the award, the Sponsor may correct an obvious clerical, transcription, identity, or provider-confirmed laboratory error on its own initiative.

6.7 Tie. If two or more eligible Participants have exactly the same full-precision winning percentile, the \$50,000 Grand Prize is divided equally among them and paid in cash unless the Sponsor and every tied winner agree in writing to another equivalent arrangement.

07 SAFETY, INTEGRITY, AND CONDUCT

7.1 Health screening. Participation is voluntary. Each Participant must complete the provider's screening and obtain medical clearance if requested. The provider may refuse or stop testing. The Sponsor does not provide medical advice, diagnosis, treatment, or individualized training instruction.

7.2 Assumption of risk. Maximal exercise, training, travel, group workouts, and events involve risks including falls, musculoskeletal injury, cardiovascular events, illness, property loss, and other serious harm. A separate participant agreement and assumption-of-risk waiver must be signed before participation.

7.3 Permitted preparation. Participants may choose their own lawful training, coaching, nutrition, supplements, equipment, and prescribed medical care. Nothing in these Rules encourages unsafe training or changing prescribed medication.

7.4 Prohibited conduct. A Participant may not falsify identity or eligibility information; manipulate body-weight measurement, respiratory gas analysis, equipment, scheduling, or test records; use supplemental oxygen to alter the test; use illegal performance-enhancing drugs; impersonate another person; bribe or improperly influence staff; or intentionally interfere with another Participant.

7.5 Community conduct. Serious harassment, threats, discrimination, stalking, dangerous conduct, or repeated material disruption in the community or at an official activity may result in removal. The Sponsor may issue a warning when appropriate but may remove a Participant immediately when safety or serious misconduct warrants it.

7.6 Disqualification. The Sponsor may disqualify a Participant for a material Rule violation, fraud, safety threat, or serious misconduct. Disqualification ordinarily makes the Participant ineligible for the prize and may result in removal without refund, subject to applicable law.

08 THE \$50,000 GRAND PRIZE

8.1 One prize if the competition proceeds. If the VO2 Cup proceeds to official testing, the Sponsor will award one Grand Prize with a total value of \$50,000, subject to the tie rule. The prize is not guaranteed if the Sponsor cancels the competition under Section 4.

8.2 Winner's choice. The verified winner may choose: (a) \$50,000 in cash; or (b) up to \$50,000 paid toward one new Tesla, with any unused portion paid to the winner in cash.

8.3 Tesla option. Under the Tesla option, the \$50,000 total may be applied to the vehicle purchase price, destination fee, sales or use tax, title, registration, and other mandatory delivery charges. The winner is responsible for every dollar above \$50,000. The model, configuration, color, availability, delivery date, and delivery location depend on the winner's selection and Tesla's then-current process.

8.4 Ceremonial vehicle. Any vehicle displayed, photographed, wrapped, or presented at the finale is ceremonial unless the Sponsor expressly confirms otherwise in writing. It does not itself transfer title or possession. The actual Tesla order and delivery occur only after winner verification and completion of Tesla, insurance, payment, registration, and governmental requirements.

8.5 Election and fallback. The winner must make a written prize election within seven calendar days after receiving the Sponsor's election form. If the winner does not timely elect, the Sponsor may pay the prize in cash. If the Tesla option becomes unavailable or impracticable, the Sponsor may substitute \$50,000 cash.

8.6 Taxes. The prize is taxable income to the winner. Before payment, the winner must provide a completed Form W-9 and any other reasonably required tax information. The Sponsor may report the prize on Form 1099-MISC or another required form. The winner is solely responsible for federal, state, and local taxes and all costs not expressly included in the \$50,000 prize. There is no tax gross-up.

8.7 Verification and timing. The Sponsor expects to announce a provisional winner at the finale. The award becomes final only after identity, eligibility, test validity, score, and tax documentation are verified. The Sponsor will use commercially reasonable efforts to pay cash or begin the Tesla purchase process within 30 days after verification.

8.8 Failure or refusal. If the apparent winner is ineligible, refuses required verification, or materially violates these Rules before award, the next-highest eligible Participant becomes the provisional winner.

09 FINALE, RESULTS, PRIVACY, AND MEDIA

9.1 Closing celebration. The Sponsor intends to hold the finale in San Francisco in February 2027. The venue, exact date, program, speakers, guests, food, and entertainment are subject to change. Participants must be willing to attend. The Sponsor may excuse a documented emergency in writing.

9.2 Published results. The Sponsor may publish the names, ranks, final percentiles, and event photographs of the top 10 Participants. Results for other Participants remain nonpublic unless they separately opt in or disclosure is required by law.

9.3 Photos and video. Official activities may be photographed, recorded, streamed, or reported on. Participants will be asked to sign a separate publicity consent. The Sponsor will provide a reasonable process for requesting an accommodation where practicable.

9.4 Data minimization. Whenever practical, raw medical records remain with the testing provider. The Sponsor will receive and use only data reasonably needed for eligibility, safety administration, scoring, reporting, tax compliance, and dispute prevention.

9.5 Retention. The Sponsor may retain applications, payment records, consents, official scores, winner records, and competition communications for at least two years after the prize is awarded, or longer where reasonably needed for tax, insurance, legal, or contractual requirements.

10 CHANGES, DECISIONS, AND LEGAL TERMS

10.1 Administrative changes. The Sponsor may make reasonable changes to dates, locations, providers, programming, logistics, or other administrative details. After paid enrollment opens, the Sponsor will not materially reduce the Grand Prize or intentionally change the core winning criterion unless required for safety, law, provider necessity, or circumstances outside reasonable control.

10.2 Notice of material change. Material changes will be posted at meaning.co and emailed to Participants. If a change materially deprives a Participant of a promised core benefit and the Participant does not accept it, the Sponsor will provide any refund required by law and may provide an additional refund in its discretion.

10.3 Events outside reasonable control. The Sponsor is not responsible for delays or changes caused by natural disaster, wildfire, severe weather, epidemic, governmental order, labor disruption, cyberattack, provider failure, venue loss, utility failure, or another event outside reasonable control, but Section 4 continues to govern cancellation refunds.

10.4 Decisions. To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Sponsor's good-faith interpretation and administration of these Rules are final. Nothing in this section limits a nonwaivable right under applicable law.

10.5 Governing law and venue. California law governs these Rules without regard to conflict-of-law principles. Any court proceeding permitted under these Rules must be brought in a state or federal court located in San Francisco County, California, unless applicable law requires otherwise.

10.6 Severability. If a provision is held invalid or unenforceable, it will be narrowed to the minimum extent necessary, and the remaining provisions will continue in effect.

10.7 No waiver. A delay or failure to enforce a provision is not a waiver. A waiver must be in writing by the Sponsor.

10.8 Entire competition terms. These Rules, the participant agreement, the testing consent, the checkout disclosures, and any written amendments issued by the Sponsor are the complete competition terms. If there is a conflict about winner selection or the prize, these Rules control.

11 CONTACT AND WINNER INFORMATION

Questions and required written notices should be sent to pablo@meaning.co. Current public information will be maintained at meaning.co. Participants should include their full name and enrollment email.

After the prize is awarded, a Participant may request the winner's name and prize information by emailing the Sponsor. The Sponsor may require identity verification and may satisfy the request electronically.

PLAIN-ENGLISH BOTTOM LINE

Show up, test honestly, and post the highest final adjusted percentile. If the competition is canceled, entry fees come back. If it proceeds, the winner receives \$50,000 in cash or toward a new Tesla.

APPENDIX A

FROZEN SCORING THRESHOLDS

Relative VO2peak thresholds in mL/kg/min for the 2022 FRIEND treadmill reference standards, maximal-test cohort with peak RER at least 1.10. A Participant's result is compared with the applicable age and provider-assigned reference group.

How to read these tables

Each row lists the VO2 threshold corresponding to the stated percentile. A result between two adjacent thresholds is assigned a percentile by straight-line interpolation. Ages 18-19 use the 20-29 column. Ranking uses full-precision interpolation; displayed results may be rounded.

MALE REFERENCE GROUP - TREADMILL CPET

PCTL	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89
99.8	74.7	68.4	64.0	61.5	52.0	44.0	29.7
95	62.1	57.9	53.2	46.8	40.2	35.2	25.6
90	57.8	54.3	49.5	42.7	36.4	29.6	23.6
85	56.0	51.2	46.1	40.1	33.6	27.6	22.3
80	54.2	48.7	44.0	37.5	31.6	26.3	21.8
75	52.6	46.5	41.8	35.5	29.9	25.0	20.9
70	50.9	45.1	40.0	34.1	28.7	23.9	20.4
65	49.4	43.5	38.5	32.9	27.6	22.9	19.5
60	48.2	41.9	37.2	31.8	26.5	22.3	18.8
55	46.9	40.1	36.0	30.7	25.3	21.5	18.3
50	45.4	38.6	34.8	29.4	24.4	20.6	17.7
45	44.2	37.4	33.4	28.2	23.6	19.9	17.0
40	42.8	35.9	32.1	27.2	22.8	19.3	16.7
35	41.0	34.3	31.1	26.2	21.8	18.5	16.3
30	39.2	32.8	29.7	25.3	20.8	17.6	16.1
25	37.3	31.3	28.4	23.9	19.7	16.8	15.9
20	34.8	29.4	26.9	22.7	18.6	16.0	15.3
15	32.0	27.2	25.4	21.4	17.5	15.0	13.9
10	28.8	25.0	22.9	19.2	16.1	13.6	13.2
5	24.8	20.6	19.7	16.5	13.8	11.6	12.2
0.2	11.6	7.9	11.2	8.6	7.2	6.5	10.2

Example. A 34-year-old assigned to the male reference group with a measured V02peak of 40.1 falls at the 55th-percentile threshold. A result between 40.1 and 41.9 is interpolated between the 55th and 60th percentiles.

APPENDIX A CONTINUED

FEMALE REFERENCE THRESHOLDS

These values are frozen for Revision A so the scoring standard cannot drift during the season.

FEMALE REFERENCE GROUP - TREADMILL CPET

PCTL	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89
99.8	61.7	56.1	54.6	47.1	40.1	32.0	45.1
95	50.1	45.5	40.7	35.3	29.7	24.2	20.7
90	47.3	41.1	37.5	31.8	27.3	22.8	19.9
85	45.4	38.4	34.7	30.0	25.5	21.4	18.5
80	44.1	36.2	32.8	28.4	24.1	20.6	18.0
75	42.2	34.5	30.9	27.3	23.1	20.0	17.2
70	41.2	33.3	29.8	26.4	22.2	19.2	16.6
65	39.6	31.9	28.6	25.5	21.6	18.8	15.8
60	38.0	30.7	27.7	24.7	20.8	18.2	15.5
55	36.8	29.4	26.6	23.7	20.1	17.7	15.3
50	35.6	28.3	25.9	23.1	19.4	17.1	15.1
45	34.2	27.3	24.9	22.3	18.8	16.7	14.6
40	32.7	26.4	24.2	21.7	18.3	16.1	14.3
35	31.3	25.4	23.2	21.0	17.7	15.7	13.8
30	29.9	24.3	22.2	20.3	17.0	15.3	13.4
25	28.6	23.1	21.3	19.5	16.4	14.8	12.8
20	26.6	22.1	20.0	18.7	15.5	14.1	12.4
15	24.5	20.7	19.0	17.6	14.7	13.7	11.9
10	22.2	19.2	17.4	16.6	13.5	12.3	11.4
5	19.3	16.6	15.3	14.5	12.0	11.3	10.7
0.2	12.4	11.4	10.7	7.9	8.2	7.4	9.0

Example. A 27-year-old assigned to the female reference group with a measured V02peak of 35.6 falls at the 50th-percentile threshold. A result between 35.6 and 36.8 is interpolated between the 50th and 55th percentiles.

Source and implementation

Kaminsky LA, Arena R, Myers J, et al. Updated Reference Standards for Cardiorespiratory Fitness Measured with Cardiopulmonary Exercise Testing: Data from the Fitness Registry and the Importance of Exercise National Database (FRIEND). Mayo Clinic Proceedings. 2022;97(2):285-293. DOI: 10.1016/j.mayocp.2021.08.020.
Threshold values and interpolation structure follow the public FRIENDanalysis reference implementation by James E. Peterman, function FRIENDpercentile, reference edition 2, as accessed August 23, 2026: <https://rdr.io/github/JimPeterman/FRIENDanalysis/man/FRIENDpercentile.html>
The published dataset covers ages 20-89. Applying the 20-29 reference group to ages 18-19 is an administrative rule of this competition, not a claim that the underlying study validated that age extension.

APPENDIX B

OPERATIONAL NOTICES STILL TO COME

The following details may be announced later without changing the core winning criterion or prize structure.

TESTING PROVIDER	Name and medical-screening process
TESTING LOCATIONS	One San Francisco or Bay Area site, or materially equivalent sites
TEST PROTOCOL	Ramp structure, calibration standards, preparation instructions, and validity checklist
TESTING WINDOW	Exact January–February 2027 appointment dates
REFUND DEADLINE	Displayed clearly before checkout and in each receipt
FINALE	Exact February 2027 date, venue, attendance instructions, and program
COMMUNITY	Slack invitation, conduct process, and planned session calendar
PRIZE CONFIRMATION	Written notice that the competition will proceed to testing and award

Version control

Revision A freezes the competition’s core structure. Later notices may fill in operational details. If the Sponsor issues a material amendment to the Rules, it will use a new revision letter, preserve the prior version, identify the change, and notify paid Participants.

PARTICIPANT ACCEPTANCE
Checkout should require an unchecked box stating: 'I have read and agree to The VO2 Cup Official Rules, Rev A, and understand that the competition may be canceled with a full refund before official testing.' The receipt should link to or attach this exact PDF.

THE VO2 CUP

GET FITTER.
WIN A TESLA.

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