

MARLBOROUGH DOWNS CHALLENGE

Saturday 07 May 2022

Pre-race information: please read these notes carefully as they contain important information you will need before the event and on the day.

Covid-19: Should national guidelines change, race guidance related to Covid will be provided nearer to the race date and will be in line with UK Athletics Association advice and the venue's rules. Our preference would be that you wear a mask inside the Leisure Centre. **Please DO NOT ATTEND THE EVENT if you have confirmed or suspected Covid.**

What3Words: If you are carrying a mobile device, please download the What3words app and familiarise yourself with it. This is the best way for our first aid crew or the emergency services to locate you if you are injured or ill. Our marshals will also have the app on their devices. If the signal is poor you can also text your location.

Contacts:

First Aid Contact (call first in an emergency): Colin on 07748 632436

Race Directors: Karina Hourd on 07595 777322 or Debs Berry on 07415 218626

ARRIVING AND REGISTERING

Where: Marlborough Leisure Centre, SN8 1PB. Toilets, showers, changing facilities and bag drop available.

When: Saturday 7 May 2022. Registration 33 Mile: 7:45am–8:45am, 20 Mile: 9:00am–10:15am. 33 Mile Race starts at 9:00am. 20 Mile race starts at 10:30. Finish closes at 5:00pm.

Parking: You will need to park in the grounds of Marlborough College, SN8 1PA. Please follow the signs and the instructions of the parking marshals. **Note – there is no parking at Marlborough Leisure Centre.** Please do not enter Marlborough College grounds before marshals tell you that you may do so.

Registration: Please go to the Small Hall in the Leisure Centre to collect your race number and timing chip. **Cut-off for registration is 15 minutes before your race**, so make sure you allow plenty of time. Please fill in the information required on the back of your race number, including any medical condition(s) that you have and any medication that you are taking. **Your number will be recorded at all checkpoints: please display it clearly on your front for us to see.**

Note – the timing chip will need to be returned at the end of the race.

Facilities: The Leisure Centre has toilets, changing rooms and showers. A bag of clothes may be left in the Small Hall at the Leisure Centre; this room will be occupied for most of the day but **this is not supervised storage** and the organisers will not be responsible for any loss or damage. The Leisure Centre café is operating limited hours due to Covid, but purchase of hot drinks and food is available on Marlborough High Street, five minutes' walk away. There will be tea/coffee and snacks at the FINISH up to 5pm for runners.

Please respect Marlborough College grounds. There are no toilets at the START – toilets are only available in the Leisure Centre. Any inappropriate use of the College grounds may prevent this event from taking place in the future and will result in your exclusion from the race.

THE RACES

Route descriptions: are available on the club website:

www.marlboroughrunningclub.org.uk/races/marlborough-downs-challenge

Copies will be emailed to you with this information. Please print the route for your race and bring it with you on the day. If there are any last-minute changes these will be announced on the website, Facebook page and on the day. The route is on public rights of way except for the START, which is in the grounds of Marlborough College: this is private land and may not be used at any other time. Much of the route is remote from public roads.

Countryside code: Please follow the countryside code at all times, taking particular care to close all gates and avoid disturbing livestock. Report any accidental damage at the next checkpoint. And please – NO LITTER, especially gel wrappers which, as well as being unsightly, are a hazard to wildlife and farm animals. It is a condition of our licence from the County Council that runners do not leave any litter!

Checkpoint refreshments: All checkpoints will offer water and other drinks, with hot drinks available at Checkpoint 7. **We will NOT be providing cups, so please carry your own cup.** All checkpoints, with the exception of CP1 after just 2.2 miles, will also offer sweets, biscuits, etc.

Direction signs on route: The Marlborough Downs Challenge route is now almost entirely unmarked – finding your way is part of the event and, therefore, is your responsibility. Do not assume that the person in front knows where they're going! Use the route description provided and/or map and compass; the best map is OS Explorer sheet 157. There may be some arrow signs near the START and FINISH, plus at a very few key points on the routes. As in all events, signs can be tampered with and are intended merely as an extra aid – at all times, the written route descriptions and OS map take precedence.

Checkpoint opening times:

Checkpoint no.	Grid Ref	Distance	Open	Close
CP1	SU165667	2.2 miles	9:00am	11:15am
CP2	SU116638	6.4 miles	9:30am	12:15pm
CP3	SU081652	8.9 miles	9:45am	13:00
CP4	SU006618	15.3 miles	10:30am	13:15
CP5	SU027661	18.6 miles	11:00am	14:00
CP6	SU032694	21.4 miles	11:15am	14:45
CP7	SU089698	12.1/25.6 miles	10:45am	15:45
CP8	SU143714	15.7/29.2 miles	12:00pm	16:45
FINISH	SU182689	19.2/32.6 miles	12:30pm	17:00

Anyone arriving at a checkpoint after the closing time will be retired from the event and asked to surrender their race number. If you continue on the route it will be at your own risk.

You will see that the Finish closes at 5pm as Marlborough Leisure Centre closes then. If you arrive later than 5pm there will not be hot food or drinks available.

33 mile race cut-off: There is a short-cut from CP3 directly to CP7, which reduces the total distance to roughly 20 miles. Anyone taking this short-cut must inform the marshals at CP3, who will mark your number before you leave the checkpoint.

Anyone on the 33 mile route who arrives at CP3 after 11am will automatically be directed to the shorter route.

PLEASE NOTE: 33 mile runners: if you choose to take the short-cut at CP3, or if you are directed to take it by one of our marshals, we may not be able to include your time in the final race results, and you will not be eligible for any prize. Also note that, if you are a speedy runner, checkpoints 7 and 8 may not have opened by the time you reach them if you take this short-cut. However, on finishing you would still be awarded an MDC pottery mug.

If you have any doubt about your ability to complete 33 miles by 5pm, or to get to CP3 (8.9 Miles) by 11am, we suggest that you email us at

downschallenge@marlboroughrunningclub.org.uk **by Tuesday 3 May to change to the 20 mile race.**

Retiring from the race: If you need to retire, you ***MUST*** report to a checkpoint, or give your name and race number to a marshal at the FINISH. We take your safety seriously and check all numbers to ensure everyone is accounted for; we will initiate a search if necessary. If you do not report your retirement, it can cause considerable difficulties and you may be banned from future MRC events.

If you get lost and fail to find a checkpoint for more than a few hours, please telephone a Race Director on 07595 777322 or 07415 218626 and report your position. You should be aware that there are some parts of the course without mobile phone reception.

Penalties: There will be time penalties for anyone missing a checkpoint and runners doing so will not be eligible for any prizes.

Chip timing: We're pleased to be working with Tri and Enter Events for our Chip Timing and Results. This will ensure accurate timing and rapid access to results. Please wear your chip timing device as instructed at registration and return it at the end. We will only hand out mugs to runners who have returned their chip timing device!

Prizes and awards: In each race there will be prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd Men and Ladies as well as age group prizes. All finishers will receive a souvenir mug from the White Horse Pottery – www.whitehorsepottery.co.uk.

SAFETY

Suitable footwear and clothing must be worn or carried. Parts of the route will be muddy. If the weather is wet and/or cold at the start then it's likely to be very wet and muddy and/or very cold out on the Downs! People have got lost in the mist! If it's sunny then sunburn may be a problem – don't forget to wear SPF.

Road crossings: Take great care at road crossings. The A4 and A4361 roads are fast so be very careful. **Marshals may be on hand but they are not permitted to halt or attempt to control traffic.**

It is your responsibility to ensure your own safety.

Injuries: First Aid staff will be in attendance on the day. If you come across someone who is injured or ill please stay with them, keep them warm, note the name and number of the injured person and ask the next runner to seek help at the nearest checkpoint.

In the event of a **serious injury or illness**, and if you have phone signal, please:

- first call TrailMed (the race first aiders) on 07748 632436 (name: Colin) as our qualified paramedics may be able to reach you faster than the NHS.
- If you cannot get through, next call 999.
- Please also TEXT your location to 07748 632436 (name: Colin). This may work better where there is a poor signal. Please use the What3Words location if possible.
- You can also call Race Directors: Karina Hourd on 07595 777322 or Debs Berry on 07415 218626.

Canal-side running: 33 mile runners will follow some 3 miles of the Kennet & Avon Canal towpath. The towpath is narrow, and may be slippery in places. Runners are required to be considerate to other users on the towpath, for example by being courteous and by running in single file when other users are encountered. Care should be taken to ensure that competitors and other towpath users do not enter the water. Competitors should be aware of the dangers associated with Leptospirosis (Weil's

Disease). Information can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/zoonoses-data-sheets/leptospirosis.pdf.

Safeguarding: We are required to bring to your attention our Club's safeguarding policy. You can read this on the Club website.

OTHER INFORMATION

Runner swaps: We do not offer refunds or deferments to runners who have entered but are not able to run; however, we do allow runners to transfer their places to other athletes as long as we are notified in advance. To transfer your entry, please email us (as above) **by Tuesday 3 May** giving your name, plus full details of your replacement (event they wish to run, name, full contact details, date of birth, age, gender, club, mobile phone number, emergency contact details, any medical conditions we should know about). We also allow runners to transfer their entry from one distance to the other. Again, please also email us by 3 May.

Cancellation: This year Marlborough Running Club is facing significantly increased costs in putting on the MDC. The cost of first aid provision, for example, has almost trebled. If extreme circumstances (e.g. Covid restrictions) require us to cancel the event we will contact all entrants to set out options, which may include partial refunds or a transfer to a future event.

Race numbers: All participants should keep their number with them when they are in the Leisure Centre as your number identifies you as an MDC participant. Your race number also entitles you to a shower. Please note: your race number does not entitle you to use other facilities at the Leisure Centre – e.g. the swimming pool.

Leisure centre access: The Leisure Centre is currently operating reduced hours and will **CLOSE at 5pm**. It is your responsibility to ensure that all bags and possessions have been removed from the leisure centre before the centre closes.

Refreshments: As mentioned above, there will be cold drinks at all checkpoints, plus hot drinks at Checkpoint 7. **Please remember to bring your own cup!** There will be tea/coffee and snacks at the FINISH up to 5pm.

Accommodation: Marlborough Tourist Information Centre – www.marlboroughwiltshire.co.uk/.

Dogs: The races are held under the rules of UK Athletics, which do not allow running with dogs. Also, livestock is grazing at a number of places around the course. Therefore, **dogs are not permitted in the Marlborough Downs Challenge.**

Photos: Barry Cornelius plans to take photos for publication on his website (www.oxonraces.com) and for possible use by the press. You will be able to download his photos free of charge. If you do not wish your image to appear as a significant part of any photo that he publishes on the web or provides to the press, you should put a large thick red cross across your race number. Red markers will be provided at the Race HQ for this purpose.

Supporters: All are welcome! Note that cars and motorcycles are not permitted at CP3, CP8, in Calstone Wellington nor on the Ridgeway. There is no parking in Avebury village other than in the National Trust 'pay & display' car park between Avebury and Beckhampton. If you visit the race checkpoints please allow marshals to concentrate on helping competitors and please keep the race route clear at all times.

We hope you enjoy the day and have a great race!