

MARLBOROUGH DOWNS CHALLENGE Saturday 11 May 2019

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

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

When: Saturday 11 May 2019. 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 5:30pm

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

Registration: Go to the Small Hall in the Leisure Centre to collect your race number. **Cut-off for registration is 15 minutes before your race**, so please 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.

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** - the organisers will not be responsible for any loss or damage. The Leisure Centre café will be open (normal opening time is 08:00h) for purchase of hot drinks and food.

Please respect Marlborough College grounds. There are no toilets at the START – toilets are available only 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.

Route descriptions: are available on the club website:

<http://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 and on the day. The route is on public rights of way except at the START 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 will not leave any litter!

Checkpoint Refreshments: All checkpoints will offer water and other drinks. Drinks will be served in plastic cups, but we are ensuring this is as environmentally friendly as possible. All cups will be collected at the checkpoints for professional recycling. Please dispose of the cups you use in the receptacles provided at the checkpoints. Do not drop them on the trail. 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	17:30

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

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 11:00am will automatically be directed to the cut-off. Please note the cut-off time!

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 faster runner, checkpoints 7 and 8 may not have opened by the time you reach them. However, on finishing you would still be awarded a hand-thrown pottery mug. **If you have any doubt about your ability to complete 33 miles, or to get to CP3 (8.9 Miles) by 11:00, we suggest that you email us at downschallenge@marlboroughrunningclub.org.uk by Monday 6 May to change to the 20 mile race.**

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. Due to the risk of contact with water, competitors should be aware of the dangers associated with Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease). Information can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/zoonoses-data-sheets/leptospirosis.pdf>.

Runner Swaps: We do not offer refunds or deferments to runners who have entered but not able to run, but we 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 Thursday 9 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. Please email by 9 May.

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

Retirement: 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 the Leisure Centre on 01672 513161 and report your position. You should be aware that there are some parts of the course without mobile phone reception.

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 will be very wet and muddy and/or very cold out on the Downs! People have got lost in the mist! If it is sunny then sunburn may be a problem.

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 will not 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 then 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.

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 and is your meal voucher for refreshments after the event. Please note: your race number does not entitle you to use other facilities at the Leisure Centre – e.g. the swimming pool.

Refreshments: There will be cold drinks at all checkpoints, plus hot drinks at Checkpoint 7. There will be tea/coffee and a hot meal at the FINISH up to 5:30pm.

Prizes and awards: In each race there will be prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd Men and Ladies as well as 1st M40, M50, M60, F40, F50, and F60. (The organisers reserve the right to change the awards depending on the number of entries.) All finishers will receive a souvenir mug from the White Horse Pottery – www.whitehorsepottery.co.uk. This year you will have a choice of colours to add to your collection.

Accommodation: Marlborough Tourist Information Centre – <http://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.**

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!