

12Hr PGC Race Update 1

General: Hello Pocket Gopher racers. First, I want to thank each one of you for signing up. I hope you have as much fun on the course as I did planning it. The 12hr race is both an ARWS and USARA sanctioned race and race results will be posted to each organization within 72hrs of the finish. I am incredible excited about the 12Hr race. This year's race will challenge you both physically and mentally. The route choice on this course puts the decision back into the hands of the racers. Even I do not know which direction or discipline you will choose, and each team will be able to choose whatever strength best suits them.

Accommodation: If you need a place to stay before the race there are hotels in both Northfield MN and Faribault MN. Both are great small cities and equal distance, about 20 min, from the start line. If you are looking to camp the Big Woods Park MN has limited camping available and is about 5 min from the Start line

Race Start: The official Race start will be located at the Nerstrand AG Center in Nerstrand MN. Our Races follow the ARWS format in that we believe racers should be given every opportunity to finish the course without being penalized. Our 12hr race means the course is designed as a 12-hour race and most teams will finish within 12 hours. However, we are giving you an added 4 hours to finish the race and still be an official finisher! After 16 hours our course closes and we will come looking for you and you will be considered unofficial at the that time, but I do not see that happening.

Race Time line:

06:00 Race HQ Opens

06:00 TA 3 Raft building drop off opens for Bag/PFD/Paddle drops

08:00 Race Starts

20:00 Lead Racers will come in

23:59 Race Course Closes

The Course: The course is a intermediate course with about 30% of the course on either gravel or blacktop roads. Southern MN is mostly flat farm land so expect bike times to be faster than other races. That being said some gravel roads in this area can be soul sucking so route selection is important. The hiking sections are combinations of established hiking trail and bushwacking.

- A. Section 1:** Section 1 is wide open and consists of TA 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D. TA 1A is mandatory, you have to drop your bikes in TA 1A to do that hiking section. This is a requirement of the park, please do not try to ride your bikes on that hiking section. TA 1A may not be manned when you get there so I am trusting you not to break the rules. TA 1B, 1C, and 1D are there for your use if you want them but they are not required and are not manned. How you use them is your choice. You can also cross the Cannon River at any point you but there is a rope aided crossing marked on your map if you choose to use it. There is also a foot bridge

across the river you can use if you choose and you may even choose to ride around the river. After you have found all the checkpoints around each TA you need to move on bike to TA 2. **TA 2 is mandatory and is where you will receive your remaining points.** The rest of the course will reveal itself at TA 2

B. Raft Building This is by far the section I have received the most questions on so please read carefully

- a.** There will be branches and other building material available at the TA
- b.** Each RACER can have one garbage bag full of whatever they want to aid in raft building. This can include things like; pool noodles, empty milk jugs, anything that floats, rope, duct tape, cordless drill, saw, let your imagination run wild but you must be able to put it in a garbage bag and you must be able to close it and put your race number on it. You will drop the bag at TA 3 before the race.
- c.** Each team will also be able to drop off paddles and PFD (labeled) next to their team garbage bags. People keep asking me do I being a kayak paddle, or a canoe paddle and I do not know. I like kayak paddles but that is me.
- d.** In my race planning I estimated it would take 1 hour to build your raft and another hour to get the points so don't rush it, enjoy it.
- e.** Each team's raft must float with all members of the team for at least 50ft to get credit for the raft building. After 50m you can swim beside it if you choose, all points are withing 2km
- f.** PFDS MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES WHILE ON RAFT OR SWIMMING BESIDE IT
- g.** Packs may be left in the TA but do not forget your PUNCH CARD
- h.** When you complete the raft building points you MUST disassemble your raft and put your building material back into the pile
 - i.** If you got the building material from us it goes back in the pile for other teams
 - ii.** If you want to donate any of your building material for other teams there will be a donate pile
 - iii.** Anything you want to keep must be place back in your garbage bag and secured and labeled
 - iv.** Please place your PFDs and paddles next to your bags and try to keep the labels on them
- i.** This is going to be a fun time if you use your imagination and put your building skills to work

C. Maps: All maps requiring plotting will be 1/24 or 1/25

Gear List Adds: There is only two add on to the gear list

1. Each team needs to have enough bike locks/bike loops to be able to lock up their bikes at unmanned checkpoints
2. Each team needs a map plotting tool for 1/24 and 1/25

What Do I Do Next: Here is what you need to do before the next update

1. Get a USARA membership. (This is a requirement and will not be available the day of the race, please bring your USARA number to the race)

2. Sign the USARA Waiver and print it. I cannot let you race without a waiver and waivers will not be available at the race so please make sure you print and sign your waiver
3. Review the 12hr Race Schematics. You won't see these at all AR races, but they are always at expedition races, and they will help you
4. Review the 12hr Race Cutsheet. Vital information is available on the cutsheet
5. I will not be printing the race schematics or the race cutsheet, but you are welcome to print them and bring them on the course. I highly recommend it

Closing: Again, thank you for selecting my race and again do not hesitate to ask questions. This race is not designed to trick you or frustrate you, that's not our goal. This race is designed to challenge you and I hope it does. As an intermediate racer you may think about quitting at some point, my last piece of advice is DO NOT. Sit down, take a deep breath, take it one step at a time. You can do this, whether its one kilometer at a time, one meter at a time or one centimeter at a time keep moving forward, I promise you will not forget it. Challenge yourself. "When is the last time you did something for the first time" Until race day train hard and I will see you on the high ground!!

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