

12Hr PGE 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 30hr 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 30Hr race. This year's race will challenge you both physically and mentally. I look at this race as your mini prep for expedition racing. I have included as many different disciplines as I could. You will get to build a raft, explore a cave, go rappelling, and conduct a river crossing all in one race. The route choice on this course puts the decision back into the hands of the racers.

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 30hr race means the course is designed as a 30-hour race and most teams will finish within 30 hours. However, we are giving you an added 4 hours to finish the race and still be an official finisher! After 34 hours our course closes and we will come looking for you and you will be considered unofficial at that time, but I do not see that happening.

Race Time line:

20 July 2024

05:00 Canoe Drops Opens

06:00 Race HQ Opens

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

08:00 Race Starts

21 July 2024

14:000 Lead Racers will come in

18:00 Race Course Closes

The Course: The course is a advanced course with about 40% of the course on either gravel or blacktop roads. DO NOT be intimidated by some of the bike distances. Southern MN is mostly flat farm land so expect bike times to be way faster than other races. That being said some gravel roads in this area can be soul sucking so route selection is important. Remember the blacktop may be longer but faster, then again some roads are hard packed dirt and just as fast The hiking sections are combinations of established hiking trail and bushwacking.

- A. Rappel:** Many rappels in AR's are added in for the fun factor but this rappel is part of the race course. While it is possible to go around the rappel it will add about 7k to the hiking section, so I highly recommend you do it.
- a.** All rappel gear is considered mandatory gear and will need to be carried at the start of the course. Some people have caught a mistake I made on the gear list. You do not need an ascender, I meant to say descender, meaning you will need a rappel harness, climbing sling, 2 locking carabiners, and one of the following: ATC, Figure 8, emergency figure 8. If you have some other type of rappel device such as a grigri, please email so I can make sure it works with our 10.5mm ropes. I will also allow you to use 7mm cordelette in place of a sling, but I will require fisherman's knot vs overhand so make sure you have enough cordelette to have a 24inch loop with knot.
 - b.** No experience is needed to rappel. We have a highly trained staff of Army certified Rappel masters and belayers that will aid you every step of the way
 - c.** Don't forget gloves, bike gloves work but leather gloves are much better.
- 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, if you leave them behind

- i. This is going to be a fun time if you use your imagination and put your building skills to work
- C. *PFDS and Paddles* This is one of several decisions you will have to make on the 30hr course
 - a. *Option 1 Place* 1 set of Paddles and PFDs at the rafting section and another at the canoeing section. You will be allowed to leave both behind but please label them.
 - b. *Option 2.* Place a single set of PFDs and paddles at the rafting section and then carry them to the canoe section and drop them there. I will allow you to leave them with the bikes any time you drop bikes before the canoe section
 - c. *Option 3 Drop* PFDs at the rafting section and make your own paddles or use your hands. This way you only have to carry PFDs to canoeing.
- D. *Maps:* All maps requiring plotting will be 1/24 or 1/25

Gear List Adds: There is only two adds 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 30hr 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 30hr 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 advanced racer you are used to dealing with challenged but even advanced racers 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 it's 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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