

reetings runners!

As you no doubt know, race day is quickly approaching! Barring any sudden changes, this will serve as the final pre-race email to hopefully answer any questions you may have and leave you informed for race weekend. **This email and the information packet are mandatory reading for all runners, crews, and pacers.** It's essential crews and pacers are aware of the rules and regulations to avoid jeopardizing your race.

Runner Information Packet

The runner information packet has been updated for 2018 and is on the website. Most information remains the same, and I'll highlight some of the minor changes and overall most important points in this email. You can find the packet attached to this email as well as on the race website under the [general information tab](#).

I am still in the process of updating the website to reflect everything disclosed in this email, but that should be done by tomorrow evening.

Aid Stations/ Misc.

The course is unchanged from 2017.

We will again have Honey Stinger nutrition products (gels, chews, etc.) and Tailwind sports drink at the aid stations.

The Dargan Bend aid station may not be fully set up when you run by it the first time (mile 1.4). People rarely stop there anyways, so the first full aid station will be mile 6.3 (Antietam). While Dargan Bend AS will not be set up, we will have a place for you to drop off your "morning chill" gloves, hat, light jacket, etc. once you warm up. We will take these items back to the start at Manidokan.

Packet pickup will take place at Manidokan from 12PM Friday until 5:45PM, then immediately after dinner has concluded for a few minutes.

If you roll into camp late you will have to wait until race morning. Packet pickup will be on race morning from 5:15AM-6:30AM. All runners must be checked in by 6:30AM. Runners who picked up number on Friday need to re-check Saturday morning so we know you are still planning to run.

New hard cutoffs have been added for Lander Rd. 4 (86.2) and Keep Tryst 4 (93.5).

The Lander Rd. 4 cutoff is 8:40AM, the Keep Tryst 4 cutoff is 10:40AM on Sunday morning. These new cutoffs represent the historically slowest time anyone has ever gone through these aid stations and finished the race (in times of 29:5X) *plus* 5 minutes. This should help the aid stations volunteers to better know when the aid stations need to be closed down and packed up. See Table 1 in the runner's packet for final times.

Bib Numbers

All bib numbers have been assigned and are visible on the ultrasignup [entrants list](#). It is crucial that you have your bib number, name, and designated aid station clearly labelled on all your drop bags.

Drop Bags

Speaking of drop bags, we are still enforcing a strict policy for drop bag size. Our leniency in drop bag sizes in the past was taken advantage of to the point where some folks were bringing large 30-gallon storage containers as "drop bags". It isn't logistically possible to transport large drop bags such as these to Brunswick and Nolands Ferry, and the aid stations have no space to store them.

As a result, all drop bags will need to conform to Western States dimensions, that is to not exceed 6"x8"x16" in any dimension. We have a drop-bag sizer (think of the ones at the airport for your carry-on luggage). We will have volunteers working the drop bag station and if your drop bag is too large it will not be accepted.

If it's a little larger in one of the dimensions and can be "crammed down" to fit, then that's fine. Please avoid having to scramble on race morning to re-pack your drop bags by making sure they conform to these dimensions before you arrive.

NOTE: The Manidokan drop bag is exempt from the size restriction. You will however be responsible for hauling any huge Manidokan drop bags to the correct drop bag location

and then hauling them back after the race is finished. 😊

Drop bags for Brunswick/Nolands Ferry will be dropped off near the only tree in the lower parking area. Drop bags for Manidokan will be brought up and placed behind the pavilion where you check in and get your bib number. After the race, all drop bags will be brought back to Manidokan for pickup. Drop bags will arrive from the aid stations approximately 1 hour after they close. If you want your drop bags earlier, you will need to go get them from the aid stations. Drop bags left behind will not be mailed to runners. Items within them will either be thrown away or donated. Drop bags may be exposed to the elements, so waterproof bags are highly recommended.

Race Premiums

The race premiums are in and they look spiffy! I'll be teasing them and some other items on Facebook over the next week and a half or so.

Deferral/DNS

I unfortunately cannot offer deferrals/refunds for this year's race. If you decide for some reason you cannot make the race, you can remove yourself from the entrants list in your ultrasignup profile. If you are unable to do that, you may also reply to this email and I can manually remove you. I hope to see you at a future year's race! If you cannot attend the race you will need to have someone come pick up any race premiums for you. Please send an email with who will be picking them up for you.

Showers/Camping at Manidokan

For those who are camping at Manidokan, the cost is \$3 for the weekend. You can arrive after 12PM on Friday. There is specific info about where to camp in the information packet.

An area should be marked off, but if you get there before that, then ask someone at the pavilion at the top of the hill.

We've been asked by the Manidokan management that you be gone by late afternoon on Sunday. Attempting to drive home after running all night is dangerous. If you finish and want to take a nap before driving, then that is an excellent idea, but you can't spend the night after the race on Sunday. If you need to spend the night you should plan to make a reservation to stay at Manidokan (they have cabins, make the reservation directly with them). Alternatively you can nap for a few hours in your car/tent and then drive to a nearby hotel to spend the night.

If you will be camping or simply driving to the race and not staying in a nearby hotel, then you might want to clean up after the race. We've gained access to several showers at Manidokan that you can use after the race. There are 1 men's and women's showers each in the dining hall, and there is a separate bathhouse containing 3 men's and 3 women's showers. You are welcome to use either of these facilities, and volunteers will be able to direct you where to go to find the showers.

Pre-race Dinner

The pre-race dinner will start at 6PM so please try to be there around 5:45 so we can start on time. A menu for the pre-race dinner has been added as Appendix C in the information packet. If you did not register for the pre-race dinner initially, please email me by this Friday (April 20th) and let me know how many people will be attending with you. Please bring cash (\$15 per person) for the dinner when you come.

If you originally signed up but are no longer planning to attend the pre-race dinner respond to this message and let me know. I want to give the dining hall folks an accurate count so we do not waste food.

Post-race Meal

This year we will again be having a post-race meal catered by Buddhist from Mecca BBQ. A menu for the post-race meal has been added as an appendix in the information packet. The details are still being worked out but this is what we have planned right now. All runners have a ticket to the post-race meal included in their registration. If you know you will not attend please let me know.

If you did not register for extra post-race tickets initially but want to feed others (crew/pacers...), please email me by this Friday (April 20th) indicating how many people will be attending with you. Please bring cash (\$15 per person) to the BBQ when you come.

The post-race meal will start being served at 11:00 am and go through 1:00 pm. For earlier finishers, we will have light breakfast-type food available at the Manidokan aid station overnight and Sunday morning.

Post-race Buckle Ceremony

Buckles will be awarded after the last finisher has crossed the line. We will recognize all the finishers for their incredible efforts as we eat BBQ. I hope this change, in combination with encouraging runners to attend the post-race meal, will help create more of a party and celebration to give runners, crews, pacers, and volunteers a chance to get together and share stories from the race.

I understand some people may have obligations that prevent them from staying for the Buckle Ceremony and if that is the case, please approach me and we can talk about it.

Alcohol

The Manidokan official policy is that no alcohol is allowed on the premises. The NPS also does not allow alcohol so please keep it away from the Brunswick AS.

Volunteers

We are still looking for some volunteers, especially Friday morning before the race to help with parking, registration, etc. If you know of anyone who might be interested in helping please have them sign up on [Ultrasignup](#).

Weather

What is the weather going to be like, that's the magic question isn't it?

Considering the averages this time of year in MD, weather for race day will *probably* in the 70s with sun/partly cloudy conditions during the day. Overnight temperatures will *probably* be in the 40's. These are rough averages. At night time, it can get breezy on the canal. You should be prepared for a wide range of conditions, anything from close to 90-degree heat to cold and rainy 40 degree daytime temperatures. As you monitor the weather, I would suggest looking at the weather for Brunswick, MD as this is roughly the middle point of the course.

At this point the long-term 10 day forecast (AKA mostly guessing) says the weather will be a high of 70 on Saturday, mostly sunny with an overnight low of 52. Weather Sunday during the day will be ~70 again with clouds.

With that, I'll leave you folks to eagerly anticipate race day and wish you a nice and anxious taper. Please don't hesitate to let me know if you have any questions that were not covered in this email or the information packet.

Happy Trails,
Lance Dockery