

# HOLY TRAIL RACE BRIEF

## Background:

There are three distances both finishing at Nicholas Everitt Park, Oulton Broad.

The marathon which starts at Walberswick, loops up onto the Sandlings walk, returning to Walberswick village hall as the first checkpoint and then joins the same route as the other two races to Oulton Broad.

The 50 km race is a point to point race which starts at Holton Village Hall, Lodge Rd, Holton IP19 8RZ. The start at Holton is a 1 mile walk from the train station at Halesworth which is on the same train line as Oulton Broad thus giving you options to plan your day accordingly.

The 50 mile race starts at Nicholas Everitt Park, Bridge Rd, Oulton Broad, Lowestoft NR33 following a circular route back to Oulton Broad making logistics easy.

## Registration, timings:

50 mile race:

This will be at The Pavilion in Nicholas Everitt Park , Oulton Broad NR33 9JR (next to the museum...follow the signs from the car park)

Registration will be from 0530 to 0700

Race brief 0715

Race start 0730

You have 15 hrs to finish: therefore you must be finished by 22:30

50 km race:

This will be at Holton Village hall, Lodge Rd, Holton IP19 8RZ

Registration will be from 0730 to 0900

Race brief 0915

Race start 0930

You have 10 hrs to finish: therefore you must be finished by 19:30

Marathon

Registration will be from Walberswick Village Hall, The Street, Walberswick IP18 6TZ

Registration will be from 0900 to 1000

Race brief 1015

Race start from the village green at 1030 (2 minute walk from the hall)

You have 8 hrs to finish so must be finished by 18:30

**There will be TWO CUT OFFS in the 50 mile race and ONE in the marathon and 50k ...**

For the 50 mile race the first cut off is at Walberswick Village Hall (Checkpoint 3) at 16:15hrs

Then the other cut off is at SAILORS HOME PUB, Kessingland. (the last checkpoint)

It is 13km to the finish from here.

The 50 mile race cut off here is 20:10 hrs

The 50 km race cut off here is 1700 hrs

The marathon cut off here is 1600 hrs

***This will be staffed by an experienced volunteer who is acting on our behalf and has authority to tell you to stop (this is in the interests of safety)***

In the marathon you must leave this checkpoint by 1600hrs (4pm)

In the 50 km race you must leave this checkpoint by 1700 hrs (5pm)

In the 50 mile race you must leave this checkpoint by 20.10 hrs ( Ten past 8 pm)

**There is no discussion about this.**

We have an 8 hr cut off for the marathon, 10 hour cut off for 50 km and 15 hrs for the 50 miler. That is plenty of time, if you haven't reached here by 5 and a half hours in the marathon, 7 and a half hours in the 50 km or 12 hrs 40 in the 50 miler then it is not going to be your day. It is not fair on staff to be left out on the course for hours after the race should be over. So please, if this happens to you, accept it gracefully. On the plus side this last checkpoint is a pub!

You will also have to arrange transport home, taxi etc. The checkpoint staff may offer you a lift but you will have to wait til after their checkpoint shift has ended and please be aware they are under no obligation to do so.

### **Finish location:**

**The finish is at Nicholas Everitt Park adjacent to the Pavilion which is the start line for the 50 mile race.**

If you are arriving here in the evening be prepared for some stunning sunset photos as the sun sinks over the far end of Oulton Broad. It should be spectacular.

There are numerous pay and display car parking spaces here. Please tell your supporters not to drive into the park though.

## **Getting to the starts:**

### 50 MILE RACE:

You have numerous options:

1. Drive, leave your car at Oulton Broad and it will be there for you after. There are pay and display and also some on road parking locally
2. Train: the park is served by Oulton Broad North and Oulton Broad South. The train from Norwich at 0540 gets you into OB North at 6.20 approximately.
3. Stay locally: The Wherry Hotel is right next to the start.

### 50 KM RACE:

Let the train take the strain: the nearest station is Halesworth.

If you are coming from Norwich it is on the same line as Oulton Broad so you could do one of the following:

1. Train to Halesworth and get the train back from Oulton Broad when you finish
2. Drive to Oulton Broad, hop on the train to Halesworth to start the race and your car will be waiting for you at the finish.
3. Drive to Halesworth, walk to the start and get the train back from Oulton Broad after the race.

There are numerous car parks in Halesworth, the closest to Holton is the station car park ( a mile) but this only has 19 spaces, the furthest away is Angel North car park ( a mile and half walk) and this has the most spaces (81).

### Marathon

There is plentiful parking at Walberswick, there will be limited spaces on a minibus leaving from Oulton Broad at about 0800 with Kevin (Race director) if you want to leave your car at the finish.

If we get enough entries we will lay on a coach to the start (to be confirmed) from Oulton Broad.

## **Route details in brief:**

The races will follow several trails that take you through medieval East Anglia.

The start of the 50 mile race is at Oulton Broad and shortly, within a mile of the start the route joins **The Via Beata** (<https://www.viabeata.co.uk/>).

The **Via Beata** is a fabulous route joining the most Easterly Point (Ness Point in Lowestoft) to the most Westerly point of mainland Britain (St David's in Wales).

This is also a **Pilgrimage Route** and along the route there are waystations, which are religious carvings. Some of them are extremely ornate. On this route there is one at Ringsfield. If you spot it, take a photo, it's a great piece of art.

The route then joins East Suffolk Lines Walk and winds its way to Holton to join the 50 km route.

The 50 km route crosses the wild and beautiful Blythburgh marshes with the impressive Holy Trinity Church at Blythburgh visible from several miles away. The cathedral of the marshes will draw you onwards to join the Sandlings Way as it runs alongside Angel marshes and through Deadman's Covert on the way to Walberswick.

At Walberswick the runners from the marathon will join in also.

The route then skips along the coast all the way to Lowestoft visiting Southwold (the jewel of the Suffolk coast), Benacre, Covehithe with it's amazing church within a church and ends up on the beach at Kessingland and Pakefield. Pakefield church is your landmark to leave the beach.

From here the route joins the promenade at Lowestoft to join the Via Beata back to Oulton Broad.

## **The Finish:**

The finish is at Nicholas Everitt Park on the edge of Oulton Broad. It is a beautiful unspoilt park with lovely views. The sun will be in the backdrop of all your photos here and it should make for a memorable finish. The finish HQ is in the Pavilion, it is here you can get the following...

1. You will get your medal here.
2. You will pick up your T shirt if you have ordered one. **DO NOT FORGET (every race we have people who forget to pick up T shirts and it creates unnecessary extra work for us)**
3. Hand in your tracker. **DO NOT GO HOME WITH IT as we will ask you to come back and drop it back in.** If you decide to ignore this advice we will have to charge you £150 + VAT for a replacement. **DO NOT FORGET !**
4. Your finish bags and drop bags (50 milers) will be here for you to collect after the race. **DO NOT FORGET THEM.**
5. There will be hot food and drinks here also.
6. We would also like it if you could stay a while at the finish to welcome your fellow runners home, this should create a nice friendly atmosphere.

## **Finish bags and Drop bags:**

At registration you can drop off a Finish bag.

In the 50 mile race you can just leave this at Registration because this is the same place that you will be finishing and this location will be manned all day. For the 50 km race you are responsible for labelling it (tags are provided at registration) and also loading it onto the relevant vehicle. **DO NOT JUST LEAVE IT LYING AROUND!** We will transport this to the finish line for you where you can be reunited with it.

Finish bags must be small rucksack size not a large holdall. It must not contain valuables such as car keys. We reserve the right to refuse to transport large bags.

***Do not forget to pick it up after the race.***

***On that note if you drop out earlier in the race you **MUST** pick up your bag from the finish.***

**In the 50 mile race** (this does not apply to the 50 km race) you can also leave a Drop Bag with us which you can access at Walberswick Village Hall (about 30 miles into the race). This also must be a small rucksack size. Please label one D for Drop and F for Finish. There will be two distinct locations to put these at the start. **MAKE SURE YOU PUT THE RIGHT BAG IN THE RIGHT PILE.** D for Drop, F for Finish. Simple...but people get it wrong every race!

You will not have access to FINISH BAGS during the race, only after, so if you need any medication / inhalers etc during the race then you must keep this with you at all times.

***At the end of the race you must collect this bag.*** If you do not collect this bag then you will have to make arrangements to pick it up from one of the Race directors' houses at a later date.

## **Checkpoints:**

There are 5 Checkpoints and 3 waterpoints in total for the 50 mile route and 3 checkpoints and 3 waterpoints for the 50 km route and 3 checkpoints and 2 waterpoints for the marathon.

CP1: Beccles Quay at 14km, this is an outdoor checkpoint but there are public toilets near

CP2: Holton Village Hall at 34km, this is a fully stocked indoor checkpoint with toilets. Your Drop bag will be here.

Waterpoint 1: Blythburgh (alongside Angel Marshes at The White Hart pub) at 42km in the 50 mile race, this is a waterpoint with a few snacks. This is 8km into the 50km race

CP3: Walberswick Village Hall at 48km in the 50 mile race, 14km in the 50 km race and 7k into the marathon. Fully stocked indoor checkpoint with toilets **FIRST CUT OFF FOR 50 MILE RACE**

Waterpoint 2: Southwold Pier, this will have water and basic snacks (54 k into the 50 mile race, 21k into 50 k race and 11 k into the marathon)

CP4: Covehithe Church at 63km in the 50 mile race, 29km in the 50km race, Halfway point in the marathon, this is a fully stocked outdoor checkpoint with.

CP5: Sailor's Home Pub, Kessingland at 70km in the 50 mile race, 36km in the 50 km race, 28.5 k in the marathon. This is a fully stocked checkpoint at a pub with access to toilets. **CUT OFF HERE IN ALL RACES**

Waterpoint 3: Lowestoft, East Point Pavilion, this is a waterpoint with snacks (76k in 50 mile race, 46k in 50k race and 37k in marathon)

Distances above are approximate.

### **Dropping Out:**

If you feel you cannot carry on then please try and get to a checkpoint. Sometimes long runs can make you feel emotional. It's a crazy thing. I guess we've all been there. So if you are in a hole don't despair. One of the marshals at the checkpoint has more than likely sat where you are and cried too in a race that they may have taken part in. It can be all consuming.

If this is you then stop, sit down, have a cup of tea, eat something. Don't hand your tracker in straight away. Talk to someone!! Honestly, it is the best thing. A listening ear from someone who has been there can usually turn your day around. You can do this !

That being said if you really have to pull out then don't be hard on yourself, you'll live to fight another day.

1. Please get to a checkpoint
2. Tell someone ( a marshal) and
3. Don't forget to hand in your tracker. **DO NOT GO HOME WITH YOUR TRACKER...**it will be an expensive mistake for you...£150 approx...

Getting home is your responsibility so make sure you have made contingencies for this just in case.

### **Medical:**

There will be race medics on the course on race day. They are experienced medics from Challenge Running, a reputable company that we use for all our races.

***Please make a note of their phone numbers and those of the race directors. (numbers will be displayed at registration and in the pre race emails).***

If you need help then please try and get to the nearest checkpoint if you can as this ensures that you can have shelter and be treated promptly. Some parts of the course are less easy to access by vehicle so please try and get to a checkpoint if at all possible.

If you cannot get to a checkpoint then ***we strongly recommend downloading what 3 words app (w3w) and get familiar with using it prior to race day.*** This gives a very precise location placing you in a 3 metre square. You can then share this location with the medics or emergency services as required.

If you have a genuine emergency then phone 999 as you would in everyday life.

If you need to withdraw from the race then you **MUST** inform the race directors on the mobile number provided or if you are at a checkpoint you must inform the marshals.

You **MUST** also hand in your tracker. If you are withdrawing at a checkpoint then hand it to the marshal at the checkpoint. ***If you are retiring elsewhere and can't make it to a checkpoint then you are responsible for getting yourself to the finish to hand in your tracker.***

***Failure to hand in a tracker carries a fine of £150 + VAT.***

Trail running is a very friendly sport and the spirit of trail running means that if you see a fellow runner in distress we expect you to stop and help out to ensure they are safe. If you lose significant time doing this then we will credit you with that time back so it doesn't adversely affect your position in the race.

***Please also remember to fill in the medical details and contact details on the back of your race number.*** You never know when you might need them. This is so that if you have a fall, injury, illness etc we need to know who to call..please don't ignore this bit of pre race admin.

On occasions the medics may deem it unwise for you to continue in the race. In our experience this is a rarity and so we hope it won't apply. However if this happens to you please take it on the chin and accept the medics' decision in good grace. **We, as race directors, cannot override the decision of the race medics.** Don't get stressed about this, we and the race medics will do everything we can to encourage you to get to the finish line so we don't often withdraw people from the race on medical grounds. If you get to a checkpoint and feel overwhelmed we suggest you take a bit longer at the checkpoint, have some food and drink and chat to the volunteers. Most of them are runners who have been in your position before so will be very sympathetic.

Break the race down into small chunks and it will seem much more achievable. We want you to enjoy yourselves and not get stressed by the challenge. You know you can do it and you will be amongst friends and we (Janice and Kevin) look forward to seeing you at the finish line. You're going to be great!

## **What things will get me disqualified?**

**Littering:** this is a big big no, no....Don't do it. It is an instant disqualification and a ban from any of our future races. This goes for all forms of litter including fruit peel (orange/ banana) and spitting out chewing gum. NO LITTER OF ANY KIND IS ACCEPTABLE. This is NOT a road race.

Trail runners do not drop litter...Full stop, end of story.

**Rudeness:** don't be rude to fellow competitors, the public or any race officials / marshals.

**Cheating:** there are many forms of cheating and you will all be wearing a tracker so we can see if you cut chunks off the course to gain an advantage. The evidence is clear and easy to see as we will have a dedicated marshal keeping an eye on all your trackers, and you won't be able to dispute it so please follow the course at all times. Also do not use any form of transport other than your own two feet. If we suddenly see your tracker speed up from 5 kph to 35 kph we will know that you are getting some kind of assistance.

**Mandatory Kit:** this is our pet hate so you had better get used to it !

The mandatory kit is for your safety.

If you slip and break your ankle 5 miles from a checkpoint and it is snowing/ raining you will rapidly start to feel rather miserable if all you have is handkerchief and an apple so please pack the FULL MANDATORY KIT.

We will do a full kit check of every athlete at every race other than marathons and below. If after you pass the kit check you decide to shed some items to make your pack lighter then you will stick out like a sore thumb as your pack will be suspiciously slim and light looking. You will then be laying yourself open for a random kit check that can occur anywhere on the course and if you are found to have an item missing you will get a 30 minute penalty per item, if you have 3 items missing you will be disqualified instantly and will not appear in our results. We are both very keen ultra runners with nearly a 100 races between us and we often see people blatantly cheating by having tiny packs with just a mars bar and a hat and this is not going to happen in our races. If you think you have been rather clever and make it to the finish line having cheated and your pack looks small we can disqualify you at the finish line in front of all your supporters and other runners. This will be very embarrassing for you.

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED !.

**Dangerous behaviour:** our races by their very nature cross all sorts of terrain, roads, farmers fields etc. Each of these types of terrain can be a potential hazard. Our main area of concern on this course will be the road crossings. We can't have marshals there to remind you to be safe as we have in previous races so this is your responsibility. Please cross the roads safely.

If marshals report dangerous behaviour or runners taking risks with the traffic we will take action as required. Sometimes it feels like you are standing at the side of the road for an eternity waiting to cross but in reality it is rarely more than 20 to 30 seconds. Take this time to have a breather, chat to other runners, take on some nutrition and then cross safely when you can.

## **Ethos:**

Our events are beginner friendly and as such we will help you wherever we can. We want everyone to finish and we are very proud of our low DNF (did not finish) rate.

We have very generous cut offs, we have excellent marshals, we will feed you at every checkpoint, we have indoor checkpoints, we have toilet facilities at every checkpoint and the course is fairly benign, gently rolling Norfolk countryside so not rugged and testing like other parts of the UK.

We also allow help from friends and relatives, so if you have supporters and you want them to have extra kit for you such as fresh socks, new trainers or special food etc then we allow you to have this extra help and you won't be disqualified.

We will also allow your supporters to meet you at checkpoints as long as they don't go inside the building or impede other runners.

However we do expect you to be able to do some things such as run, carry your mandatory kit all the time and make the cut offs.

This race ***will also require basic navigational skills.***

The Holy Trail is not an official route so don't go looking for Holy Trail fingerposts. There aren't any. It's a name we came up with !

***It is a windy wiggly course so don't look for Boghopper arrows either, use your gpx. It is your responsibility to know the route.***

***THIS COURSE WILL NOT BE MARKED...you must be able to navigate!***

***Therefore you must have a means to navigate and whatever device you use you must be familiar with it.***

If you are running with a friend do not rely solely on them to navigate for you as they may slip up, fall over, become unwell or injured and then you will be in a pickle. So make sure you know how to navigate. We will issue a gpx so it is a good idea to download this and get used to using it.

Our races are very friendly and we expect you to be kind to your fellow runners. We also expect you to be polite, kind and grateful for the excellent marshals that you will meet. Many of them are runners and many of them have completed Boghopper events in the past. They are helping you for free, they are giving up their time for you and without them you would not be able to race. So smile, say thank you and treat them how you would like to be treated yourself.

***There is normally always a lovely friendly feel to our races and if you approach this race with a happy heart you will gain so much more from the experience.***

If after racing with us you want to join the Boghopper Family and help us at future races then we will welcome you with open arms. We can't promise you riches but we can promise you a rewarding experience helping your fellow runners. Our marshals age from 4 yrs old to 82 and they keep coming back. Have a look at the Volunteer Hall of Fame on our website, you may see some familiar names on there.

So smile, help each other and stay positive. You can definitely finish this race with the right attitude and we often have people who walk the whole way.

Believe in yourself, you can definitely do this and we will do our utmost to help you along the way.

### **Other matters:**

We hope this race brief gives you a rough idea of what to expect from us and hope it helps you prepare well for race day.

If you have any queries then feel free to email us on [hello@boghopperraces.co.uk](mailto:hello@boghopperraces.co.uk) or use the chat function on our website at [www.boghopperraces.co.uk](http://www.boghopperraces.co.uk)

But to help you out here is a quick checklist for you:

1. Check the mandatory kit list and ensure you have all the items, if unsure get in touch and we can guide you
2. We would recommend you use trail shoes for this race, it will be too slippery for road shoes in some places but of course this is entirely up to you. If we have a very dry Spring then road shoes could be ok. Carlton Marshes and Blythburgh marshes can be a bit wet in places but the rest of the course will be good running.
3. Make sure you know where the start and finish are, and make sure you know how to

get to the start in good time

4. Make sure you know the race registration time and race start time
5. If you have a finish bag it must be a small daysack size (no valuables or car keys or medications etc.). In the 50 mile race you can have a drop bag that will be transported to Walberswick village hall and then on to the finish for you. This does not apply to the 50k race. So if you are in the 50 mile race remember to pick up both your drop bag and your finish bag if you left one.
6. Bring photo ID to registration, you know who you are but we might not !
7. If you order a T shirt then PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE remember to pick it up at the end
8. Also don't forget to pick up your finish bag and drop bag (50 milers only). Did I say that already??
9. Make sure you have downloaded the gpx onto a device that you know how to use
10. If you want to navigate on your phone by using the race tracker link then you can but **we don't recommend this method** as it will drain your phone battery quickly, in which case you will need a battery power bank and a compatible lead.
11. And lastly, but very importantly, smile at all times as we have an awesome photographer and his photos are absolutely tip top, he may well be hiding in a bush so be prepared to be ambushed.

That's all for now, we will send out a race email prior to race day and we will send a gpx link for the course too (this is also available under the race information tab on our website).

Make sure you download the relevant gpx for your race.

And lastly keep on training and stay fit, healthy and happy.

See you all on race day

Best wishes

Kevin and Janice xx