

RACE BRIEFING

NOTES FOR PARTICIPANTS

As you are hopefully well aware of by now, **this event is quite different from usual** due to the many Covid-19 control measures implemented to reduce the risk of transmission.

PLEASE READ EVERYTHING CAREFULLY

Print off a copy and bring it with you to the event for reference if needed.

Welcome

On behalf of The Quest Team, welcome to the 2021 Chilterns Adventure Race – the second of four events in the 2021 Questars Adventure Race Series.

The past 15 months have been tough and challenging for everyone, not least for events like Questars. But if there is one thing that has kept us going through these difficult times, it has been the kind words, understanding and unwavering support that many of you have shown us when difficult decisions had to be made.

Getting this event to this stage has not been easy. The recent 4-week delay in the move from Step 3 to Step 4 when all legal limits on social contact and gatherings were due to end has not helped, creating a significant amount of extra work and costs. We are sorry that, due to all the Covid control measures that have to be followed, we are not able to offer everything that regular Questars participants have come to expect. However, we hope that this is a short-term price worth paying for being able to take part.

We thank you all for supporting us by taking part in the 2021 Chilterns Adventure Race. And we hope you'll join us again at another event in the future when Questars Adventure Races can hopefully return to its normal service.

Daniel Carrivick

Event Director

Race Overview

The start/finish is on the sports field behind St Leonards Parish Hall ([view on Google maps](#)).

The transition area (for bikes and race kit) is also on the sports field behind St Leonards Parish Hall. This is where you transition between the run and bike disciplines. You can leave all your race kit including your bike in the transition area when you are not using them during the race.

No riding of bikes is permitted on the football pitches, or in the transition area. You must dismount/get off and push your bike when in any of these zones.

The kayak transition is approximately 10km from the start/finish (though could be more or less than this depending on the route you take). You will need to make your way to the kayak transition on bike. You may visit mountain bike checkpoints both on your way to and back from the kayak transition (i.e. before and after you kayak).

All routes and areas not shown on the course map are out of bounds.

Teams should stay together at all times (whilst maintaining 2m social distancing where possible if applicable). By together we mean close enough to easily communicate with each other without having to shout (or to put it another way 10-20 metres).

The **map data has been shrunk** (90% 1:25,000 scale) **and rotated 26 degrees** clockwise to fit on the paper. So north is not at the top of the paper - use the blue grid lines on the map to find north if needed.

Where routes are different on the ground to those marked on your map, follow the route/signs on the ground. Look out for the footpath/bridleway waymarkers and fingerposts to keep on the right route.

Course Planners Tip >>>

“Novices have the same course/checkpoints as Masters, who have an hour longer (6 hours not 5). So if you are a Novice race participant you shouldn’t be thinking you can visit all the checkpoints. You don’t have sufficient time to do so. Most Novice participants won’t visit more than about half the checkpoints. So set your expectations accordingly. Do not be too over-ambitious. And play to your strengths. Prioritise and spend more time doing what you enjoy most whether that be running, biking or kayaking.”

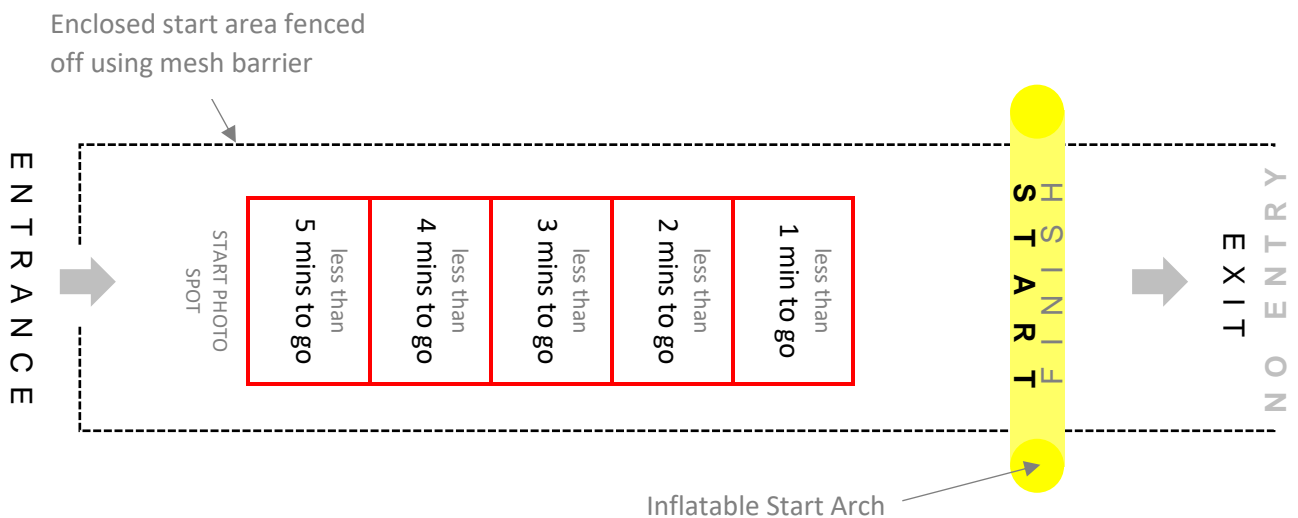
Race Starts

NO BIKES are allowed at the start. Please put your bike in the transition area before coming to the start.

Starts are at one-minute intervals. See the [Start List](#) for your start time.

The checkpoint descriptions & values won’t be handed out at the start like usual. You will receive this sheet in your race pack instead. As a result, there are **no dummy checkpoints**.

A one-way system will operate through the start enclosure as shown by the schematic sketch below.



You/all your team members must be together (as a team) at the entrance to the start enclosure, ready to enter it, at or before your allocated start time (to avoid a penalty). Wait near the entrance to the start enclosure until you are called forward. On entry, stand on the designated spot for a start photo (marked by two sports cones on the ground). Then make your way to the next available vacant box marked out on the ground. A whistle/bell will sound every minute. Every time it sounds...

- the participant/team in the *“less than 1 minute to go”* box moves forward to the start control underneath the yellow start arch to start their race and...
- the other participants/teams in the boxes behind move forward one box to fill the vacant box in front of them.

Your race time begins when you place your electronic scorecard (EMIT card) on the start control (as pictured opposite). This is when you should start your stopwatch so you know how long you have been going for.

To reduce the risk of transmission, you should take care not to touch the control itself when you place your EMIT card on it.

Masters participants have a 6-hour time limit.

Novices participants have a 5-hour time limit.

Duo participants have a 5-hour time limit.

You must vacate the start area immediately after you start.



The tables below show some of the key figures including the time penalties if you exceed the time limit.

Do not be late back – you will lose those hard-earned points very quickly! This info is printed on your checkpoint descriptions and values sheet for you to refer to during the race if needed.

Race Category:	Trio Masters	Trio Novices	Duo
Time limit:	6 hours	5 hours	5 hours
Max. Points Available: <small>realistically possible in the time limit</small>	1000	800	800
Points deducted for exceeding the time limit:	5 points per minute <small>(or part thereof)</small>	2 points per minute <small>(or part thereof)</small>	5 points per minute <small>(or part thereof)</small>

Penalties	Points Deducted
Late off the water after the end of your allocated kayak time slot	50
Going out of bounds / off the event map	200
Inadvertent use of a route which is not permitted <small>(e.g. taking a bike on a footpath or using a private road / track – see details on map)</small>	200
Losing EMIT card (electronic scoring device)	200 <small>(plus replacement cost)</small>

Checkpoints

There is an EMIT control at each checkpoint (like the one #202 in the photo with the cows below). All the EMIT controls are numbered. Use the checkpoint descriptions sheet to help you locate the EMIT control at each checkpoint.

The EMIT controls aren't deliberately hidden from you but they may be facing the other way to that which you approach them. And sometimes they can be around the back of objects so they don't attract unwanted attention from passers-by.

Also, use the checkpoint descriptions sheet to cross-reference the EMIT control number with the checkpoint on your map to make sure you are at the right checkpoint. You must not punch a run control whilst mountain biking or vice versa, otherwise, you may be penalised. **Check before you punch!**



Where possible, the EMIT controls for the kayak checkpoints will be fastened to objects on the side of the river, like control #202 is attached to the fence in the photo above. So, you should be able to lay your EMIT card on the control without touching the control or getting off your kayak. However, if it's not possible to do that, then the EMIT controls will be attached to white fenders floating on the surface of the water (like control #245 pictured above).

HOW TO REGISTER & RECORD YOUR VISIT

Your EMIT card (electronic scorecard – blue in adjacent images) will have a card insert (yellow in image shown) on one side with your team number handwritten on (#100 in image shown). This is the bottom/underside of the card.

Place your EMIT card on the EMIT control with the card insert face down. This card insert acts as a manual backup should your electronic scorecard fail (this is why it's important to lay the card flat on the control, and the right way round).

Top: this side up



Bottom: this side down



A small red LED light on the EMIT control will flash within less than a second of you correctly placing the card on the control (as shown in the adjacent picture). This tells you that your visit at this control has been registered and recorded on your EMIT card. Once you've seen the red LED light flash once, remove your card and move away from the control.

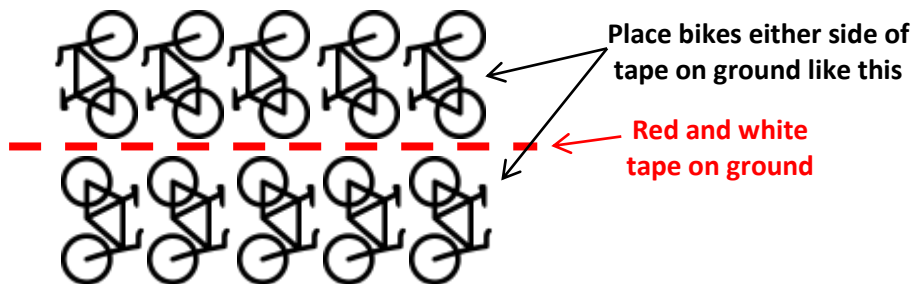
If for any reason the LED on a control does not flash, press your card firmly down on the control to record your visit manually on the card insert. This is no more than a pinprick and is virtually invisible to the naked eye (so it can't be forged). So, don't expect to see any noticeable difference to the card insert.



Bike Transition

Corridors/clear passages will be marked out on the ground inside the bike transition area. Any kit you leave in the transition area, must not be left in or encroaching any of these corridors as they will get in the way of other participants and could hold them up. Offenders will be penalised as it's not fair on everyone else.

Bikes must be placed either side of the red and white tape pinned to the ground, with one wheel close to the tape and the other wheel as far away from it as possible as shown below...



Solo participants should lay their bike on the ground, teams should stand their bikes up and lean them together if possible (so there is enough space for everyone).

Marshals will keep an eye on the transition area during the race but it can get busy at times. A couple of people have in the past, returned to transition, unable to find something because they left their things loose/on their own and these became muddled up with other participant's belongings. We, therefore, recommend you take the following precautions to safeguard your equipment:

- Attach Mt Bike items (e.g. helmet) to your bike or leave them in a bag/box next to your bike
- Slip a lock around your bike(s) to prevent it from being moved (either by mistake or deliberately)








There is an EMIT control (#100) at the entrance to the bike transition area. You should **punch this control (#100) twice during the race: once when you enter the transition area to pick up your bike and again when you enter transition to return your bike** (which you must do before you finish).

If you don't do this we don't know that you've gone through the transition area (which is laid out so everyone covers the same distance irrespective of where their bike is in the transition area). You therefore risk incurring a time penalty for not doing this.

Mountain Biking

All the mountain biking is on roads (coloured yellow/orange), off road cycle routes, byways and bridleways. A roads (coloured red) may only be ridden along a short distance at a time (<1km) in order to cross them. No riding, pushing or carrying of bikes is allowed on footpaths, tracks or any other trails.

The only routes you may take bikes on are:

Permitted Mt Bike Routes	
	Bridleway
	Permitted Bridleway
	Byway
	Restricted byway
	Traffic free cycle route
	Other routes with public access
	Public road (yellow/orange/red)

White / uncoloured roads may only be used if they are public roads e.g. residential streets. They must not be used if they are private roads / driveways.

BRIDLEWAY

You can take your bike along here (long green dashes)

FOOTPATH

You must **NOT** take your bike on footpaths (short green dashes)



It's a legal obligation in England to give way to walkers and horse riders when cycling on bridleways. Please make sure you slow down and do this. Use your bike bell or politely say hello to let others know you are approaching them. When descending, you must also give way to any cyclists coming uphill.

Close all gates behind you **AND** ensure they are properly fastened, unless they are tied/propped open.

TAKE CARE – Get off and push your bike if needed. It's better to be safe than sorry and can be quicker!

You must wear a cycle helmet. Always follow the [Mountain Bike Code](#) and the [Highway Code](#)

Course Planners Tips >>>

"Most of the byways & bridleways are rideable in one direction or another (hint). However, expect to encounter short sections where you may need to get off and push your bike. There are short steep slopes, loose rocky sections, uneven surfaces, lots of tree roots – some large and slippery – and some wet/muddy sections in the woods. But don't let that put you off. It is an adventure race after all!"

We have tried to use off road routes that hold up well and are rideable in most conditions, but the recent wet weather means there are some wet/muddy patches in the woods that are unlikely to dry out much.

Most of the trails are clear of vegetation but we did come across a few short sections where the vegetation was encroaching from either side. We ploughed on and rode through these, and ended up getting stung by nettles on the hands more than the legs (so you may wish to bring full finger mountain bike gloves or hop off and walk these short sections which are soon passed). One overgrown section that we rode through in the morning (and got stung by nettles) had been cut back when we passed it again later that day so work is being carried out in the area to keep them clear.

Many of the lanes are narrow, and some are steep-sided. Watch your speed when descending these steep narrow lanes. You must be able to stop if a vehicle suddenly comes around the bend. Some lanes are badly pot-holed and others have sections that are covered in loose gravel washout.

Remember going the direct route along a byway/bridleway might not be the quickest route. It may be quicker to go the long way round by sticking to roads as much as possible. It depends on what the trail conditions are like on the day (and your cycling skills of course)."

Kayaking

You can only kayak during your kayak time slot. See the [Start List](#) for your kayak time slot.

You will receive a 50-point penalty if you exceed 60 minutes - the maximum time allowed on the water for the kayaking. The kayak time slots are 70 minutes to give you some flexibility and spread you out, but you must not go over the 60 minutes, not even by one second!

You must also be back at the kayak transition before the end of your kayak timeslot. So, if your kayak slot ends at 15:20 and you get on the water at 15:00, you'll only have 20 minutes left in which to kayak.

Getting ready to kayak and on/off the water is NOT part of the race if you follow the correct procedure below (also printed on your course map for your reference during the race).

GETTING ON THE WATER

When you arrive at the kayak transition, this is the procedure to follow...

1. Punch control #200 to begin timeout as you enter the transition
2. Deposit bike in the transition area
3. Put buoyancy aid on and do it up properly
4. Collect a paddle, clean the handles with soapy water & wash your hands too
5. Join the queue/wait in line if necessary to get on the water
6. A marshal will tell you which kayak to use
7. Follow marshal's instructions on where and when to get on the water
8. Paddle across the canal when clear to do so
9. Punch control #240 to end timeout and record your kayak start time
10. Visit any of kayak checkpoints K41-K45 inclusive, in any order

GETTING OFF THE WATER

When you return to the kayak transition to get off the water, this is the procedure to follow...

1. Punch control #246 to begin timeout and record your kayak end time
2. Paddle the short distance back to the kayak transition
3. Follow marshal's instructions on where & when to get off the water
4. A marshal will tell you where to put/leave your kayak
5. Put your paddle back on the pile
6. Take off and return your buoyancy aid
7. Wash / sanitise your hands
8. Collect your bike and all other personal belongings from the transition area
9. Punch control #200 to end timeout as you leave the transition
10. Continue mountain biking

TIMEOUT – SUMMARY

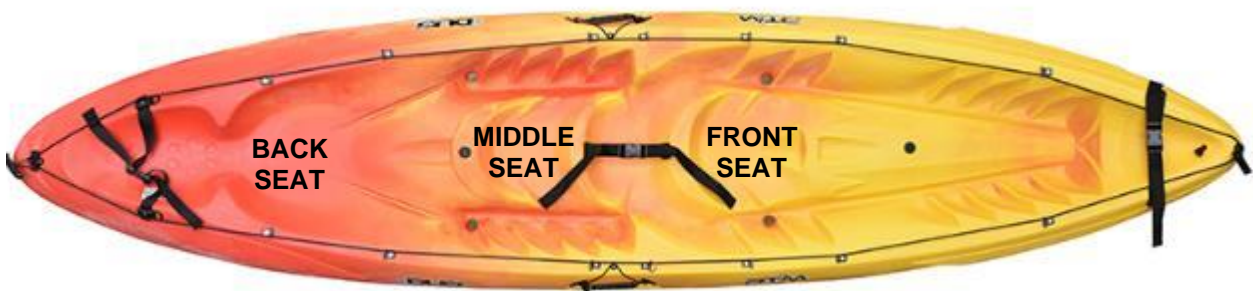
When getting on the water, you must punch control #200 followed by control #240, consecutively and in that order. The time taken between the two will not count towards your race time limit (6 hours for Masters, 5 hours for Novices). When getting off the water, you must punch control #246 followed by control #200, consecutively and in that order. The time taken between the two will not count towards your race time limit. If you forget to punch a control, or do not punch them in the correct sequence then you will not be timed out. **It is your responsibility to do this correctly** (not the marshals).

There are two #200 controls (one on each gate at the entrance to the kayak transition), to ease any potential congestion. The two #200 controls are both the same. So, you only need to punch one of them. Use whichever control is free / not being used by another participant. NB. The location of the two #200 controls are not marked on your course map (because they are at the entrance to the kayak transition) – use the description provided on the Checkpoint Descriptions & Values sheet to locate if necessary.

WARNING: The timeout is **ONLY** to be used for getting ready to kayak and getting on/off the water, which is expected to be a couple of minutes for most participants and certainly no more than five minutes. It is not for you to rest and recover or sit down and have something to eat. You must not hang around at the kayak transition unless you are waiting in line to get on the water to kayak. And when you have punched control #246 (end kayak time) you must return to transition to get off the water. As soon as you have come off the water, and returned your kayak equipment, you must collect your bike and punch control #200 and leave the kayak transition. Anyone who doesn't follow these fair-play rules will have their timeout time added back on to their race time. You have been warned!

GENERAL NOTES

Solos and pairs use one kayak. Teams of 3 or 4 people use two kayaks (staying together rule still applies). A picture of a kayak (from the top) is shown below. Sit in the front and back seats if there are two of you paddling a kayak. Sit in the middle seat if you are paddling the kayak on your own. If it doesn't feel comfortable, you are not sitting in the right place, so slide forwards / backwards as necessary. Note: front of kayak pictured is yellow; rear is red/orange.



The canal is not that wide. Keep to the right-hand side (so oncoming kayaks/vessels pass on your left), but away from where any anglers are fishing. Due care must be taken with regards to all other river users. You do not have any priority. Please be considerate to others.

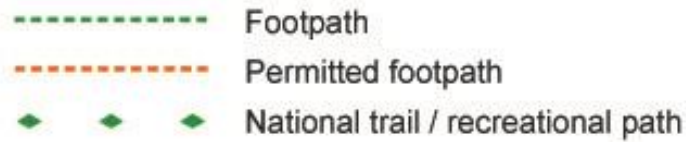
All kayak checkpoint controls can be reached from your kayak and there are no locks to pass around. So, the only place you should get on/off your kayak is at the kayak transition.

There are no toilets at the kayak transition. The kayak transition is a private space that we have kindly been permitted to use. The area is covered by private CCTV cameras which the owners have access to. They do not want to see someone going for a pee in the hedge. And if they do, this risks us being able to return again in the future. So, gents, if you need to go, please find somewhere discreet to go, well away from the kayak transition i.e. either before you arrive or after you leave.

Anything you leave at the kayak transition whilst you are on the water is done so at your own risk. It may empty when you arrive, but it could be packed when you return so do not spread your things out (keep everything together).

Trail Running

You must remain on public rights of way and permitted footpaths at all times during the trail run (even when on access land). In addition to the routes that you are allowed to use for the mountain biking, you may also use the following routes on the Trail Run...



For the majority of the time when you are off-road, you will be running along public footpaths (short green dashed lines) and bridleways (long green dashed lines).

Take care when running on and crossing roads. Many of the lanes are narrow. Use pavements if present. If you do run along the road itself, you should face oncoming traffic (i.e. on the right hand side).

Always follow the [Countryside Code](#) – respect other people and the natural environment.

Course Planners Tips >>>

“Due to the position of the trail run checkpoints you will want to do all your trail running together in one go. It doesn’t really make sense to visit a some trail run checkpoints before you bike & others afterwards.

The ground is generally hard/firm and is likely to remain so underneath. However the surface on some paths can quickly become sticky when they are wet or damp, and this mud can stick or clump together on the soles of your shoes. You may therefore wish to wear shoes which have tread that isn’t just going to clog up and gather the mud.”

Leaving litter on the course is unacceptable and won't be tolerated. Please make sure all empty wrappers are securely stowed and carried back to transition / the finish with you.

Finish

Make your way back to the finish when your time limit (6 hours for Masters, 5 hours for everyone else) is nearly up. If returning by bike, remember to **dismount your bike and return it to the transition area before you finish**. Punch the finish control underneath the start/finish arch to stop your race clock.

A one-way system will operate through the finish area. So, once you cross the finish line, continue in the same direction until you exit the fenced area (do not turn around and head back the way you came).

Return your electronic scorecard (EMIT card) to the hall where you collected your race pack. You MUST do this so we know you have finished and are back safely.

The course closes at 17:40 on Saturday, and the furthest checkpoints removed before this. If you aren’t going to make it back to the finish by the course closure time, use the **Emergency Number printed on your map** to let us know that you are safe and well and just running late.

In an Emergency

If you have a serious accident and need to summon help, do so by blowing six short blasts on your whistle every minute. If you hear this go immediately to assist (times of teams that assist others can be adjusted accordingly). Phone 999. Tell the ambulance service where you are - install the [what3words app](#) on your smartphone to help with this. Then phone the emergency contact number (on your map) to let us know.

Final Word

Remember to...

- Respect the area and the local community
- Be great ambassadors for adventure racing
- Stay on the permitted routes at all times
- Give way to other members of the public
- Give all animals a wide berth
- Close and properly fasten gates behind you

Each team must carry a first aid kit and a whistle with them.

Ensure that your competitive instincts do not override your common sense.

Have a good race. We hope you enjoy it. And stay safe!

Acknowledgements

Today's event simply wouldn't have been possible without the help and support of a large number of people and organisations including...

- St Leonards Parish Hall Committee
- Canal & River Trust
- Berkhamsted School (kayak transition)
- Buckinghamshire County Council
- Hertfordshire Country Council
- Forestry England (Forestry Commission)
- National Trust
- Thames Valley Police
- EMIT Timing
- Medic: Emma
- The Quest Team – Richard, Martyn, Dan, Robert, Debbie, Darcy, Fraser, David, Jerome, Bella, Dave & James