RACE DETAILS

FOR PARTICIPANTS

QUESTARS WINTER SERIES

PLEASE READ EVERYTHING CAREFULLY

Please download/print a copy and bring it with you to the event for reference if needed.

Welcome

Each Questars Adventure Race is slightly different due to the lie of the land and where everything (i.e. the start/finish, running and biking) is in relation to each other.

Things that are different or unique to this event will be explained at the race briefing on the day and in the Race Day Information document. Everything else (i.e. things that remain more or less the same from one Questars Adventure Race to the next) is contained within this document.

If you've never done a Questars Adventure Race before, it's important you read everything within this document carefully so you know what to do and how things work.

The information contained within this document won't be repeated on the day at the race briefing.

If it's been a while since you last did a Questars Adventure Race, it's worth having a quick read through this document to remind yourself of anything that you may have forgotten about or that may have altered over the years.

We look forward to seeing you at the 2024 Berkshire Winter Adventure Race on Saturday!

Kim & Joe Selby

Event Directors

The Challenge

To find/visit as many checkpoints as you can within the time limit. The most points wins!
Where points are tied, then position is determined by time, with the quickest person/team first.

Race Overview

On the day, you will be able to collect your race pack which includes a copy of the course map with the checkpoints marked before the race briefing (i.e. before you start).

Each checkpoint is worth a certain number of points. You will be given a list of checkpoint values and descriptions when you start. This is when you will find out how many points each checkpoint is worth. Some of the checkpoints marked on the course map are dummy checkpoints (i.e. they don't exist/aren't worth any points). So, the first thing to do after you start, is to cross the dummy checkpoints off your map so you don't waste time going to a checkpoint that's not there!

The challenge is to score as many points as possible by visiting checkpoints & then return to finish within the time limit.

Run and Bike Full participants have up to 5 hours, Run and Bike Taster participants have up to 3 hours and run-only and bike-only participants have up to 2 hours to visit as many checkpoints as possible. How long you spend on each discipline is entirely up to you. If 5 hours sounds like too much for you, you can call it a day after 2/3/4 hours or whenever you want. Some participants go hard all day whilst others take it at a more relaxed and enjoyable pace, stopping for lunch and taking in the views along the way. The choice is yours!

A Few General Points

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

Teams should stay together at all times. 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 course map is printed on waterproof paper, and uses the 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey map data set. The OS map data may be rotated and/or shrunk (a fraction) to fit on the A3 piece of paper (i.e. it's not always printed at 100%).

Where routes are different on the ground to those marked on your map, follow the route/signs on the ground. Look out for footpath/bridleway waymarkers (typically waist-high posts with circular discs on) and fingerposts (typically above head height with pointed directional 'fingers') to keep on the right route.

Course Planners Tip >>>

"Those on the 'Taster' course (3 hours) have the same course/checkpoints as those on the 'full' (5 hours). So if you are doing the 'Taster' you shouldn't be thinking you can visit all the checkpoints. You will not have sufficient time to do so. Most 'Taster' 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, or biking."

Race Starts

Make your way to the big blue start arch when you're ready to start. The whole team (i.e. all team members) should do this together.

If you bring your bike to the start, you must not be riding it – please dismount and push it under the arch. You will need your hands free to dib the start control (i.e. place your timing device – SI card – in the start control) and to take a copy of the checkpoint descriptions & values.

A one-way system will operate underneath the arch. Please follow the marshals' directions.

Your race time (2/3/5-hour time limit) begins when you dib the start control with your timing device (SI card provided) within your race start time. This is when you should start your stopwatch so you know when you started and how long you've got left.

You must vacate the start area immediately after you dib the start control. Find a quiet spot well away (at least 25 m away) from the start control, to look at the checkpoint values and mark them on your map (if you want to do this).

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 (that you get at the start) for you to refer to during the race if needed.

Race Category	Full	Taster	Run / Bike only
Time limit:	5 hours	3 hours	2 hours
Max. Points: realistically possible in the time limit	800	450	300
Points deducted for exceeding time limit:	5 points / minute (part thereof)	2 points / minute (part thereof)	2 points / minute (part thereof)
Reward for finishing early: (max. 15 points)	1 point / minute (whole minute)	1 point / minute (whole minute)	1 point / minute (whole minute)

Penalties	Points
Inadvertent use of a route which is not permitted (e.g. taking a bike on a footpath – see map key)	200
Going out of bounds / off the event map	200
Losing SI card (electronic scoring device)	200 (plus cost of replacement)

Checkpoints

There is a control at each checkpoint (like the #2 pictured). All the controls are numbered. Use the checkpoint descriptions sheet (given to you when you start) to help you locate the control at each checkpoint.

The 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.

Check BEFORE you dib the control that the number on the control matches the checkpoint number on your map. You cannot dib a run control whilst mountain biking or vice versa, as points will not be credited.

RED light flashes & control beeps
(i.e. your visit is recorded)

HOW TO REGISTER & RECORD YOUR VISIT

Place your SI card (electronic timing device – yellow in the image above) in the hole in the control (as pictured above). This is what is referred to as 'dib' or 'dibbing' the control.

The control should beep and a small red light on the control should flash within less than a second of you dibbing the control. This tells you that your visit at this control has been registered and recorded on both your SI card and the control itself. Once you've seen the red light flash once OR heard one beep, remove your card and move away from the control. You only need to hear one beep OR see one flash. You don't need both. So, don't worry if a control beeps but doesn't flash (or vice versa).

Next to all controls there is red/white hazard tape. The hazard tape will include the number of the checkpoint and two randomly assigned letters. If for any reason a control does not flash or beep (very unlikely), or is missing (more likely but still rare) please make a note of the letters to prove you have visited.

You will also need to let us know when you download and return your SI card so we can credit you with visiting that control if, in the unlikely case, it was missing/broken. If the hazard tape is also missing and you are not recording your activity on a GPS enabled device (e.g. an app like Strava on your phone), take a photo of the control (or where it should be in the case of a missing control) as proof of your visit. If it's not possible to take a photo, make a note of the checkpoint number and the time you visited it (e.g. on the back of your map) so you don't forget.

CHECKPOINT DESCRIPTIONS

Where applicable, the location of each checkpoint control is given in the following order and format:

1. Identifiable feature on map e.g. footpath junction
2. Where the control is in relation to this identifiable feature e.g. SW side (N = North, S = South etc.)
3. What the checkpoint control is attached to e.g. wooden gate

Here is an example taken from the checkpoint descriptions & values sheet (from a previous event)

No.	CP	Value	Location & Description
121	B21	40	Track - stream crossing | N side of cycle route | tree
122	B22	35	Vehicle turning area | SW side | tree

Transition Points

Space is often tight at transition points (if not when you arrive, then when you return). Bikes should be turned upside down and dovetailed with each other so as not to take up too much space on the ground. Teams can turn one bike upside down and lean other bikes carefully against the upturned bike. If you don't do this, and just lie your bike down on the ground, you run the risk of someone else accidentally damaging it – which is not good for your bike or for your race!

Place bikes in lines/rows where possible. If there is a line of tape/cones, place bikes either side of the line with one wheel close to the line and the other wheel as far away from it as possible. This will ensure corridors/clear passages are left for you to be able to reach your bike. 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 are a hazard. Offenders will be penalised as it's not fair on everyone else.

Marshals will keep an eye on transition areas 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 general precautions to safeguard your equipment:

- Attach biking items (e.g. helmet) to your bike or leave them in a bag/box next to your bike
- Slip something around your bike(s) to prevent it from being moved
- You are allowed one small transition box to keep your items together and dry in, if needed

Transition Control

A transition control (#100) will be located at the transition point where you transition from run to bike and/or vice versa. You only need to punch the transition control each time you switch disciplines. If you don't punch the transition control, there is no way of telling that you've changed over from running to biking or indeed done this at the transition point. You will therefore incur a penalty if you don't punch the transition control when you switch over from run to bike or vice versa.

Mountain Biking

The mountain biking is on roads (mainly coloured yellow/orange), off road cycle routes (orange dotted routes), bridleways and byways (green long-dashed lines). No riding, pushing or carrying of bikes is allowed on footpaths, tracks or any other trails (unless specifically stated otherwise). As a general rule, if you cannot take a horse on a route you should not be taking a bike (i.e. over stiles or through kissing gates).

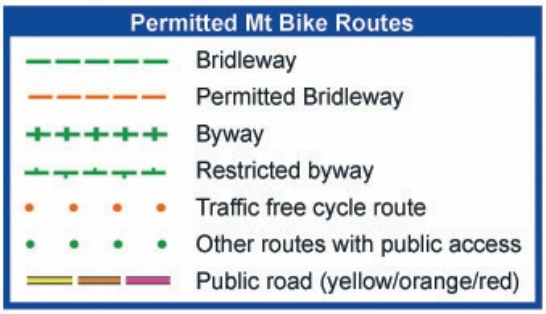
It's a legal obligation in England to give way to walkers and horse riders when cycling on bridleways. Make sure you slow down and do this. Use a bike bell or politely say hello to let others know you are approaching behind them. When descending, give way to any cyclists coming uphill (towards you).

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

TAKE CARE – Moderate your speed and get off and push your bike if needed. It's better to be safe than sorry and will be quicker than damaging your bike or injuring yourself!

You must wear a cycle helmet. Always follow the Mountain Bike Code and the Highway Code.

The only routes you may take bikes on are:



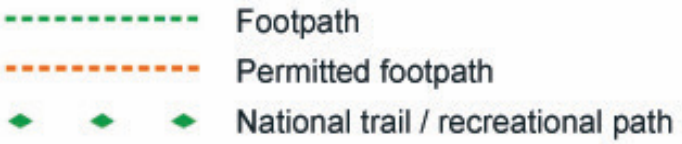
White / uncoloured roads may only be used if they are public roads e.g. residential streets. They must not be used if they are private roads / driveways.

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

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

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 (unless specifically told otherwise). 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 (green short dashed lines) and bridleways (green long dashed lines).

Take care when running on and crossing roads. Use pavements/verges if present. If you have to run on the road itself, you should face oncoming traffic (i.e. run on the right-hand side of the road).

Always follow the Countryside Code – respect other people and the natural environment.

Dropping/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 (5/3/2-hours) is nearly up. If returning by bike, remember to **dismount your bike at the line (signed)** and push it across the finish line. 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 finish area (do not turn around and head back the way you came).

Return your SI card (timing device) to the desk where you collected it. You MUST do this so we know you have finished and are back safely.

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 OS Locate app and/or the what3words app on your smartphone to help with this. *NB. The OS Locate app is better than what3words in certain situtations.* Then phone the emergency number (on your map) to let us know.

Final Word

Ensure that your competitive instincts do not override your common sense. Please 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/solo participant must carry a first aid kit and a whistle with them.

Have a good race. Enjoy the adventure, and stay safe. We hope you have a wonderful day!