

## **2009 RED RIVER GORGE AMERICAN CLASSIC – THE FIG VII PRE-RACE BRIEFING NOTES**

**The following information supercedes any conflicting information on the web site (e.g., there are some slight modifications to the schedule – THIS ONE is correct).**

### 1. Friday night schedule

3 – 6 pm	Check-in
5:30 pm	Rappelling clinic
6:00 pm	Dinner
7:00 pm	Maps/UTM coordinates distributed
8 – 9 pm	Pre-race briefing
9 – 10 pm	Volunteer briefing
10 pm	Truck leaves RRG Campground

### 2. Saturday's schedule

5 – 5:45 am	Stage personal canoes at Beattyville Boat Ramp
5:45 – 6 am	Check-in at Kiwanis Community Center
6 am	Load buses for shuttle to start – Kiwanis Community Center
7 am	Start race – location to be disclosed Saturday morning

DO NOT miss the 6 am mark for loading buses at Kiwanis Community Center. We will not wait for you.

### 3. Friday check-in – Red River Gorge Campground, 2270 Star Gap Road, Stanton, KY:

You must check in at RRG Campground Friday night by 10 pm. You do not have to attend the pre-race briefing, though it is highly encouraged. Any information disseminated during the briefing will become part of the official race rules. We will make note of any significant modifications, but you are responsible for reviewing those notes and making sure you are informed if you do not attend the briefing. We will be giving out door prizes at the briefing.

Please note that if you are not a USARA member already, you will need to bring \$8 for your one-day USARA fee or \$35 for a yearly membership. Exact change will be much appreciated and will speed you through the check-in line. If you are a USARA member, you MUST present your CURRENT card. If you do not, you will need to pay \$8. You will not receive your maps/UTM coordinates until you have completed the USARA waiver/form and paid this fee. Please note that the online waiver is no longer valid, so no need to print and bring that with you. USARA has replaced that with a new, single form that covers both membership and waiver.

If you did not register by the early registration deadline, you will not receive a race shirt. Please don't ask. You're encouraged to register early next year to ensure we have a shirt ordered for you. If some of the volunteers I've included in the shirt count do not turn up, then we may have a few shirts left over for sale. I'll let you know at the post-race party if there are shirts for sale.

4. Saturday check-in – Kiwanis Community Center, 500 Happy Top Road, Beattyville, KY If you rented a boat or brought your own kayak, DO NOT go to the Beattyville Boat Ramp on Saturday morning. The only racers going to the boat ramp Saturday morning will be those teams who brought their own canoe. Unless you brought your own canoe, go directly to Happy Top and check in at 5:45 am. If you brought your own canoe, drop it at the boat ramp and then proceed to Happy Top. You should not be staging anything with your canoe. Therefore, you should move very quickly in and out of the boat ramp. Please follow traffic control signs so we avoid a traffic jam at the boat ramp. After dropping off your canoe, proceed to Happy Top, which is just about 5 minutes from the boat ramp.

**All teams must check in at the Kiwanis Community Center on Happy Top no later than 6 am, when we will load buses for the shuttle to the start. Do not miss the 6 am shuttle.**

Park only in the designated areas at Happy Top. There is another event going on during the day Saturday and we need to leave some parking spaces available for that group.

4. Staging gear

Do not leave any gear at Happy Top. You will not return here until the end of the race.

#### **Paddling gear/transition**

Everyone will place whatever food/drink/clothing/other gear they want to stage with their boats in a single, heavy duty trash bag with your team number marked on it. One trash bag per team. You will also need to bind together and mark your paddles and PFDs, if you brought your own. You will deposit your bag and your PFDs/paddles in a moving truck at check-in at RRG Campground and they will be transported for you to the put-in. The truck will leave RRG Campground at 10 pm. All gear bags/paddles/PFDs you want staged with your boat must be on the truck by 10 pm.

If you are bringing your own kayak: You will deposit your kayak in the moving truck. You should put your gear bag/paddle/PFD in your kayak in the truck.

If you are bringing your own canoe: You will deposit your canoe in the designated location at the Beattyville Boat Ramp Saturday morning from 5 – 5:45 am. You may leave NOTHING in your canoe at the boat ramp EXCEPT items that are affixed to the canoe. There will not be a volunteer with the boats at all times. We will be locking canoes up with a cable. Therefore, you should not leave anything valuable in your canoes. If you have a middle seat that is not affixed to the canoe, you may put that in the truck at the campground with your other paddling gear.

If you rented a boat: Canoes will come with canoe paddles and kayaks will come with kayak paddles. If your team is designated to receive a canoe, you must take a canoe and canoe paddles. There are only 3 tandem kayaks and I have assigned those to teams within divisions in which there are no rental canoes, in order to keep things as level as possible. Do not take a tandem kayak unless you are specifically designated to receive a tandem kayak.

When you leave the put-in, you must take everything with you that you staged with your boats that you do not want thrown away. Any extra food/drink that are left behind at the put-in will be taken to the post-race party. There will be a designated area for you to leave any such items. Do not leave trash, food, drinks, or anything else laying on the ground when you leave the put-in.

When you leave the take-out, you may leave your PFDs, paddles, and any wet clothing you would like returned to the finish line. There will be a designated area for you to leave these items. Do not leave trash, food, drinks, or anything else lying on the ground when you leave the take-out.

### **Bike gear/transition**

You will be staging your bike gear at RRG Campground. You may leave your bike helmet, shoes, food, water, clothes, and whatever other gear you like with your bikes. When you leave the campground on your bikes, you will need to take everything with you. You cannot leave anything behind that you do not want to be thrown away. Any extra food/drink that are left behind will be taken to the post-race party. There will be a designated area for you to leave any such items. Do not leave trash, food, drinks, or anything else lying on the ground when you leave the campground.

You will almost certainly get wet on the bike. How wet depends on whether it rains any more this week. I was in water up to my knees on Saturday, but there was a HUGE rain Friday.

#### 5. Maps, swag bags, etc.

In addition to some great swag from Pedal Power Bike Shop and Jack's Links, your swag bag should contain your bib number (affix this to your backpack), safety pins, race shirt (if early registration), and passport.

You will receive a single MyTopo waterproof map at 1:30,000 scale and UTM coordinates at 6 pm Friday (or upon later arrival, prior to 10 pm). These coordinates will cover all of your biking and paddling CPs. You will not receive your punch card or the pre-plotted, 1:24,000 map for the trekking leg until Saturday morning. Please note that the 1:24,000 map for the trekking leg is not waterproof. A waterproof map case is on your mandatory gear list. Also, the entirety of the trekking leg is located within the boundaries of the MyTopo map, so you can transfer the CPs from the trekking map to the waterproof map, and have the 1:24,000 as a back-up or secondary map. The 1:30,000 map is certainly sufficiently detailed and clear to allow for accurate navigation on the trekking leg.

So, when you finish up at RRG Campground Saturday night, you will be leaving your bike and bike gear in the designated transition area and you should have with you your bib number, passport, MyTopo map, and UTM coordinates.

You will receive your trekking map and punch card Saturday morning.

The MyTopo maps do not reflect a relatively new Hwy 52 bypass around Main Street of Beattyville. Basically, as it enters Beattyville from the west, “old” Hwy 52 dips south and becomes Main Street. The “new” Hwy 52, or 52 Bypass, continues running east from the intersection of Hwy 52 and Carlisle Street over to Hwy 11, paralleling Main Street to the north. It’s pretty easy to figure out on the ground.

6. Race length – cut-off

You will have 14 hours in which to complete the race. I expect the winners to finish in 12 hours, though they might well need the 14 in order to clear the course. What this means is that if you are not realistically expecting to be in the top 15, you should plan from the outset to skip some CPs. There are no “mandatory” or “optional” CPs. You will not be disqualified for skipping a CP. You will simply rank behind a team that located more CPs within the 14-hour time limit.

It was very difficult trying to design this particular course to accommodate both the fastest and slowest teams. I initially did not intend to have a cut-off. However, after vetting the course, I am fairly confident that the back of the field will not come close to clearing the course, even with 14 hours allowed. So, for this reason, I am imposing a cut-off very late in the race, which will be explained in your passports. I want everyone to make that cut-off.

It’s for this reason that I’m urging you to make a realistic assessment of your team’s navigation skills and fitness level from the outset and chart a course that will enable you to reach the cut-off. Unfortunately, there are not many short-cuts available in this race. With your maps, I will give you my suggestions for which CPs to drop in order to maximize your experience and enjoyment of the race, including hitting that cut-off.

This is also why I decided to go ahead and give you maps and UTM coordinates Friday night, in order to save your race minutes for racing.

7. There will be random gear checks on the course.

8. The Mountain Parkway is off limits to any and all travel. Also, you may not bike along any trails within the Red River Gorge or NBSRP.

9. This is an unsupported race. You may not receive assistance from anyone other than another racer or race staff, except in a designated transition area.

10. You may use maps other than those supplied by the race staff.

11. At the rappel site, do not approach race staff until all members of your team are wearing their harnesses and are prepared to get on rope. You must secure yourself to the rope with your rappel device and locking carabiner. Volunteers will provide a fireman’s belay at the bottom of the rappel. You must still have your Prussik rope available and within reach when you rappel, in the event of an emergency requiring you to lock off or ascend up the rope while on rappel.

Our team of professional climbing guides will be at the rappel site to conduct a safety check before you rappel. Do not rappel until you have been cleared by one of them. Be sure to use the command “off rope” when you have reached the bottom and removed your rappel device, so that the next racer can get on rope as quickly as possible. It is recommended that you wear full fingered gloves for the rappel.

12. You will find all sorts of surveyor’s tape or flagging out there that I did not put out. Some of it may be helpful, some of it may not. Any flagging put on the course by me will be mentioned in your passport.

13. All trekking and paddling CPs are indicated with a standard orienteering control marker (3-sided, high-vis orange and white fabric marker). All biking CPs are indicated with only orange and yellow surveyor’s flagging/tape, as well as a small orange surveyor’s boundary flag stuck in the ground nearby. The description you receive will be sufficiently specific to allow you to locate the CP if you are in the correct location generally. The control punch is locked at the bike CPs and any other CPs where I deemed the risk of theft to be particularly high. Any markers that you could possibly encounter in the dark will have reflective tape on them.

14. Although your primary race map is waterproof, your passport and trekking map are not. Therefore, it is recommended you keep them protected via waterproof map case. Your punch card is Tyvek.

15. All checkpoints must be visited in order. Final standings will be determined according to number of checkpoints visited and then by time. In other words, if you miss a checkpoint, you will be ranked behind those teams who visited more checkpoints than you, even if you returned to the finish line earlier. However, any team returning to the finish line after 9 pm will be ranked as an unofficial finisher. So long as you finish the race under your own power, you will be considered a finisher, official if you return before 9 pm and unofficial if you return after 9 pm. You will be disqualified for breaking a rule for which disqualification is the stated penalty. If you do not finish the race under your own power, you will be listed as “DNF.”

16. The race will finish at the Kiwanis Community Center at Happy Top. We will have cheese pizza delivered at 6:30 pm and 7:30 pm. We’re having 40 pizzas delivered, which means you will not be able to recoup all of your spent calories through pizza. There is a kitchen available to us at the community center. Feel free to bring whatever additional food you might want to heat up there. The awards ceremony will be no later than 9 pm. All gear will be brought back to the Community Center.