

Big Sky Wind Drinkers

2011 Ed Anacker Bridger Ridge Run

Dear Ridge Runner (or soon to be!),

Welcome to those of you who have officially been entered into this race via active.com! The 2011 Bridger Ridge Run will be held Saturday, August 13th, 2011 . Please read these directions carefully to have the best run possible. Course Orientation Meeting The day before the race, Friday, August 12th, at 4pm , 5pm , and 6pm , all first time runners are REQUIRED to attend the Course Orientation Meeting. Your name will be checked-off our list after you have received personalized directions, briefings, warnings, and maps. You MUST attend one of these meetings. Please make your travel arrangements so you can be in Bozeman for one of these meetings. They will be brief. The meeting place is at the same location as our "After-Ridge-Run" party/award ceremony/potluck: Mountain Hot Tub, across from the Gallatin Valley Mall on West Main Street , next to the Interstate Bank (the one with the brass elk out front). They have a conference room upstairs, ready with slides, pictures, and maps of the trouble areas. Unfortunately, we lose a few people each year, and they usually get lost at the same places! We don't want it to happen any more!! Though we say we aren't responsible for those who get lost, we certainly feel responsible and have to go looking for you if you DO get lost. Thanks for helping us help you have a better run!

** At these meetings, we will provide cell phone numbers of race personnel who will be on the course during the race. If you are carrying your own personal cell phone, you can obtain these numbers and use them in case of an emergency. This did help a woman who badly twisted her ankle, and was able to obtain help in a more timely manner.

Refund Policy:

In the past, we had refunded everyone's entry fee up until the Wednesday before the run. Four years ago saw quite a bit of chaos in that last week, and led us to reconsider our policy. We no longer refund entry fees. For those of you who have entered but cannot attend, please consider your entry fee as a charitable contribution which will go to a very good, non-profit cause. We know there will be broken legs and closest relatives dying the week of the run. This policy applies to all reasons to withdraw. Please know that we are sorry for your plight. Please know that your entry fee will be well used and very much appreciated by a non-profit agency.

Starting Place and Time:

The start will be at the Fairy Lake Trailhead which heads up Sacagawea Peak at 7:00am sharp! All runners have given us an estimated finish time, which will place everyone in one of 5 start "waves". Each wave will start 5 minutes apart. Anyone thinking they could win up through the 50-59 age group should request to be in wave 1. Runners are encouraged to carpool to Fairy Lake from the finish line at the "M" parking lot near mile marker 4 on Bridger Canyon Road. This is an informal carpool affair - make yourself visible and knock on a few windows. Plan on leaving the "M" around 5:30am . If you leave the "M" parking at 6am, you will not make the start on time! We must account for all participants at the start, so runners should be at Fairy Lake ready to run no later than 6:45am. There will be a barrier set-up across the road on the way to the trailhead - this is where you check-in and receive your bib number. That is the only way to get your race number, and it is the only way we can know for sure who is actually starting the race. Having completely accurate counts is essential to be able to track who is on the course. All names garnered at the start are then radioed on to the various checkpoints. We are responsible to take excellent care of you up on the Ridge! The start will NOT be delayed. All warm-up clothing/ bags/personal belongings will be taken down to the finish area.

The Course:

The course is officially (GPS) 19.65 miles, so long as you take the "quick" way down from the "M" and don't make too many detours during the race. The longer way down makes it 20.55 miles. Total elevation gain is 6,800 feet, with a 9,500 foot loss. If you have run the course before, you don't need a map. If this is your first time on the Ridge, you are well served to get all the help possible. Maps (photocopies of USGS Topo maps) will be available at the Orientation Meetings. We run on the Sacagawea Peak, Saddle Peak, and Kelly Creek USGS 7.5 minute series topo maps. Here are a few pointers for those wishing to practice on their own before the race:

The first 2.25 miles climbs a 1,800 foot vertical rise on a decent trail to the summit of Sacagawea. There will be race personnel on the actual summit, taking down your race number on their check sheets. Failure to get checked-off (missing the peak, not letting them see your number, etc.) will result in disqualification. You must be patient as you approach the summit - there will be a long line - there's no other alternative. We MUST know who made it to the top, and who is on their way to Ross Pass. If you get missed, then you're out of the race. After Sacagawea, the trail traverses across the South Peak and down to a saddle on the ridge. You will find a 4 foot high "chimney" cairn of rocks which marks where you turn right off the ridge to gain the Foothills Trail. This is a steep loose rock drop, which traverses back and forth until you hit the well-maintained Foothills Trail. This is followed until you come out onto Ross Pass. This trail drops and gains elevation at will - there is no other trail around - keep following it. If there is dense fog or low clouds during the race, we often lose people when they come into the meadows of Ross Pass. The checkpoint is at the far end of the pass, and a good trail does head left, then up and over the pass and down Brackett Creek to Bridger Canyon Road. Don't do that! Find the aid station, get checked-off, get refreshed, and hopefully you're on your way before 10am!! If you have encountered physical problems at this stage of the race (this first 1/3rd of the race is the most challenging), now is the time to bag the race, and go down to vehicles waiting a mile down from the pass.

After the Ross Pass Aid Station, you go about 1/4 mile into the forest and find a Ridge Run Cut-off trail that heads left back up the ridge. The rise is about a 1000 foot gain - and the trickiest, footing-wise. Follow markers - look for orange flagging in trees or on rocks, whenever you're not sure where the trail is. Much of the trail is on talus, with no clear trail to follow. Besides contouring around some impassable cliff sections, this trail does pretty much stay on top of the ridge, if you ever have to make a choice. The Bridger Aid Station cut-off time of 4 hours 15 minutes is pretty tough if you've left Ross Pass at 10am. The only other tricky area is approaching Bridger Peak - there is an obvious trail that goes left of the peak - that is a dead-end. Stay to the right of the peak. After Baldy, after you make the initial drop off the peak, there is a main trail that veers off to the right and down into Sypes Canyon. Motor bikes use this trail, and it is well-used. Don't go that way. Look for the cut-off that goes straight ahead, instead of veering off to the right. Stay on the Ridge all the way down. Once you get to the "M", there are only 2 official ways down - the longer way to the right at the bottom of the "M", or the steep version which angles left at the bottom of the "M". Don't use the abandoned gully (original trail) which is off-bounds, and will result in instant disqualification!

Checkpoints:

Your race numbers MUST be completely visible on your front when going through the 4 checkpoints. The race is designed to finish at 3pm, or 8 hours of running. Any later than that puts the race and volunteers in a tricky position with regards to afternoon thunderstorms. We need to get all personnel off the Ridge by 3pm. To make this happen, the cut-off times are STRICTLY enforced. If you fail to make a deadline, you will be asked to stay at the checkpoint and to come down off the mountain with a race personnel. You will be escorted to the finish line, so the race officials can check you off as having officially gotten off the mountain. Any disregard for any of these "rules" will result in not being able to enter any future Ridge Runs.

Sacagawea - 1:15 from the start plus 20 min for 5 waves (8:35am)

Ross Pass - 3:00 from the start plus 20 min for 5 waves (10:20am)

Bridger Bowl - 4:15 from the start plus 20 min for 5 waves (11:35am)

Finish Line - 3pm hopefully!!

Aid - Water Stations:

These Aid Stations are supplements to what you are already carrying yourselves. Everyone should start the race with full bottles/camelbacks and lots of their own snack materials. There are 3 official Aid Stations: Ross Pass, Bridger Bowl, and Mt. Baldy. These will have ample water available - enough to take a drink, and fill your water bottles - at least a full quart. A limited amount of water will be carried to Sacagawea by the volunteers the morning of the race - a cup apiece. There is also what we call "an emergency aid station" \hat{A} ½ way down from Mt. Baldy. Here, we will have water, gatorade, cookies, candy - as a help to those struggling down the last couple miles. For those not needing any supplies, please just run by this station. We will have over 70 gallons of water at the main stations, but only about 20 gallons here. There will be basic 1st Aid supplies available, though you are responsible for the correct application of these materials. Runners can leave excess clothing/equipment for the volunteers to carry down for them - but the retrieval of such items at the post race party is always in question.

Equipment and Clothing:

The weather can be extreme, the footing hazardous, and it is a long way between snacks and water. Bring your own cold weather gear to the start - in case you need it (it's a lot colder on Sacagawea than at the "M"). Plan on carrying a rain/wind shell, gloves, knit hat, map, water, and snacks. There are excellent padded belts commercially available to carry these items. You may want to start the race with a long sleeve shirt to keep you warm until the sun comes up with a singlet/T-shirt, with number attached, over it. Shoe preference is very individual. You need good support and cushioning. A good trail shoe is best - not hiking boots. Run on similar terrain for your training well before the race to find out what works best for you.

Safety:

Safety is our paramount concern. There will be a sweep team bringing up the rear, and radio or telephone contact is maintained between that team, the checkpoints, and the race director. If you are injured too badly to continue, stay on the marked trail and wait for the sweep team. They will have whatever is necessary to help you. Under NO circumstances should a runner leave the course except under the direction of the race support personnel. If you can walk comfortably but feel you cannot finish the race, walk to the next aid station. Do not attempt to finish if you are severely injured. If severe weather occurs (thunderstorms, high winds, extreme cold, accumulating snow) stay off the ridge top but stay within sight of the course. If you get lost after Ross Pass, go back up to the top of the ridge - you should be within sight of the sweep team as they come along. Before Ross Pass, keep looking for the Foothills Trail on the Bozeman side of the Ridge. The Race Director reserves the right to cancel or stop the event in case of extreme weather conditions. If lightning strikes nearby, get off the top of the Ridge! Your main concern should always be: proper pacing, adequate clothing, proper hydration/caloric intake. PLEASE, if your physical condition is in any way questionable on August 11th, do not participate in the race!!

Hot Tub/Cold Tub - Award Ceremony and Potluck:

You can go directly to the Mountain Hot Tub facility after the race - they have changing rooms, showers and towels available. The real party doesn't get going until about 5pm, with the awards scheduled to commence around 6pm (if all runners are off the mountain by then!!). There are 2 hot tubs of varying temperatures, and a "cold tub" with ice floating in it for therapeutic reasons. Various area businesses always donate goods and we have a raffle drawing after the awards have been handed out - running shoes, hydration packs, runners' supplies. All friends and families are invited to attend this party. The running club is providing burgers/hot dogs, buns, drinks, and tableware. The rest is up to you. Please bring a main dish, salad, or desert appropriate for the number of people in your party. If all else fails, go to Albertson's (23rd and Main) and pick up something. We hope that all of you will be able to attend this Ridge Run Wrap-Up Party!

Race Director: David Summerfield home phone (406-587-2656) or work

(406-586-8192) or cell phone (406-539-0011)

Award Program:

Wow - here's something new with the Ridge Run. We have started a new idea: if you have won this event in the past, you no longer have to reserve a spot and pay your money - you're in - anytime - just let David Summerfield know. And, if you've run the Ridge (officially) at least 10 times, the same applies. You've paid your dues, and can run for free - your spot is assured. You just need to pay the initial fee and enter the lottery procedure, though you are automatically picked.

The Bridger Ridge Run is a memorable event for such a mountain community as we have here in Bozeman. Our entrants either have a deep love of the mountains the world over, or they will develop such a love from "doing" the Ridge. Thanks for being willing to share some of who you are with these organizations.

They thank you.