

November 23, 2013

Quad Dipsea

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With 1 week to go until the 31st annual Quadruple Dipsea, I hope you are ready for a few stairs, a few hills, a few more hills, and a few more stairs, all on a spectacular trail with beautiful views. The trail is in good shape. A few trees had fallen across the trail east of Cardiac, but they have been removed. We've removed some trip hazards, but plenty remain, so please be vigilant with regard to your footing, particularly on wet stairs. At the moment the weather forecast suggests sunny and 60°F on race day, but the weather can change and be anything from cold and rainy to warm and sunny. A typical day would be foggy until mid-morning and then sunny and breezy in the afternoon, with high temperatures of about 60°F. It has only rained three of the previous 30 years, but keep an eye on the weather forecast and be prepared for whatever nature delivers.

Bib Pick-up & Runner Check-in. As an option, and to save a bit of time on race morning, you can pick up your bib number on Friday afternoon, from 4:00PM to 6:00PM, at the San Francisco Running Company, located at 247 Shoreline Highway in Mill Valley (Tam Junction, phone (415) 450-7031). The store is open on Friday until 7:00PM, in case you need anything for race day. If you pick up your bib number on Friday you still need to check-in at the starting line on Saturday morning, so we know who is running, and as the day progresses who remains on course. As usual you can pick up your bib number at the starting line in Old Mill Park on race morning between 7:00AM and 7:45AM. The race will start at 8:00AM, SHARP!

Directions to the start. From Highway 101, take the East Blithedale/Tiburon Blvd. exit. Upon exiting the freeway, head west and follow East Blithedale for 1.8 miles. You will go through several traffic lights and will eventually come to a stop sign. At the stop sign, turn left onto Throckmorton Avenue and follow it for 0.4 miles to the intersection of Cascade Way. Old Mill Park is on your left.

For more explicit directions, go to maps.google.com and enter 324 Throckmorton Avenue, Mill Valley, CA as your destination.

Facilities at Old Mill Park. There are public toilets at Old Mill Park but they are limited in capacity (we are working on permission to add a couple portable toilets next year). There is usually a line before the race; if you dislike waiting, it might be best to stop at a gas station on your way to the start.

Parking. The City of Mill Valley is concerned about parking in the densely populated residential area around Old Mill Park, so please carpool if possible. In addition, please refrain from parking in the diagonal parking spaces, at the Mill Valley Library, a few hundred yards past Old Mill Park on Throckmorton, as it will make library access more difficult for local residents. And please park legally, so parking does not become an issue for the race next year. Parking a few blocks away is not all bad, as after a Quad, and sitting around eating and drinking and socializing, it may not feel like it but a short walk is a good thing.

Course Marking & Changes. The course will be marked with hot pink ribbon (survey tape). No short-cuts are allowed, and short-cutting will result in disqualification. As you may be aware there have been some course changes over the past few years. Due to a slide, a portion of the Dipsea Trail below Windy Gap & Hauke Hollow was closed for several years. The section of trail was re-opened in time for the race last year, and will be part of the course this year. After descending thru Hauke Hollow, cross the paved road and continue on the Dipsea Trail. Starting with the 2012 race, about 1 mile from Stinson Beach a significant switchback has been added to the Dipsea Trail. Over the past few years, and in response to comments from residents, the location of the Stinson Beach Aid Station has moved. This year, as last year, it will be located directly across from the Highway 1 crossing, at the Stinson Beach Park Maintenance and Park Policy Facility. Collectively these changes appear to have shortened the course slightly, to 28.0 miles. If you wear a GPS on race day, please feel free to share your cumulative distance with me, because more data points help.

Road Crossings. There will be volunteers to help you at road crossings. There will be "Runners of Road" signs in both directions and volunteers will have orange flags & vests. These volunteers do not have training or authority to stop traffic. In addition, CHP will be present at several busier road crossings. Please take direction from the CHP officers and/or volunteers regarding road crossing safety. Early on lap 1 they will make every attempt to minimize delays, but we need to ensure road crossings are safe.

Aid Stations. There will be aid stations at the top of Cardiac, Stinson Beach, and Old Mill Park. You will have aid at miles 4.5, 7, 9.5, 14, 18.5, 21, 23.5, and the finish. Aid stations will be fully stocked with PBJs, bananas, pretzels, cookies, salt, water, and GU Roctane energy drink. GU energy gels and GU Chomps will be available at Old Mill Park and Cardiac Aid Stations, but as a permit requirement GU gels will not be available at Stinson Beach. We strongly recommend that all runners carry at least one water bottle, and please do not litter. Two portable toilets will be located at the Cardiac Aid Station, and the Stinson Beach Park restrooms are a short jog from the Stinson Beach Aid Station.

Drops. If at any point you decide not to continue your run, please go to the nearest aid station and inform the captain you are dropping. This includes Old Mill Park, if you complete two legs, and are safely back, to ensure we know you are not out on the course somewhere. If you drop at Cardiac or Stinson Beach Aid Stations we will make every effort to get you a ride back to Mill Valley, but you may need to wait until the aid station closes.

Cut-off Times. The race has an 8½-hour time limit. There will be a cut-off of 4:00 hours at the halfway point, and 6:30 hours at Stinson Beach to start the fourth leg. Runners must leave the aid station prior to the cut-off times.

Pacers. Due to the relatively crowded nature of this race, pacers are not permitted.

Drop Bags. We will not be able to transport anything to Stinson Beach for you. You may leave a drop bag at the start, which you can access at the halfway point.

Finish Line. There will be modest post-race facilities. We will provide a large tent for shelter. Post race we will be serving FireTrail Pizza and drinks. It is usually chilly in the shadow of the large redwoods, so we advise bringing something warm to change into after you finish. T-shirt and schwag pick-up for finishers will be post race. We have ordered t-shirt sizing based on entrants as of August, ordered about 40 more shirts than the number of expected runners, and sizes seem to be running true, but with cancellations and addition of wait list entrants not everyone may get the size they requested. So to ensure you get the right size t-shirt pick it up right after you finish. There will be modest winners and age group awards for overall male and female winners, and winners of each age group (up to 29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70+), courtesy of San Francisco Running Company and Ultrarunning Magazine. 10-Year Finisher Jackets await their 10-Year finishers!

Photographs. Photographs during the race will be taken by Keith Facchino, and available post race at the following website link:

<http://www2.backprint.com/FacchinoPhotography/121461>

Trash & Recycling. Please do not litter on the trail. Littering will result in disqualification. Although we sweep the course post race, we can't catch every piece of litter, and litter found on the trail jeopardizes our ability to secure permits in future years. In addition, we are required to segregate and recycle cans, glass, and paper/cardboard. Please help us keep these recyclable materials segregated in labeled receptacles, particularly at the start/finish line, when you are finished and enjoying post race activities.

Sponsors. I want to thank our sponsors for their support to make this what will hopefully be a great event, alphabetically: FireTrail Pizza; GU; Mountain Hardwear; PrincetonTec; San Francisco Running Company; Ultra Health; Ultrarunning Magazine; and Victory Sportdesign (V-Bags).

If there is anything else you really need to know, please send me an e-mail at johncatts@earthlink.net.

I look forward to seeing you on November 30th!

John (not the tropical one)