



25TH ANNUAL GRAND TRAVERSE



2023 RACER MANUAL

CRESTED BUTTE^{to} ASPEN

MARCH 31st ^{to} APRIL 2nd

PRESENTED BY



Blessing of the Freeheelers

Greetings ye conquistadors of the snow clad heights
Traversing through the darkness under the dome of celestial lights
Receive now thy blessing for the journey is at hand
Thou and thy partner, beside whom ye stand

As ye climb Mt. CB, cross East River and Brush Creek
Toiling to the Friends Hut, under the watch of Star Peak
When the guardians of Taylor Pass urge ye on to Barnard Station
And you climb Richmond Ridge, descending Ajax with elation

Be assured that the Holy One fortifies all thy strength
And abides in thy suffering, regardless of its length
The spirit soars above thee as an eagle on the wing
Comforting thy torment and tempering its sting

Summon all thy vigilance and prepare to depart
For this epic competition will require all thou art
Go ye with resolve that thy training was sufficient
Making all thy pole plants, kick and glide most efficient

With the urging of Ullr, son of Thor by thy side
May ye be found worthy for thy perseverance will be tried

Take heart for this blessing accompanies thee on thy route
Now let the racers confirm thus with a great Grand Traverse shout!

— Rev. Tim Clark
Union Congregational Church
Crested Butte, 2022

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Conditions of Participation

***** This is a minimally supported backcountry ski event *****

Rugged backcountry conditions and severe weather may be present along any part of the course. Hazards may include but are not limited to - rapid snow accumulation, avalanche, poor visibility, high winds, extreme temperatures, swift creek crossings, lightning, and/or rock fall. Course officials cannot monitor, or guarantee complete safety throughout the entirety of the course. Participants must be skilled in making their own assessment of conditions, have sufficient gear and knowledge of how to manage potentially life threatening circumstances. All racers proceed at their own risk.

- Racers Must -

1. Have a high level of physical fitness, experience in winter backcountry travel, and the necessary equipment to survive in strenuous to potentially life-threatening conditions.
2. Have ONE partner - No more and no less.
3. Jointly attend with partner - Athlete Clearance (Gear Check), Mandatory Racer Meeting & Mandatory Pre-Start Check.
4. Carry all Mandatory Gear throughout duration of the race, including an activated Tracking Beacon.
5. Remain within sight of teammate at all times, proceeding through checkpoints in tandem.
6. Arrive to, and depart from, checkpoints *prior* to the established cut-off times.
7. Agree to be pulled from the race for any reason deemed necessary by Race Officials.
8. Notify Race Dispatch by phone of decision to self-withdraw or abandon the race without informing race staff on course.
9. Present *proof* of current **Colorado Recreational Search & Rescue card**, or valid Colorado fishing/hunting license at Athlete Clearance. [Purchase CORSAR](#)

Registration

Registration Refund

No Registration Deferments.

RegShield is offered during registration as an optional registration protection policy in the event of injury, illness, family illness, work conflicts, etc. [Link](#) to information on how to file a claim. All questions referring to the policy should be directed to RegShield

Full Team drop outs may request a 50% refund until February 20th, 2023. RegShield Policy holders are not eligible for a refund via The Grand Traverse.

There are no refunds for any reason after February 20th from the Grand Traverse or CB Nordic.

find your
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trust yourself

trust your kit



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mens

MONTANE.COM



Teammate Bib Transfer

Teammate changes may be executed for a \$25 processing fee.
Deadline to submit Teammate Change Request via the link below is **March 26th**

INITIATE BIB TRANSFER >>>

Event Schedule

FRIDAY, March 31st

Athlete Clearance / Gear Check - 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM

[Lodge at Mountaineer Square Ballroom - Mt.Crested Butte](#)

Teammates must check-in and proceed jointly through Gear Check to be cleared to race.

Skin up the Mountain with Montane

[Crested Butte Mountain Resort Base](#)

Warm Up with Athletes with Montane

4:30 PM-6:00 PM

Film Festival sponsored by Dynafit

[Majestic Theater- Crested Butte](#)

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

SATURDAY, April 1st

Athlete Clearance / Gear Check - 8:30 AM to Noon

[Lodge at Mountaineer Square Ballroom - Mt Crested Butte](#)

Teammates must check-in and proceed jointly through Gear Check to be cleared to race.

Athlete Lunch - Noon to 1:00 PM

[Lodge at Mountaineer Square Ballroom](#)

Hearty pasta meal served compliments of Crested Butte Mountain Resort

Mandatory Racer Meeting - 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

[Lodge at Mountaineer Square Ballroom](#)

Current course conditions and racer questions addressed at this time.

Mandatory Pre-Start Check - 10:30 PM to 11:45 PM

[Lodge at Mountaineer Square Ballroom](#)

*The following functions will occur prior to the race start.
Any alterations to the final course will be described to racers at this time.*

*** Avalanche Transceiver Check & GPS Tracker Distribution ***

Racers renting a SPOT tracker will receive their activated beacon at this time.
Every racer must pass through the avalanche transceiver check station to verify functionality.

*** Medical Bracelet Pick-Up ***

Individual emergency medical bracelets must be picked up and worn by each racer.

*** Finish Line Bag Drop ***

Each competitor is permitted a single compact bag to be transported to the Aspen finish line.

The bag must be smaller than a carry on size and weigh less than 25 lbs

- Please pre-label your bag with the following contact information - **Name / Phone # / Bib #**
- Unclaimed bags will be transported back to the Crested Butte Nordic Center, by 5:00 PM on Monday (4/3/23)

Blessing of the Freeheelers - 11:55 PM

[Crested Butte Mountain Resort Base](#)

On snow adjacent to Red Lady Lift

RACE START - MIDNIGHT

[Crested Butte Mountain Resort Base](#)

Mass start up Warming House Hill

SUNDAY, April 2nd

Aspen Finish Line - 6:00 AM to 5:00 PM

[Aspen Mountain - Gondola Plaza](#)

Teams finishing throughout the day. Athletes served buffet meal & Ska Brewing beer!

Flower Ceremony - 2:00 PM

[Aspen Mountain - Gondola Plaza](#)

Podium ceremony for Top 3 Overall - Male, Female & CO-ED Teams

Accommodation



[Search Crested Butte Lodging](#)

Group Lodging Code: SCBCBN23

Parking in Crested Butte

Overnight parking in the Town of Crested Butte is permitted on any public right-of-way (excluding Elk Avenue). However, be aware that [winter parking regulations](#) are in effect on most right-of ways. Overnight parking is NOT permitted in the following parking lots - Visitor Center (4-Way), Community School parking lot & Crested Butte Mountain Resort lots. We encourage you to utilize the free Town Shuttle to transport yourself between the Town of Crested Butte and the Lodge at Mountaineer Square.



Discounted lodging is available via the link below.

[Search Aspen/Snowmass Lodging](#)

Parking in Aspen

Parking is FREE on Sundays in downtown business core. Metered spaces are enforced Monday - Saturday from 10am to 6pm. Pay Stations are located in both the downtown, as well as in some residential locations.

Transportation

Post-Race Return Shuttle to Crested Butte

Return transportation from Aspen to Crested Butte may be booked through online race registration for \$75/person. *Capacity is limited - additional shuttles will not be booked once sold out.*

To inquire about available shuttle capacity, email - events@cbnordic.org

Shuttle Departure:

SUNDAY (4/2), ~ 6:00 PM, In front of the Little Nell Hotel

Carpooling

Transportation logistics for a point-to-point event can be daunting. We encourage our racer community to assist one another in pooling transportation resources. You may publicize transportation requests, in addition to other race logistic needs, by posting in the [Grand Traverse Athlete Forum](#).

Course Details

Course Marking

The route is NOT continuously marked.

Limited marking does not free participants from their obligation to familiarize themselves with the course route, while being diligent to keep bearings during the race.

The following marking conventions will be used to guide racers:

- Glow Sticks on Bamboo (Crested Butte Mountain Resort)
- Strobe Lights on Bamboo (Alpine Terrain)
- Wood Lathe Stakes with Reflective Tape (Alpine Terrain)

Press **Esc** to exit full screen



DYNAFIT



BLACK LIGHT

THE LIGHTEST SPEED TOURING SYSTEM

Course Aid

The Grand Traverse is a *minimally supported* backcountry event. Competitors should start with *no less* than 100 ounces of hydration.

Provision of aid is limited at the following checkpoints:

- **Upper Brush Creek Checkpoint** - Limited to 7oz. Water per racer
- **Barnard Checkpoint** - Unlimited Water, [Tailwind Nutrition Electrolyte](#), Hot Ramen Soup

Cut-Off Times

To ensure the safety of participants and Course Staff alike, the following cut-off times will be strictly enforced. Weather or changing conditions may compel the Race Director to alter cut-off times without prior notice.

UPPER BRUSH CREEK CHECKPOINT – 6:10 AM Cut-Off
STAR PASS CHECKPOINT – 7:00 AM Cut-Off

Teams failing to meet a cut-off will be directed to retrace their route back to Brush Creek Road. Shuttles will make periodic pick-ups at the East River Trailhead, transporting dropped racers back to the Town of Crested Butte.

Racers must DEPART checkpoints at the appointed cut-off time. Failure to abide by an imposed cut-off will result in immediate disqualification and will blacklist both athletes from any and all future Grand Traverse events.

Cut-Off Contingency Plan

To assist cut-off racers from being stranded without intended return transportation, the bib numbers of cut-off teams will be broadcast on the following Grand Traverse social feeds - [Facebook](#) (@grandtraverse) & [Twitter](#) (@EMGTskirace)

Teams unsure of their ability to pass cut-off checkpoints should instruct their support crews to monitor GT social feeds for cut-off bib broadcasts before departing Crested Butte for Aspen, prior to 8 AM on race morning.

All teams should plan for one member at minimum to pack a cell phone and a credit card. If your team is turned back to Crested Butte, you will need to independently arrange your own alternative travel logistics.

Self-Withdrawal

Race officials must be notified if you choose to abandon the race. Failure to properly exit the race could result in an unnecessary Search & Rescue mission activation.

You MUST phone Race Dispatch if you elect to abandon the race without notifying a Course Official. Race Dispatch's phone number will be printed on race bibs.

Route Description

Due to weather and snow safety considerations, the exact course cannot be finalized until race day. The course may be changed based on snow conditions, weather or other safety concerns. In extreme circumstances the course may be modified to finish in Crested Butte rather than Aspen. The race director reserves the right to delay the race start, alter the race course, and/or cancel the event as deemed necessary. Final course alterations will be communicated to racers at the Mandatory Pre-Race Briefing, Saturday evening.

*** Note on Hut Visitations ***

Advanced reservations are required to visit Huts along the race route. If you intend to preview the race course, DO NOT enter the huts without a reservation.

Crested Butte to Star Pass

Racers ascend from the base area up Warming House Hill, proceeding past the Painter Boy Lift base on Houston trail. Upon reaching the "Five Way" intersection, racers may choose to transition to enable a skating traverse along the flat ridge leading to the top of Gold Link lift. Here racers begin a groomed descent on the North Pass ski slope, proceeding through the Prospect Tunnel, further exiting the resort boundary by descending into a steep and narrow gulch, arriving at the valley floor and the East River Checkpoint (Mile 4). On occasion, in overly warm conditions, the East River may be open to water flow. In order to proceed on course teammates must advance through all checkpoints in tandem.

The route proceeds down valley, making a gradual ascending traverse to pass the Ambush Ranch Checkpoint (Mile 7.25). Here the race route turns up the Brush Creek drainage, continuing to a second creek crossing at West Brush Creek (Mile 8.75). A snow bridge is generally passable here, but can also be a wet crossing in some circumstances.

The course climbs briefly until merging onto a narrowly sketched single-track, known as "Death Pass", a .25 mile traverse skirting a steep, south facing escarpment.

Sustained climbing begins in earnest beyond the Death Pass Checkpoint. The course continues beyond Middle Brush Creek, climbing through dense timber into the upper reaches of East Brush Creek and the Upper Brush Creek Checkpoint at 11,006 feet (Mile 15.5).

UPPER BRUSH CREEK CHECKPOINT - 6:10 AM CUT-OFF

The set route to attain Star Pass in the upper basin varies year-to-year. Star Pass (12,336') is arrived at approximately mile 17.25.

STAR PASS CHECKPOINT – 7:00 AM CUT-OFF

Star Pass to Aspen

With skins ripped, racers are treated to a well earned, however brief, 1000 foot descent to the bottom of the Taylor Basin. Racers must adhere to the specific descent route marked by strobe lights on bamboo.

Once transistioned at the bonfire, sustained climbing commences along a timbered cross slope delivering racers up into Taylor Flats. The terrain approaching Taylor Pass Checkpoint (Mile 22.25) is perhaps the most exposed section of course. In high wind conditions, disorienting ground blizzards may arise in the wide open expanses of Taylor Flats. In such white out conditions, teams should proceed taking bearings by following wood lathe stakes that identify the course route.

Gradual climbing continues past Taylor Pass, interspersed with two small descents prior to climbing to attain the second highest elevation point on course - 12,273' on Richmond Ridge (Mile 24.6). From here the course begins incrementally dropping in elevation, however intermixed with short pushes up-hill. Barnard Checkpoint is reached at Mile 27. Racers receive a recharge of hot hydration and soup broth at this location. Racers must remain conscious that Barnard is a checkpoint, and not a course lounge! Teams are NOT permitted to loiter at this checkpoint for more than 20 minutes, as significant miles of terrain remain to be covered.

BARNARD CHECKPOINT – 20 Minute MAXIMUM LAYOVER

Departing the checkpoint, racers continue on a short descent, followed by an abrupt 400 feet of climbing, leading to 7 miles of mercurial up and down terrain across Richmond Ridge to the Aspen Mountain Boundary at Mile 34.25.

Entering the Aspen Mountain, racers will embark upon 3,200 feet of elevation loss over 3 miles.

Course marshals at the checkpoint will direct racers towards the following designated descent route to the finish line - 1 & 2 Leaf, Silver Bell, Spar Gulch, Kleenex Corner, Little Nell, to Gondola Plaza Finish Line.

Reverse Course Contingency

Severe weather / Heightened Avalanche Risk contingency plan:

In a scenario in which Race Staff deem the standard course too hazardous to route through to Aspen, a "Reverse Course" will be implemented. If called upon, a "Reverse" will start and finish on Crested Butte Mountain Resort.

This modified race route ascends to the **Upper Brush Creek Checkpoint** in the same manner as a standard course, but will climb further into the alpine of the East Brush Creek basin, before reversing course back to Crested Butte. The course further routes down valley via Brush Creek Road, until connecting to the winter approximation of the summer - Upper Upper Loop trail (USFS 453.1). This trail makes an elevated traverse along the front side of Mt. Crested Butte, routing racers back onto the CBMR resort via "Banana Exit", proceeding to a final descent to the finish line between the Silver Queen & Red Lady lifts.

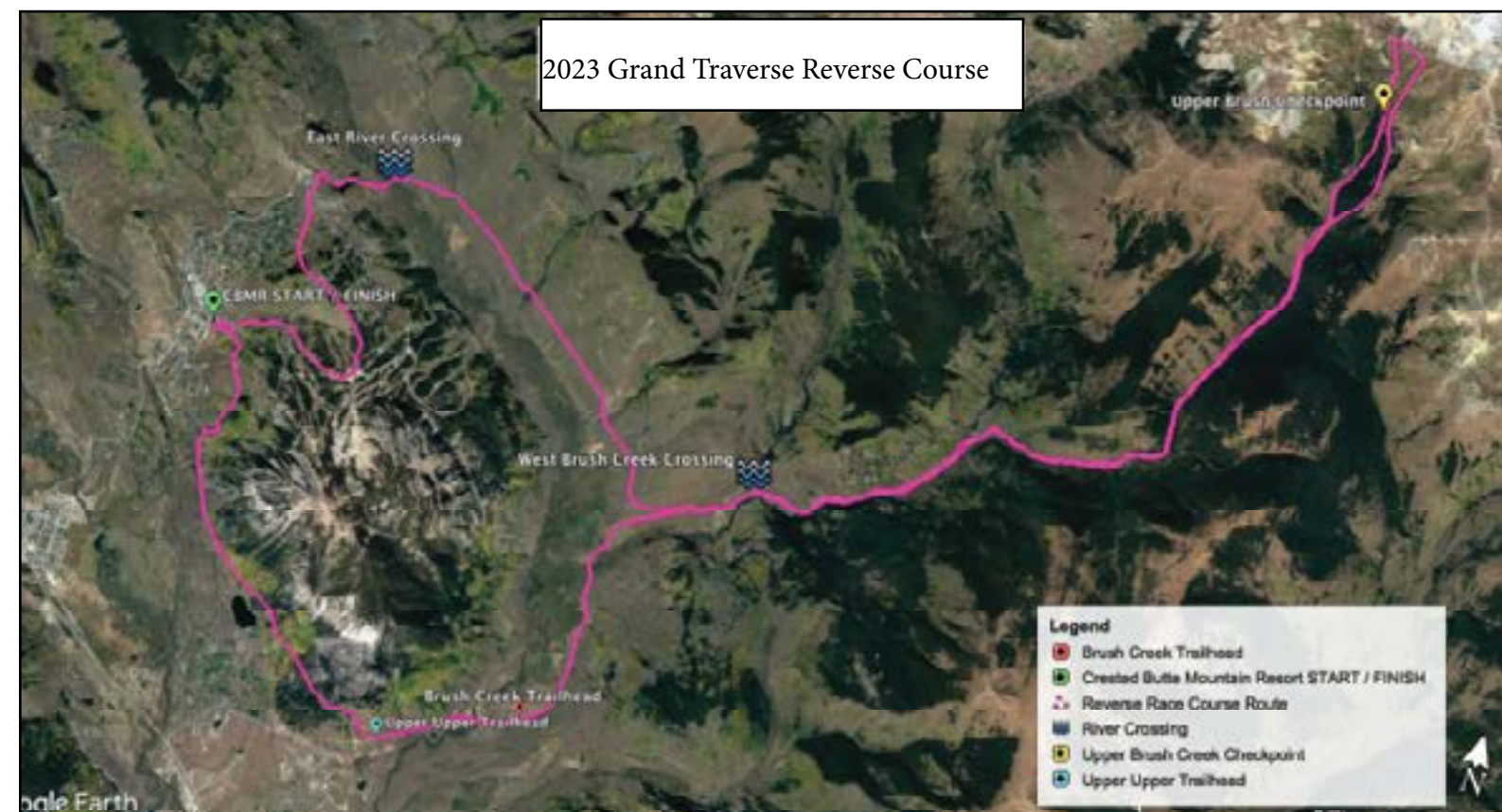
This course is approximately **32.5 Miles** with an elevation gain / loss of **+ 6,857 ft. / - 6,862 ft.**

Teams must meet established cut-off times at the Upper Brush Creek Checkpoint to continue further into the alpine.

Waypoints - Miles & Elevation Gain / Loss				
(RED = Cut-Off 's Imposed)				
Mile	Altitude	Waypoint	+ Miles	+/- Elevation
0	9,442'	START - CBMR Base	-	-
2.12	10,240'	Top Gold Link Lift	2.12	+ 798 ft.
4	9,073'	East River - Checkpoint	1.88	- 1,167 ft.
7.25	9,144'	Ambush Ranch - Checkpoint	3.25	+ 71 ft.
9.4	9,269'	Death Pass - Checkpoint	2.15	+ 125 ft.
15.5	11,006'	Upper Brush Creek-Checkpoint	6.1	+ 1,737 ft.
17.25	12,336'	Star Pass - Checkpoint	1.75	+ 1,330 ft.
18.62	11,305'	Taylor Basin - Low Point	1.37	- 1,031 ft.
22.25	11,817'	Taylor Pass - Checkpoint	3.63	+ 512 ft.
23.35	12,213'	Richmond Ridge - High Point	1.1	+ 396 ft.
23.75	11,945'	Richmond Ridge - Low Point	0.4	- 268 ft.
24.6	12,273'	Richmond Ridge - High Point	0.85	+ 328 ft.
27.05	11,436'	Barnard Hut - Checkpoint	2.45	- 837 ft.
28.5	11,041'	Richmond Ridge - Low Point	1.45	- 395 ft.
29.5	11,426'	Richmond Ridge - High Point	1	+ 385 ft.
34.25	11,264'	Aspen Mountain Boundry	4.75	- 162 ft.
37.25	8,031'	FINISH - Aspen Mountain Base	3	- 3,233 ft.



[\(Link to Interactive Map\)](#)



Mandatory Gear

The equipment racers carry into the backcountry is critical.

Due to the length of the course and varying conditions, each team must be independently prepared for a 24-hour bivouac if circumstances dictate. The following list contains the essentials required to participate. Teams should exercise their own backcountry sense as to what supplementary gear they may wish to carry.

Mandatory Gear will be checked during the Gear Check process of Athlete Clearance.

Skis, Boots and Poles do NOT need to be presented for inspection at Gear Check.

No Split Boards

Link to Mandatory Gear List



GPS Trackers

GPS Trackers are required as a safety measure to enable rapid response to medical emergencies on course. During online registration, teams will choose to either have a rental SPOT tracking/SOS beacon supplied to them, or may choose to link their personally owned **SPOT** or **Garmin inReach** to the tracking database.

The following fees apply:

Rental SPOT - \$40 / Link a Personal [SPOT](#) or [Garmin inReach](#) - \$15

Personal tracking beacons must have "Tracking" enabled (subscription based), in order to link to the tracking application - www.trackleaders.com Personal beacon users will be required to submit device **ESN Serial Number** and **XML Feed**, or **Share Page URL**. In the days prior to the race, you'll be instructed to log tracking points to ensure your device is functional.

LINK PERSONAL BEACON HERE >>>

*** Note on Live Race Tracking ***

Live tracking is NOT a flawless system. Teams being tracked online may at times display an erratic track, or even freeze in place due to poor transmission signal. Spectators viewing athlete progress online should be informed of the imperfections in tracking, and be advised to not become alarmed if your team is stalled out on the Live Tracking map.



Race Division & Awards

Team Division

Male Team, Female Team, CO-ED Team

Cash Prizes for Top 3 in Each Division

1st- \$1000

2nd- \$500

3rd- \$200

1st Overall Male and Female Teams will have names and finish time immortalized on GT Trophy

Age Classes - Average Combined Team Age

18 - 25 years

26 - 35 years

36 - 45 years

46 - 55 years

56+ years

1st Age Class Winners will be recognized with product prizes, across all 3 divisions

- Finisher Award -

Every race finisher receives a commemorative GT Finisher Medal

Results Posting

Live preliminary results will be populated online throughout the duration of the event at - Webscorer.com

Official results will posted to the [Grand Traverse Results Board](#) by 5:00 PM on Monday post-race.

Race Updates

Receive regular race updates by following us on the following social channels



Course Dispatches from the Star Pass Field Team will be broadcast on the GT Facebook page in the days leading up to race day.

We want to share in the totality of your GT experience!

Share your race related documentation by tagging -

#CBtoAspen #MontaneGT #GrandTraverseSki

Racer Community

Grand Traverse Athlete Forum

Utilize this Facebook Group as a racer resource for anything and everything GT related!



All information contained herein is subject to change.

For the safety of participants and Race Staff, the Race Director reserves the right delay the start of the race, alter the course, or cancel the event.



The Grand Traverse operates under a Special Use Permit on the Gunnison and White River National Forest.