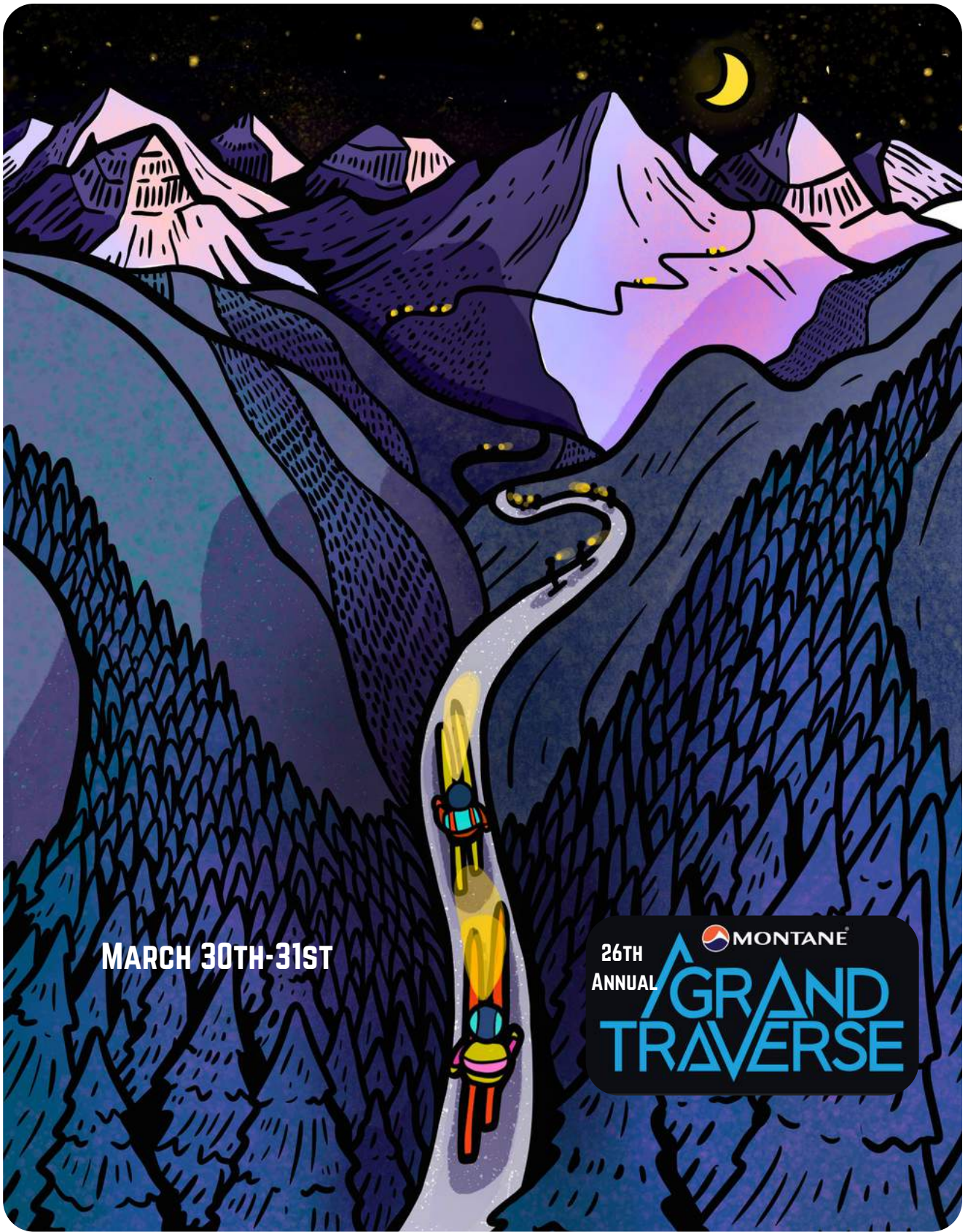


# 2024 RACER MANUAL



MARCH 30TH-31ST

26TH ANNUAL  MONTANE  
**GRAND TRAVERSE**

PRESENTED BY



icebreaker



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# BLESSING OF THE FREEHEELERS

Hear ye all thou seekers of Grand Traverse glory  
For tonight ye fulfill the 25 th edition of its story  
Gather thy courage and summon thy spirit  
It will take all thy strength, endurance and grit  
As ye swoop down cross the East River meanders and  
oxbows

Up to the Friends Hut, Star Pass and Taylor snows  
The Barnard awaits to urge your slogging with packs  
To the Richmond Ridge roller coaster and top of Ajax  
Then down to the finish in Aspen tomorrow  
Having suffered it all, yet never with sorrow  
Be blessed by the Holy One whose spirit will abide  
Every every breath, every pole-plant, every kick, every  
glide

May Ullr give wings to your skis and your pace  
As you and your partner move as one through the race  
And now as you start may thy fortitude remain  
For ye wilt surely be worshipping in the cathedral of pain  
Let the racers cheer one another with a worthy outburst  
Of ecstatic celebration for this great Grand Traverse!

2023

-Rev. Tim Clark  
Union Congregational Church



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# CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

## -This is a minimally supported backcountry 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.

## RACER 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

## TRANSFERS

We will no longer be offering transfers for Grand Traverse races. If your partner can no longer race, they can file a refund protection claim or email [events@cbnordic.org](mailto:events@cbnordic.org) for a refund (if the request falls within the refund window). The remaining partner should look for a new partner to fill the empty spot. Email [events@cbnordic.org](mailto:events@cbnordic.org) for an access code and your team link. Once they complete their registration on Race Roster, they will officially be your new teammate. The last day to register a new teammate is March 22nd.

## DEFERRALS

We do not offer deferrals for any reason. We recommend athletes purchase registration protection.

## REFUNDS

We will offer a 50% refund if you drop before January 31, 2024. Run + Bike: Participants can receive a 50% refund if requested before June 28th, 2024. We will operate a traditional waitlist through Race Roster this year to fill spots as they open up.

## REGISTRATION PROTECTION

Registration Refund Protection applies to many of the perils that can stop someone from attending an event. Accidents, severe weather, family emergencies, and the common cold, Race Roster's Registration Refund Protection has you covered. Standard refund protection requires documentation when a refund is requested. However, Race Roster makes the refund request process as simple as possible. Users can quickly request a refund and conveniently upload their documentation.

Race Roster's Enhanced Refund Protection Program covers but is not limited to:

- Injury & Illness
- COVID-19
- Severe weather
- Work travel conflict
- Layoffs/terminations
- Mechanical breakdowns

[FILE A CLAIM HERE](#)

# EVENT SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, MARCH 29TH

## Athlete Clearance and Sponsor/Vendor Expo | 2 pm - 6 pm

- [Crested Butte Mountain Resort](#) | Lodge at Mountaineer Square
- Teammates must check in and proceed jointly through Gear Check to be cleared to race
- [Crested Butte Mountain Resort](#) | Lodge at Mountaineer Square

## Skin with Montane | 4:30 pm - 6 pm

- Crested Butte Mountain Resort Base



# EVENT SCHEDULE

**SATURDAY, MARCH 30TH**

**Athlete Clearance and Sponsor/Vendor Expo at Mt. Crested Butte | 8:30 am - 12 pm**

- [Crested Butte Mountain Resort](#) | Lodge at Mountaineer Square

**Athlete Lunch | 12 pm - 1 pm**

- Lodge at Mountaineer Square Ballroom

**Mandatory Racer Meeting | 1 pm - 2 pm**

- [Lodge at Mountaineer Square Ballroom](#)
- Current course conditions and racer questions addressed at this time

**Mandatory Pre-Race Check and Beacon Check from | 10:30 pm - 11:50 pm**

- Lodge at Mountaineer Square Ballroom

**Blessing of the Freeheelers | 11:55 pm**

- Crested Butte Mountain Resort Base, adjacent to Red Lady Lift

**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 + worn by each racer.

## **FINISH LINE DROP BAG**

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 4/1/24 + must be picked up by 4/10/24 or they will be donated to charity



# EVENT SCHEDULE

**SUNDAY, MARCH 31ST**

**Race Start | 12:00 am**

- Crested Butte Mountain Resort Base, Mass start up Warming House Hill

**Aspen Finish Line | 6 am - 5 pm**

- [Aspen Mountain, Gondola Plaza](#)

**Flower Ceremony | 2 pm**

- Aspen Mountain, Gondola Plaza
- Podium Ceremony for Top 3 Overall - Male, Female + Co-Ed Teams



# ACCOMMODATIONS

## CRESTED BUTTE LODGING

[CLICK HERE FOR DISCOUNTED LODGING AT CBMR](#)  
**CODE: SCBNOR24**

[CLICK HERE FOR DISCOUNTED LODGING AT](#)  
[ELEVATION HOTEL AND SPA](#)

## 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.

## ASPEN SNOWMASS LODGING

### Aspen Square

- Stay Dates March 29-April 2
- 2 night minimum length of stay
- Studios or Two Bedrooms ONLY
- 10% off best available rate at time of booking
- 35% due at time of booking
- 14 day cancellation
- **Promo Code: [GTraverse2024](#)**
- Booking Dates: July 1, 2023-March 29,2024
- Must put code into the PROMO field on the booking page and it will calculate the discount.

### Aspen Meadows

- Stay dates March 29 – April 2
- 2 night minimum length of stay
- 15% off best available rate at time of booking

### Hearthstone House

- Able to offer a discounted rate of \$299
- 2 night minimum length of stay



**DYNAFIT**



**BY ATHLETES  
FOR ATHLETES**

## 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

Return transportation from Aspen to Crested Butte may be booked through online race registration for \$85/person. Capacity is limited - additional shuttles will not be booked once sold out. The shuttle will depart Aspen's Gondola Plaza around 6 pm and return to Crested Butte at the conclusion of the ski race on Sunday, March 31st. Ski shuttle reservations are refundable until February 23rd and transferable to another athlete until March 22nd. Book return shuttle [here](#).

## 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](#).



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to keep you out in the snow.

# 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)



## 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, Skratch 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 communicated on Grand Traverse Channels.

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

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



## 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 and 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 decent 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 from year to year. Star Pass (12,336') 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 transitioned 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 the course. In high wind conditions, disorienting ground blizzards may arise in the wide-open expanses of Taylor Flats. In such whiteout 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 the course - 12,273' on Richmond Ridge (Mile 24.6). From here, the course begins incrementally dropping in elevation, however, intermixed with short pushes uphill. 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 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.

# WAYPOINTS - MILES + ELEVATION GAIN/LOSS

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.



**POWDER  
PROJECT**

[LINK TO INTERACTIVE MAP](#)

# REVERSE COURSE CONTINGENCY

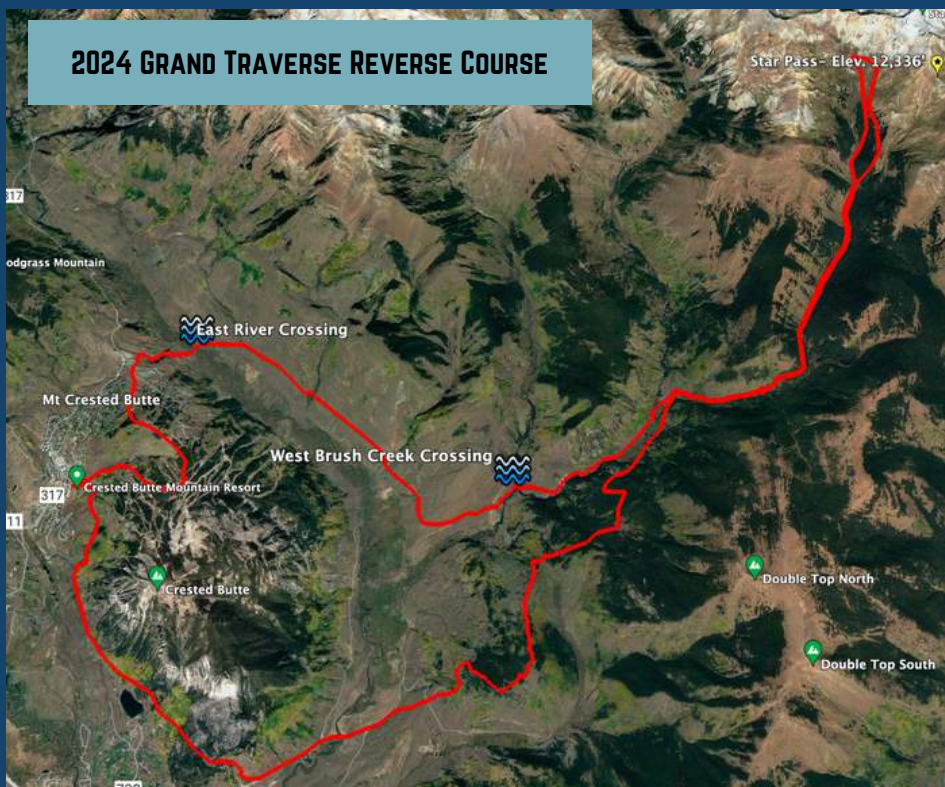
## Severe weather / Heightened Avalanche Risk contingency plan:

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.



## 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 - \$50 / Link a Personal SPOT or Garmin inReach - \$20

Personal tracking beacons must have “Tracking” enabled (subscription-based) in order to link to the tracking application - [www.trackleaders.com](http://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 GARMIN DEVICES 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.



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# RACE DIVISIONS + AWARDS

## TEAM DIVISION

Male, Female, Co-Ed Team

## CASH PRIZES FOR TOP 3 IN EACH DIVISION

1st- \$1,000

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.

\*\*Cash prizes will be mailed after athletes confirm mailing address (must be done one week after the race). Physical prizes must be picked up in person at the awards ceremony. \*\*



# RESULTS POSTING

Live preliminary results will be populated online throughout the duration of the event at - [Webscorer.com](https://www.webscorer.com).

Official results will be posted to the Grand Traverse Results Board by 5:00 PM on Monday post-race.



**ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.  
FOR THE SAFETY OF PARTICIPANTS AND RACE STAFF, THE RACE DIRECTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO 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. And Thanks to MT CB for the support!





# SPECIAL THANKS TO:

The **field team members** that make this race possible!

Our Volunteers!

And our partner organizations...  
click to learn more about the great work they do



Cover Art + 26th Annual GT Sticker made by: [Nikki LaRochelle](#)

Photos throughout manual taken by:  
[Eric Phillips](#), [Dave Kolowski](#), [Chris Miller](#)



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