

Hey Klipspringers!!

Two weeks to go!! Your training is now mostly done and all you have to do is look forward to an awesome roadtrip and some of the most incredible trail running the planet has to offer!

As things stand, the Race Day weather forecast for Augrabies is looking like fantastic running conditions! According to AccuWeather, we can expect a Low of 11C and a High of 27C, with expected conditions described as "a stray morning shower, otherwise mostly sunny". We'll keep an eye on the forecasts as we get closer to the time, but for now we will take it – and yes, just in case, pack your rain gear! That being said, it will still be warm, and for most of the field that will be out there after 11h00 in some of the hotter parts of the course, heat exposure and dehydration remain a factor. The requirement that each runner (in both Challenge and Lite races) carries a minimum of 1.5l of water or fluid at the start will be enforced. It is also recommended that you carry some kind of rehydration / salt or electrolyte replacement product to mix with your water. It will definitely come in handy.

The Start Times are still scheduled for 06h00 for the Challenge and 06h30 for the Lite, but as previously mentioned these could very well be adjusted depending on expected conditions. We will communicate the final Start Times by the latest midday on Friday 28 April via email, sms, twitter and facebook, so please be on alert. If you haven't heard anything by the time you arrive at Registration on Saturday afternoon, please make sure you find out.

Registration will be at the Augrabies Falls National Park Headquarters on Saturday 29 April 2016 from 15h00 to 18h00. There will be a small registration facility available on race morning, specifically to cater for those local runners who are not staying in the Park and will be driving through on the morning. The final times for the Race Day Registration facility will be announced with the final Race Start Times, but for those of you planning on registering on Sunday morning it is recommended that you plan on being at the Park by no later than 05h30 regardless. If you are planning on early Race Day Registration, please inform the organisers beforehand.

The official Pre-Race Briefing will be held at the Park Headquarters at 18h00 on Saturday 29 April and shouldn't be longer than 30 minutes.

Race Tip #3 - What to expect & Pacing

Both Challenge and Lite courses can quite conveniently be broken down into easily definable sections. The first section, shared by both races, is deceptively technical and demanding, and we recommend not starting out too hard and conserving energy. You can expect lots of running in this section, but regularly broken up by tougher technical pieces that it could serve you well to walk through. For the Challenge the second section is down into the Gorge along the river, and the gradual climb out. This section involves some serious boulder hopping interspersed with soft, quad-draining river sand, and we expect most

of you will do a fair bit of walking here. This is not a bad thing as this section provides one of the most spectacular pieces of trailrunning terrain in the world! We strongly recommend that if you're not racing for a place or a time that you take a few minutes off here and enjoy a refreshing canyon-bottom dip in the majestic Orange River. Best race-selfies ever, and you will never forget it! The climb out of the Gorge is a few km of gradual uphill in the soft sand of a dry river bed through possibly the hottest section of the course -just find a rhythm here and keep your head down.

The next section, where eventually Challenge and Lite join up again, is what you have been conserving your energy for. By no means flat and easy, the trail from Swart Rante to Moon Rock offers some great fast running through some truly otherworldly desert landscapes. If you've got the legs to run this it will be one the most memorable and enjoyable sections of the entire race. The last section presents a super-cool running climb over the impressive Moon Rock structure, where you will enjoy looking back at where you've come from, then down into some great eroded river boulders, and then RIGHT PAST the forest section that elicited much wailing and gnashing of teeth last year (feedback appreciated) with a fast run to the finish and some ice cold beer.

Race Tip #4 - Don't be afraid to walk

As all of you experienced trail-junkies will know, a good trail consists of a fair amount of walking. For those less experienced trail runners and especially our roadie friends who are about to have a life-changing experience, it takes some time to get your mind around this. A personal recommendation here is to assess each different section of the course and each different type of terrain that presents itself to you on a "Return on Effort" basis. In other words, what return can you expect for the effort that you invest. For example, to run up a steep technical climb may require a huge amount of effort and drain a lot of your energy, but the time you gain on the person rather choosing to power-hike up the climb is minimal. As SA trail legend Iain Don-Wauchope remarked in an interview last year, don't be afraid to walk as a recovery tool. As long as you keep moving forward you do not lose too much time. Rather try and minimise the long stoppages.

Also remember why you are there - to enjoy the unique physical beauty of the Kalahari and to savour the entire experience. As somebody on facebook said, it is the person who comes last that gets the most value for their entry fee :-)

Training Tip #2 - Hill & stair work

With two weeks to go, most of your distance work and high-intensity training is done, but it is important to keep the legs moving and the cardio bits working. Hill work, and for those of you in the flatter parts of the Northern Cape, stair work, is a great way of doing this. It is a low-intensity, high-cardio workout that is brilliant for preparing the quads for the climbing on a trail, and while the Klipspringer is not the country's steepest race, you will definitely feel the benefits of some good climbing preparation. Another recommendation when doing hill or stair work is to carry weight, at least what you expect to carry on

Race Day if not more - it is a great way to prepare those often under-prepared shoulder and neck muscles.

As always, feel free to shout with any specific questions. Happy tapering and see you soon!

Warren

#klipspringer2017