

Evergreen Lake Ultras

September 10th, 2016

This may seem a little wordy, but we have tried to answer all of the questions you may have concerning our race!

Course

This year's course will have a new start/finish location next to the "Prairie Picnic Shelter" (40.640779, -89.034239). It is located just past the Ranger Station/Visitor Center on the right. This area features 2 large pavilions for shelter in inclement weather, ample picnic tables, grills and fire rings, and best of all the camping is a very short walk away! All camp sites have gorgeous views of Evergreen Lake.

The course will consist of approximately a 17 mile loop. **Half-Ultra** participants will run one loop (17miles), **Ultra** participants run two loops (34 miles), and the **Ultra-and-a-Half** participants will complete three loops (51 miles). While repeat entrants will recognize much of the course, we will be adding some new trails to mix it up and keep things interesting.

Evergreen Lake is a very "runnable" course, which makes it ideal for a first-time ultra-runner. However, it is tough enough to challenge the experienced racer. The course will consist of a mixture of single-track running and mountain bike trails; open prairie and grass horse trails; and a few segments on paved roads (each less than ¼ mile). You will cross a few bridges. We have made sure to incorporate every hill that Evergreen Lake offers, but there really aren't any terrifying climbs. Honestly, the course is flat-to-gently-rolling. There are two creek crossings, but they are often dry in late September. The course is incredibly beautiful, ranging from thick pine woods to fields of goldenrod, with views of Evergreen Lake the entire way.

Our course is very well marked with flags, pie plates, and ground paint. We will have reflective markings for the Ultra-and-a-Half start before sunrise. The roads are open to traffic during the races, so please use caution at the road crossings. The trails will also be open to public use throughout the day, so be alert for mountain bikers, hikers, and horseback riders. Oh yea, and be sure to watch for the Bone Tree!

Aid Stations

Our course is well-supported with three manned, fully-stocked aid stations and two unmanned water stations per loop, as well as full aid at the start-finish. The locations of each aid station will be posted once we finalize the course, but you will never go more than 4 miles between aid stations.

The manned stations will feature a good selection of standard ultra-fodder including: water, Tailwind Nutrition, soda, fruit, salty snacks, cookies, and candy. We will also have basic first-aid available. Please note that we do not provide gels.

One of the most popular features of our race is our homemade vegan and gluten-free treats. Runners with special dietary concerns do not have to rely on their own food or orange slices!

In keeping with SHTRs spirit, there are outhouses at several locations along the course as well as at the start-finish. If you prefer a more civilized approach, there are indoor flush toilets and running water inside the Ranger Station, just a short walk or drive from the start-finish.

Drop Bags

Ultra and Ultra-and-a-Half runners may have drop bags. Drop bags will be accessible at the second manned aid station (approximately halfway through the loop). We will also have a drop bag site right at the start-finish. Bring your bag(s) to the registration table before the race start and we will transport them to the aid station. Please mark your bag(s) clearly with your last name and your event distance so we can

return them to the finish area after you pass through on your last loop. We do not have shelter at the aid station, so we cannot guarantee your belongings will stay dry in bad weather; please pack accordingly.

Pacers

Pacers will be allowed for Ultra and Ultra-and-a-Half runners after your first loop is completed. Only one pacer per runner at any given time. "Muling" is allowed, but pack goats are strictly prohibited.

Cutoff Times

All runners must be finished by 5:30pm. This is a 13-hour time limit for the Ultra-and-a-Half and a 10-hour time limit for the Ultra. While we will not close the trails, we cannot guarantee aid stations and finish-line food after this time. All runners must be on course to start their final loop by 12:30pm. We want everyone to finish! We will do our best to help you complete the course.

Crew/Family and Friends

Our course is extremely crew and spectator friendly! All four manned aid stations are easily road accessible and only a few minutes' drive from each other. In addition, there are numerous areas along the course where a car can pull over so you can cheer on your runner!

Evergreen Lake is a great family destination. In addition to camping, your non-running guests can enjoy miles of hiking trails, mountain biking, fishing (dock or boat), swimming, and canoe/kayak rental. There is a playground very near the start-finish.

Headphones, Pets, etc.

In accordance with Road Runners Club of America, Shady Hollow Trail Runners strongly discourages wearing headphones during our races. Passing on single-track can be difficult, and it is important that runners be able to hear other runners coming up behind them. While we will not expressly forbid you from listening to tunes, why not leave the electronic noise in your car and listen to the trail!

Strollers, bicycles, and dogs are prohibited on course. In keeping with XTerra National Trail Championship regulations, in-line skates are not allowed. You shouldn't need walking poles on our course, but you may carry them so long as you do not use them to poke other runners.

Awards and Swag

Finishers for all three races will receive an arrowhead pendant.

Half-Ultra (17 miles): Cotton t-shirt, gender-specific sizing. Special awards will be given for overall male; overall female; and the top two males and females in their 10-year age group.

Ultra (34 miles): Long-sleeve thermal t-shirt, gender-specific sizing. Hand-carved walking sticks will be given to the top 6 males and top females finishers.

Ultra-and-a-Half (51 miles): Long-sleeve 3-button hoodie shirt. Many people have told us this is the most comfortable race shirt they have ever received! Hand-carved walking sticks for ALL finishers!

There will also be special awards for overall male and female.

Note: although we do our best, late registrants are not guaranteed a shirt or a walking stick. You will, however, receive a finisher pendant and will qualify for awards.

Food

We are famous for our food. Forget the cold sandwiches and bananas. We will have a home-cooked, hot meal at the finish line, prepared by our experienced caterer/restaurant cook. Previous years have

featured barbecue beef brisket sandwiches, shrimp salsa, bacon-cucumber hors d'oeuvres, and more. We will have vegan and gluten-free offerings as well. **The menu for 2016 has not been determined.**

Prior to the Ultra and a Half (51 miles) race there will be food available. We anticipate having bagels, english muffins, oatmeal, grits, and hot coffee. **However, this menu could change prior to the race.** Runners receive breakfast and post-race meal as part of your entry fee. If family and friends would like to dine, we request a small donation to cover our costs.

Camping

Camping is allowed only in approved camping areas. The MRA Group Camping area (40.638575, -89.034550) is a short walk from the start/finish area. Pit toilets are nearby as well as barbecues. You **MUST** inform the race director prior to race day if you intend to camp in the group area. This is a Park requirement!

If you prefer a more comfortable evening, there is an RV/tent campground just a short walk from the start-finish. There is a fee for this campground and campers must register separately with Comlara Park management. Check our website for a link to camping registration.

Hotel Information

We frequently receive questions about what hotels are close to Evergreen Lake. The closest town is El Paso, IL, which is about a 20-minute drive from the start/finish area. El Paso is a typical small rural Illinois town - minimal amenities! There are 2 hotels in El Paso. Dining options are limited to Subway, Monical's Pizza, Woody's (family restaurant), and fast food.

Bloomington-Normal (B-N) is about 30-45 minutes away (depending on where you are in the community). B-N is a much larger town with numerous hotels and just about any dining option you could want. B-N also has plenty of stores if you need any last-minute items.

<http://www.daysinn.com/hotels/illinois/el-paso/days-inn-el-paso/hotel-overview>

<http://www.super8.com/hotels/illinois/el-paso/super-8-el-paso-il/hotel-overview>

Note: Last year, hotels in the Bloomington-Normal area filled very quickly due to an event at ISU. If you are planning to stay in a hotel, you may want to book a room early. Happy training, and see you in September!

All for a Good Cause

Shady Hollow Trail Runners is a non-profit organization. Race proceeds, after our costs, are donated to St. Jude Children's Hospitals. In addition, a portion of your entry fee goes directly back to Evergreen Lake for park maintenance.