

Blues Cruise 50K Participant Guide 2025

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Statement From Race Directors

The Blues Cruise 50K Trail Ultramarathon circles the beautiful Blue Marsh Lake. The 31-mile loop is very runnable, with a varied terrain that includes fields, plenty of rolling hills, single track and less than .5 miles of public roadway. The “Ski Slope” is the only major climb (240 feet in vertical accent). We have one optional water crossing where you can choose to splash through or cross on a bridge. Our themed aid stations are well stocked and serviced by local ultra runners. The 9 hour (strictly enforced) time limit makes this the perfect race for those newer to trail or ultra marathons.

New for 2025: We are moving the race start up 30 minutes to 8:00 AM in order to allow us to extend our hard cut off from 8.5 hours to 9 hours (finish by 5PM). We are required to be out of the park and gates locked at 6 PM. Aid stations 5 and 7 will have strict cut off times (see charts under “Aid Station”) to facilitate this deadline, and a sweep vehicle will be available for runners who are cut (expect some wait time).

Also: Blues Cruise 50K RELAY. Each 2-4-person team will complete 4 legs of the 50 K course.

- Leg 1: “The Lead Out” start to Aid Station 2, ~6.8 miles
- Leg 2 “The Mountaineer” Aid Station 2-4, ~7.1 miles including the famous Ski Slope
- Leg 3 “The Voyageur” Aid Station 4-7, ~13.3 miles
- Leg 4 “The Sprinter”, ~4.7 miles to the finish, where the entire team can cross the line together and receive Blues Cruise finisher awards. Prizes for the fastest teams! Due to the speed of the relay teams, Aid station support will be limited upon team arrival.

Don't miss: The Pagoda Pacers *Triple Trail Challenge 50.3 Series*. Runners that complete the Charlie Horse Trail Half Marathon (May 25), Run for the Ages Trail Chase 10 K (June 15), and Blues Cruise will receive a sweet bit of runner swag at no additional price. No special registration is required. Links to the Triple Trail Challenge 50.3 can be found at

<https://www.pagodapacers.com/Races-Results/Races/Triple-Trail-Challenge-Series.aspx>

Race Directors Michael Whalen & Elaine Cook are experienced trail and Ultra runners and long-time members of the Pagoda Pacers. With more than 200 members, the Pagoda Pacers have years of experience organizing

first class trail and road races. www.pagodapacers.com We expect to have over 100 members, most of them trail/ultramarathon runners, on site to support our participants and manage 7 of the best aid stations you ever encountered. If you have any questions about our race or ultra running in general, please don't hesitate to contact us. bluescruiserd@gmail.com Most questions and ongoing race information can be found on the Blues Cruise 50K Facebook page

(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/65364255002>).

Early registration will be \$90.00. Price will increase to \$100.00 on August 1, 2025. Guaranteed swag deadline is September 1, 2025. Online registration will close on September 28, 2025 at midnight. Race day registration will be available, but race swag is not guaranteed for anyone registering after September 1.

Race Schedule

- January 20: Blues Cruise Registration opens on UltraSignUp
- May 25: Triple Trail Challenge Race #1, Charlie Horse Trail Half Marathon

<https://ultrasignup.com/register.aspx?did=119493>

- June 15: Triple Trail Challenge Race #2, Run For the Ages

<https://www.pagodapacers.com/Races-Results/Races/Run-for-the-Ages-10k-Trail-Chase.aspx>

- July 12: 2nd annual Blues Cruise “Justa Fat Ass” Blues Cruise Training run #1 at Justa Road
 - Follow our Facebook group for details <https://www.facebook.com/groups/65364255002>
- August 1: Fee increase for Blues Cruise on UltraSignUp
- August TBD: Blues Cruise Training Run #2
- September TBD: Blues Cruise Training Run #3
- September 1: Last day to register with guaranteed race swag
- September 28: Registration closes on UltraSignUp
- Saturday October 4: Dry Camping at Race Headquarters (5 miles from start/finish–must sign up)
- Sunday October 5: RACE DAY
 - 7:00 AM Registration opens
 - 7:00-7:50 Coffee, swag sales, photo ops, sponsor freebies
 - 7:50 Pre Race announcements
 - 8:00 Race Start!!!
 - 1:45 PM Aid Station #5 (Oktoberfest) Cut off
 - 4:00 PM Aid Station #7 (Blues Brothers) Cut Off
 - 5:00PM Finish Line Closes–runners must cross the line by 5 PM (9 hours total time) to earn a finisher award.
 - ~12:00 PM-5:30 PM Post Race Buffet, Recovery Zone, swag sales
 - 6:00 PM All runners, crew, spectators, volunteers out of the park GATES LOCKED BY PARK STAFF

General Information

Blue Marsh Lake

From the official website: Blue Marsh Lake is a 6,100 acre-project having a 1,150-acre lake. Facilities include a day use area with swim beach, bathhouse, food concession, picnic areas, volleyball courts, pavilions available for rental; visitor center; three boat launches; and a stilling basin. Trails include a 30-mile multi-purpose hiking/biking trail and three interpretive trails, one being ADA accessible. Activities include swimming, picnicking, boating, water-skiing, hiking, equestrian and mountain bike riding, fishing, hunting, bird watching and other nature-oriented and outdoor activities. <https://www.recreation.gov/gateways/195>

There is NO camping or alcohol anywhere on lake property, in spite of some misleading Google search results!

Race Start/Finish

Lakeview Pavilion at Dry Brooks Day Use Area (NOT Dry Brooks Boat Launch—watch for Pagoda Pacers signs)

https://www.google.com/maps/dir//Lakeview+Pavilion,+Unnamed+Road,+Bernville,+PA+19506/@40.3864669,-76.0424671,896m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m9!4m8!1m0!1m5!1m1!1s0x89c675e876cfe9cd:0x4d82f4cb67b43643!2m2!1d-76.0417236!2d40.3869652!3e0?entry=ttu&_ep=EgoyMDI0MTIxMS4wIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D

The public restrooms will be closed in October, but we have plenty of porta johns. Notice the ample paved parking lots surrounding the pavilion. YOU MUST PARK IN A LINED SPACE. No parking along roads or driveways or in the grass. There is a large covered pavilion but no indoor space, so please have your crew and spectators plan accordingly if the weather is cold. There is a lot of grassy space with a lovely view of the lake for hanging out to watch the finish or relax with your entourage after your run!



Pre Race

Registration will begin at 7:00 AM. We will have day-of registration, but we will not have swag ordered for runners who did not register by the swag cut off on September 1. If available, post September 1 reg runners may have unclaimed 2025 swag or leftover swag from previous years. You must wait until after race start to get unclaimed 2025 swag (your crew can do this for you if you don't want to wait until you finish). We also sell a variety of Blues Cruise and Pagoda Pacers items from 7AM until about 5:30 PM.

You can also check out a table of free items from our sponsors.

Race day, morning coffee service will be available

We'll have the race arch and banners up for pre-race photos.

Pre race announcements at 7:50–IMPORTANT!

Race starts at 8:00 AM sharp! THIS IS A CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEARS IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE A 9 HOUR CUT OFF.

Drop Bags

Please keep the size reasonable! Write your name on your drop bags for easy identification. We will have a marked area near registration for you to leave your bags. The drop bags will be taken to a blue tarp at the Margaritaville (aid station 4, ~mile 14). Drop bags will be returned from AS 4 to the finish line area after the last runner exits the AS.

Spectator and Relay Info

For runner safety, the driveway in and out of the start area at Dry Brooks will be **CLOSED** from the time of race start until the last runner has crossed it. Relays should move their team car before the start, and spectators should be prepared to either leave early or wait a few minutes to exit the park.

All pre-race and on-course food is for registered runners only. Post race food is only for registered runners and those who pre-purchased a meal ticket.

We will have a large map near registration with preferred spectator sites identified. Below is driving information to AS 2,4, and 7. These are the preferred spectator areas

Finish line: Feel free to run in with your runner, but do not block the bib number or other finishers.

Driving directions for spectators and relay vehicles

Fleet Week (Capt. Matt) AS2 and **Margaritaville** (Capt. TBA) AS4

Exit the start-finish line driveway and turn left onto Palisades Dr and drive 1.0 mi, then left onto PA-183 (Bernville Rd) north. Drive 2.7 mi and turn left onto Old Church Rd. The Parking lot (with porta potties) will be located on the left, shortly after you turn onto Old Church Road. AS 4 is across the bridge to the left, AS 2 is across the street from the parking lot. For runner safety, we ask all spectators to park in the lot and NOT along the road.

Relay TEAM CARS with a proper windshield sign (Provided on race day) can move cars from the lot at AS2 to the shoulder of the road beyond AS4 (ask volunteers for guidance). No spectator cars should be parked along the roadways.

Blues Brothers (Capt. Steve) AS7: From the start area turn right onto Palisades Drive, go 2.0 mi and turn right onto Rebers Bridge Rd. Go 1.5 mi and pass Ganley's Pub, on Brownsville Rd. Go approx. 0.4 mi and turn right onto State Hill Boat Ramp entry. Follow the road to the end. The AS is on the left side of the main parking lot. **State Hill Boat Launch 599 Brownsville Rd, Wernersville, PA 19565**

Post Race Food and Activities

All registered runners will get a full hot meal at the finish. Menu includes pulled pork, vegan hot dogs, pierogies, soup, and dessert. During the registration process, you can select additional meal tickets for your crew if desired. Only registered runners and those with tickets should eat from the buffet! Please plan accordingly and bring food or stop in nearby Bernville for sustenance if needed.

Alcohol is prohibited at the park. The finish line Recovery Center will have water, soda, gatorade, and some NA Athletic beers available for registered runners, as well as recovery care including first aid and massage for donation.

Awards are handed out as participants finish. There is no award ceremony. Finish line volunteers will give out finisher awards and age group or overall awards as runners cross the line. Results will be posted on UltraSignUp.

We **MUST** have everyone out of the park by 6PM, when the gates are locked. This is why we have a hard cut off of 9 hours (finish by 5PM) to allow runners to recover enough to safely drive, and to allow our volunteer staff to clean up.

Aid Station Info

Due to documented medical evidence, we will **NOT** be offering Ibuprofen at any of the Aid Stations. We **WILL** have Gatorade, gels, fuel, Ultra-style food and of course GREAT costumes at each of the 7 on-course stations.

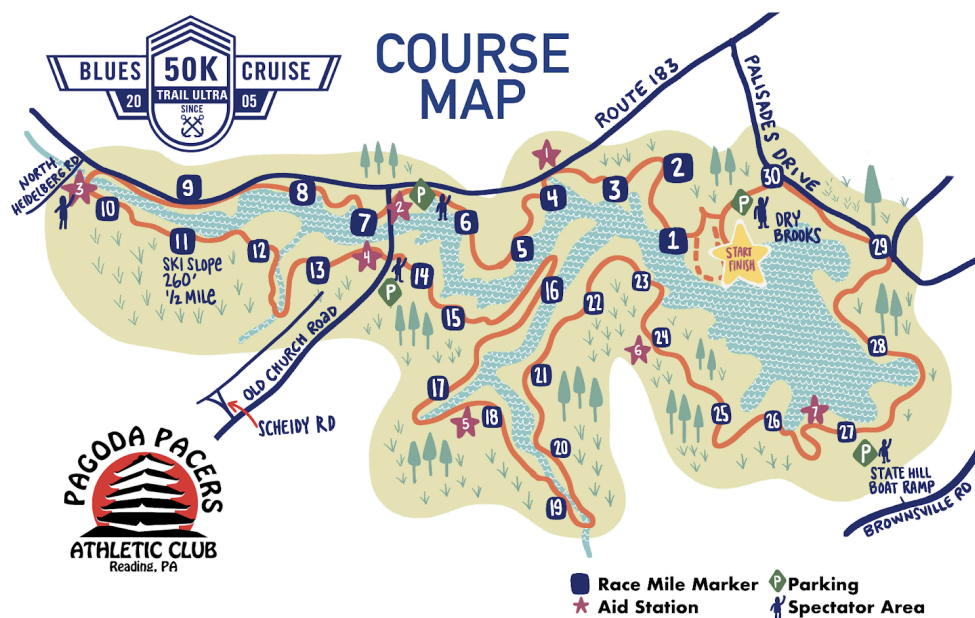
Remember Blues Cruise is cupless. Please carry a reusable cup or water bottle!

Counter Clockwise Years (odd years)

	Aid Station Name	Total miles	Distance from previous AS	Crew access	Drop bag	Cut off time	Restroom Facilities	Relay exchange
AS1	Rocky	3.7	3.7	No	No	none	No	No
AS2	Fleet Week	6.8	3.1	Yes	No	none	Yes	Yes
AS3	Rat's Nest	10.1	3.3	No	No	none	No	No
AS4	Margaritaville	14.0	3.8	Yes	Yes	none	No	Yes
AS5	Oktoberfest	19.7	5.7	No	No	1:45PM*	No	No
AS6	Fugawi	22.6	2.9	No	No	none**	No	No
AS7	Blues Bros	27.2	4.7	Yes	No	4:00PM*	Yes	Yes
finish	Finish line	31.8	4.7	Yes	No	5:00PM	Yes	No

*Note: Runners must average under 16:59 pace per mile over the entire course to earn a finish (remember: GPS data varies!!!). The cutoffs are slightly more generous than that pace to account for minor issues that might delay you temporarily such as shoe change, bathroom stop, etc. IF YOU LEAVE AS 7 AT THE 4:00 CUTOFF YOU WOULD HAVE TO RUN 12:45 PACE TO THE FINISH LINE. Aim to be at least 30 minutes under the cutoff if you are moving at a steady pace!

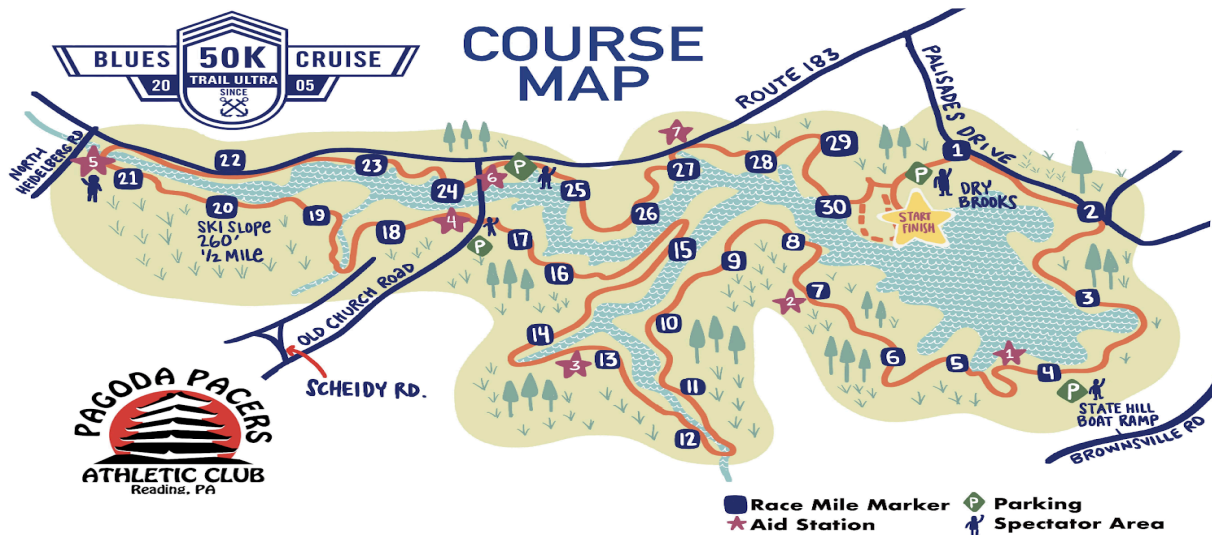
**Also note: In odd (counterclockwise) years, there is no cutoff at AS6 simply due to the fact that it is inaccessible to crew. Runners who leave AS5 Oktoberfest close to the cutoff would need to cover 7.6 miles to AS7 Blues Brothers in order to get a ride if they are unable to continue. Plan and train accordingly!



Clockwise Years (even years)

	Aid StationName	Total miles	Distance from previous AS	Crew access	Drop bag	Cut off time	Restroom Facilities	Relay exchange
AS1	Blues Bros	4.7	4.7	No	No	none	Yes	Yes
AS2	Fugawi	9.4	4.7	No	No	none	No	No
AS3	Oktoberfest	12.3	2.9	No	No	none	No	No
AS4	Margaritaville	18.0	5.7	Yes	Yes	none	No	Yes
AS5	Rat's Nest	21.8	3.8	No	No	2:20PM#	No	No
AS6	Fleet Week	25.1	3.3	Yes	No	3:15PM#	Yes	Yes
AS7	Rocky	28.2	3.1	No	No	4:10PM#	No	No
finish	Finish line	31.8	3.7	Yes	No	5:00PM#	Yes	No

#Note: Runners must average under 16:59 pace per mile over the entire course to earn a finish (remember: GPS data varies!!!). The cutoffs are slightly more generous than that pace to account for minor issues that might delay you temporarily such as shoe change, bathroom stop, etc. IF YOU LEAVE AS 7 AT THE 4:10 CUTOFF YOU WOULD HAVE TO RUN 13:31 PACE TO THE FINISH LINE. Aim to be at least 30 minutes under the cutoff if you are moving at a steady pace!



Race Rules

1. NO BANDITS. Registered runners only. No pacers. 50K races typically do not accommodate pacers. If you want to run with a friend they must also register.
2. Race swag cannot be mailed to those who are unable to run. You may pick it up yourself or have a friend get it for you.
3. Park in designated lined spaces only. No parking along roads or in grass.
4. Race is cupless. Please bring a reusable cup. We will have a limited number for sale at the race.
5. Wear bib number on the front of your body so that numbers can clearly be read by volunteers.
Exception: relay runners not running the finish leg will wear numbers on their BACKS so ultra runners who are passed by them will be able to tell they are in the relay competition.
6. Aid station captains, course marshals, sweepers, and fire police guidance must be followed. Failure to yield at road crossings (there are 2) or not following race official requests can lead to disqualification.
7. Cut Off times strictly enforced. See charts above. Aid station captains may also pull runners who are clearly unable to continue safely. Failure to turn in your bib number when asked will result in disqualification.
8. No course cutting. If you accidentally leave the course you must return to the point where you left to rejoin the race. Course will be well marked, but trail racing requires you to be alert and attentive to the markings! Course will be flagged with pink ribbon, orange will mark do not enter, and there will be some supplemental spray chalk and signs.
9. No dogs on course.
10. Crew may not assist you anywhere other than the 3 designated aid stations (see chart above). Drop bags only at AS4. No unofficial drop bags.
11. Do not litter. Carry your trash to the next AS.
12. Be courteous. Announce yourself when passing, allow faster runners through, yield to horses, allow bikers and hikers space in this public park.
13. If you find you cannot finish, tell the nearest aid station captain and turn in your bib. Otherwise we will be unaware and will notify authorities to search for you!

Course Records

Men: 3:32:53

Women: 4:07:30

Non Binary:

Men's Relay:

Women's Relay: 5:26:14

Mixed Relay: 5:04:15

Safety Plan

The Race Directors have created a detailed Race Safety Plan that will be emailed to all runners prior to race day