



Cactus Rose

100mile / 50mile / 4x25mi relay

Hill Country SNA near Bandera Texas

(Start) 5am Saturday- (36 hours)-5pm Sunday (Stop)



WELCOME

... to the Texas Hill Country: where everything Stings, Scratches, or Bites. The name CACTUS ROSE defines this event very well... where Pain accompanies Beauty. A nasty rugged trail run through the beautiful Texas Hill Country. Cactus Rose is a race for veteran trail runners. You'll get a nice shirt, finisher's buckle/medal, chip timing, unique awards for top M&F winners, etc. Course is really well marked 25mi loop. 100 milers run 4 loops switching directions each time, 50mi runs 2 loops. All in all, this is a full-grown race with all the amenities, except one: there are NO volunteers at ANY aid station and we do NOT provide ANY food either. We mark the course like crazy, and set up tents/tables/water/ice at each aid station (5mi apart). You place your own gear/food/coolers at each station as you desire, or carry what you need. Very simple. Very wonderful.

THIS IS HOW IT WORKS

Marking is done a few days prior. Each aid station is a large tent with table, water coolers, and cooler full of ice. We make sure there is always water and ice during the run. Before the race, we can show every runner where each station is so that you can put what you want at each. You place your own gear, food, & coolers at each station. Some people set up their own chair, ice chest, food bag, and clothes bag at each. The loop is 25 miles to run, but is a very short drive to get to all stations by vehicle. It might take 20 minutes to get to all of them. For record keeping, I leave a pad, with pen & watch at each station. Every runner must write down your name, bib#, and time at every aid station as you pass by each one so that we can keep track of where you are at all times. It's okay to make any notes in the books if you wish to pass along info to me or anybody else. The only exception is: you don't need to stop & write at the first two stations on the first loop. Nachos and Boyles are Quiet aid stations, which most of the runners have acquired a very strong liking for. Nobody is there, so you can carefully take care of your own needs without being pressured or harassed. It's really a great place to take a peaceful break. Equestrian is usually busy & loud, just because it's the main gathering place for most crews. It really is amazing how the runner's crews make as good a full service aid station as many planned aid stations. It is spontaneous and a true joy to be apart of. The Lodge is where the race staff, timing, medical and everybody else waits for you to finish each loop. Sometimes, friends set up and help at equestrian and the Lodge, but there is no promise of anyone being at either place.

COURSE

You run the exact same 25mi loop every time, BUT... reverse direction each loop. Loops 1 & 3 are clockwise, loops 2 & 4 are counter-clockwise. So everybody will see everybody else to appraise time gaps, determine how they look, and to just say hello. 100 milers & Relay teams run 4 loops, while 50 milers run 2 loops. This can provide a tough challenge in that if you second guess yourself and turn around to see if you went the wrong way, you might very well

see an arrow pointing you the other direction. So be careful coming and going from aid stations and when you stop off for a restroom break in the woods. Also note that you start and end each loop at the “stick” of the lollipop. In other words, you start off running down a straightaway, then turn to enter onto the loop. When you get to the end of the loop, you’ll turn and head right back down that same straightaway to come in. It’s marked like crazy, but you have to follow the signs.

The course is best described as rough & gnarly (technical)... understanding we made every attempt to avoid what is flat to find what is nasty. It was built more for entertainment than speed. Note* entertaining = slower than you think!

COURSE MARKING

At this, we do excel. We mark and manage the course, using hundreds of arrows & wrong way signs. There literally must be at least 1000 confidence flags out there with reflective ribbons on every one. It is exactly the same course for the 100mi, 50mi, & Relay, so there are no split course markers for one group or another. One distinction is that you will change direction each loop, so that runners will be going both directions on the same trail at the same time depending on speed. Yes, the very fast ones will lap the very slow ones. There will be an arrow at every location where there is more than one choice. Every effort is made to make it so that anybody can follow the route without a map... especially a bunch of veteran trail runners. Note that at times, we do use a CHOICE sign which points in both directions. Choice means both routes are equally bad. Think about this: If we select the route, we’d pick the more difficult one. Also, this messes with all those who don’t read this document.

AID STATIONS

There are FIVE aid stations roughly 4.5 - 6 miles from one to the next. (Lodge, YaYa, Nachos, Equestrian, Boyles). Each is a large tent. We put water & ice at each station with notepad, pen, & light. You must write your name, bib, & time at every station so we can track you. We check the station regularly for water, ice, and you.

All stations are an easy drive within minutes of the start and directly off the park roads. You should be able to drop your gear at each in under an hour. You can get a detailed map for all of them from the website. If you can't figure it out, and you arrive on Friday, ask me & I can find somebody to escort you to each. If you arrive race morning, you're on your own. The race starts very early, so I won't have the time on race day. I would suggest putting everything edible in an airtight container, or it will attract bees, bugs, and other beasts. Also, make sure your trash ends up in the trashcan. This is the method we have used for all years... and it works great.

CUPLESS

We will NOT provide cups for cold beverages. You must carry your own water bottles,

hydration vests, etc. We WILL provide a couple community cups at each aid station if you lost your water bottle and you are desperate and gross enough to use that. At hot events, we WILL provide Styrofoam cups or bowls and plastic spoons for hot items. We WILL also place some small food items in small serving paper dishes for sanitary reasons. You are required to stay at the Aid Station with all paper and Styrofoam items. No one may enter back onto the trails while still holding that trash. Anyone caught with items on the trail and/or littering will be automatically DQ'ed, and not allowed to return for a future event.

AID STATION NOTES

Set up your own stuff where you want it. Nobody is to touch anyone else's gear. The only thing that should be left on the tables will be from the race: Water, Ice, Notebook, Pen, and Watch. If anything is left on the table as we come to check on each aid station throughout the night, it is trash. There will be a trash can there for your trash: please use it. Crews: take out your own trash, and if you really want to be helpful, take out the other trash as well. Also to crews: do not leave anything with a flame (like a lantern) unattended. I have a few LED lanterns on each table that give some light, but not much.

Start 5:00am (Sat)		Cactus Rose				5:00pm (Sun) Final Cutoff	
Aid Station Names (LOOPS 1,3)	Lodge (start)	to YaYa	to Nachos	to Equestrian	to Boyles	to Finish (Lodge)	
Distance b/w stations		5.15	4.45	6.15	4.32	5	
Aid Station Names (LOOPS 2,4)	Lodge (start)	to Boyles	to Equestrian	to Nachos	to YaYa	to Finish (Lodge)	
Distance b/w stations		5	4.32	6.15	4.45	5.15	
Loop 1 Aid Stations Names	Lodge (start)	YaYa	Nachos	Equestrian	Boyles	Finish (Lodge)	
Loop 1 (cumulative miles)	0	5.15	9.6	15.75	20.07		
Loop 2 Aid Stations Names	Lodge (start)	Boyles	Equestrian	Nachos	YaYa	Finish (Lodge)	
Loop 2 (cumulative miles)	25.07	30.07	34.4	40.55	45		
Loop 3 Aid Station Names	Lodge (start)	YaYa	Nachos	Equestrian	Boyles	Finish (Lodge)	
Loop 3 (cumulative miles)	50.15	55.3	59.75	65.9	70.22		
Loop 4 Aid Station Names	Lodge (start)	Boyles	Equestrian	Nachos	YaYa	Finish (Lodge)	
Loop 4 (cumulative miles)	75.22	80.22	84.54	90.7	95.14	100.29	
Cutoffs	8:00am	9:50am	11:20am	1:35pm	3:10pm	5:00pm	
Drop Bags	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Crew Allowed	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Slowest Pace Possible	21:36 per mile						

100 mile and 100 Mile Relay = 4 loops. Loops 1&3 are clockwise. Loops 2&4 are counter-clockwise.
50 miles = 2 loops. Loop 1 is clockwise. Loop 2 is counter-clockwise.

PACERS

- Must wait til AFTER 50 miles or AFTER it gets dark, whichever comes first.
- As many as you want, but only 'One-at-a-Time'. i.e. A new pacer at every aid

station is fine.

c) Pacers can ONLY start from an Aid Station. Not from anywhere else.

d) If a runner is 60 or older, a pacer is allowed the entire 100 miles.

e) No mule-ing . Carry your own gear, jacket, water, toothbrush, hearing aid, skeleton, monkey, gorilla... and so on.

THE 50-mile OPTION

The 50 milers start with the 100 milers. Same start, same course, same rules. The 100 milers cannot have a pacer until dark or 50 miles; so, this same rule applies to the 50-mile runners. So, the only way a 50 miler can have a pacer is to still be running after dark. In reference to 50mi cutoffs: the same rules apply to both 50mi & 100mi runners. You have 36 hours.

4x25mi RELAY

The 100mi relay is a 4-person team, running 25mi each. Start at the Lodge & hand off the timing chip & race bib to the next team member at the Lodge. 4 shirts, 4 medals, & possibly 4 winners awards. We treat the relay teams much the same as we would a solo 100mi runner except for a few things: such as we don't really think you need a pacer. If we didn't have a relay option, y'all would most likely be pacers. Also, relay teams can only crew at Lodge & Equestrian.

DROP BAGS

Well this is what this one is all about... your skill in providing for yourself, in your own drop bags at each station. You bring it, you clean it up, you take it home. It's all yours. But on Sunday starting at 8am (or after the slowest runner if he/she is ahead of cutoffs), we start a rolling teardown of the aid stations as we close the course down. If you leave anything behind, it's gone. Our teardown crew cleans up & clears out pretty quick after the race is over. We have it down to a science, such that everything will be gone soon after the race is over. Please note: we do not take home any items left behind. The aid station cutoff times are also the teardown times. We'd prefer that you picked up your own bags. You did put them out there, so you should pick them up as well.

We will bring all the bags and gear back to the Lodge when we tear down, but we make our best guess on what is trash.

You will have until 5pm to collect your bags.

CREWS

Crews can meet their runner at any aid station, but only at an aid station, nowhere else. Relay teams are only allowed to crew at Lodge & Equestrian. If your crew wants to settle in, set up a stove to cook some food, and hang out someplace, then it is okay to make yourself at home at either Equestrian or Lodge aid stations. Heck they might as well even help anybody else who

happens to come in, but keep in mind that as many runners might appreciate your help, many others don't want it or need it. Please be considerate when rendering aid, as some prefer to do it all themselves. Many crews do pull up and camp at Equestrian and Lodge stations. Each has become a party of sorts, with lots of activity all day and most of the night. If you do set up and cook at any aid station, make sure you do this OUTSIDE of the tent. The runners own the tent space. This is not a place for crews to adopt and own. If you're concerned about rain or cold, bring your own tent. Please do not disturb the peace and quiet at Boyles or Nachos, as both are to remain QUIET stations. It is ok to go there, but be respectful of the runners desire for a peaceful and quiet rest station. A good crew might even be talked into driving to town to fetch a hot meal for a weary runner. But, that's your business. And lastly, please take your trash & your gear with you when you are done.

PARKING

Crews and spectators may park anywhere that is in a parking space. Hill Country State Natural Area is a Texas State Park, and abides by the same rules. Thus, you can be ticketed if parked on the side of any road.

Lodge – plenty of parking for everyone

Equestrian - has the most parking spaces next to the main race hub at the Lodge.

Boyles - No driving or parking, but it's a short hike from the Lodge.

YaYa – no parking spaces exist here.

Nachos – only a few. This is right next to the park superintendent's house. You may not park in his driveway or in the mowed down spot next to his fence. There are a small number of spaces a little past the turn to where you start hiking the short walk off the main road.

BATHROOMS

We will provide a few portojons at the start/Lodge, but there are none at Boyles or Nachos. There are actually a few other semi-permanent bathroom structures on the course: 1 at Equestrian, 1 at Bar-O, 1 at Chiquita Falls. If you know the park, then you know. If you don't and you really need to know, then I suggest you go find them before the race starts. You can drive to all these locations, as they are all at road crossings.

AWARDS

Top 3 male & females receive awards for 100mi & 50mi. Top 2 teams receive awards for the Relays. All 100-mile finishers receive a buckle. All 50-mile finishers receive a medal. We do not allow an **Under-Achiever** who starts as a 100-mile runner and finish with a top placing in the 50-mile race. You will be a DNF in the results. You can choose to take a finisher medal if you'd like. We do allow 50 milers to be an **Over-Achiever** who goes beyond 50 miles to finish as a

100 miler. Make sure you have a check or cash ready to present to me before you start the 3rd loop. You should know before you start that this might happen, so simply make your arrangements.

This being close to Halloween, we also do **Best Costumes** awards for the best costumes worn during the run. You don't need to wear it for the entire run, but must have it for at least one complete 25-mile loop. This does imply the costume award is ONLY for the runners.

CHIP TIMING

We use chip timing for this race. Do not forget to pick up your chip & ankle strap at packet pickup. A timing mat will be at the finish. You must cross it after every loop to get credit for each one. Also, I'll have a notebook at the Lodge for final verification. Somebody will always be at the finish but you should still make certain to write your time here just the same as every other station. Note that chip timing does not apply to offset your start time. Start time is the same for everybody: what we call Gun-Time, when the race starts.

MEDICAL

Yes, medical will be there. The park expects a certain amount of coverage. You can duct tape your own wounds, but we will be there if duct tape is not enough.

TRASH

The park expects us to leave the park as clean as we found it. We would hope that you would help us to keep it clean by putting all your trash in the aid stations trashcans. Please do not leave any trash on the course. I hate to talk about "disqualification" but this is one place where it can happen. Only thing worse than TRASHing is CHEATING.

VOLUNTEERS

Of course, some things we cannot do without, and these are what we need help with. Medical, course markers, checkers to make certain every station always has water and ice, and also to cross check names, bibs, and times at every aid station, chip pullers, & someone to hand out medals & awards. And there is always some grunt work, but really not all that much. So if you want to help and can... please call or email and note the day(s), time(s) and means to contact you (name, phone, email, when to call) I plan to arrive in the park early on Wednesday to start marking the course. Email: Chris McWatters

MAPPING & COURSE CERTIFICATION

I have worked with a few professionals who know quite a bit about mapping & course certification and they tell me that we have done more than most certified road races to make certain the distance is correct. Still, there is no official organization that will certify a TRAIL race. If somebody tells you their trail race is

certified, then they are lying. It just isn't done. Still, we do the best we can. The course is rolled with a 6ft Jones counter (wheel), a professional device to measure distance. I have been using this method for 15 years on all my courses and believe it to be the most accurate method available. The trails do change, some by erosion, some are detoured, and some are closed. So, I have to go and redo entire sections at times and sometimes recheck the entire length. I do use a GPS device to collect a nice picture of the route (a track), but do not use the GPS for distance measurement. We get a nice topo map and accurate measurements for distance by different means. End result: we create a 25mi round-a-bout loop that we have made every attempt to avoid what is flat and include what is nasty. If your GPS is not exact to what we profess, consider that we are very very careful with how we measure. I have also run this course with GPS and do not turn it off each time I stop to pee, or step into the bushes for other business, or drift around my drop bag when I fetch food and water, or when I accidentally drift down the longer chute on a trail that when I look back to discover there was a slightly short route. What we do while measuring is as exact as we can make it. What we run - is not. Also, I have learned the shorter way is also not the fastest way: but we always measure the shortest way. All of these reasons are why NO trail races are certified and may never be. Anyway, we do try to make it right. I could tell you a few stories about this topic & they are all quite funny. The course gets tweaked every year, and we log a bunch of miles to get the distance as dead on to what we advertise as possible!

RACE WEEKEND SCHEDULE

Fri	5:00pm - 6:00 pm	Packet Pickup
	6:00 pm - 6:30 pm	Trail Briefing
	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Packet Pickup
Sat	4:00 am - 5:00 am	Packet Pickup
	5:00 am	Start Race
	11:00am	Youth Trail Run (check in at timing tent)
Sun	8:00 am	Cutoff Lodge (must have begun final loop)
	5:00 pm	Cutoff 36-hour (race closes)

We will hand out all awards as you cross the finish line.

DRIVING DIRECTIONS... to each aid station from the Lodge.

YaYa... You drove past this coming into the park. Drive back past the park office, across the low water crossing, turn left like you're exiting the park. The aid station will be on your left, visible from the road (where the course goes directly across the road). Be careful parking off the road if it's wet.

NACHOS... is just off the road but not easy to see. You will be on the park road leading to Tarpley (opposite direction as you went to find YaYa). If you go to YaYa, then to Nachos, just simply turn around at YaYa like you're going back to the low water crossing, but don't cross it, just go on straight. A little down the road that way, a house will be on the left side just before you exit the park. A trail is directly across from the house. If you park here and walk up the jeep road

about 30 yards, you will find the aid station. It is not visible from the road. It is a very short walk.

EQUESTRIAN... You drove past it coming in to the Lodge. There is a small dirt parking lot on the left side of the road as you drive in.

BOYLES... is a short drive/hike up from the Lodge. In front of the Lodge is a grassy/dirt road going left across the field, that leads out past a corral on the right side (looking out from the house). The road is about 100 yards long and T's into another road. Make a left and drive another 50 yards. An old abandoned house is on the left. The aid station will be just on the other side of the house on the left. If it's dry this is an easy drive. If wet... you will have to walk.

LODGE... aid station at the start/finish. Your stuff can go in the barn to the side of where we're doing packet pickup.