

# Tinajas Ultra & Trail Relays



100km / 50km / 13.1mi  
100km Relays / 50km Relays

Colorado Bend State Park  
Bend, TX  
24 Hour Cutoff



## WELCOME

to Bend, TX and Colorado Bend State Park! This park is full of an incredible feature called tinajas. A Tinaja is an incredible natural feature native to this part of the world. After water falls from above for long periods of time, stone is eroded away into shallow bowls. These areas allow water to sit in them long after the water stopped flowing from above. This water has kept wildlife and humans alive for centuries. Just like the Tinajas out in the wild, we hope this event gives you something deeply needed, whatever that is for you. Perhaps a break from life's complexities.

We created this event because we wanted another difficult long distance trail event in Texas. This area is beautiful; the trails are technical and fun; the loop is a big 50km circuit; the awards are really cool and unique; the Tejas Trails volunteers are incredible as always. But one twist, we aren't letting any volunteers be out serving you at aid stations like usual. In fact, the only thing at the Aid Stations will be water, ice, and a little shelter.

Like always, we will have medical, restrooms, food, camping, and other amenities around the start/finish area, backyard games around the finish line, and a well-marked course. But you'll have to take care of yourself out there on the course. This is a great practice for Cactus Rose!

## MORE DETAILS

Marking is done a few days prior. Each aid station is a large tent with tables, water coolers, and a large 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, tent, and drop bag at each. Some people use only the main aid station and carry what they want through each loop. The loop is 31 miles to run, but is a very short drive to get to all stations by vehicle. All within the same park. For safety, I leave a pad, with a pen & a watch at each station. Every runner must write down his or her name, bib#, and time passed through at each aid station. This allows us and your crew to 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. If you need medical help, they will be stationed at the start/finish area the entire race. If you get into an emergency situation out on the course, you just let another runner know what's going on and they will let us know. We can access the entire course fairly quickly.

## COURSE

You run the exact same 31+ mile loop each time. This course has a bit of everything, as well as some really beautiful scenery. Only caveat to that this year is that we removed a couple small out and back sections from the original

layout to simplify things. So to dial in the distance to get you exactly 50k and 100k, you running those two distances will do a short out and back before heading out on the first loop. Please note that the first lap for the 100km is a little longer than the 2<sup>nd</sup> lap because you only do the extra out and back before lap 1.

## COURSE MARKING

We mark and manage the course, using hundreds of arrows & wrong way signs. There literally must be at least 1000+ confidence markers out there with reflective ribbons on every one. It is exactly the same course for the 100km, 50km, & Relays. The Half Marathon will have a split off where they short cut part of the course. Those intersections will be heavily marked. But you will have to take note of those signs. 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 7 aid stations roughly 3-6 miles from one to the next. Each is a large weatherproof tent. The tent might be enclosed with side panel tarps if the weather turns cold and/or wet. Usually we'll have the tarps in position rolled up with bungees. Feel free to drop those tarps down if you feel it's cold enough to warrant the added protection. The only exception is that the Conference Center A.S. is the actual building called the "Conference Center". You won't have access inside this building, but there's a nice covered porch all around it. For every aid station, 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. If anyone's distance, splits, etc. is in question, we will check those books. If you don't sign in each time, you may get disqualified from the results.

All stations are an easy drive from the main race hub. 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 us and we'll help you figure it out. They are all off of main roads though. No complex turns or off road driving capabilities are needed. If you arrive race morning, you're on your own. The race starts early, so we won't have the time on race morning to help you. 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 trashbags provided or pack out on your own.

Please note that the park no longer allows you to drive down to the Conference Center. So for Conference Center and Tinaja Aid Stations, you'll have to park at Gorman Falls Parking Lot and hike or bike to the aid stations. Tinaja is a little over a mile from there, and Conference Center is around 1.5 miles each way.

## AID STATION NOTES

Set up your own stuff where you want it and nobody will touch it. It remains where you put it. Always clean up your own trash. 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, it is trash. 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. Please battery operated items only.

## CUPLESS

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

At cold events, we WILL provide Styrofoam cups or bowls and plastic spoons for hot items at the start/finish aid station only. Think of this as more for medical concerns than aid station food. 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.

## PACERS

- a) Must wait until AFTER the first loop, or AFTER it gets dark, whichever comes first.
- b) As many as you want, but only one at a time.
- 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 100km.
- e) No mule-ing . Carry your own gear, jacket, water, toothbrush, hearing aid, chicken, monkey, gorilla...

## RELAYS

This is gonna be a blast! 50km and 100km options. Bring anywhere from 3 to 7 relay members per team for 100km Relay, and 3-7 for 50km Relay. It doesn't matter who does how many legs or miles. There will not be separate categories per number of teammates.

Your Team Members may run any number of legs in any order. We don't need to know your team's plan.

Only rules are as follows:

Relay leg handoffs only allowed at an Aid Station.

Any Relay Team Member seen starting anywhere but at an aid station will get their entire team automatically disqualified.

Your team will have a single Team Bracelet. This will be your "baton". You will each have to remove your bracelet from your arm and pass it to your next teammate at each relay exchange.

Only your Team Captain must check in at Packet Pickup. Only your Team Captain may pick up your team's packet. We will most likely only send info to your Team Captain. He or she must pass along info to your team.

There aren't a lot of parking spaces at most aid stations, therefore, please plan on your relay member also taking your vehicle back to the start/finish area or the next exchange location.

There is no parking at Tinaja & Conference Center Aid Stations. You have to park at Gorman Falls Parking Lot and walk, hike, jog, or bike past the big iron gate and down the dirt road. Tinaja is a little over a mile from the parking lot. Conference Center is about 1.5 miles.

So, if you're going to exchange at either of those aid stations, you'll need to plan accordingly (runner starting from there needs to jog into position early, and runner finishing there needs to be able to safely hike or jog the distance up the road to the parking lot).

Everyone's vehicle except for ONE designated transport vehicle must stay at the main start/finish area.

Whichever vehicle is designated as your team's Relay Transport Vehicle, will need an official race Relay Transport Vehicle Tag in it at all times. You can pick this up at packet pickup.

Please don't cheat this system. It's the only way we can have this fun option for this many teams!

See the [Map link](#) on the [Tinajas page](#) to see all possible Relay Exchange Points.

## 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 morning, 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 Start/Finish Aid Station when we tear down, but we make our best guess on what is trash. You will have until noon to collect your bags from the start/finish area. After that time, items will be donated or thrown away.

\* For **Tinaja & Conference Center Aid Stations**, you'll need to put your drop bag (if you really need to have one) at the Drop Bag feather flag sign at Packet

Pickup. Look for the sign with the appropriate Aid Station name, put your bib number and A.S. name on your bag. We will deliver these bags for you Saturday morning after the race starts and place them in numerical order according to your bib number. We will not bring these back until Sunday morning at 7:30am. So you may not want to put anything too valuable out there at these two spots.

## CREWS

Crews can meet their runner at any aid station, but only at an aid station, nowhere else. Note that you cannot drive to Tinaja or Conference Center Aid Stations. It's really nice down there, but you'll have to jog or hike. Even for relay members. So that does mean that if you finish there, you need to have enough juice in the tank to jog/hike up the road to the parking lot.

Otherwise, please be considerate when rendering aid, as some prefer to do it all themselves. Many crews do pull up and camp at aid 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 official aid station tent. The runners own the tent space. This is not a place for crews to adopt and take over. If you're concerned about rain or cold, bring your own tent. And lastly, please take your trash & your gear with you when you are done.

## BATHROOMS

The park does have some permanent bathrooms. We'll rent a few extra to have at the Start/Finish area. But be prepared to do your business in the woods. There are also a couple outdoor showers at the Start/Finish area...and a big river.

## AWARDS

Top 3 Males & Females plus Top Masters Male and Female (50+) for all distances will receive an awesome award. Top Relay teams will receive awards as well. All 100km finishers receive a buckle. All 50km and ½ marathon finishers receive a killer medal.

We do not allow an Under-Achiever who starts as a 100km runner to place in the 50km race. You can have a finisher medal if you want it. But you'll show as a DNF. We do allow 50km runners to be an Over-Achiever and want to run beyond 50km to finish as a 100km. Make sure you have a check or cash ready to present to the RD and/or Timer before you start the 2nd loop. You should know before you start that this might happen, so simply make your arrangements.

## 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 each loop to get credit for each one. Also, I'll have a notebook at the Start/Finish Aid

Station 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 aid 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.

## DNF

If you do not complete the distance you signed up for, you will show up in the results as a DNF. Your miles may still be used toward the Tejas 400 if you align with the rules for that award.

## MEDICAL

Yes, medical will be there. 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 trashbags. 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. So if you want to help and can... please jump on the website and click on the "Volunteering" link at the top of any page. There's a form there you can quickly fill out. We plan to arrive in the park early on Tuesday or Wednesday to start marking the course. Email: [Brad Quinn](mailto:Brad.Quinn)

## 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 many 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, we 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 50km round-a-bout loop that we have made every attempt to avoid what is flat and include what is technical and scenic. 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 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 shorter 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. So, know that the course gets constantly tweaked, and we log a bunch of miles to get the distance as dead on to what we advertise as possible!

## RACE WEEKEND SCHEDULE

See "Weekend Schedule" on website.

## DIRECTIONS / ACCESS TO AID STATIONS:

See the map on the website and look for these (in order of leaving the start/finish area):

**Start/Finish**, all the way into the park, as far as you can drive. It's technically at the "River Group Site" according to the park's vocab. You'll know you're close when you head down a really steep section of paved road and the river comes into view. We will be to the right along the edge of the river. Campsites are both left and right of the ranger check-in station.

**Lemon Ridge Parking Lot**, first pops up on your right hand side after climbing back up the main road.

Note, **Lemon Ridge Aid Station** is hit twice per loop. Once on the way out and once on the way back. All other A.S. are hit once per loop.

**Cedar Chopper**, this will be next, showing up on your right hand side also. Park in the small parking lot and walk up the trail about one-tenth of a mile to find the aid station.

**Windmill Area Parking Lot**, isn't far past the Cedar Chopper Parking Lot on your left if exiting the park.

**Gorman Falls**, after driving past Windmill Area Parking Lot, you'll see a turn on your right. Take that turn to the Gorman Falls Aid Station near the big iron gate.

**Tinaja**, you won't be able to drive all the way to this one. Park at Gorman Falls Parking Lot, and look for the big iron gate. Hike or bike around the gate and travel down the dirt road. It's a little over a mile past the gate. You'll see the aid



station setup on the side of the road, right where the Tinaja Trail crosses the dirt road before you make it to the Conference Center.

**Conference Center**, a little past Tinaja A.S., around the curve, down the hill, you'll come to the Conference Center. Nestled in some big beautiful trees and some stream crossings lined with small bridges across them. This won't be a tent, it will actually be under the porch of the cabin down there on the opposite side you'll approach from when coming from the road.

Just like Tinajas A.S., the park doesn't allow you to drive down here. You can park at the Gorman Falls parking area and walk around the big gate. Just follow the same dirt road that takes you to Tinaja A.S., but keep going past it, about 1.5 miles total one way.