



# RIDGEWAY RELAY 15<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2008

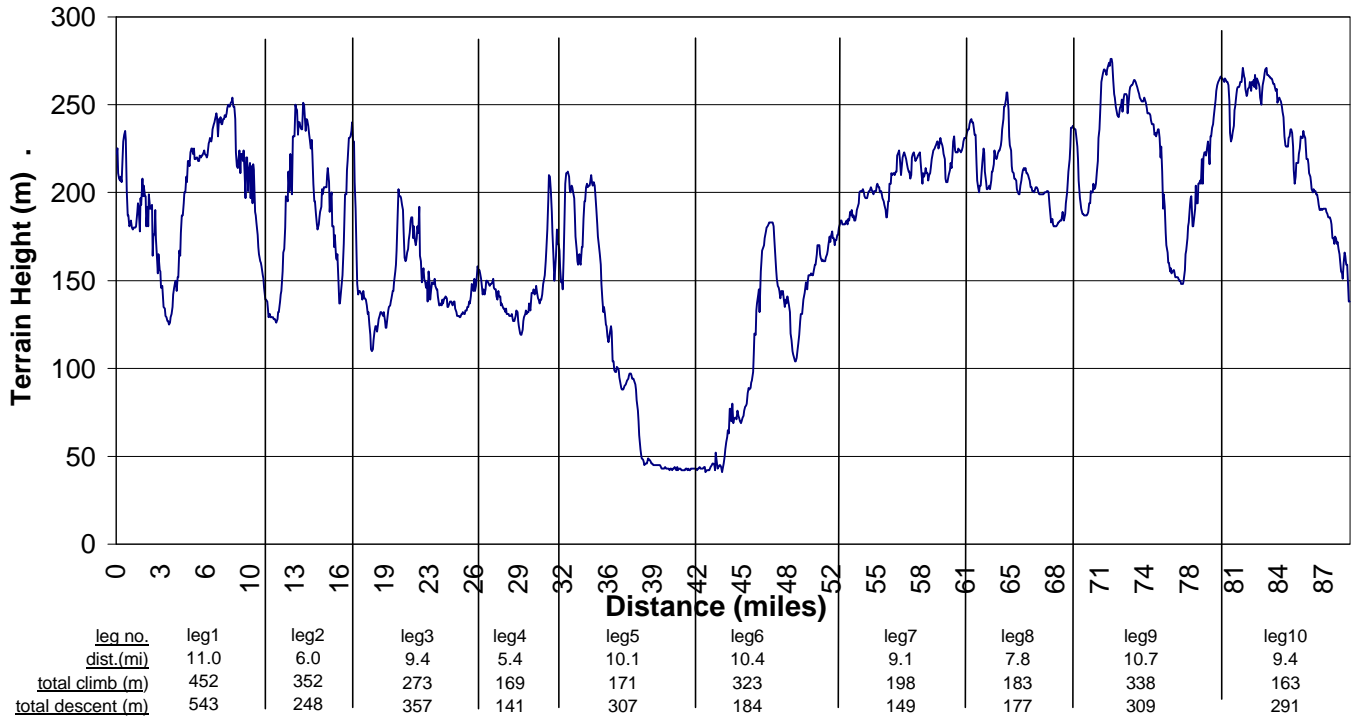
## RACE INFORMATION

Team captains are asked to distribute this race information pack to all members of their team.

### Maps and Further Route Information

The route follows the official Ridgeway National Trail, except for a diversion on stage nine to avoid a dangerous road crossing South of Ogbourne St. George, and a diversion on stage ten across the Marlborough Downs to the finish at Marlborough Leisure Centre. The total distance is 89 miles. Runners who gain advantage by deviating from the route are liable to incur time penalties.

### Ridgeway Terrain Profile



We have now plotted the stages of route on MapMyRun.com. References are given below. The distances given by MapMyRun don't quite agree with those given in the above chart, which was produced using commercial mapping software, but we will stick to those shown here as the "official" mileages.

All runners/teams are responsible for undertaking their own navigational research. Available from most good bookshops are several publications giving details of the Ridgeway Path, including:

National Trail Guide - 'The Ridgeway' (which includes OS 1:25,000 maps of the whole route, and gives an excellent guide for negotiating the Ridgeway on foot – but in the reverse direction to the Relay!)

The HMSO book, 'The Ridgeway Path', published for the Countryside Commission.

It is recommended that all competing teams get a copy of one of the above, plus the relevant Ordnance Survey maps: - Landranger Series (Scale 1:50,000)

Map No. 165 Aylesbury and Leighton Buzzard area.

Map No. 175 Reading and Windsor area.

Map No. 174 Newbury and Wantage area.

Map No. 173 Swindon and Devizes area.

The ten stages of the race will be found on these maps as follows:

- |                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| - Stages 1, 2 and 3: | Map 165        |
| - Stage 4:           | Maps 165 & 175 |
| - Stage 5:           | Maps 175 & 174 |
| - Stage 6:           | Maps 175 & 174 |
| - Stages 7 and 8:    | Map 174        |
| - Stage 9:           | Maps 174 & 173 |
| - Stage 10:          | Map 173        |

The larger scale Explorer range of maps are also ideal.

Or, to cover the whole route in one go, get Harvey's Ridgeway map (1:40,000). Available from [www.harveymaps.co.uk](http://www.harveymaps.co.uk), Amazon, and bookshops.

If, while checking your section of the route, you find a problem, (a new by-pass has been built; Gypsy caravans blocking the way, etc.) please let me know so that action may be taken to alleviate the problem. Thank you.

## **General Information**

### **Start time 7.30am Ivinghoe Beacon**

The Ridgeway Relay generally follows the official route of The Ridgeway National Trail, starting from Ivinghoe Beacon. The Ridgeway is clearly marked on the OS and Harvey Maps.

We deviate from the official Ridgeway in two places. On Stage 9, to avoid a dangerous road crossing, we divert through the village of Ogbourne St George. On Stage 10, at the end, we leave The Ridgeway about 1¾ miles from the end, and turn left across the Marlborough Downs to finish at Marlborough Leisure Centre. This section is not marked, and it is important to follow the directions given below.

Although the Ridgeway is generally marked on the ground by signposts bearing the acorn symbols used to mark all National Trails, there are places where these are not well positioned, and it is easy to run past and miss them. In particular the direction is not always obvious when you are running hard, and all competitors are therefore advised to run, walk or ride their stages before the day of the Race if they can. This is particularly important for the first half of the course, where the path is often narrow, in woods, and crossed by other similar paths; after Goring it is mostly wider and in more open countryside, but route checking is still recommended. **YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!**

All runners/teams are responsible for making their own travel arrangements to and from each checkpoint.

## Team Members' Details

By Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> June, Team Captains need to log onto the Marlborough Running Club website: <http://www.marlboroughrunningclub.co.uk/ridgewayrelay.shtm> using the IDs and passwords as advised, and record the details of the runners on each stage for their teams.

Any changes after that date can be advised by phone to Alan Joslin on 07989 494408.

## Race Numbers

The marshals at the start of each stage will issue these to competitors on that stage. Safety pins will also be provided.

Runners should report to the marshals at least 10 minutes before they expect to set off. Runners are asked to record their names and any relevant medical details on the back of the numbers.

## Health and Safety

Like any trail race, the Ridgeway Relay is not entirely free from hazards and risks of injury. Hazards include:

- Road crossings, and one rail crossing (note – not all road crossings will be marshalled),
- Stiles, which may be slippery, especially if it is wet or muddy,
- Uneven paths, with ruts or roots coming up through the ground,
- Slippery grass paths,
- Tripping on stony tracks.

All runners are expected to take reasonable measures to recognise potential hazards and avoid injury to themselves and others, and to take sensible precautions in case of any injury. Runners are advised to carry a mobile phone, a list of emergency telephone numbers (which appear on the reverse side of the race numbers) and contact numbers for their team members.

In the event of one or more of your team getting lost, it is the responsibility of your team to get out there and find them.

Because of the nature of the event and the course, it is impractical for the organisers to provide full effective first aid cover. Team members are advised to carry basic first aid supplies. If first aid is needed that cannot be provided by another team member or a nearby marshal, use an A&E Department in the nearby hospitals. Locations of these and their phone numbers are given at the end of this document, and on the reverse side of the running numbers.

**Team members should note that no toilet facilities will be provided at the start or along the route.** Public facilities are available in nearby towns and villages (for example, near the start at Tring Station), and at the end of stage nine, and for customers of the Perch and Pike at the end of stage five. Changing and toilet facilities will be available for all competitors in Marlborough Leisure Centre at the finish.

## Water

Note that the organisers will not be providing water or other drinks (including beer, champagne, or Bacardi Breezers) for runners at checkpoints or along the route. It is each team's responsibility to make appropriate arrangements for their runners.

## Prize Presentations

Prizes to winning teams in each category will be in Marlborough Leisure Centre as soon after 19.45h as we can make it. There will be a small cash bar selling drinks. We expect that the Leisure Centre café will also be open for light refreshments.

## Route Descriptions

### Stage 1:

**Livinghoe Beacon SP 961 168 to Wendover SP 873 072**

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.842&lon=-0.6085&scale=25000&icon=x>

to

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.756&lon=-0.7340&scale=25000&icon=x>

Route map: <http://www.mapmyrun.com/run/united-kingdom/ivinghoe/873865583794>

Use the Car Park south of the Beacon, map reference 963 163. and walk back up the Ridgeway Path approximately 600 yards. Allow 20 minutes for this walk, and it is likely to be chilly at 7am. so dress accordingly. Use the footpath among the trees to get to the Beacon not the road.

Please do NOT park on the road. The Police have been known to move cars on, even that early on a Sunday morning.

Navigationally this is a tricky stage, which needs to be checked before the Race, as several competitors have discovered in the past! The first half is physically quite tough, lots of hill-work, although the last 5 or 6 miles are predominantly flat or downhill.

There are several road crossings to negotiate. Most are quiet, needing the usual degree of care, but particular care is needed at Wigginton (SP 934105) where traffic coming up the hill from your right has a restricted view. Particular care is needed here.

As some teams are already aware, there are a number of handy short cuts on Stage 1, such as the one going straight on at SP 896077. Using this will give your team an advantage of about a mile. However, it will also incur your team a hefty time-penalty! Please stick to the official Ridgeway Path.

**The handover is on the road approaching a small crossroads before the church on the SE of the town.**

**For parking please use *Fostercare Associates* car park SP 873 072 and the no through road leading to it.**

### **Stage 2:**

**Wendover SP 873 072 to Whiteleaf Car Park E. of Princes Risborough SP 824 037**

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.756&lon=-0.7340&scale=25000&icon=x>

to

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.725&lon=-0.810&scale=25000&icon=x>

Route map: <http://www.mapmyrun.com/run/united-kingdom/wendover/887743315048>

**The handover is on the road approaching a small crossroads before the church on the SE of the town. Please do not go up the road and obstruct the marshals' view.**

**For parking please use *Fostercare Associates* car park SP 873 072 and the no through road leading to it.**

Navigationally this leg could be tricky, and includes running through part of the Prime Minister's country residence, Chequers. (Please remember to smile for the security cameras!)

Although relatively short, this is a very tough stage with some interesting hills, especially the final ascent to the handover point. Since last year the official route down to the road at Cadsden has been re-routed, and now goes straight down the hill at the cross-tracks at SP827050, rather than the old route of right then left at this point. The new route is, in fact, that favoured by several teams last year (before it had been re-routed) earning them a small time penalty. Please take the new official route. It is slightly shorter, and avoids about 200m of running along the road.

Cars tend to drive through Cadsden at speed, so take care crossing the road here.

In the past we have had considerable over-crowding in the Car Park at the end of the stage, so **please** don't come here unless you are involved in finishing leg 2, or starting leg 3. No more than one vehicle per team should use the car park. (If you drive SE past the car park for 200m and turn right, the road there is wide enough for several cars to park without causing obstruction. Please park there if the car park is full.)

### **Stage 3:**

**Whiteleaf Car Park SP 824 037 to just beyond the M40 SE of Lewknor SU 722 968**

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.725&lon=-0.810&scale=25000&icon=x>

to

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.6663&lon=-0.9592&scale=25000&icon=x>

Route map: <http://www.mapmyrun.com/run/united-kingdom/princes-risborough/771118300747>

See the comment above about car parking.

There is a steep downhill section at the start, and a significant hill to climb and descent in the middle. Otherwise this stage is fairly flat.

It can be navigationally tricky. After about 1½ miles, just after Shootacre Corner at SP803016 The Ridgeway bears left off the road. Please don't miss this turn. If you do you will avoid cut out

about a mile of the route and miss out the joys of Lodge Hill, but you will also incur hefty time penalties.

600m after leaving the road near Shootacre Corner, the route crosses one track of the rail line to Princes Risborough. Usually this line is used by one train per hour. The railings you come across immediately before the track are for your safety, and the temptation to leap over them should be resisted. **Please listen and watch out for trains** (and if you see one it is best to avoid it).



All road crossings need care, but there are three other road crossings on this stage where particular attention is called for. The first is at SP760003 (near Chinnor), where traffic passes surprisingly fast for a minor road, the next near Kingston Blount (SU742986), and finally where The Ridgeway crosses the A40 at SU728977. Here traffic on the A40 crosses at very high speeds, particularly coming down the hill.

See the note below about parking at the end of this stage.

#### **Stage 4:**

**Near Hill Fm. SE of Lewknor SU 722 968 to Minor Road N. of Swyncombe Church SU 683 904**

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.6663&lon=-0.9592&scale=25000&icon=x>  
to

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.6083&lon=-1.0145&scale=25000&icon=x>

Route map: <http://www.mapmyrun.com/run/united-kingdom/lewknor/953681440282>

When driving to the changeover, take care not to drive up the exit slip road off the M40!! Parking at the hand-over was difficult last year, with cars getting stuck in the ruts next to the road. The road leading to Hill Farm is narrow, and there is limited space to park on the verge. We suggest cars are parked near to the B4009, about 500 metres from the handover.

The first 4 miles of this leg are relatively flat, until the path turns sharp left at North Farm leaving the Icknield Way. The last mile is quite tough, involving a steep hill climb (be careful to stay on the official route at the top – many of your predecessors have not, to their cost), a short descent, and a last climb to the finish in full view of all those at the handover.

There are two road crossings. The second, across the B480 South of Watlington, needs particular care, as traffic moves fast along this road.

#### **Stage 5:**

**Minor Road N. of Swyncombe Church SU 683 904 to Perch and Pike in South Stoke SUSU 599 835.**

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.6083&lon=-1.0145&scale=25000&icon=x>

to  
<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.5470&lon=-1.1365&scale=25000&icon=x>

Route map: <http://www.mapmyrun.com/run/united-kingdom/swyncombe/113908673088>

The Swyncombe handover point is at the minor road just before the church. The lane is narrow and may get congested. We have been fortunate again for the local farmer to agree to us parking in one of his fields. **Please park in the field as directed** and not on the lanes - the churchgoers tend to take a dim view, so please respect their feelings.

This is the most challenging stage to navigate correctly on the day. If you do not research it beforehand you will get lost!

The first navigational challenge is only 600m from the start, where the Ridgeway turns left off the main track. If you miss that, you may, like others in the past, end up back on Stage 4 going in the wrong direction!

The first two miles are physically tough with some tricky navigation, and many competitors take the wrong route where the Ridgeway Path crosses the golf course at Nuffield. The route then follows Grim's Ditch, an ancient earth bank and ditch. **BEWARE TREE ROOTS** under foot and branches at eye-level. Stinging nettles also a pain. We may have a marshal here to make sure runners stay on the official route and not in the field to the left.

In some places the path is along the top of the bank, in others it drops into the ditch, and with a few stiles to cross it can be quite tiring. At the end of the bank after about 6 miles the path drops towards the River Thames, **CROSSING THE A4074, WHERE GREAT CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN AS TRAFFIC TRAVELS VERY FAST IN BOTH DIRECTIONS.**

The final 4-mile length is flat, much of it following the river. Brunel's magnificent brick railway bridge is a mile from the finish.

### **Stage 6:**

**Perch and Pike in South Stoke SU 599 to Car Park N. of West Ilsley. SU 479 840**

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.5470&lon=-1.1365&scale=25000&icon=x>

to  
<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.5531&lon=-1.31&scale=25000&icon=x>

Route map: <http://www.mapmyrun.com/run/united-kingdom/south-stoke/136622516334>

There is reasonable parking here, although the pub can be busy, so don't use the car park unless you are planning to be a customer. It is normally necessary to park a little way along the road. Please park sensibly to avoid causing obstructions.

For about 2 miles the route is flat, until just after crossing the Thames, but then this becomes a tough stage with a long climb onto the Downs followed by plenty of undulations. As the runners climb out of Goring, they pass the half-way point in the race.

Don't miss the right turn 2 ½ miles from the end. If you do, you'll end up in the village of East Ilsley. The finish is 1200m after crossing under the A34 using the underpass.

**Stage 7: Car Park N. of West Ilsley SU 479 840 to Car Park S.W. of Wantage. SU 344 851**

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.5531&lon=-1.31&scale=25000&icon=x>

to

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.5631&lon=-1.505&scale=25000&icon=x>

Route map: <http://www.mapmyrun.com/run/united-kingdom/west-ilsley/227509194817>

**The first mass start will take place here at 2.00pm for teams who have not arrived at South Stoke by 1.00pm.** We don't want to spoil anyone's fun, but we do want to get everyone to the finish while the sun is still up. Actual running times will still be recorded for all stages, and the aggregate times calculated. (Note: The mass start here last year was for teams not reaching South Stoke by 1.30pm, but this led to needing an unplanned extra mass start later at Charlbury Hill for several teams that came in just under the deadline at South Stoke.)

The start is at a large car park with plenty of space on both sides of the minor road.

From here onwards navigation is generally easier and, with one or two exceptions, the hills are less severe. However, this stage is undulating, and tougher than it looks. Please take care on road crossings of the B4494 at SU418842, and the A338 at SU394844, where you turn right onto the main road, followed by a left turn after 100m.

**Stage 8: Car Park S.W. of Wantage SU 344 851 to Lane S. of Charlbury Hill. SU 238 818**

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.5631&lon=-1.505&scale=25000&icon=x>

to

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.535&lon=-1.657&scale=25000&icon=x>

Route map: <http://www.mapmyrun.com/run/united-kingdom/wantage/972019625065>

There is a reasonable amount of parking at the start, but parking will be tight at the end of this leg.

Take care crossing the road at the start.

This stage is similar to the previous one, being undulating but navigationally easy. There are two main hills to climb, including one about a mile long just before the finish.

**Stage 9: Lane S. of Charlbury Hill SU 238 818 to Car Park at Barbury Castle. SU 156 761**

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.535&lon=-1.657&scale=25000&icon=x>

to

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.4838&lon=-1.777&scale=25000&icon=x>

Route map: <http://www.mapmyrun.com/run/united-kingdom/swindon/881912770219>

There is limited parking at the start, but should just about be sufficient as long as care is taken and teams keep to a minimum the number of cars going there. Don't go there unless you have to. A recommended alternative is to park at the bottom hill 300m South West of the start, near the Shepherds Rest pub, and walk up the hill.

This is a long and very tough stage with some serious hill climbing. This is definitely not a stage for those seeking a gentle jog!

After the first descent, turn left along the road for about 100m, crossing over the M4 motorway. Turn left at the T junction with the B4192, cross the road carefully, and after 250m turn right and climb Liddington Hill.

Take care crossing the road about 3 miles after the top of the hill. **DO NOT TURN RIGHT HERE – YOU WILL SAVE ON DISTANCE, BUT INCUR A HEFTY TIME PENALTY BY MISSING THE PASSAGE CONTROL.**

**To avoid crossing the busy A345 Swindon to Marlborough road at Ogbourne St George, we deviate from the official route.**

After the Ridgeway swings west at a X-roads grid ref SU 211737, it goes downhill to cross the old Roman Road. At this tarmac road turn right, (signposted Ogbourne St. George) onto the Roman Road heading north. (passage control marshal).

Continue until you can go under the road bridge on your left. Immediately after bridge, go diagonally right between houses and 200m later, right again. Follow the road through Ogbourne St. George, and around several bends up the hill out of the village.

The Ridgeway then joins your route coming in from your left at a right hand bend in the road. **Do not turn left here, but** go round the right hand bend and then 100m later turn left up a track.

This is followed by a long 400-ft climb up Smeathe's Ridge to Barbury Hill.

The car park at Barbury Castle has toilets and, just outside the car park at the Warden's house, a small cafe which is recommended to those wanting tea or a snack (hot and cold).

**Stage 10: Barbury Castle SU 156 761 to the Leisure Centre Marlborough SU 182 692**

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.4838&lon=-1.777&scale=25000&icon=x>

to

<http://www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.4201&lon=-1.740&scale=25000&icon=x>

Route map: <http://www.mapmyrun.com/run/united-kingdom/swindon/940556560388>

**There will be a mass start here for any teams not here by 17.45 hrs.**

There is plenty of car parking at Barbury Castle, plus public toilets and a cafe at the Warden's house.

The car park closes with a barrier at 8pm. Please get out before then. If you need to leave a vehicle there after that time please park on the road outside the car park entrance.

(Please note: this car park is at the end of the minor road which passes the Alexandra Park housing development at map reference SU 163793. It cannot be reached from the road which goes south from the centre of Wroughton and skirts the eastern side of Wroughton Airfield.)

The route is well marked and obvious for the first 4 ½ miles.

**NOTE: CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN CROSSING THE ROAD AT HACKPEN HILL AFTER ABOUT 2 MILES, AS THE CROSSING IS ON A SHARP BEND AT THE TOP OF A STEEP HILL AND VISIBILITY IS VERY RESTRICTED.**

After Hackpen, continue down the Ridgeway to the crossing with the Herepath (SU125709). (A Passage Control may be here). Here we leave the Ridgeway to descend into Marlborough.

Turn left off the Ridgeway and follow the Herepath, across a grassy track heading towards some woods.

Go through gates and onto gravel track down across the valley and up through Fyfield Down.

Turn right at underground reservoir (SU 144715), *signpost Fyfield car park*. Follow major track parallel to horse gallops, keep right at fork and continue South to Car Park (SU160700).

Bear diagonally left across car park and continue to tarmac road. Turn right along this road. and after about 300 metres follow the road as it turns right. The road goes up slightly, then downhill. After approx. 300m, at mirror on right-hand fence, (girls, this is the last chance to check your hair) go left through large stone gateway and along drive leading to Manton House Farm.

After 200m turn right through first opening onto track, and follow telegraph poles, then follow track to the hedge. Turn right in front of the hedge and follow the narrow grassy path with hedge on your left for approx. 700m.

Just before the houses and the last telegraph pole, turn left through the hedge-line, *sign post Barton Farm, Marlborough*. Keep hedge on left and housing estate 100 metres on right. At the end of the field carry on down with hedge and houses on right until you hit stony track, go right & reach the FINISH 200 metres later.

When you come to research this you will find it much easier than it sounds, but don't leave it to the day of the race, because it will be very confusing if you are trying to read instructions and run flat out at the same time.

### **Last but not least .....**

Just in case of any unforeseen accidents, these are the addresses and telephone numbers of the nearest Accident and Emergency Departments along the route

#### **Aylesbury**

Stoke Mandeville Hospital            01296 315 000

#### **High Wycombe**

Wycombe General Hospital        01494 526161

#### **Oxford**

John Radcliffe Hospital            01865 741166

#### **Swindon**

Great Western Hospital            01793 604020

#### **Race marshals:**

Alan 07989 494408            Nick 07765 245093  
Rene 07748 830287