



UNDERDOWN TRAIL RUN RACE GUIDE

August 19, 2023

Prairie Dells Trail Head, Merrill, WI 54452



Overview

1. All racers begin and end at race headquarters. All routes will be well marked. The Thunderdown in the Underdown Wisconsin Endurance Mountain Biking Series (WEMS) races will be held on the same courses on the same day. Yield to overtaking bikers. (Bikes start just before runners so any traffic on course will be minimal.)
2. There are no indoor facilities at the venue. There is an outhouse available onsite.
3. Cell phone service will be spotty at best.
4. Crews can support anywhere on the course. Recommended places for spectators are the start, any aid station, and the finish. Aid stations may be accessed via car.
5. After racing, join in the fun with the after race party.

- TUESDAY, AUGUST 15, 2023

- Live Q&A with race director, Chris Schotz, August 15, 2023 at 8 pm. Meeting link: <https://us05web.zoom.us/j/84547473589?pwd=weZlQZUSNUavWK9z1mbrcMWRBBiOTb.1>

- FRIDAY, AUGUST 18, 2023

- 5:30 - 7:30 pm: Packet pick up

- SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 2023

- **7:00 – 11:00am: Packet pickup**
- 8:00am: Hundred Down (3 lap) mountain bike start
- 8:30-10:30 am: Complimentary Ruby Coffee cold brew available
- 9:00am: Thunderdown (1 lap = 36 miles) mountain bike start
- 9:15am: Oktoberfest Summit (13 miles) mountain bike start
- **9:30am: Prairie Dells 60K run start**
- **10:15am: Heineman Hills marathon run start**
- **11:30am: Oktoberfest half-marathon run start**
- **1:00-5:00pm: The Northwoods Skitchers live music**
- **1:30pm: Estimate of first Oktoberfest half-marathon finishers**
- **2:30 to 6:30 pm: Food available for racers and spectators (we will box up extra meals for racers & volunteers still on course) from [Urban Street Bistro](#)**
- **3:30pm: Estimate of first Heineman Hills marathon finishers**
- **4:30pm: Estimate of first Prairie Dells 60K finishers**
- **6:15pm: Heineman Hills marathon course close**
- **8:00pm: Prairie Dells 60K course close**

Awards will get going for each distance after we have a good amount of award winners in.

Recommended Gear

- Water bottle/ hydration pack (limited cups will be available)
- Race shoes and clothes
- Change of clothes and shoes for pre-race/ post-race
- Nutrition and hydration appropriate for race length
- First aid: blister/chafing protection, bandages, ace wraps, aspirin, etc.
- Miscellaneous: bug spray, sunscreen, sunglasses, hat, anti-chafe gel
- Watch/GPS
- Cell phone and camera
- Race and parking maps and directions. There will be signage but ultimately, it is up to you to follow the correct course and a map can help ensure that! We have our course maps available online at: <https://www.ironbull.org/underdown-maps>
- Read a 2022 racer report at: <https://www.ironbull.org/in-the-news/underdown-2022-race-report>

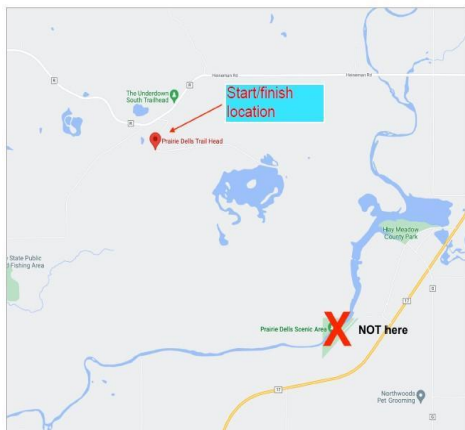
After Race Party

- Help us live up to our tagline – “Still rowdy since 1989!” Food, music, campfire, drinks, and stories for everyone...you deserve this! There are a limited number of picnic tables so bring blankets/chairs to enjoy the party.
- Family and friends are invited; donations are appreciated.
- Food: Urban Street Bistro food truck (food also available for purchase by friends/family/crew)
- Beverages: Complimentary Ruby Coffee cold brew available pre-race and local beer from The Sawmill available post-race
- Live music: Live performance from The Northwoods Skitchers 1- 5 pm

Parking

- Parking available for racers and spectators at Prairie Dells Trail Head, Merrill, WI 54452 (this works in Google Maps) (located off of Heineman Rd / Cty R). Please park tightly since space is limited - outhouse available onsite
- Coordinates: 45.27290759030347, -89.5879814947932

- Here is a screenshot (be careful NOT to go to Prairie Dells Scenic Area)



Timing

- This event will be professionally timed by Wisconsin Endurance Mountain Bike Series (WEMS).
- Your race bib must be clearly visible on your chest or left thigh.

Transfers, refunds, cancellations

- Registration and transaction fees are nonrefundable, including in the event of extreme weather or cancellation.
- Competing under another person's name will result in disqualification.

Course Description

- Course map including aid station locations at <https://www.ironbull.org/underdown-maps>
- All courses loop, so you will start and finish in the same spot.
- Thanks to race proceeds from 2022, all racers will enjoy Underdown's newest trail, Heinemania, in 2023!
- This is a challenging trail run on challenging terrain that goes through remote areas. It is meant to be a physical and mental test that allows you to test your trail running mettle.
- Elevation Gain: You can expect about 100 feet per mile. This terrain is very much glacial, up and down, and not easy. Expect a wilderness type experience on tough terrain.
- Surface/Surroundings: The race is almost all forested singletrack trails, with a few gravel road crossings. The ground is a result of glacial deposits. You can expect rocks, roots, dry to loamy dirt and everything in between. You're traversing all the ups and downs that the glaciers left behind. In sections you'll be on hillsides and then you'll drop down into areas that have marshes near the trail. You'll see lakes, ponds, and A LOT of trees.
- The course map is accurate, but due to trees, tight trail, and elevation change, the overall distance and elevation gain isn't perfect. Note that this GPS reading, your GPS reading, and everyone else's GPS reading will likely be different. There is a lot of tree cover, winding trail, and up and down; therefore, it's different every time it's recorded.
- GPS file: <https://caltopo.com/m/MQLM3>

- Download the GPS file by clicking “Export” on the upper left (on your Desktop) or tap the folder with a pin drop on the top row of icons (on your phone), then select the desired race (60k, marathon, or half-marathon) under “Shape”, your preferred file format, followed by the “Export” button. You may download the CalTopo app for free or if you have a tracking app on your phone, a prompt should ask to upload it into the app so you can use during your race in airplane mode.
- Prairie Dells 60k
 - Start: 9:30am
 - Cutoff: 8pm (10.5 hours)
 - Description: The legend of 70 hills has grown to 75 hills in 2023, four lakes and the Prairie Dells gorge with about 3,000 vertical feet of glacial hills (some GPS says 2,500 feet and some GPS says 3,500 feet). Start at the Prairie Dells trailhead and complete a loop of all the trails north in a general counterclockwise direction. After crossing Heineman Road, tackle the huge hills of the Disconnecter Trail to Horn Lake Road aid station (Aid #1 & 8). Continue north on Oktoberfest to Old School plus some XTRA Credit to Main Course Trail enroute to the first Loop Road aid station (Aid #2). Utilize the Over/Under Bridge and circle clockwise on the Hollow Trail with a stop at the second Loop Road aid station (Aid #3). Return to the Main Course Trail after the Over/Under Bridge and proceed north to the third Loop Road aid station (Aid #4 & 5), then continue to the easternmost point of the course on the Homestead Loop. After completing the Homestead Loop, return to the third Loop Road aid station (Aid #4 & 5), then head to the northernmost point on the Main Course Trail passing by the fourth Loop Road aid station (Aid #6 & 7). Enjoy the views along Dog Lake and return on the western sections of Oktoberfest and Old School. Hit up the Horn Lake Road aid station (Aid #1 & 8) a final time then proceed on the Connector Trail to the final aid station at Heineman Road (Aid #9). Enjoy the brand new Heinemania Trail and finish with a clockwise Prairie Dells Loop.
 - Uses all Underdown singletrack trails ending on the Prairie Dells loop. Measured with a wheel sensor to be 36 miles = 58 kilometers although the GPS data reads almost 10% lower.
 - Aid stations available around miles 3 ½, 8, 9 ½, 13, 15 ½, 17½, 19, 25, 27 ½. Note the longest gap between aid stations is between Aid #7 and Aid #8, about 6 miles and Aid #9 to the finish (8+ miles), where your pace may be slowing and temperatures may be the warmest of the day.
- Heineman Hills marathon
 - Start: 10:15am
 - Cutoff: 6:15pm (8 hours)
 - Description: A marathon of pure singletrack and hills all the way accumulating to over 2,000 vertical feet of glacial hills. Start at the Prairie Dells trailhead and complete a northern loop in a general counterclockwise direction. After crossing Heineman Road, tackle the huge hills of the

Disconnecter Trail to Horn Lake Road aid station (labeled Aid #1 & 8). Continue north on Oktoberfest to Old School plus some XTRA Credit to Main Course Trail enroute to the first Loop Road aid station (labeled Aid #2). Utilize the Over/Under Bridge and circle on the northern half of the Hollow Trail with a stop at the second Loop Road aid station (Aid #3). Take the marathon cutoff on the Ice Age Trail to the Main Course near Dog Lake and return on the western sections of Oktoberfest and Old School. Hit up the Horn Lake Road aid station (labeled Aid #1 & 8) a final time then proceed on the Connector Trail to the final aid station at Heineman Road (labeled Aid #9). Enjoy the brand new Heineman Trail and finish with a clockwise Prairie Dells Loop.

- Aid stations available around miles 3½, 8, 9½, 14, 17. Note the longest gap between aid stations is from the last aid station at Heineman Road to the finish (8+ miles), where your pace may be slowing and temperatures may be the warmest of the day. Estimated total distance is about 25½ miles.
- Oktoberfest half-marathon
 - Start: 11:30am
 - Description: Start at the Prairie Dells trailhead, after crossing Heineman Road, tackle the huge hills of the Disconnecter Trail to Horn Lake Road aid station (labeled Aid #1 & 8). At the aid station, return on the Connector Trail to the aid station at Heineman Road (labeled Aid #9). Enjoy the brand new Heineman Trail and finish with a clockwise Prairie Dells Loop.
 - Aid stations available around mile 3½ at the half cutoff and at Heineman Road around mile 6½ before beginning the Prairie Dells loop. Note the 8+ mile gap between aid stations from the last aid station at Heineman Road to the finish. Estimated distance is about a mile over 13.1 miles.
- Loop Road is the best place for most crew because 60k racers cross it six times and marathon racers cross it two times.
- Aid stations at the following are manned aid stations: Horn Lake Road aid station (labeled Aid #1 & 8), Loop Road aid station (Aid #4 & 5) at the Homestead Loop, fourth Loop Road aid station (Aid #6 & 7), and Heineman Road (labeled Aid #9). They may have the following beverage and food choices available (but not limited to): water, Tailwind Nutrition, soft drinks, fruit, chips, cookies, candy.
- The other aid stations may be more basic with water and other food items and may or may not have someone tending them – they may be self serve if we don't have adequate volunteers.
- If you have special dietary requirements, please make sure to make use of your drop bags.

Drop Bags (marathon and 60k only)

- Drop bags must be labeled. Bags will be outdoors, in any kind of weather. Drop bags will NOT be mailed, if unclaimed, they will be disposed of or donated by the end of the week. Small totes may be used but drop bags may not exceed 10 pounds and < 9" x 9" x 16".
- Race organizers are not responsible for lost or stolen drop bags or property.

- You are allowed one drop bag per aid station. It needs to be placed in the area that is marked drop bags before you start. We will deliver your drop bag to each area for you to access.
- Drop off drop bags at packet/bib pick up on race morning. **CLEARLY LABEL YOUR DROP BAG WITH THE FOLLOWING:**
 - Name
 - Bib number
 - Drop bag location (Horn Lake Rd, Loop Rd, or Heineman Rd)
- Drop bags returned to the start/finish area main tent after the last runner has left that aid station.
- You may drive to reclaim your drop bag from the aid station before they are transported back to the start/finish area.
- Prairie Dells 60k and Heineman Hills marathon drop bag access will be at Horn Lake Road aid station (labeled Aid #1 & 8), fourth Loop Road aid station (Aid #6 & 7) (60K only), and Heineman Road (labeled Aid #9).

Race Rules

It's important that you use common sense, follow the rules, and be nice to ensure everyone's enjoyment, safety, and overall experience. If you break the rules or do any other shenanigans, we have the final decision in DQ'ing you. If you see someone being "one of those people," please reach race director (Chris Schotz 715-351-0107) to handle. Thanks for being nice.

- Race bib showing race number must always be visible on the front of your body to ensure we can accurately and efficiently time your race. **Runners are responsible for ensuring that their bib number is recorded at each manned aid station.**
- Yield to overtaking bikers and runners when it's safe for them to do so. The Wisconsin Endurance Mountain Biking Series (WEMS) races will be held on the same courses on the same day. All the bikers start before the runners, but the 100 mile bikers are completing three laps on the same race course.
- **NO LITTERING.** This applies to on-course, in the parking lot, and everywhere. Please pick up any garbage you see, no matter how small it is.
- Runners must race under their own name/registration. Runners who bandit the race by running under someone else's name and registration will not only be disqualified, but you will also never be allowed to race any of our races ever again. We're serious.
- If you drop out of the race, call or text the race director (Chris Schotz 715-351-0107) with your name and number or alert the nearest aid station and they will alert that number.
- Racers cannot stash support including nutrition, equipment, or any other gear or items on course prior to the race. We are providing aid stations with drop bag transportation.
- Strollers, pets, bikes, and other non-running items are not allowed.
- Pacers are not allowed.
- Racers must stay on course. Cutting the course is not permitted and really lame.
- If you come across an injured (non-life threatening) person, please get the runner's bib number and call the race director or report the situation to the following aid station. Call 911 for any emergencies.
- Be considerate of other trail users, racers, and volunteers.

Safety

- **Trails:** Trails remain open to the public, including horses. If you encounter a horse at a trail crossing, yield to the horse, make eye contact with the rider, and talk calmly with the rider.
- **Road Crossings:** Each course crosses low-volume gravel roads. It is still ultimately up to you as an intelligent runner to be aware of your surroundings and look both ways before crossing.
- **Headphones:** We do not recommend the use of headphones. However, we won't tell you can't wear them. Full awareness of one's surroundings, and the ability to communicate with other participants, race volunteers, and trail users not associated with the event are critical to everyone's safety.
- **Littering:** Please don't litter. If you are caught in the act of littering on course, you will be asked to leave and not invited back. If you see some trash someone else has dropped, please pick it up. There will be garbage bags at the aid stations.
- **Wilderness:** You should be comfortable being alone and have experience taking care of yourself in the woods. Cell phone coverage is spotty. Bears are in the area but sightings are rare and usually harmless.
- **Emergencies: DIAL 911.**
 - Aspirus Tomahawk Hospital
401 West Mohawk Drive
Tomahawk, WI 54487
(715) 453-7700
 - Aspirus Merrill Hospital
601 S Center Ave,
Merrill, WI 54452
(715) 536-5511
 - Aspirus Wausau Hospital
333 Pine Ridge Blvd,
Wausau, WI 54401
(715) 847-2121

Dropping out

- If you have to quit the race, **call or text the race director (Chris Schotz 715-351-0107) with your name and number** or alert the nearest aid station and they will alert that number.
- You are responsible to get yourself off course and back to race headquarters.
- If you leave the course and fail to notify race officials, you may be banned from future races. We take the safety of everyone very seriously and don't want to leave anyone out on course in bad shape.

Cutoff policy

- The Heineman Hills marathon has a cutoff of 6:15 pm (8 hours)

- The Prairie Dells 60K has a cutoff of 8 pm (10.5 hours)

Pacers, crew, spectators

- Pacers are not allowed. Any runner found running with a pacer who is not a registered runner (“a bandit”) will be disqualified.
- Your crew members may offer support anywhere on the course.
- It is critical that every runner’s crew or a spectator drives slowly and stays away from other runners near the aid stations. Vehicles near or at aid stations can ruin the day for everyone.
- Runners are responsible for the actions of their crew and may be disqualified for inappropriate actions of their crew.

Course Markings

The course will be marked with arrow signs and white marking chalk.

Awards

Each finisher of every distance will receive a custom pint glass at the finish. Custom awards will also be awarded.

Results

- A link to results will be posted at <https://www.ironbull.org/underdown-details> within 24 hours of the event.

Ironbull retail

- Official IRONBULL merchandise may be available for sale onsite

Social media

Make sure you tag yourself and IRONBULL on social media.

- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/ironbullxtreme/> #ironbullxtreme and #ironbulltough
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/events/173487988773509>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/IronBullXtreme> #ironbullxtreme and #ironbulltough

Volunteers

Volunteers are IRONBULL’s lifeblood. Our willing volunteers exhibit the eagerness to participate in and support various roles throughout the event. They provide a contagious feeling of excitement for both racers and spectators alike that helps make IRONBULL an all-encompassing community event. Without the passion and dedication of our volunteers, we wouldn’t have a race.

If you feel it within yourself to volunteer at any of the positions that are critical to making the IRONBULL as successful as we intend, please contact us at executivedirector@ironbull.org.

Lodging & Camping

- **Hotels:** Merrill and Tomahawk have several options to choose from and are the closest. Wausau offers several as well. If you’re looking to take your IRONBULL race weekend to

the next level, check out all the fun and affordable room options from our partners at bantr hotels! 30% off all rooms for IRONBULL athletes (using the promo code IRONBULL) and free access to bantr events during race weekend like live music, comedy shows, trivia, free drinks, and more!

- **Camping:** Primitive camping is available at the northern end of the Underdown Recreation Area at Copper Lake Road and it is first come, first serve basis. There is a pit toilet, no electric hookups, and water pump. It's quiet and convenient and a good option. Please note that there is a \$15 daily self-pay camping fee. Country campgrounds at Newwood Park and Otter Lake are nice options. Camping is allowed on county forest as long as campers leave no trace. Horn Lake Road has a few unmarked options including a drive-up spot at Underdown Lake which is on the race course.

Resources

The following are some links to give you information about the Underdown Recreation Area:

- Lincoln County Website – <https://co.lincoln.wi.us/forestry-land-and-parks/page/underdown-campground>
- Underdown Dells Project www.facebook.com/underdowndells (This is kept up by Chris Schotz, who is responsible for the trails existing the way they do now. It's an awesome resource and we all owe Chris a huge virtual round of applause)

Contact Info

- Chris Schotz, race director: call/text 715-351-0107, email: undergroundunderdown@gmail.com
- Andrea Larson, IRONBULL executive director: office 715-848-5949, executivedirector@IRONBULL.org

EVENT SPONSORS

CITY OF MERRILL

For visitor information, call the Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce at 715-536-9474 or visit www.merrillchamber.org

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