



## Sheep Mountain 50-Mile & 50k Endurance Run Course Description

Both courses start and finish at the Town of Fairplay Beach. They are lollipop-type loop consisting of 30% Roads, 34% Forest Service/ATV roads, and 36% Singletrack Trail for the 50 Mile; and 35% Roads, 30% Forest Service/ATV road, and 35% Singetrack Trail for the 50k. The 50-Mile course both climbs and descends approximately 9,600 feet at an average elevation of 10,700'. The 50k both climbs and descends 6,200' at an average elevation of 10,500'. The normal temperature in August is 69 Degrees with night time lows in the upper 30s (but anything can happen).

*The Sheep Mountain 50-Mile and 50k Course is a classic HPRS Offering with no shortage of ups and downs, and ample sections for runners to make time up on. This course description has been created to give you an idea of what to expect on certain sections of the course. It is by no means meant to be a 100% accurate step-by-step depiction of what you can expect out there, but more a guideline broken down into sections. HPRS does not guarantee the accuracy of this description, nor do we condone its use as a means for navigation.*

**Miles 0 - 4.73:** Runners will leave the town beach by climbing the dirt road up to Platte Drive. They will then turn right onto a paved road before turning off to the left onto Busch Run Rd. For the rest of this section, runners will travel through various Fairplay Subdivisions on their way towards the National Forest. These roads are all dirt roads, which vary in consistency. Some are smooth while others are rutted like washboards.

**Miles 4.73 - 7:** Runners will turn right onto Thompson Park Road. This road starts as a dirt road and then quickly turns into a Forest Service Road. The FS Road section starts out as a rutted muddy section before slightly rising up out of the valley. As the trail begins to rise, it turns into a trail covered in small rocks and pine needles. It is a rugged trail with rocks primarily the size of golf balls and tennis balls. Runners will eventually drop down into Horseshoe Park for the first aid station of the race.

**Miles 7 - 8.12:** Runners will leave the aid station and turn right onto County Road 18/Four Mile Creek Road. This is a heavily traveled dirt road filled with potholes and washboard rutting. After passing a USFS Four Mile campground on the right, runners will turn left onto Limber Grove Trail.

**Miles 8.12 - 9.46:** After crossing Fourmile Creek, runners will begin their ascent of Sheep Mountain. This first section of trail, Limber Grove Trail, is a technical single

track trail loaded with rocks and roots. This section is often referred to as “The Moonscape” as the rocks are strewn all over the place, are shattered and very sharp, and going tends to be slow.

**Miles 9.46 – 13:** The first segment of this section is the ascent of Sheep Mountain. It includes steep switchbacks full of loose stones. Runners will take these trails to the top of Sheep Mountain, the highest point on the course. From the top of the mountain, runners will descend to Browns Pass via narrow, seldom used, herd paths. These paths travel through coniferous forests with many stumps, roots, and sticks littering the trail. It terminates at the aid station at Browns Pass.

***(50K Note: Runners in the 50k should now skip ahead to Mile 32.75 of this description and follow the description from there to the finish.)***

**Miles 13 – 17:** Runners will begin heading down into Sheep Creek Park via FS/ATV Roads. These trails are heavily rutted and uneven/Off-camber until you reach the valley below. Once you reach the valley, runners will head through Sheep Creek Park on more FS Roads. There are a couple of creek crossings through here, which are unavoidable depending on depth. Runners should expect to get their feet wet in incredibly cold water unless shallow waters allow you to jump across. After the last creek crossing, the road climbs again before rolling along then dropping down in Twelve Mile Creek. You’ll come to a water only aid station at the end of this section.

**Miles 17 – 22:** From the water only station, the trail turns into Single-track trail. Please pay attention to all course markings over the first 3 miles of this section, as without them, the route is hard to follow. This begins the most remote sections of the course. These trails are seldom used, slightly over grown, and from time to time rugged with rocks and other debris. This is the most likely place for you to spot any large wildlife such as moose or bear. The trail eventually climbs out of the creek area and up into Aspen Glades. The trail will get a bit rockier in these sections but very much runnable. All stream crossings can be done on small wooden bridges. This section terminates at the Watrous Aid Station.

**Miles 22 – 26.25:** This next section is all dirt county roads from the Watrous Aid Station to the Round Hill Aid Station. These roads are in great shape and heavily used for the area. It is usually very hot along this road if there is no cloud cover. You’ll run downhill past horse farms into the Twelve Mile Creek Valley before climbing the roads back towards Round Hill.

**Miles 26.25 – 33.25:** Runners will leave Round Hill Aid station heading uphill on FS Roads/ATV Trails. The first segment is heavily rutted and at times off camber with sections of very loose gravel and stone. It then levels out onto an ATV Trail that isn’t necessarily technical but rugged nonetheless. Follow this road/trail around to the west side of Round Hill where you will eventually come to a sharp right hand turn in the course. Take this right hand turn and climb in earnest. This climb never seems to end, is an ATV trail that is a bit overgrown. Follow it to the top. From the top, you’ll

follow a singletrack trail that is at first hard to see but easier to follow the further along you travel towards Browns Pass. Eventually this single track trail will open up into double track.. BE CAREFUL TO PAY ATTENTION.. once you hit the double track you'll be at Breakneck Pass. You'll take a left onto the Forest Service Road here and then an immediate right. You'll hit more double track, take a quick right onto it.. and continue travelling north along the ridge. You'll eventually come to an old cabin/ruins where the double track is more of a cul-de-sac, and a single track continues on from here. Continue on to the singletrack and follow it all the way in to Brown's Pass Aid Station.

**Miles 33.25 – 35.8:** (*Note\* 50k Runners continue from here*) Upon leaving the Browns Pass Aid Station for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and last time, runners will head downhill on Browns Pass Road. This road is a forest service road that is heavily rutted, off camber, with short stretches of exposed loose rock ledges. The further down the road you get, the more it levels out, and the less rugged it becomes. Up high, it's a near unrunable rock garden. The road eventually turns into a dirt forest service road with nothing more than soft dirt and potholes present. Be careful not to take an errant left at the fork in the road down in the valley. Continue straight until you run into the Pasture Aid Stop.

**Miles 35.8 – 43.87:** The next segment starts out as an ATV trail. It has potholes, ruts, and is often very muddy depending on recent weather. It follows along Four Mile Creek (to your right) before taking a sharp left and once again climbing Sheep Mountain. Once runners begin their climb, they travel on softer trails that are covered in soft pine needles, which eventually turns into another rock garden. You'll run into what looks like an ATV trail, where you'll take a left and climb a little more before descending for a short bit. You'll want to be on the lookout for the sharp right you'll take onto a faint trail. You'll take this trail, which climbs steeply for the first half mile or so, before traversing across the upper meadows that cross some old mine areas, and avalanche run outs. You will reconnect with the original ascent trail of Sheep Mountain from Mile 10, taking a hard right and descend the mountain. You'll take a hard left near the bottom and enter the final section, being the Limber Grove Trail, which is technical singletrack.

**Miles 43.87 – 44.93:** Runners will run on heavily traveled County Road 18 down to the Horseshoe Aid Station. This road is rutted with potholes and washboard ruts.

**Miles 44.93 – 47.74:** Runners will turn left onto Thompson Park Road and access the Horseshoe Aid Station. This road starts as a Forest Service Road and turns back into a dirt road near its end. The FS Road section starts out covered in small rocks and pine needles before slightly rising up out of the valley. It is a rugged trail with rocks primarily the size of golf balls and tennis balls. Runners will eventually drop down back into the residential area, maneuvering sections of rutted mud. At the end of this section, runners turn left back onto dirt roads.

