

Pretty Good Race Volunteer Instructions

Introduction

The PGR course is a 5K (3.1 miles) distance over the trails of Schenley Park and is an out and back course - runners/walkers go to the halfway point and return the way they came. The course is pretty compact and the halfway is about a 5-6 minute walk from the starting line.

We will have 4 people from the CMU Radio Club positioned on the course to provide direction to the runners & walkers and provide communication to coordinate the race start, progress and finish. They will also be able to assist in case someone has an accident or emergency.

The race has seen a dramatic increase in the number of runners & walkers participating in the past 2 years with 126 in 2022 and 150 in 2023 at the starting line. Keep in mind that we do not have exclusive use of the trail and so there may be other people running/walking/biking on the trail during our race.

The course map and directions to the starting line are on the PGR website: <https://www.cs.cmu.edu/~PGR/> You will see a link for the [2024 PGR Map and Course Directions \(.html\)](#) I suggest you print this out to use to find the location of the cobblestone driveway and how to get to the starting line under the Panther Hollow Bridge.

NOTE: I will be running in the race and so these job descriptions will provide guidance to you in the work to be done in your assignments and hopefully answer any questions you may have during that period when I am not present. I may be absent for about 15 minutes during the registration and set up period before the race starts in order to guide the Race Halfway Turnaround Crew over to the race halfway point. I am hoping to have a volunteer present who will be able to guide that crew so that I can remain to help at the starting line.

Two Distinct Volunteer Groups & Their Tasks

Volunteer Group_1 is an early group of 6 volunteers whose primary role is to meet me around 2:30pm on Friday near the beginning of the cobblestone driveway to help unload the race supplies from my car and carry them down the cobblestone driveway to the starting line to be set up for the race start. We will also carry some water over to the race halfway point.

Volunteer Group_2 consists of 18 volunteers who will show up around 3:30pm at the starting line to take over and perform race entry registrations and prepare and carry out other tasks for the race start and finish. These volunteers will be assigned to 1 of 6 sub-groups that will carry out specific tasks, such as timing the race, scoring, recording the finish, helping at the halfway turnaround point, etc.

I realize that some people may have a class or meeting that ends at 2:30 or 3:30 and may be delayed 15 or 20 minutes after the appointed times. We can be flexible so let me know your constraints and perhaps we can adjust. For example, the work of Volunteer Group_1 can likely be completed in about 35 minutes and we could allocate a 35 minute window between 2:30 and 3:30 to do that work though I may need 1 or 2 of you to remain at the race halfway turnaround to watch over the supplies until some volunteers from Volunteer Group_2 relieve you at 3:30.

Volunteer Group_1 Tasks

We will need the 6 volunteers to show up at my car around 2:30pm on Friday or in a 35 minute window between 2:30pm and 3:30pm. My car is a silver Honda Accord sedan and will be parked on the street as near as possible to the cobblestone driveway shown on the course map.

We will first carry the supplies needed at the race halfway point: 8 1-gallon jugs of water, 2 bags of plastic cups, a tray and stand to hold cups of water, an orange traffic cone, and some trash bags.

We will leave 1 volunteer here to watch over the supplies while the rest of us return to my car to carry supplies to the race starting line. Once we have unloaded the car, 4 volunteers will set up the tables and the starting line area for the race. 1 volunteer will join the other volunteer who was left at the halfway point. You 2 will remain there until the second group of volunteers arrives at 3:30pm.

At 3:30pm, one of you 2 will return to the race starting line and will guide 4 members of the Volunteer Group_2 plus a Radio Club member to the halfway point. After doing that, the 2 members of Volunteer Group_1 should return to the starting line and check in with me. All of the 6 Volunteer Group_1 volunteers are free to leave when their tasks are done or to stay around to watch or run the race as they may wish.

Volunteer Group_2 Sub-Group Tasks

These 18 volunteers will be assigned to their sub-groups and will be needed from around 3:30pm until around 6:00pm. We will try very hard to get the race started on time at 4:30pm. **NOTE:** Once the race is started, we will have about 15 minutes to prepare ourselves to handle the finish before the first runner crosses the finish line. The last walker might take up to 60 minutes to cross the finish line.

VG2_Task Race Registration & Scoring Sub-Group: 4 volunteers needed.

Two volunteers will sit at the registration table (the brown table) to handle registration by those that have pre-registered and to receive the entry forms from people registering at the starting line. You will find the entry forms for those who pre-registered in a manilla envelope. You will have a Sample Entry Form to show you what areas of the form to check for needed information and legibility.

The green table will be kept empty so that those registering have a place to fill out their race entry forms.

Entry fee is \$10. In the upper right-hand area of the form, write the amount paid and whether by cash or check. If someone gives a \$20 bill and you don't have change, mark on the top right corner that we owe them \$10. They can either stand by and wait until you get \$10 from a subsequent person or the PGR could reimburse what we owe in the week after the race. If someone forgets to bring money, write in the upper right what they owe and we will collect in the week after the race.

There is a small box of race tags that are 1/2 sheets of paper with a number. Take the next numbered tag and use a felt tipped pen to write its number in the top left of the entry form. If possible, use a green or black felt tipped pen for runners and a red one for walkers. For walkers, print a large "W" in the top left corner so we can more easily find the walkers forms when they cross the finish. Also for walkers, Print a large "W" using the red felt tipped pen in the right side of their tag so that we are able to tell when the first walker has finished. Ask the person to write their name on their runner tag.

The other 2 volunteers should assist with the registration where needed. One of you should check that they have written their names on their tags and also hand out a Race Instruction sheet for each person to read

before the race. Tell them they can bring back the instruction sheet and deposit it in the bin on the table. You might hand out the instruction sheets to people standing in line to register.

When registration is done, one of you should hold the manilla envelope with the money and hold onto it and not lay it down in order to keep it secure. If someone from the Dean's office is present at the race, I will give it to them to take back to GHC. If not, you should just keep it in your hands until I cross finish line and can take it from you.

Once registration is completed, the 4 of you will be preparing for your part in the race finish. First pack up the registration supplies except for the things you will need for your scoring assignment. You will need one of the ruled yellow pads, some ink pens, some of the large and medium binder clips, and the race entry forms. The binder clips are to hold race tags in finish order from runners & walkers after they finish and also to hold together the race entry forms. You should have the race entry forms sorted by tag number so you can easily find the form by the tag number of each finisher.

The 2 who sat taking registrations will sit at the "Scoring Table". Use the green table for the Scoring Table so the larger brown table can be used for serving up water and fruit. The Scoring Table will be positioned at the end of the chute that will be constructed by the race timing set of volunteers. Runners/walkers cross the finish line and will be guided by another set of volunteers to remain in the chute in the order they finished and will report to the Scoring Table where one of you will use the yellow ruled pad to record the finish order.

On each line of the pad, you will write the number indicating their finish place followed by their race tag number followed by an "R" for runner and a "W" for walker followed by their name. The second of you will find the entry form with that tag number and add it to the set of entry forms in finish order. Look at the form to see if that person might be the winner in any of the 6 competitive categories: 1st Male Runner, 1st Female Runner, 1st GenderNeutral Runner, 1st Male Walker, 1st Female Walker, 1st GenderNeutral Walker. Note winners next to their names on the yellow pad.

Note that we keep runners and walkers in a single total order and the crew of volunteers recording timing are keeping track of the times people cross the finish lines and we match their timing sheets to your yellow pad to assign the correct finish times. But we can do this matching after the race is over.

The other 2 of you 4 volunteers can assist at the scoring table. We want to collect the tags and keep them in finish order - use a large binder clip to hold them - you may need more than 1 binder clip if we have a large turnout as in the past 2 years. You should instruct the runners/walkers to remove the safety pins that held their tags and deposit in the pin bin on the Scoring Table. We don't want pins being put in any of the trash & recycling receptacles.

VG2_Task Race Timing & Chute Setup Sub-Group: 4 volunteers needed.

Before the race starts, you will familiarize yourselves with operating the 2 stop watches and using the timing sheets. The watches and timing sheets (attached to 2 clipboards) are in one of the race supply boxes/bins.

You will also prepare the chute setup off to the side of the tunnel under the bridge where the race starts. The chute materials consist of 2 larger orange traffic cones and 6 smaller ones, 8 4-foot long wooden sticks with eyebolts attached to hold the string that defines the chute sides, 2 50-foot long pieces of orange rope to thread through the eye bolts. The rope at 4 endpoints of the chute can be tied off onto/around the eyebolts and sticks or perhaps terminated with a medium binder clip. The orange traffic cones have a hole in their tops through which the 4-foot wooden sticks can be inserted. The chute supplies are in a box/bin with the 8 sticks lying loose.

The chute starts at the finish line and will end at the Scorers Table 40 - 50 feet away. The mouth of the chute should be 6-8 feet wide to allow for people who might finish close together. The chute should be only 1 person wide at the Scoring Table to force people to maintain correct finish order. A separate set of volunteers will work at the Scoring Table to collect the runners tags, keep the tags in finish order, and record the finish order.

One of you 4 volunteers will be the Race Timer and will hold the primary stop watch and your only job is to call out the finish times as runners/walkers cross the finish line. This person should be able to speak clearly and loud enough for the Primary Time Recorder to hear you above the ambient noise. We keep a total order of runners and walkers all together and the Scorers Table will use the race tags plus the entry forms to sort out who is a runner vs walker.

We will have 2 Time Recorders. The Primary Time Recorder will place an "x" beside the time that a person crosses the finish line. If 2 people cross at the same time, place 2 "x" marks beside that finish time. **This is one of the most important jobs in the race since we need to be sure to get an "x" on the timing sheet for everyone that crosses the finish line. These timing sheets are then correlated to the set of ordered race tags collected at the Scorers Table to match each person with their time.** We will have the third volunteer in this group be the Primary Time Recorder Assistant and your focus will be in assisting the Primary Time Recorder in getting the right "x" marks onto the timing sheets in the right places. When several people cross the finish line simultaneously or bunched together, it can be difficult for the Primary Time Recorder to get it right.

The 4th volunteer will be the Secondary Time Recorder. He will have the second stop watch around his neck and ready to hand off to the Race Timer in case the Race Timer's stop watch would fail. When the race starts, these stop watches should be started at the same instant. The Secondary Time Recorder serves to help us sort out the finish order in case any people in the chute fail to line up in their correct finish order. The Secondary Time Recorder will capture race tag numbers as people cross the finish line but, instead of an "x" beside the finish time, you will write the tag number beside the finish time, or the 2 tag numbers if 2 people finish at the same time. When lots of people are crossing the finish line simultaneously or bunched together, you may not be able to capture every number or assign them precisely to their time, but that is OK. Your recording of tag numbers is intended as an assist if runners in the chute get out of order or if some disaster befalls the Scorers Table.

VG2_Task Chute Organizers Sub-Group: 3 volunteers needed.

Your jobs are to observe the order in which people cross the finish line and make sure they end up in the correct order in the chute. This can be difficult if a bunch of people finish at the same time. Sometimes a runner going fast across the finish line may fail to slow down very quickly and pass up someone ahead of them in the chute. If it gets really mixed up, then the Secondary Time Recorder who is trying to capture tag numbers may be able to help you sort out the order, but he faces a similar challenge of capturing the tags correctly when a bunch finish close together. You 3 volunteers will need to discuss how you will work together to do your job.

VG2_Task Recycling Czar Sub-Group: 1 volunteer needed.

You must stand guard over the 3 separate bins/containers that will be used to collect food waste, plastic cups/bottles and metal cans, and trash. We recycle everything and cannot allow wrong stuff mixed into the wrong bins. We don't want to have to sift through the bins after the race to sort things out. Our goal is to clean up after the race and pack the car as quickly as possible so you can all get over to the TGIF party. So you must be stationed there as soon as the bins are set up and never leave them unattended until the race is completely

over.

Only food waste goes into the food waste bin. Only plastic cups & bottles and soda cans too go into the recycle bin. You should tell people to empty the liquid in their cups, bottles, & cans in the bushes outside the tunnel. If their plastic cup held food waste and is dirty, pour some water into their cup and have them rinse out the cup. When they give you the cup insert it into a stack of cups and when you get a good sized stack, put the stack in the recycle bin. We need to get the recycling compact so it can all fit into the car with all the other race stuff. The 1-gallon plastic water jugs will be handled by the volunteers taking care of serving up the water and fruit. They will put the empty jugs into a separate plastic bag.

VG2_Task Water & Fruit Server Sub-Group: 1 volunteer needed.

As soon as registration is finished or mostly finished, you will get the brown table that registration was using and they will take the green table for the Scoring Table. You will set up the brown table with cups of water on a tray in case any runners/walkers want a drink of water before the race starts. When a jug of water is emptied, replace its lid and put the empty in one of the milk crates or plastic bins.

Once the race has started, set up more cups of water on the tray and set up another tray with bananas for the runners & walkers when they finish the race. You will keep up the supply of water and bananas for the duration of the finish. Remind people that there are bins for recycling, food waste and trash.

VG2_Task Troubleshooter Sub-Group: 1 volunteer needed.

You will roam around looking to see where help may be needed by any of the other groups or may be tasked with handling any last minute assignments or issues that arise. You might be assigned to hold the money envelope until I cross the finish line. There will be non-CMU people passing thru the race start/finish area so we don't want to leave the money lying around.

VG2_Task Race Halfway Turnaround Crew Sub-Group: 4 volunteers needed.

You 4 and a Radio Club member will be guided over to the race halfway turnaround point. It is about a 5-6 minute walk across the Panther Hollow bridge followed by a right turn down the playground area driveway for about 100 meters whereupon the halfway point is located to the right of the driveway where the running trail first becomes visible running parallel to the driveway.

Runners & walkers will run slightly down the hill and turn around the orange traffic cone. You should find a white "X" on the trail marking where the orange cone should be placed. If that white "X" is not visible, there is an orange paint marking to the side of the trail that marks the turnaround point as well. Don't hand out water until after they have made the turn and travelled another 30 feet or wherever you find a level area to place the tray with cups of water, to the side of the trail nearest the driveway. If it looks like you might run out of water, one of you could return to the starting line to get another jug or 2 of water.

One of you should station yourself on the trail just beyond the orange cone and wave and call out to runners & walkers to guide them to the turn around point.

As you empty a water jug, place a cap on the empty jug and put it in the recycling trash bag. Once we get to the later stages of the race, one of you could take a trash bag and pick up empty cups or bottles. Go back on the trail only about 100 meters to find cups. I can check the rest of the trail on the weekend for any stray

cups. If possible we might have you place a box with a "Plastic" sign on it at the top of the short hill at around the 100 meter mark for people to deposit their cups.

The Radio Club member will be able to communicate with the other 2 members on the course and with the Radio Club member positioned at the start. This should allow us to determine when the last runner or walker has made it to the halfway turnaround point and thus when you can return to the starting line area. If it is too difficult to carry any remaining water back to the start, just dump it out. Hand over the recycling bag to the volunteers overseeing the recycling bin.

Cleanup at Race End: All of us

We will orderly repackage all the race supplies to the boxes and bins in which they came so that they will fit back into my car. We will figure out how to package the recycling, compost and trash bins so they can fit into the car. It may be necessary for some of you to carry the 2 boxes the bananas came in to campus if they will not fit in the car. If there are any bananas left over, we may have you carry them back to the TGIF party.