



RTB Relay Captain's White Paper

What you need to do and when

Greetings Team Captains!

Organizing a Reach the Beach Relay team might seem like a daunting task, but it need not be a labor-intensive undertaking. With careful thought and preparation, you and your team will have a great race experience. Here are a captain's primary responsibilities:

1. Register a team.
2. Recruit runners.
3. Get the team to the race.
4. Get the team from start to finish safely and within the rules.

Here is a closer look at how to handle these four steps, and other details related to captaining a team.

6 weeks to 1 Year Before Race Day

REGISTER TEAM

- Register as soon as you can. You don't need to pay immediately, but you might eventually need to front some of the entry fee, and then collect it from your runners as you recruit them. Come up with a fun team name while you're at it.
- Recruiting runners can be easier if you have a team registered because they know they're committing to something that's going to happen.
- Monitor rtbrelay.com and the race's Facebook page for updates on how full the field is.

CREATE A ROUGH BUDGET

- Create an approximate budget so you can tell recruits how much the event will cost. The major expenses to factor in are the entry fee, vehicle rentals, supplies, and, possibly, air travel and lodging. The per-person total can include about \$110 for the entry fee, \$40 to \$60 for van rentals/insurance, and additional costs for food, fluids, and other supplies. Additional expenses may include pre-race lodging, safety gear, and team shirts or singlets.

RECRUIT A TEAM

- Take advantage of all your networks: friends, family, alumni groups, running clubs, co-workers, social networks, etc. Have your recruits reach out to their networks also. To ensure a full team, you'll want to generate as much interest as you can. Our "FreeStyle" Category makes it easier than ever to pull in runners of all abilities.
- Try to find more people than you need—someone will get injured or realize they have to be at a wedding on race weekend.



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- Share RTB videos with them to give them a feel for the event. Start with “[Come Join Us](#)” then check out the many other videos available on our [Multimedia page](#) or our [YouTube Channel](#).
- If you still need to fill your team, look for runners seeking a team through our [Facebook page](#).
- Throughout the recruiting process (and beyond), make sure to keep your team informed. Create an email list, go on group runs, and keep in touch in any way possible.
- You want an engaged team—and you don't want to fall out of touch only to find out weeks, or days, before the event that someone isn't going to be able to race.
- Keep track of everyone you invite and note their level of interest—someone who can't make it this year might be in next year.

ORGANIZE TRANSPORTATION

- Decide whether you'll be renting or using a team member's vehicles (or both). If you'll be renting vans within a couple hundred miles of the race, reserve them early to ensure you have what you need.
- Make sure everything you need for the race will fit in your vehicles (roof pods are a good option; but remember, trailers are not allowed on the course). Some teams use plastic bins or lightweight sets of drawers to keep their vehicles organized. Consider whether you'll want to remove any of the seats to create more space.



- When making rental arrangements, make sure to account for insurance and supplemental drivers. Some credit cards that provide insurance do not cover large passenger vans, though sometimes you can add that insurance for a fee. Most rental companies also charge a fee for each extra person who will be driving the van. Be sure to have copies of everyone's drivers license and signed waivers, if necessary, if your drivers can't all be at the rental agency in person.

TRAINING ADVICE

- Members of your team may be wondering how to prepare for three races within 20-30 hours. Training is, of course, a very individual thing. But given the nature of the race, solo tempo runs (ideally over terrain comparable to the legs you'll be running) are great



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preparation. You might also consider going for runs at times of the day when you're not accustomed to running, or consider occasionally experimenting with two runs a day. Expect to race at approximately your current half marathon race pace.

1 to 2 Months Before the Race

STAY INFORMED

- Monitor the race website, official emails, and [Facebook](#) for new information. In the weeks before the race, the race manual and course maps will be posted, as will your start time (when you get this, you can plan your travel accordingly).
- Encourage team members to review the race manual so they all understand the rules and safety considerations involved in the event.

REGISTER INDIVIDUAL RUNNERS

- About one month before the event will be the deadline for runners to sign up for your team. After this you will have to pay a fee for each roster change. Your runners should be prepared to estimate their current fitness, in the form of their current half-marathon race pace. This is how race organizers will calculate your team's predicted pace.

SET YOUR LINEUP

- Consider these factors:
 - Each runner's current fitness level.
 - Each runner's personal preferences: up-hills vs. down-hills; Running early vs. late in the rotation; etc.
 - Van chemistry: Are there certain people who want to be in the same vehicle? You'll all be in close quarters for a long time—you want to make sure to create the right mix of personalities.
 - Combine that information with an analysis of the individual legs of the race.
- There are many ways to evaluate the difficulty of the legs. You can simply total the mileage of each set of three legs to get an approximate sense of their level of difficulty. Another method is to rank the legs 1 (hardest) through 36 (easiest) based on length, elevation change, and position in the rotation (5 miles late in the race will be harder than early on). Total the scores for each of the 12 sets of legs. The lowest total should be the hardest set. If you also rank your 12 runners, you can simply match up the two lists, then tweak as necessary. Here's a sample of what that might look like:



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Leg	Rank	Length	Notes
1	8	7.97	7.97, but 300+ elevation drop
2	25	3.3	3.something, climbs, then descends
3	11	5.59	5.59, gradual climb of 200+
4	20	3.87	3.87, but steady climb of 300ish feet
5	24	4.12	4.12, all downhill

- Keep your team involved in this process and seek their input.

DELEGATE

- Assign different roles to members of your team to lighten your workload. Is there someone who can arrange the vehicle rentals? Plan the necessary shopping? Or handle other tasks?
- Consider having a Team Captain for each vehicle, and having them coordinate the needs of their vehicle (food, supplies, etc.).

Race Week

There's a lot you can get done in the days before the race that will help you during the event. Proper preparation and thinking through what's ahead will help you avoid potential in-race issues that could slow your team down.

ORGANIZE YOUR INFORMATION

- Create a binder for each vehicle. This should include required materials—the race manual, course maps, and course directions. You can also include a number of other useful pieces of information, including:
 - List of team members' cell phone numbers taped to the cover for easy access.
 - Chart displaying your lineup and leg distances.
 - Chart for recording splits during the race. Several of these charts can also be combined into one document. Here's an example of the first two charts combined:



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Leg	Runner	Level of Difficulty	Distance	Split
1	Jane Smith	moderate	7.97	
2	John Doe	hard	3.3	
3	Bob Jones	easy	5.59	

- Chart of estimated arrival times at each transition area, based on predicted pace:

Leg	Runner	Distance	Est. Pace	ETA
1	Jane Smith	7.97	0:08:30	11:08 a.m.
2	John Doe	3.3	0:07:45	11:34 a.m.
3	Bob Jones	5.59	0:08:10	12:30 p.m.

BEGIN PACKING

- Assemble the necessary safety gear (review the race manual for specifics) in a box or bag. These items are critical—without them, you won't be allowed to start the race. Having them organized in advance will also ease the check-in process. Find out what extra supplies your team members can bring; try to have a safety vest for each runner.
- Plan for fun: Do you have music for each vehicle? Does your team have matching uniforms? Costumes? (check out the RTB Facebook page photos for some great examples of what teams have done)
- Send a packing list to your teammates. Here's a start of the personal items recommended:
 - Drivers License
 - \$\$ for meals/ Credit Card
 - 3 sets running clothes
 - 1 set lounging clothes & sweatshirt
 - 1 thin towel
 - Running shoes (extra pair optional)
 - Flip Flops/Slides
 - Toothbrush/paste
 - Powder/deodorant/wipes
 - Sleeping Bag
 - Pillow
 - Labeled laundry bag for dirty clothes

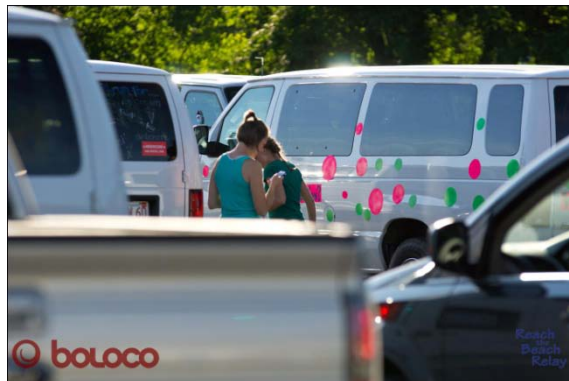


SHOPPING

- Different teams have very different shopping needs. Decide if your runners will each bring their own stash of food, or if shopping in bulk makes sense. At the very least make sure to stock your vehicles with the basics—lots of water, some snacks, and items like ibuprofen, hand wipes, extra batteries (for headlamps and flashing lights), etc.

VEHICLE DECORATIONS

- By now you will have already declared your team name, but many squads also go to great lengths to decorate their vehicles. This can be both fun and practical—unique decorations will help you identify your vans in even the most crowded transition areas, and recognize them out on the course when you run by.



Race Weekend

Most of the work is done by race weekend. With proper pre-race preparation, you should now be ready to focus on racing. Keeping your team engaged in the weeks and days leading up to the race is critical, though. You want everyone to understand the rules of the race, the plan your team has for the event, and to be focused on both from start to finish. This will make the event safer—and will help your team avoid making costly mistakes.

Once the race begins, you won't see much of the other vehicle. Consider having a team dinner the night before and a team breakfast on race morning, to bring everyone together.

CHECK-IN

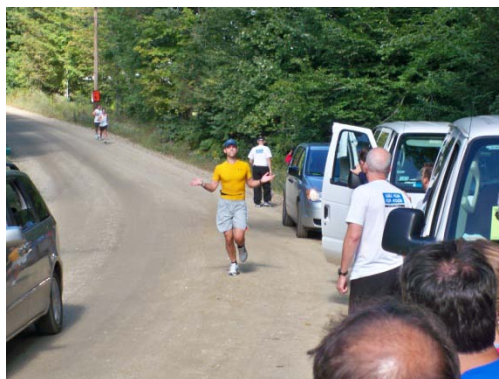
- Arrive early (at least 90 minutes before your assigned start time) so that you have plenty of time to check-in before your assigned start time.
- Take your collection of required safety gear and race materials to the safety check-in.



- Attend the pre-race safety seminar. At a minimum, a representative from each vehicle needs to be present; however you should encourage your entire team to join you so that everyone understands the rules and safety requirements of the event.

IN-RACE

- Keep splits
 - This will give you a sense of how your team is running versus your original projections, and will help you be prepared at each transition area.
- Stay organized
 - Keep your vehicle organized, keep both vehicles informed of the team's progress... and make sure you don't leave any runners behind at a transition area.
- Stay fueled
 - Keep your runners, and your vehicles, fueled throughout the race by eating regularly, and refilling your vans when the opportunity arises. Keep in mind that there may not be businesses in remote areas on the course, and even in populated areas, businesses may not be open through the night.
- Stay rested
 - Have a plan for the VTA's. Are you camping? Sleeping in your vehicles? Make sure your other vehicle knows where and how to find you when they reach the VTA. You'll want your next running to be ready to go.
- Have a co-pilot
 - Always having a designated navigator in each vehicle will help your drivers safely and quickly reach each transition area.
- Support your runners
 - Talk to each runner before his or her legs to find out where they would like splits or aid on the course. Cross-reference their desires with the race manual to make sure you don't pull over where stopping is prohibited (and be aware of when you're in a Quiet Zone).





Post Race

No matter how well you've planned, you'll learn a lot during the race. Take notes on what worked, what didn't work, and what you might want to do differently next year. Create a list of items you didn't have enough of or had too much of, to aid with your shopping next year. Poll your team for their thoughts on how things went. Do this before your memories fade.

Other Resources: [RTB Captain's Blog](#)

Thanks for reading.

We hope this has helped and that we see you out there at one of our events!

