



## **Hello again Taliharja Vanakuri participant!**

We have entered the new year and days left to Taliharja Vanakurja Ultra Undurance Race can now be counted on fingers. Taking part in a winter ultra-race is a brave decision whether in the snow or not. I strongly advise you to think through everything before you face the coming-Saturday challenge and test your equipment in similar circumstances. The weather deserves a climate strike - snow will probably not come, but night-time mild minus degrees, fog and various forms of water from sky is still possible. Also, ground under foot might be softer with plus degrees than with snow.

## **LINKS TO LOCATIONS AND TRAVEL**

Race center: [RMK Karula Rahvuspargi külastuskeskuses](https://goo.gl/maps/soS5HYM2L4LQVtyg7) <https://goo.gl/maps/soS5HYM2L4LQVtyg7>

Midcamp/48km "pehmo" course finish: [Mõniste Talurahva muuseumis](https://goo.gl/maps/EXzqH4VpriYPcDg7) <https://goo.gl/maps/EXzqH4VpriYPcDg7>

Start: Korneti village, Latvian Republic <https://goo.gl/maps/bHABvPJnmv2mCCtn6>

For foreign visitors starting journey from Tallinn - I suggest you reach out to other participants on FB page and arrange a car together with other racers. There is an option to take a train to Valga (20km away from race center) on Friday from Tallinn <https://elron.pilet.ee/et/otsing/Tallinn/Valga/2020-01-10> and try find a cab ride, but the latter is not sure. Here are some taxi numbers in Valga if you choose this option <http://valgamaa.ee/teenused/taksoteenus/>

To get back it is probably easier to find a ride with other finisher to Valga or Tartu to take a train back to Tallinn.

## **COURSE**

**By law you need to carry ID card or passport during race as we are crossing border!**

Final 101km course: <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/960387>

48km "pehmo" course: [www.plotaroute.com/route/995184](http://www.plotaroute.com/route/995184)

From plotaroute under “menu” you can download the GPX track for your device.

Runners, cyclists and even courageous mud-cross-country skiers all use the same trail. If you want to change the way you race, make your decision by January 5th and mark it in the participant table.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1CG2sKH6rjk9BoYvkMJvz5nlvoO02IZqek6d4tJRqw8/edit?usp=sharing>

The first kilometers of the trail in Latvia are marked with red “trail” arrows on a white background and when entering the territory of the Republic of Estonia, the RMK hiking trail marking. Marking is bad at times and inadequate to carelessly stay on the track (especially on sharp turns in the dark). The signing is white-green-white painted on trees and wooden signs showing the right path to take. In November, organizer added some pieces of reflective tape to the turns as a reminder - but they aren't available all over the course! Mõniste Midcamp / 48km finish line is not located on the RMK hiking trail and is again signed by red trail arrows at turning points along forest roads. To stay safely on course, you need a map or GPS device - a sportswatch with trail, a dedicated handheld GPS or a smartphone. Also, a full battery bank with cable to charge your chosen navigation device. It is possible to use a wall socket in the Midcamp while you are there. Everyone will receive a map of the trail, with 10km markers (not in nature) and information about the surrounding area (mostly in Estonian). The scale of the map is 1:50 000, the elevation line is 5m. Eduard Pukkonen contributed to the completion of the map.

## **CLOTHES & EQUIPMENT**

The best solution for clothing is layering. When active, two layers are sufficient - warm underlayer and running jacket. A third layer, such as a waterproof/insulated jacket or a vest, should be added when walking or standing still. For pants, one layer is probably enough for running. I would definitely bring some spare gloves and a replacement hat. Try to avoid sweating as you move - adjust your pace or layers of clothing accordingly.

The main places that start to freeze (especially on cyclists) are hands and toes. The best solution for your hands is double gloves - gloves on the inside and windproof mittens on the top.

For feet (bikers), it is wise to use shoe covers and insole with a layer of silver paper or special winter shoes or hiking boots. Given that there are not many climbs and technical descents (the steep short ones will probably have to be pushed), this is not a bad option. Cold limbs can be best warmed by waving them in high amplitude - about 20 waves and blood flowing to the tip of the limb warms it up.

As for running footwear, bear in mind that the conditions on the track can be muddy and sandy at times. More tread, better traction. Gaiters help prevent debris from entering your footwear and prevent chafing. Studded shoes are not necessary.

The race begins at noon, but no one is likely to finish it in daylight, at least on the long run. Personal lamp is very important. Make sure the battery is charged and that there is a spare. I would recommend lamp with at least 300+lumen.

Get ready for high energy loss - it's cold and dark! Mandatory food to start with will be a minimum of 2000 kcal (48km 1000kcal). My sample menu - 4 Kalev marzipan bars (55 cents 40g pcs a '180kcal), 4 Nestle muesli bars (50 cents 35g pcs a'135 kcal), double

ham sandwich 350 kcal, 4 sponser gels a 100kcal. Eating every hour pays off - helps maintain energy levels, but at a later stage also helps to overcome boredom.

You can refill and drink approx. at 21.5 km after passing Paganamaa at the Vargamäe Farmyard; at 48km Midcamp and at about 76km in Alumati tea point. Water and tea with sugar are provided.

In midcamp you get a warm meal - according to FB survey proportion - 33% of the portions are porridge and 66% solyanka soup. And not on the same plate;) Also traditional pickles, chips, candies, banana and so on. Each person has about half a kilo of food available in midcamp.

In the finish, the proportion of porridge and solyanka is the opposite, ie porridge 66% of portions and 33% soup.

## **TIMETABLE**

Saturday January 12, 2020:

8.00 - 101km Mandate open at the Karula National Park Visitor Center

9.00 - 48km "Pehmo" trail Mandate open in Mõniste Peasant Museum (Talurahva muuseum)

9.00 - stowage of bicycles in a truck open in Karula;

9.30 - buses departure from Karula center towards Mõniste Peasant Museum;

9.50 - buses arrives to Mõniste Peasant Museum;

10.00 - Visiting the museum's external exposition and a short presentation on the historical and cultural background of the area - outdoors. Toilet, possibility to take water.

10.45 - buses departing towards Korneti - 48km "pehmo" course participants join the bus passengers;

11.15 - 11.30 busses arrive to Kornet village center; Can use toilet in community center and have access to tap water:

11.55 - Competitors lined on start line;

12 noon - START

1 pm - 5 pm drinking point at Vargamäe open

14.30 - 22.00 Mõniste Peasant Museum Midcamp / 48km course finish;

17.00 - 12.00 (13.01) Finish at the Karula National Park Visitor Center open

## **ACCOMMODATION**

The participants of the "pehmo" 48km course can stay overnight after closing the Midcamp on the floor of the same room (who paid the entry fee 40 euros) or for an additional fee (+10 euros) in personal bed in Karula or Kaika Community Center. Needs driving...

Participants of the long course will have an overnight stay on the floor in Karula / Kaika Community Center free of charge or in a personal bed +10 eur.

Sleeping Friday to Saturday in Karula is possible for 15 euros in bed, 5 euros on the floor.

NB! All out of competition food must be prepared by your own means. A stove is available in both places and some cutlery.

NB! The table for bed preferences will be locked on January 5th at 10pm [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1CG2sKH6rjk9BoYvkMJvz5nlvoO02lZqek6d4tJ\\_Rqw8/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1CG2sKH6rjk9BoYvkMJvz5nlvoO02lZqek6d4tJ_Rqw8/edit?usp=sharing)

## **WASHING UP**

In the midcamp 48km finishers have a smoke sauna (from ca 18.00 until the stones are hot) and a shower (1). Sauna unisex. Read about smoke sauna: <https://savvusann.ee/et/smoke-sauna/smoke-sauna-and-customs/>

Karula 101km finishers can use hottub, caravan sauna, smoke sauna (from the arrival of first runners at about 22.00) and showers. Overnight stay on the floor or at an extra bed (10 euros) in Karula / Kaika Community Center. Unisex saunas, bring swimwear if wish.

The heating of the smoke saunas is timed to become usable approximately one hour after the finish of the expected winner of the short course and for the arrival of the foot-competitors on the long course. Slower walkers will probably only be able to sniff out the cold smoke-smell and have to put up with a barrel, caravan sauna or a shower. That is, because smoke sauna can only be heated one time in evening.

## **COMPETITION MATERIALS**

Competition materials - presumably 2 A3 size maps (waterproof), stickers, race numbers and GPS unit. One number is used to mark the finish bag to be given away at the start. Attach another race number to your bag or clothes. Cyclists in front of the bike. Put your finish bag in a marked transport vehicle before the start.

NB! All participants will receive a Sportrec GPS tracker before the start. This matchbox-sized device can be attached with a special rubber band around the arm or placed in the top pocket of the bag. In the latter case, make sure that the drawer is always closed so that the device is not lost! It is wise to attach it inside the pocket with a ribbon / safety pin or similar. If a GPS device is lost, it is the competitor's responsibility to find it or to reimburse the cost!

With GPS tracking, your location is visible to dot-watchers, friends and family in real time. The participant himself / herself can also observe it during the competition. The link will be published on FB and on the website.

## **MEDAL**

This year, as an innovation, we're introducing checkpoints in which competitors can take with them for a "medallion". The medallion is an engraved metal disk with a 45mm diameter. There are a total of 4 checkpoints on the course (to on 48km "pehmo" course). The medallions collected from the checkpoints form the commemorative medal of the race. All racers will receive an S-carbine to collect the medals and carry them safely. The medallions do not need to be worn outside on carabiner, they can also be kept inside pocket or bag. Lost medallions cannot be replaced! In the event of quitting the race, the competitor will retain the medallions he/she has reached on the course. The same applies for "pehmo" course. I hope this solution will add some excitement and small wins to the racecourse and it will become a tradition!

Checkpoints (KP) from which each competitor can pick up 1 medallion are:

- 1 KP - approx. 9 km - at the top of the observation tower on Raadi hill in Paganamaa;
- 2 KP - ca 32 km - in the southern peak of the Republic of Estonia inside cabin;
- 3 KP - ca 62.5 km - at the top of Tellingumäe observation tower;
- 4 KP - ca 88,5km - RMK Kivi hiking cabin.

Medallion position will be marked by reflective tape and sign.

The production of the medallions is altruistically supported by Enima Trade Ltd, along with its leader Indrek Reitsak, who is also on the race-track himself. Many thanks to Indrek from all of us!

## **MORE ABOUT COURSE**

As there is a narrow and steep forest trail shortly after start you need to be prepared for a slow line. Taking over a competitor is also possible on this track, but does it make sense? It is better to take a position in the line of runners right after start that will satisfy you. If you want to pass - ask and cooperate with the other person! In the first few kilometers there are also a significant amount of fallen trees. Don't worry, it is not the case later on the course.

Staying on the race track is mandatory, with reasonable compromise. If you mistakenly go off the track and return to it without gaining time in front of other competitors or cutting distance, it is OK. In the case of a cut that has resulted in an advantage, the competitor will be placed in the protocol after the racers that completed the course correct. The decision will be helped by GPS track and will be made by race director. If you decide to start shortening the course after passing through Midcamp (for example, you will take the big road to the finish line), you will still get the result of the short course in protocol if you wish so.

The map has marked evacuation points with a letter "E" and a number to help identify your location in an emergency. Quitting is possible in the midcamp or in extreme fatigue / freezing through these evacuation points. For evacuation request the organizer ahead in good time, tel +3725246894. Keep moving to the meeting point if possible to keep warm as transportation may take a long time. Because many roads are inaccessible by car, it is not possible to get help to every section of the track hence - evacuation points.

The finish line is directly in front of the Karula National Park Visitor Center (on the "Pehmo" trail, in front of the Mõniste Peasant Museum school room). I hope to welcome you all after finishing, but if for some reason I fail (for example, I have to deal with an emergency) we will fix the time by GPS in the end.

At the finish there is a diploma, a warm (or cold) sauna, hot food, snacks. If you think you need a special treat (like beer), put it in your own finish bag!

If any unexpected events occur on the course that the main organizer or other competitors should be aware of, report them by phone to +3725246894 or to a volunteer in drink points or midcamp.

Have a good final preparation and successful race!

Silver Eensaar

Peakorraldaja