



# The Winter Challenge – *Because life isn't always easy.*

## 2017 Preliminary Order of Events and General Athlete Info

### Friday, February 17

- 12pm Dome Farms opens to campers and participants
- 12pm Athletes are welcome to pitch a tent, check out the course, or just kick back and start working on their good time.
- ~7pm Pre-race Meal will be served to all Campers and Volunteers\*
- ~7:30pm REI Giveaway!

\*\$15 Camping fee includes pre-race meal.... \$5 for non-campers... and of course, gratis for volunteers

### Saturday, February 18

- 7:30-9:30am Packet pick-up
- 9am Volunteer meeting
- 9:30am Pre-race orientation
- 10:30am Race Start!
- 11:30am Live Music! Skinny Mike and His Wicked Friends
- 12:30pm Post-race meal served (until everyone is fed!)
- ~2:30pm Awards Ceremony-everyone is encouraged to attend. We give away a sick amount of swag, not only to winners, but to pretty much anyone who sticks around.

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For frequent, and late-breaking updates, give us a Like on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/winterchallengex](http://www.facebook.com/winterchallengex).

For a more complete list of FAQ's, visit <http://www.winterchallenge.net/faqs.html>

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### Getting to the Winter Challenge

Address: (more or less)  
Dome Farms  
Hwy 39 & New Forest Road  
Between Springfield & Williston, SC  
[Use the map below, or view location in Google Maps here.](#)

There will be a sign directing you to race headquarters. There is plenty of parking in the field just before you get to the cabins. Please do not drive all the way up to or past the cabins, as this is always the most congested area, especially once the kayaks are unloaded.

*Important word of advice - Closely monitor your speed in neighboring small towns!  
Seriously Folks... Small infractions = big fine\$\$\$.*





## Packet Pickup and Race Day Registration

There will be staff on hand by 7:30am, usually on the front porch of the cabin, ready to get you registered and to help you with your packet and t-shirt. You must present ID to obtain your race packet. Also, though we ordered extra shirts to try and ensure everyone received the exact size they requested, there's simply no guarantee we'll have the exact number of larges or smalls necessary. Shirts will be handed out on a first come first served basis.

At the time of this writing, we are sold-out. However, we've never turned back anyone who showed up to race at the last minute. In other words, if you got someone who needs some bliss, bring em along and we'll make it happen.

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## Getting your bearings at race HQ

Winter Challenge Race Headquarters consists of a couple of 125+ year old buildings sitting astride a 75-acre pond. There'll be signs posted around to help you find the important spots such as packet pick-up, but it's not a big place... just stop anyone and ask if you have any questions. This is a friendly crowd.

The buildings are rustic and the plumbing isn't much different. As such, we politely request that you take advantage of the porta-johns provided outside, unless there's some real emergency, in which case... yeah, it's no problem, come on inside.

Once you park, it's a good idea to go ahead and position your kayak in your designated corral. More on this innovative little development a little further down in the Kayak section. But if you need help getting your kayak from the parking area to the water, ask just about anyone. There'll be plenty of folks eager to help.

There are two easy-access spigots outside to fill up your bottles, or for whatever other needs. One is located on the right hand side of the first building, near the trees. The other feeds off the well, next to the ice house. No need to ask, just help yourself. Just remember to turn them off when you're done. Oh, and the water tastes great, if you're wondering... fed from the same aquifer as the nearby Healing Springs (some free trivia for you right there).

Campers are pretty much welcome to pitch a tent wherever they please, though we recommend the area to the right of the first building, amongst the trees. This provides some shelter from the wind, and keeps you out of the way of cars moving around the field. The bonfire will also be in this general vicinity. All this will be immediately apparent once you get there, but now you know... and knowing is half the battle, right?

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## Food

A scrumptious pre-race meal will be served Friday evening. While we'll stop short of calling it haute cuisine, it is a delicious, tried and true pasta-with-a-lot-of-veg-based-protein dish that will fill you up with the nutrients necessary for the challenge ahead.

If you're just dropping by for the Friday night meal, there'll be a modest charge of \$5. Please purchase dinner ticket from staff onsite. Meal will be served at main cabins.

If you're camping, then Friday's meal is all just part of the program. All campers must check in with race staff upon arrival. Please and thanks.



Post-race, a delicious, hot and healthy meal will be provided by Lone Star BBQ after the race, free of charge to all participants and volunteers. There will be a modest \$7 charge for all others. Plus, there will be a warm cabin, hot beverages, and various diversions throughout the day, all free of charge, naturally!

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## **Lodging/Camping**

Primitive Lodging/Camping will be available at the race site. Matter of fact, a lot of people think this is one of the most fun things about the Winter Challenge. And if you want to rock the RV, that's cool too... we won't come knocking.

For campers, there is a \$15 charge per head. This includes the pre-race meal on Friday night, all the delicious well water you can drink, an outlet inside to plug in your iPhone, and the opportunity to chill out with other brave souls around the bonfire or our pot-bellied stove. Plus, you'll probably get to help us fill up swag bags.

And what's even cooler is that we're donating proceeds from camping and the pre-race meal to St. Lawrence Place, a very cool charitable organization up in Columbia that helps families transition from homelessness to stability with the support of permanent lodging.

If you have already signed up for camping, fantastic! Just be sure to check in with one of the Brohams at Race HQ upon your arrival. And if you have not yet RSVP'd, no big deal... just show up and check in at Race HQ. We'll make room.

For those with more refined tastes, the Villa Motor Inn Ph# 803-266-7001 is located in nearby Williston, approximately ten minutes from the race site.

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## **Kayak Rentals**

### **Nature Adventures Outfitters**

If you're new to this sort of thing, or perhaps find yourself looking for a more stable touring-style kayak, then give our friends at Nature Adventures Outfitters a shout to reserve your boat for race day. Out of Mt. Pleasant (and now Santee), Kathie and her excellent crew have been hauling their excellent fleet of Wilderness Systems kayaks up for the Winter Challenge for as long as we can remember.

Call: (843) 568-3222

[nao@att.net](mailto:nao@att.net)

[www.NatureAdventuresOutfitters.com](http://www.NatureAdventuresOutfitters.com)

### **Epic Kayaks**

For the more daring among you, longtime sponsor Epic Kayaks is bringing the heat. As my broham has so often pointed out... if you're gunning for a podium spot, then you'd better be paddling an Epic.

Call: (843) 884-4601

[www.epickayaks.com](http://www.epickayaks.com)

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## Course Details and Race Rules

### Transition Area

Triathlon and Duathlon participants will share a single Transition Area, which will be located at Race Headquarters, just next to the main cabins.

- Label your belongings.
- Participants & assigned volunteers only in TA.
- No support in the TA during the race.
- Bike placement is first come first served.
- Participants must push/run bikes out of TA. You are not allowed to mount your bike or anything else in TA.
- Helmets must be on and fastened before mounting bike. (This goes for riding around before and after the race as well, please)
- Bar end plugs are required for all bikes.
- No glass in the TA.

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### Run Course

**Triathlon:** The triathlon begins with the 7-mile run course. It takes place on 6-10ft wide hard-packed farm roads and single track woodland trails that will keep participants surrounded by woods and lake view. The course is mostly level terrain with a few rolling hills.

**Duathlon:** The duathlon begins with a 2.25-mile run course, taking place on 6-10ft wide hard-packed farm roads and single track woodland trails that will keep participants surrounded by woods and lake view. The course is mostly level terrain with a few rolling hills. Following your warmup run, you will enjoy a pleasant 10-mile interlude on the bike, and finish with a 4.75-mile run course which follows the complete triathlon run course. As with the first leg, this part of the course is mostly level terrain with a few rolling hills.

### Run Course Rules

- You must wear the race number that is provided in front.
- Music is allowed on the run part (only!) of the course.

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### Kayak Course

The 6 mile paddle course takes place on a 75-acre still water lake. The lake is approximately half open water and half flooded cypress. The course will require circling the perimeter of the lake in a series of three laps. The path requires no portage but paddlers may encounter the possibility of minor obstacles through portions of the course. This is a beautiful blackwater, Edisto setting, haven to a wide variety of waterfowl including duck, heron, geese and osprey.

**Kayak Corrals:** Based on your projected run split, you were assigned a color coded corral in which to stage your kayak. The idea is that the fastest runners will be first back to their boats. By staging the kayaks according to run split, we should be able to free up some space upfront as everyone returns from the run. Corral assignments will be posted on the website and will be readily available on race day. Kayaks of all types will be permitted. Canoes will also be allowed. No SUP's or fixed rudder boats.



## Kayak Course Rules

- Approved PFD's must be worn at all times when participants are in their kayak.
- Volunteers will be onhand to assist with kayak launch, but ultimately, it is the participant's responsibility to get their kayak from the designated staging area to the water. Definitely do not stand around waiting on someone to drag your boat to the water.
- This is a 3X lap course. Buoys, ribbon and signs will mark the course. There is also a very large tree near the dam. It is a vital, nay critical(!) part of the Winter Challenge. Though it is always marked, there are always a few who forget that it's part of the course. Do not skip going around this tree.
- The course runs counterclockwise. You must stay to the right of the marks. The marks are not just guidelines. They are boundaries, and if you miss one, you must either go back to it or suffer the wrath of course officials... as well as the scorn of onlooking paddlers.
- If you need assistance from a race official, blow a whistle, wave your hand or paddle overhead. We expect to have 2-3 boats on the water to officiate & provide assistance.
- Those who throw items at our alligators will be asked to retrieve them.

A note on your choice of kayak: There've been many questions regarding which boat to pack. There is no perfect answer, but here are a few thoughts: If you're an amateur or beginning paddler, you'll feel more secure in a wider kayak. Lengths vary, but we generally recommend 16' boats, give or take.

For more experienced paddlers, you probably know what you're going to use already. Beware though, there are any number of submerged logs, stumps which you might encounter (actually, we expect you to encounter them. That's why we call it the Winter Challenge, and not just another day in Couchlandria). Canoes are allowed but do not come recommended. Paddle boards are not allowed... sorry.

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## Bike Course

**Triathlon:** Participants finish the race on a challenging 10-mile mountain bike course. The trail varies in width from less than 3 feet to more than 8 feet, and features both double and single track. The trail is built to accommodate riders of all levels, but offers technical challenges for those with advanced skills. There are for instance, several natural obstacles which may be either ridden or bypassed at the cost of a few seconds.

**Duathlon:** The middle leg of the Duathlon will follow the same 10-mile mountain bike course as the triathlon, with no modifications. That's some serious value right there. One might say it's just that much more bliss for your hard-earned dollar.

## Bike Course Rules

- Approved Helmets must be worn and fastened before leaving the Transition Area.
  - If you suffer a valid repair problem with your bike, you can finish the course on foot, with or without your wheels.
  - Use caution. These are trails running through the forests, swamps and general wilderness of a private farm. There are wild creatures out and about. Stay away from them and for the most part... they'll probably give you a pretty wide berth as well.
  - Again, use caution. A significant amount of time goes into marking and grooming the trails for the race. But let's be clear here, these are not a manicured trails on some well traveled State Park thoroughfare... you will encounter stumps, holes, roots, logs, bogs, frogs... you name it. Just use good sense and we'll all get through this thing just fine.
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## Relay Teams

Tags, bibs, and/or chips must be handed off immediately past the timing mat.

## Additional Race Rules

- If a participant appears in physical distress, officials may pull the participant from the race, to be evaluated by medical personnel. Participant may re-enter upon positive assessment by medical personnel.
  - Follow the marked path, both on land and water. Any participant deliberately leaving the trail for shorter route will be disqualified (don't be on the receiving end of Lu's whistle!).  
Exceptions follow:
    - Where there may be an obstacle, such as on the bike course, a participant may choose to ride around or dismount to cross that obstacle.
    - Nature's Call! If a participant must leave the trail to answer Nature's Call, he or she must leave their bike or some other form of gear beside the trail. Only venture as far as necessary please.
  - Participants should do their best to assist other participants who are in physical distress. Officials may adjust that participant's time accordingly. Main thing to keep in mind is that we're all here for a good time, and there are no Kona slots awaiting the individual who leaves a fellow Winter Challenger in a tight spot.
  - Decisions affecting timing of participants will be made final by official event timers. Issues may be appealed to our timing team, who will finalize decisions on race day prior to distribution of awards, as required.
  - Music players are allowed on the run part of the course. However, headphones, earplugs, etc. will not be allowed on any other part of the course. Too dangerous when you're on the water (with a bunch of other people) or riding a bike (with a bunch of other people).
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## Aid Stations along the Course

Aid stations will be located throughout the course. Water, Gatorade and Heed (Hammer Nutrition sports beverage) will be provided.

### Triathlon (Individual and Relay)

1. Run - Mile 2.25 (outside the transition area)
2. Run - Mile 3.5
3. Run - Mile 4.5
4. Bike – Mile 2.25 (outside the transition area)
5. Bike – Mile ~7

### Duathlon

1. Run 1 - Mile 2.25 (outside the transition area)
2. Bike – Mile 2.25 (outside the transition area)
3. Bike – Mile ~7
4. Run 2 – Mile 1.25
5. Run 2 – Mile 2.25

Please note, aid station locations are approximate.

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## Withdrawals

Should any participant choose to withdraw, they should notify an official and request that this information



be forwarded to the race director. Everyone must stay on trail unless accompanied by an official.

Oh yeah... You are responsible for your timing chip. Please don't lose this.

**For frequent, and late-breaking updates, please give us a Like on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/winterchallengex](http://www.facebook.com/winterchallengex).**

**For a more complete list of FAQ's, please visit <http://www.winterchallenge.net/faqs.html>**

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## **A sampling of some of our more Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the weather usually like?**

Usually the race begins at a cool temperature, 40's, and ends in the 60's. But it's February and anything can happen. And that is part of the excitement. Get a complete 5-day forecast here:

[Winter Challenge Weather Forecast](#)

### **In the event of inclement weather, will a refund be available?**

In addition to a good time, we can guarantee that there will be weather. Good or bad, it'll be waiting on you.

Though it is nearly unfathomable that we would postpone, we don't want our good friends driving or racing in dangerous conditions. Keep an eye on [our Facebook page](#) for further updates.

### **After such a challenging race, will I be exhausted?**

Yes, we have that on good authority. And as soon as you've regained your wits, you'll be probably immediately begin planning for next year's race. But be sure to bring a set of dry clothes, maybe a tasty beverage or two, and plan on fighting back the urge to collapse for a few more hours so you can hang out and be cool during the afterparty.

### **What about volunteers? I've got friends/family in tow who want to help out. How can I sign up them up for some of that action?**

Anyone interested in volunteering should stop what they're doing right this moment and head over to [www.winterchallenge.net/volunteer](http://www.winterchallenge.net/volunteer) to sign up for the volunteer role of their choosing. Alternatively, feel free to email [thewinterchallenge@gmail.com](mailto:thewinterchallenge@gmail.com) to let us know about some special ability you possess that might just help improve the good times that much more. As a little for instance, we're always hungry for race day video and photography, so if you have an eye for a swell pic, then let us know and we'll help you find some choice spots!

All volunteers will receive a free ticket for the post-race meal and will be eligible for **drawings** to take a crack at the prize table!



### **What would you recommend for accommodations?**

The Villa Motor Inn Ph# 803-266-7001 is located in nearby Williston, approximately ten minutes from the race site. Let's be clear though, we're not putting the VMI out there because it would be our own first choice... just that you're going to need to drive 25-30 miles to find the next closest set of accommodations that doesn't fit in the we-rent-rooms-by-the-hour category.

### **How about camping? I heard there's camping...**

Ah yes, a much better option, we think you'll agree. No issues whatsoever with camping and we've got ample space. Matter of fact, a lot of people think this is one of the most fun things about the Winter Challenge.

For campers, there is a \$15 per person. This includes the pre-race meal on Friday night, all the well-water you can drink, an outlet inside to plug in your iPhone, and the opportunity to chill out with other brave souls around the bonfire or our pot-bellied stove. Plus, you'll probably get to help us fill up swag bags, which we'll greatly appreciate.

Proceeds for camping and the pre-race meal will go to [St. Lawrence Place](#), a very fine organization out of Columbia, SC that helps folks transition from homelessness to independence with the support of food and lodging. See what we did there?

Head to [www.winterchallenge.net/camping](http://www.winterchallenge.net/camping) for more details on the great outdoors, Dome Farms style.

All campers must check in at Race HQ upon arrival. Just ask for Broham #1 or Broham #2.

### **How do I know when I get there?**

The entrance to Dome Farms can be found between Springfield & Williston, SC, just past the intersection of Hwy 39 & New Forest Road-- LOOK FOR THE DIRT DRIVEWAY!!!! There is always a large banner at the road, so it should be pretty hard to miss.

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## Sponsors and Friends of the Winter Challenge

The Winter Challenge would not have been around for as long as it has if it weren't for our extremely cool, extremely generous sponsors. Special shout-outs go to our friends at [Outspokin Bicycles](#), [Epic Kayaks](#), [Hutto's Transmissions](#), [Palmetto Engineering](#), [Malone Coaching](#), and [Edisto Irrigation](#). And a little closer to home, we'd like to offer a special thanks to [Lone Star Barbecue & Mercantile](#), which always provides the delicious meals known to follow a hearty Winter Challenge. These good folks have been with us since the beginning, and have come through with a strong presence year after year, helping us fund extra promotion while consistently hooking up some truly epic prize tables.

Seemingly every year, we find support for the race in some new spot. Recent additions include [Under Armour](#), [Park Tool](#), [The Sufferfest Training Videos](#), [ZIPP Speed Weaponry](#), [Chamois Butt'r](#), [Astral Designs](#), [Country Clear Bottled Water](#), [Earth Fare](#), [Nature Adventures Outfitters](#), [The Ulmer Insurance Agency](#), [Terra Nova Global Properties](#), [Bogard Branding](#), [Printing Partners](#), [Diamondback Toolbelts](#) and [Calavera Tool Works](#). We greatly appreciate the generosity of these excellent companies, and encourage our participants to support them whenever the opportunity presents itself.

If you're interested in becoming a sponsor or somehow helping us keep this good thing going, drop us a line at [thewinterchallenge@gmail.com](mailto:thewinterchallenge@gmail.com) to let us know!

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## Adventure Geek Productions

We're very excited to have Jefferson Nicholson and his Adventure Geek team on hand to produce and time this year's Winter Challenge, expected to be our biggest and best yet. We expect Jefferson, Kristen and Waylon to bring plenty of energy to the proceedings. We're certain you'll be impressed.

