

COMBAT STRESS
FOR VETERANS' MENTAL HEALTH



**classic
challenge**



**D-DAY CHALLENGE
EVENT INFO PACK
2024**

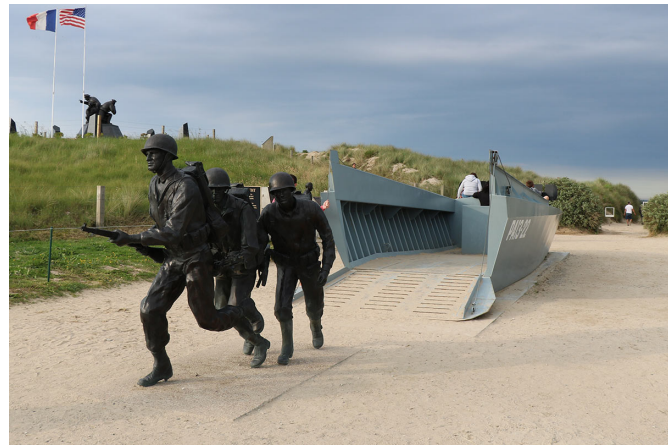
ISTOCKPHOTO

D-Day Challenge

PLEASE NOTE

As 2024 is the 80th anniversary there may be some timing and route changes on event day. Please be patient with the team and have a flexible approach as a lot of the restrictions are beyond our control.

The D-Day 44 Challenge stretches for an astonishing 44-miles. It takes you through corn, wheat and barley fields. It hugs the Normandy coastline taking you over sand dunes, through marsh land as well as pebble beaches. You will follow forgotten paths and rocky outcrops and beautiful Norman villages.



The D-Day 44 Challenge commemorates the 1944 Allied invasion of occupied France. For those of us who are passionate about adventure and sporting challenges, the D-Day 44 Challenge offers the perfect opportunity to indulge these passions. The walk/run allows us to appreciate fully the sacrifices made by our forefathers as well as current servicemen who have bravely fought to protect our way of life. The forces present on D-Day were from many different countries, supporting the American and British and Canadian there were large numbers of Polish, French, Belgian, Dutch and Norwegian soldiers.



The D-Day Challenge was originally created by Lt Col Mike McErlain who sadly died while running on the Normandy Beaches on the 6th June 2013. The Challenge has returned in recent years' however due to the work of Mike's widow Jo and the challenge is now supported by the charity partner; Combat Stress.

D-Day Challenge

Day 1: Wednesday 5th June

Participants make their own way to London (Wellington Barracks) to join the coach transfer down to Folkestone. We then take the Eurotunnel over to Calais. (Or own way to the accommodation if not taking event transport). On arrival in France it is a long drive down to Normandy where we have dinner in the port town of Ouistreham and have the full challenge briefing about the day ahead. It is then a very short drive over to our accommodation. Please be aware this is a long day and we will arrive at the campsite in the evening - we are limited by the tunnel crossings and so try and sleep on the coach to ensure you are rested!



Day 2: Thursday 6th June

D-Day Challenge Day (*timings are still TBC depending on ceremonies and road closures*)

44 Mile Challenge: Early wake-up to board the coach @ 04:30 to be at the start for 05:30.

22 Mile Challenge: Morning coach transfer @ 07:00 to start point to begin walking for 07:45.
(22 mile runners will have time with the team historian before their event begins at 09:30)

We start the 44 challenge from Pointe du Hoc, where Colonel Rudder led an elite group of 200 rangers up the chalk cliffs using ropes and ladders. After dispatching the German sentries at the top of the cliff, their mission was to find and destroy large battery guns; this action was crucial as these large guns were capable of firing shells several miles out to sea and would therefore have claimed many men's lives who would be arriving at Utah beach the following morning.



After destroying the guns, but alerting a large German infantry force, Colonel Rudder and his men fought bravely with their backs to the sea and suffered large casualties, not only at the hands of the German infantry force but also due to friendly fire coming from naval ships at sea. Colonel Rudder and 30 of his men survived the mission.

From the Pointe du Hoc, we head east with the sea on our left beating against the rocks below. Immediately the striking countryside takes hold as you run through crop fields, passing evidence of the German defensive line in the form of concrete bunkers and the occasional burnt out WWII vehicle. As we head down towards Arromanches the 22 mile participants then begin their challenge. As we head down to the Norman village there is an incredible descent as we look out to sea. You will get fantastic views of the emotive scene of what is left of the Mulberry harbours.



These were huge sections of floating concrete roads dragged across from Britain and fastened together at Arromanches forming a temporary harbour for ships to unload their cargo in support of the soldiers who had recently landed on the beaches. Over 19 million tonnes of supplies were off-loaded at the Mulberry Harbour of Arromanches.

The route then continues to Ouistreham where the course heads south along the Orne canal. Pegasus Bridge looms up ahead, its structure an icon of the first few hours of the D-Day invasion.

It was here where Horsa gliders, part of the three airborne divisions deployed during the night of June 5th, landed 50 metres away from the canal bridge.



The gliders broke up on impact as they hit the field and soldiers scrambled out through the broken sides. Led by Lieutenant Brotheridge, the small platoon of commandos (the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire light infantry) charged across the bridge.

Their mission was to take it intact in order to aid the main landing force which would be arriving in the morning at Sword Beach. But by the time Brotheridge's platoon reached Pegasus Bridge, the German guards had got themselves organised enough to open fire. Brotheridge was the first casualty of D-Day after being mortally wounded from a shot through the neck. The bridge was quickly over-run with reinforcements in the form of charging Willis Jeeps fitted with Browning machine guns.



It is here at Pegasus Bridge that the epic D-Day 44 Challenge concludes. On arrival at the finish line you will be greeted with a celebratory drink and some well earned food. Our overnight accommodation is a short walk from the finish line and participants make their own way back.

[Day 3: Friday 7th June](#)

Today we board our coach for a tour of the historic D-Day sites guided by our trip historian. Tour to include the highlights of: Ranville Cemetery, Sword, Juno & Omaha Beach, American Cemetery, Arromanches and finishes at the new British Memorial. On this day there will be time for lunch which you will buy yourself. Dinner is then back at the campsite with the group.

[Day 4: Saturday 8th June](#)

Breakfast at the campsite followed by the coach transfer back to Wellington Barracks. Expected back into London 18:00.

EVENT TIMINGS

Wednesday 5th June

- 08:30 Registration @ Wellington Barracks, London Victoria
- 09:00 Coach departs London
- 12:00 Arrival at ferry terminal
- 15:30 Drive down to Caen
- 19:30 Arrival at dinner & group briefing
- 21:00 Arrival at accommodation

Camping Hautes Coutures
Avenue de la Côte de Nacre,
17970 Bénouville,
France, Basse- Normandie



Thursday 6th June - D-Day Challenge Day

- 04:30 44 Mile transfer departs
- 05:30 Arrival at start point and 44 mile event begins
- 06:30 Wake Up 22 Mile
- 07:00 22 Mile transfer departs
- 07:45 Arrival at start point and 22 mile walk event begins
- 09:30 22 mile run begins (time with historian before departure)
- 16:00- 18:00 Event finish



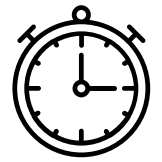
Friday 7th June

- 08:00 Breakfast
- 09:00 Coach departs
Coach Tour
- 19:00 Group dinner at campsite



Saturday 8th June

- 07:30 Breakfast & check out
- 08:00 Depart
- 18:00 ETA back to London Victoria



EVENT DAY TIMINGS

Due to the nature of this event there will be cut off times throughout the course to ensure that all participants are safe at all times and can be reached by staff within a certain amount of time in case of an emergency. Please see the below table and make yourself aware of the cut off times that would be applicable to you.

Please note—if you do not make it to a checkpoint by the required time then you need to be willing to be put into a support vehicle and taken further down the course to ensure you will finish the challenge within the required time.

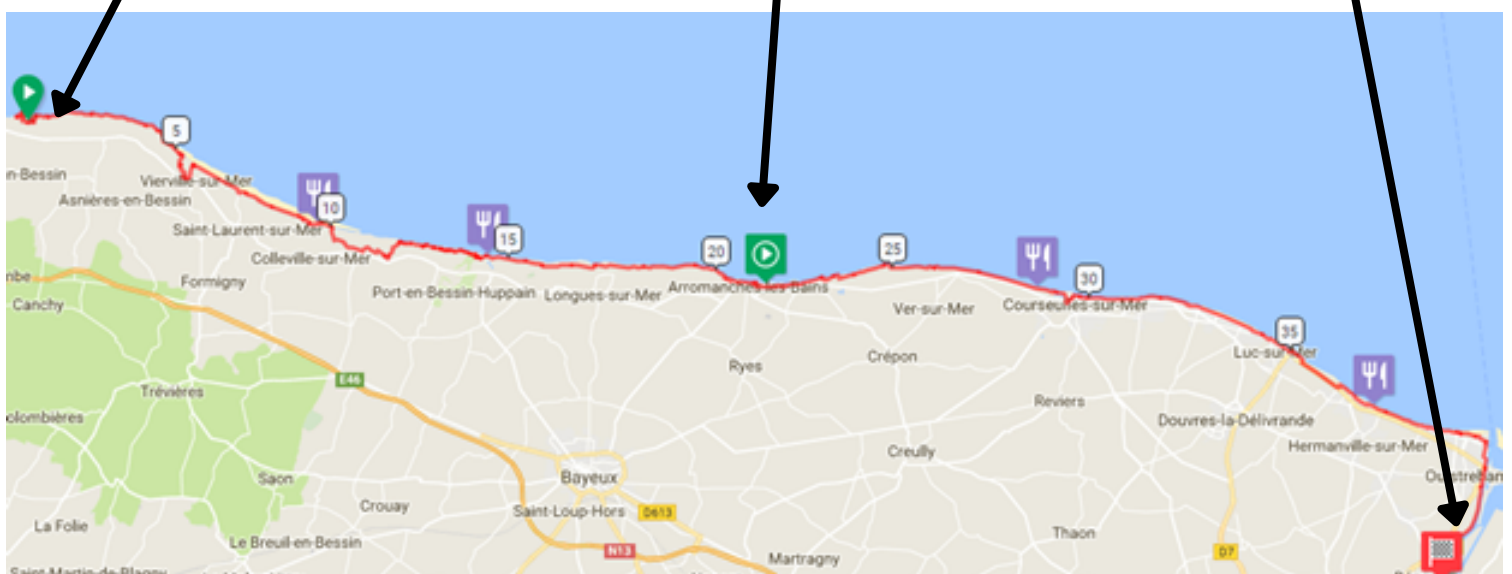
Cut-off times are in place to make sure that all participants are safe throughout the entire challenge and so must be taken seriously and adhered to.

	<u>Start</u>	<u>Water</u>	<u>BS1: 14.2m</u> Port En Bessin	<u>BS2: 22.4m</u> Arromanches	<u>BS3: 29.3m</u> Courseul Sur Mer	<u>BS4: 38.3m</u> Lion Sur Mer	<u>Finish:</u> <u>44.5m</u> Pegasus Bridge
44 miles	05:45	07:00 — 08:00	08:00 — 09:15	09:00 — 11:00	10:30 — 13:00	12:00 — 15:30	13:00 — 18:00
				<u>Start</u>	<u>BS1: 6.8m</u>	<u>BS2: 15.8m</u>	<u>BS3: 22m</u>
22 mile run				09:30	10:30 — 13:00	12:00 — 15:30	13:00 — 18:00
22 mile walk				07:45	09:00 — 10:15	11:00 — 14:00	13:00 — 18:00

44 Mile Start
Pont Du Hoc

22 Mile Start
Arromanches


Event Finish
Pegasus Bridge



EVENT SUPPORT


You will be supported throughout the challenge by experienced event staff from Classic Challenge. The 44 mile challenge has a support runner, Darren who will be at the back of the group taking down the route marking flags. The 22 mile run has support runner Helen who will be running at a mid-pace. The walk has 2 support walkers. Please see below for an overview of where the break stops (B.S) are located on the course:

44 Mile



Water Stop @ 9.6 miles
BS1 @ 14.2 miles
BS2 @ 22.4 miles
BS3 @ 29.3 miles
BS4 @ 38.3 miles

22 Mile



BS1 @ 6.8 miles
BS2 @ 15.8 miles



There will be medics and first aid trained staff along the course in addition to a medic response vehicle roaming the route.



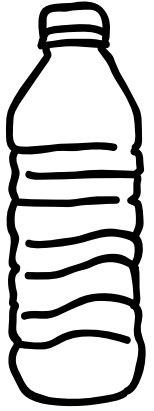
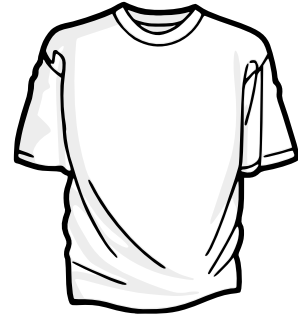
There will also be experienced event staffing manning the break stops along the course in conjunction with the charity reps.



KIT LIST

Suggested Clothing for 44/22 Mile Event

- Runners: trainers/trail running shoes—must be worn in!
- 22 Mile Event: Walking boots - lightweight with ankle support - must be worn in!
- Walking socks
- T-shirts—ideally wicking fabric
- Breathable trousers for trekking or shorts for running
- Spare trainers to change into at finish if required
- Hat & sunglasses
- Waterproof jacket/cagoule (essential)
- Warm wear i.e. fleece, sweatshirt



Equipment

- Passport and travel insurance plus photocopies
- Towel—there is **not** one provided at accommodation
- Telescopic walking stick or walking poles (optional for 22 mile)
- 2 x drinking water bottles or camel pack or platypus
- Small rucksack for carrying items while trekking/running e.g. water, phone, sun cream, tissues, waterproof
- Zipper bags / sandwich bags: useful for documents, phone etc. to keep dry

Small personal medical kit

Long distances can be damaging to even the most experienced walkers and so please bring blister treatment with you. Our medics will be on hand to assist but you must bring your own blister treatment and plasters such as Compeed. Our stock will not cover the large size of this group and so you must come prepared.

Other medical items to bring: Antiseptic ointment, plasters, ankle and knee supports, zinc oxide tape (to prevent blisters), pain killers, insect repellent, sting relief, immodium, dioralyte (or other rehydration medication), sufficient regular medication, Sun cream (minimum SPF 20-25) Lip salve (minimum SPF 20-25), Isotonic powders, Energy snacks & snacks for during the hike, antibacterial handwipes / alcohol gel, tissues

Pack as lightly as possible, preferably in a soft, robust bag.

Participants should take a photocopy of their passport and travel insurance cover.

This list is not exhaustive and also some items may not be required during the trip.