

IMPORTANT ULTRA BIKE COURSE CHANGE ANNOUNCEMENT

As you are aware, two weeks ago Hurricane Ian had a significant impact on Florida. While the Clermont area was spared from the brunt of the hurricane's impact, surrounding communities did not fare as well.

Having had storms impact many of our events over the past 39 years, I learned quickly that you do not need to sustain actual damage from the storm to face major challenges that can hinder your ability to conduct a safe event. Resources required to execute a safe event are often redirected to other areas of the state where the storm had a direct impact. That is the dilemma we are currently facing with traffic control for next weekend's race.

The Great Floridian's 140.6 mile course requires a tremendous amount of police resources for traffic control. We have over 60 positions to fill requiring nearly 400 hours of police support, the bulk of those needed for the bike course. Our law enforcement partners have been working diligently to fill all positions during this challenging time, but as of Saturday have less than half the shifts filled. They also informed us that it would be nearly impossible to fill the remaining shifts. Because this is a special event, they cannot force officers to work the event, they must volunteer to work a paid off-duty detail. They also informed us that even if they could force officers to work the race, they would not have enough manpower available as many officers are still reassigned to the areas of Florida impacted by Ian.

The health and safety of our athletes and community is our utmost priority. With that in mind and knowing we may not be able to obtain the police support required to staff all the intersections for the entire duration of the 112 mile bike course, we have no choice but to shorten the full distance 112 mile bike course to 60 miles. By refocusing support to a single lap of the bike course, we eliminate approximately 150 police hours required for course control. By reassigning officers that have already committed to work the race, we will have the police support required to safely execute the shorter 60 mile bike course. The new GFT Ultra distances for 2022 will be a 2.4 mile swim, 60 mile bike, 26.2 mile run.

We realize how important this race is to you and wish we did not have to alter this year's race. However, with circumstances out of our control, our options are limited.

Due to the shortening of the ultra-distance bike course, we would like to offer all athletes a complimentary entry into the 2023 Great Floridian Triathlon.

We look forward to seeing everyone next weekend!

Thanks for your understanding and support.