THE RACING COLLECTIVE

GBDURO

GBDURO entry manual v100

2026 edition

January 2026

GBDURO26 is a 2000km single-stage self-supported gravel reliability trial from Land's End to John O'Groats.

GBDURO is run by The Racing Collective, a not-for-profit road and gravel bikepacking club for self-supported racers. Inspired by races like the Transcontinental and the Tour Divide, we set out to construct a series of UK trials that carried this spirit of self-sufficiency, but which can be completed closer to home. ***We seek the freedom and feral mindset that comes from riding fast and far.***

Meanwhile, all too aware that the environment we ride in needs protecting, our aim is to **support nature restoration projects** in the UK, and we want GBDURO to continue to **drive innovation in sustainability**.

Our overriding objective is to apply the ultracyclist mindset to go beyond 'Leave No Trace' (#beyondleavenotrace) - ***to leave the world in a better state than we found it.*** To this end GBDURO is a no-fly ride, so riders must find their own way to/from this event without flying. This edition will run as a **single stage** starting at Land's End and finishing at the iconic **John O'Groats** signpost.

GBDURO is as much about the **community** as it is as about riding hard. The strength of any community lies in differentiation and integration, but bikepacking tends to be dominated by men. We strive for a start list made up of **50% women**, an objective we set for our inaugural 2019 edition, which we are pleased to see is now a common aim amongst bikepacking races. Our record speaks for itself: 50% of the top 10 finishers in 2021 were women, in 2022 40% of our start list were women, and in 2024 44% of the finishers were women.

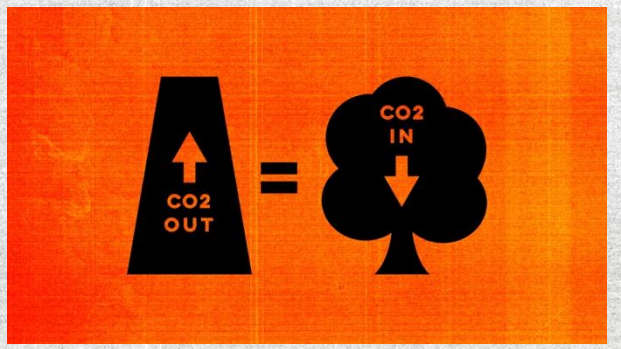
This manual contains enough information for you to decide if you wish to enter GBDURO. More detailed info will only be provided to those who have been accepted to ride.

We'd like to thank the countless people who have chipped in behind the scenes to create a unique event and to the early 20th century pioneers whose tenacious spirit continues in our riding today.

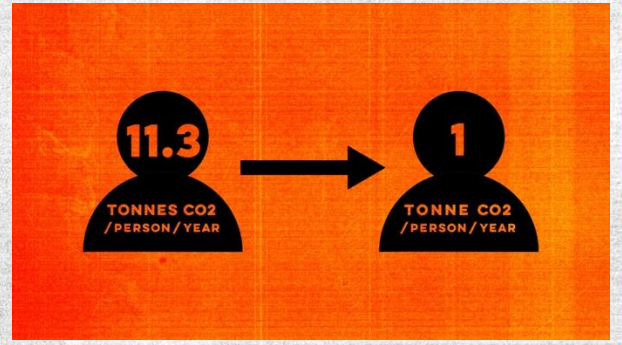
The Racing Collective

No-fly ride

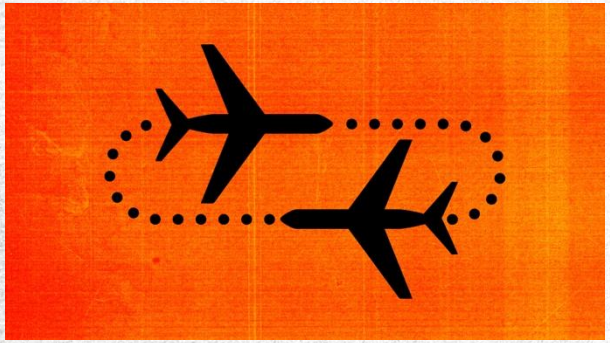
GBDURO is no-fly ride i.e. we do not accept entries from participants who plan to fly to / from the event. Although we understand this measure makes participating in the event harder or even impossible for some people within our community, we feel it is the only choice we can make, as we do not want the impact of these carbon emissions on our conscience. Flying might not be the only trace we leave as cyclists, but it is a substantial one. This rule has been in place since 2020 and we are proud of the no-fly ride commutes from over 11 different countries we have witnessed since then.



Global temperatures will only stop rising when we reach *net-zero emissions*[1] - where carbon emitted (e.g. from the burning of fossil fuels) matches carbon sequestered (e.g. from absorption of CO_2 into the oceans, forests or technological removal).



So to stabilise temperatures, the average emissions per person must fall to about *1t CO_2/year*[2], down from *11.3t CO_2/year* for a typical European or North American.



A return flight from London to Madrid emits *~0.5t CO_2* so you've just used half your annual carbon budget on a single trip. A return flight from London to New York emits *~1.8 t CO_2* so you've just blown the budget.

We set up this club and our rides on the founding principles of wanting to reconnect the cycling community with nature. Our aim to collectively apply the ultracyclist mindset (self-supported, self-actualised, self-motivated) to leave the world in a better state than we found it – both on the bike and in other aspect of our lives.

We believe sport should be about progression, improving over time and exploring ourselves, and the world around us, as we go…the no-fly rule just adds another dimension.

To further reduce impacts, we encourage use of public transport or liftshare to/from the start/finish.

If you think our take on this is a little harsh, think of the 80% of people around the world who have never taken a flight and already live below 1t CO_2/year.

[1] *Net-zero: The UK's contribution to stopping global warming, CCC, 2019 (Page 16)*

[2] *Net-zero: The UK's contribution to stopping global warming, CCC, 2019 (Table 1, Page 20)*

The 2026 edition of GBDURO is a 2000km single-stage self-supported gravel reliability trial from Land's End to John O'Groats.

It will take in some of the best riding the UK has to offer and is designed to test the versatility of rider and bike. Much of it is on road so you'll need a setup that rolls well, whilst also dealing with the rough stuff. ***A gravel bike with minimum 35mm tyres is recommended.***

It will be run with a no-frills ethos. ***Riders will be given a GPX file of the route and that's about it.*** At all times riders are expected to embrace the self-supported nature of the ride, meaning they don't receive any form of support (including drafting) from other riders or friends/family; all food, repairs, etc, must be acquired from commercial sources.

In the past we have experimented with ways of reducing the amount of waste we generate while riding. However, this year we're going for a bottom-up rather than top-down approach and encourage riders to **make an Ultra Distance Plastic Resistance pledge** and complete the ride with a **Plastic-Free Time (PFT)**.

We'll start out from Land's End at 8am on ***15 August 2026*** and finish at John O'Groats, with finish times will be taken via GPS tracking. **First person home *'wins'... nothing.*** Riders are expected to complete the GBDIVIDE route somewhere between 6-11 days. There is no cut-off time.

KEY DATES

Entries:

- 30 January 2026 – Entries open; must be submitted by midnight on 7 February 2026
- By end of February – Entrants notified if they have a place or not; successful applicants must confirm their place within 48 hours of notification
- By end of March – Successful applicants to make entry payment, sorted insurance, access to a tracker, and made an (optional) Ultra Distance Plastic Resistance pledge

Prep:

- By 8 August 2026– Riders notified to register on tracking site and GPX route released

Showtime:

- Trackers on when you leave home to log your commute
- 14 August 2026:
    - Trackers on for 8am to check they are being picked up on the tracking site
    - Pre-ride beers from 4pm, food and campout at Lamona (~15km from the start)
- 15 August 2026, 8am – Land's End, start
- Finish (anytime) – John O'Groats signpost, finish and make your way to John O'Groats Brewery for a well-earned drink
- Continue to keep your tracker on to log your commute home

Hangover:

- Submit a single GPX track of your ride within 5 days of finishing
- By end of September – final results published and dates for 2027 confirmed (provisional start date – 14 August 2027)

RULES

1. **Don't be a dick** - Be nice, and endeavour to #bemoremike. Respect the people and places you encounter during GBDURO.

2. **Complete the entire route, under your own power** - No drafting or motorised transport. If you leave the route then re-join it at exactly the same spot. If your bike breaks beyond repair you may take motorised transport to fix it, but you must ride back to where you left the route.

3. **Be self-supported throughout** - No support crews, no food or gear caches, no gear sharing. These self-supported rules apply at all times. If you seek or accept help from others you must scratch immediately, and you should not share information that assists other riders both before or during the ride. However, you should assist your fellow riders if a medical situation arises; any material time lost will be taken off your finish time.

4. **Show evidence of your ride:**
   a) Tracking (i.e. transmitting your live location) is done via a third-party tracking site, through a SPOT tracker (personal or rented) set to ping **once every 5 minutes**. You must start your SPOT tracker so we can **track your commute** and **your tracker must be on exactly 24h before the start time** to check you appear on the tracking site. It is your responsibility to monitor battery levels and are advised to carry a **spare pair of lithium batteries** as sourcing on the go is notoriously hard. You should also keep your tracker on to log your commute home.
   b) Validation (i.e. proof you followed the route) is achieved by recording your daily GPX tracks on your navigation device and submitting them via the email address at the end of this manual, as a **single GPX file**, plus any accompanying explanations, if necessary, within 5 days after finishing the ride.

5. **Protect the integrity of the ride** - You must report any incidents where either yourself, or other riders, have broken the rules, via the email address at the end of this manual.

6. **Leave No Trace:**
   a) Do not fly to or from the event - We want to reduce the environmental impact of bikepacking so this ride must not create any demand for flights. Flying in a couple of days beforehand still counts as a flight.
   b) Consider making an Ultra Distance Plastic Resistance pledge and complete the ride with a **Plastic-Free Time (PFT)**. Whilst not explicitly a rule, we hope you will commit to this to ensure a level playing field for all. The #plasticfreeultra concept is designed to reduce the amount of single-use plastic we generate ("not faster, but better").
   c) Pick up dropped kit/litter - If you spot dropped kit/litter that was likely from a careless GBDURO rider, take a photo of it/make a note of exactly where you are, pick it up and report it via the email address at the end of this manual. The rider who dropped it may be subject to a 3-hour time penalty for each occurrence.

7. **Understand and obey all local laws** - Act responsibly with regards to other users, especially walkers who may feel vulnerable to fast moving bikes.

8. **Buy your fellow riders a drink** - Tradition has it that the first home buys the second place finisher a drink, the second place rider buys the third place rider a drink, and so on.

RIDER CONTRACT

The Rider Contract is an agreement between The Racing Collective and the Rider (whose name, address and contact details are specified in the individual's application for this ride). It sets out the terms and conditions that the Rider must agree to when accepting a place to ride. It should be considered carefully; a Rider that breaks the terms of the Rider Contract could be excluded from the ride.

The Rider accepts GBDURO (the Ride) is a reliability trial not a race or a sportive, run on an informal basis by The Racing Collective (a not-for-profit road and gravel bikepacking club) and whilst The Racing Collective has advocated following a particular route in a particular style, ultimately the Rider is responsible for his or her own actions. Each Rider agrees to the following:

1. The Rider must obtain cycle insurance covering 'Third Party liability insurance and Personal Accident insurance' at their expense prior to entry. It is the Rider's responsibility to arrange cover that meets their cycling needs.

2. The Rider accepts that safety is the paramount consideration during GBDURO, and this takes priority over any feelings of peer pressure during the ride.

3. The Rider is fully aware and acknowledges that riding GBDURO involves a serious risk of harm.

4. The Rider must be over the age of 18 at time of the start of the ride.

5. The Rider confirms they are in good health and know of no reason, physical or mental, why they could be unable to participate safely in the Ride.

6. The Rider must take measures to be seen by traffic during the day and night. This includes riding with at least two sets of lights (two on the front and two on the back), reflective gear and bright clothing.

7. The Rider accepts the route covers everything from riding on busy roads (including in cities) to riding in remote areas on rough terrain and technical descents. If the Rider feels unsafe or uncomfortable about riding any part of the route for whatever reason (technical, busy road, access rights or other) then they should detour around it and join back onto the route where they see fit. In particular, we advise that the descent from Great Dun Fell and the 10km section from the Crask Inn to Loch Choire should not be undertaken at night or after heavy rainfall. Temporary path diversions for forestry operations etc should be observed.

8. The Rider acknowledges and accepts full responsibility for checking and maintaining all equipment in their possession for the duration of the Ride to ensure its safe use (including by way of example, wheels, brakes, and tyres).

9. The Rider understands that no safety provisions are provided by The Racing Collective. Riders are advised to carry with them a mobile phone in case of emergency in addition to the one used for navigating, tracking, or recording. Be aware that reception will be limited in many locations. In the case of an emergency, riders should call 999.

10. The Rider must be aware that the nearest hospital or medical facility may be hours from them should they suffer any injury and that there may be a lack of helicopter assistance in some areas.

11. Under no circumstances shall The Racing Collective be liable for any actual or alleged indirect loss or consequential loss howsoever arising suffered by the Rider including, but not limited to, loss of profits, anticipated profits, savings, business or opportunity or loss of publicity or loss of reputation or opportunity to enhance reputation or any other sort of economic loss. Similarly, none of The Racing Collective volunteers shall be liable to any Rider for death or personal injury, damage to property or other loss or damage of any nature whatsoever suffered by the Rider whether arising from participation in the Ride or otherwise.

In recognition of these facts the Rider elects voluntarily to enter GBDURO and assume all risks of loss, damages, injury or death that may be sustained, and the Rider will participate in the Ride in accordance with the text above entirely at their own risk.

The £125 entry fee includes:

- **GPX of the GBDIVIDE route[1]**
- **A shared experience as part of a special community of riders**
- **Unlimited access to the UK's hungriest midges**
- **Our Organiser's Liability Insurance[2]**

Other details:

- Note you'll still need to source your own SPOT tracker and pay ~£50 to register it on the tracking site.
- Applications cannot be transferred to another rider, deferred to a later date, or refunded.
- GBDURO is run by volunteers on a not-for-profit basis.

[1] Our GBDIVIDE route was first released for the inaugural GBDURO ride in 2019 on bikepacking.com and is publicly available on https://www.gbdivide.net/ but the official GPX for 2026 will be released to successful applicants.
[2] Note this insurance is for The Racing Collective officials; you still need your own cycle insurance as set out in the Rider Contract.

TRACKER RENTAL

You will need a SPOT tracker for the event; these can be hired if you don't own one. In the past riders have used this site for tracker hire:
https://gtc.co.uk/collections/spot-satellite-tracker-rental

We also recommend sourcing some **lithium-ion batteries** for your tracker, and carry a spare set, as these last considerably longer than alkaline/NiMH batteries and are notoriously hard to find in shops.

Successful applicants will be asked to register your tracker on the tracking site; more details for be released down the line.

NEXT OF KIN

All riders are required to give details of their next of kin, so that they can be contacted in the case of any incidents or accidents involving riders.
Riders must discuss their entry into the ride with their next of kin prior to entry and make them aware of the risks you are voluntarily taking by entering the ride. In the event of an incident, we will notify next of kin as soon as possible and provide them with as much information as we can.

MEDIA AGREEMENT

The rider agrees to yield the commercial rights of all the media they collect on the ride to The Racing Collective.

If a rider wishes to use their participation in the ride including media captured therein to promote any commercial organisation (including their own), either directly or through a third party, then they must make this clear when submitting their entry.

We welcome interest from third-party media who wish to document the ride (either in full or restricted to a certain stage or geography) or a particular rider(s), but this will need written permission from The Racing Collective ahead of the ride.

This year the ride will be followed by some independent MediaRiders (i.e. photographers/videographers shooting from the saddle) and other volunteers collecting stories.

By entering GBDURO you give your consent for us to add you to a riders' WhatsApp group – this group is for sharing photos/stories that we can use to help give dotwatchers more of an insight into what riders are going through. It should not be used to share information which will help other riders.

We also hope to be covered by Dotwatcher.cc who will issue regular updates.

The Racing Collective will primarily be making updates through Instagram:

@theracingcollective

APPLICATION PROCESS

Entries will be accepted from 30 January to midnight on 7 February 2026 via the application form link at:
www.theracingcollective.com/gbduro

The field will be restricted in numbers to keep it personal/manageable, and we are aiming for a start list that includes 50% women.[1]

Selection will be based on merit[2] rather than first-come first-served. However, in a case where two applicants are deemed indistinguishable on merit, the rider who submitted their application first will be selected.

The questions in the application form will require you to jump through a few hoops and could take an hour or two to complete. Your answers should not be shared with fellow riders etc.

Qualifying rides include any big one-day gravel races or ultras e.g. the Transcontinental, The Accursed Race, APN, Dales Divide, Dorset Divide, HT550, Further, Badlands, CTR, AZTR, French Divide, Tour Divide and so on.

It is free to submit an application, only successful applicants will be asked to pay the entry fee.

No feedback will be provided on why applicants were not successful so please do not ask. However, we will keep a record of who applied which will help your case if you choose to reapply in future years.

Good luck!

[1] See FAQ section for more details on this.

[2] See the FAQ section for more details on rough selection criteria e.g. applicants who have helped out on and/or ridden previous The Racing Collective rides will be favoured.

F A Q s

How much time do I need to book off work?
We'll meet for beers in Lamona (~15km from Land's End) on the afternoon before the start, share a meal, and camp out. It's not essential you're there to meet up before the start but it would be nice, so you'll most likely need to take the Friday off before the start. In addition to the time spent riding, you'll also need to factor in the time taken to return from John O'Groats. It is sensible to build in a couple of days contingency, plus the train ride home and general physical recovery is likely to take some time. With that in mind we recommend taking at least two weeks off to complete this.

How hard will it be?
You'll be carrying your own stuff and navigating your way through small lanes/fast doubletrack/the rough stuff/the odd hikeabike/gates/moors/forests/mountains/etc. Riding the WalesDURO, EngDURO, or ScotDURO routes will give you a flavour (see Trials webpage).

Why 'no-fly'?
The writing has been on the wall for decades but we've buried our heads in the sand and hoped it was all an elaborate hoax.

But the body of evidence is conclusive; the frequency and severity of extreme weather rising year-on-year, with average temperatures set to keep on rising until we reach net zero emissions i.e. we stop burning unabated fossil fuel.

Flying is incompatible with a net zero aligned carbon budget (1t CO_2 per person per year) so we are drawing a line in the sand. As bikepackers, Leave No Trace ethics are part of our DNA; so are solving seemingly unsurpassable problems, and doing things that others (initially) think are crazy. With that in mind we want to hear stories of riders travelling far and wide in a sustainable way. For a more in-depth discussion on this issue see here.

Why are the numbers of riders restricted?
We are a very small team and with more people comes more risk, more visibility, and more impact. We want GBDURO to feel special and that sense of community is more likely to flourish in a small group.

Why aim for a field with 50% women?
Half the world's population are women, yet men currently dominate bikepacking start lines and we want to change that. If your gut instinct is to ask "why?" this probably isn't the ride for you.

Can I transfer my entry if I can't ride?
No. Applications cannot be transferred to another rider, deferred to a later date, or refunded.

What's the route like?
Fun. Variable. Mountainous.

Any bits of the route I need to take particularly watch out for?
The route is a serious challenge and should only be undertaken by experienced cyclists who have studied the route in detail and planned accordingly. In particular, as per the Rider Contract, we advise that the descent from Great Dun Fell and the 10km section from the Crask Inn to Loch Choire should not be undertaken at night or after heavy rainfall.

F A Q s

How will riders be selected?
Riders must demonstrate they understand the basics of the ride and the ethos that underpins self-supported riding. Beyond that we're on the lookout for riders who tick one of the following boxes:

- We are looking for people with a 'can do' mindset; what they lack in bikepacking experience, they make up for through their resourceful and optimistic attitude

- We are looking for the best bike riders backed by race results

- We are looking for those who give back e.g.
    - *Riders who can demonstrate they have given back to the bikepacking community for no commercial gain e.g. by volunteering at events etc*

    - *Riders who are actively trying to reduce their own environmental impact, or working on societal solutions to climate breakdown*

    - *Riders who have helped shape The Racing Collective since it began*

- We are looking for people who can tell a good story

What happens if I am forced to leave the route?
If you feel unsafe or uncomfortable about riding any part of the route for whatever reason (technical, busy road, access rights or other) then they should detour around it and join back onto the route where you see fit. You should contact us via the email address at the end of this manual, detailing your diversion at the earliest opportunity. Temporary path diversions for forestry operations etc should be observed.

What happens if I drop some kit by accident?
You should pack in a way that minimises the chance of kit being dropped i.e. do not strap kit to the outside of your bag. But if you do drop kit, please contact us via the email address at the end of this manual, with the details.

Do you need volunteers?
Yes! We're always on the lookout for passionate people to help The Racing Collective continue to thrive on a not-for-profit basis so have included this as an option on the entry form. Rest assured, your answers to this will not influence the selection process. If reading this manual has made you question your readiness to ride GBDURO this time around, but you would still like to be involved then contact us via the email address at the end of this manual with details of any useful skills you have and your location in the UK. It's a great way to be part of the ride.

Can I sleep inside?
Yes, including commercial lodgings, provided they are not booked before the start of the ride.

Can I ride with others?
You can ride with another rider for a few hours over the course of a day. But if you are together for more than that then you run the risk of being removed from the General Classification. We will not warn you of this so be vigilant.

Can I use an e-bike/Recumbent?
Nope, as we want people to be riding roughly the same kind of bike.

What bike shall I ride?
Ride whatever you want but a gravel/adventure bike with aero bars and minimum 35mm tyres is recommended.

CONTACT US

For all enquiries before, during, and after GBDURO please use:

admin@theracingcollective.com

Please avoid social media messages concerning GBDURO to either The Racing Collective or personal accounts of The Racing Collective committee.

All ride enquiries should be made using this official email address.

THE RACING COLLECTIVE

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