



## RACE TO THE WRECK 2024 - MANDATORY KIT LIST

Here's a rundown with some additional advise from Test Pilot Darren. We may revise this nearer the time but this should give you a good idea at this stage.

*Note: All items are mandatory, unless it says recommended, where they are, well, recommended!*

### To wear

- **Cap/hat with neck protection:** Protecting your head and neck from the sun is a must. There are several variations but something like either this from My Race Kit or this from Raidlight will do the trick. The removeable neck protection function is useful, although it does not need to be removeable. You'll want all the shade you can get on this event and this starts with your head.
- **Sunglasses:** We advise wrap-around sports sunglasses to give you maximum field of vision and maximum sun protection. These can vary massively in price, but anything with good UV protection will be fine as long as they're comfortable on your hot sweaty face. Cat 3 protection minimum spec.  
*Darren: I steer away from spending too much on glasses on these trips as you have a good chance of getting them ruined at some point.*
- **Buff – Or neck gaiter, neckerchief or bandana.**  
*Darren: A buff keeps the sun off your neck and is especially cooler if under the shade of your hat, and you can wet it at water stops too, which is heavenly when you're part-baked!*
- **Suncream/block**  
*Darren: You're in a desert and it's hot. Of course. Plus that sun is out all day from early on and it is fierce on the skin. Another from My Race Kit, specially made to cope with extra sweaty desert runners, Tingerlaat has a good reputation amongst racers. P20 is also a fantastic choice, available widely at pharmacies. Also pack some sun blocking lip cream like this too*

- T-shirt:** Generally a loose-fitting lightweight t-shirt (not cotton) is advised. Short or long-sleeved are permitted but our strong advice is long-sleeved and with some element of SPF UV sun protection built in if you can find it. Raidlight do a good range of such garments including this one.

*Darren: Even the right cheap and simple shirt from the local sports store can do the trick, but in contrast to this, during the recce of the Namib, I tried the DNAmic Ultimate Cooling top and bottoms which proved to be fantastic in extreme heat and I can definitely recommend these garments. Anything from Raidlight is usually good, lightweight and well-made and our firm recommendation is to go LONG-SLEEVED. Anything with SPF in the fabric will also stand you in good stead. It's one less part of the body to worry about sun-damage from if you have garments with SPF built-in.*
- Shorts:** Whatever you're most comfortable in to be honest. You can wear compression shorts/tights underneath for extra support if you choose.
- Tights:** (Not mandatory) You can wear shorts if you prefer; but if you want to keep the sun off your legs and avoid heat rash, cooling tights are well worth packing, plus the compression also helps with recovery.
- Lightweight waterproof jacket:** however unlikely it is that it may rain, a lightweight waterproof is recommended.
- Socks and at least 1 spare set:** Your final sock choice is up to you and can be quite personal. Our strong advice would be a double sock system with a toe sock and a good wicking lightweight running sock over the top. Ininji liner socks are fantastic. Coupled with something lightweight and breathable and 'friction-free' such as the Hilly Monoskin ankle or the Rat Race merino sock for outer layer – with excellent moisture wicking properties.

*Darren: Toe Socks like Ininji, can prevent blistering between toes. These have been fantastic for me and I wouldn't go to a desert without them now. If toe socks aren't your thing, then Hilly are a great brand and will sort you out.*
- Running shoes:** In deep dry sand, trail shoes aren't going to get you much more traction than road shoes. So we are not saying you MUST use trail shoes. Road or trail are OK. The important thing here is to have plenty of support and comfort and to ensure your sizing has enough space for some foot swelling in the heat and to accommodate a double sock system, if that is what you choose.

*Darren: HOKAs are growing more popular for long distances so would be well worth checking out. The bossman Jim swears by his pair. My desert-pal Allie had zero problems with her trusty Altras and would strongly recommend these. Personally I've found both Brooks GTS and Saucony Exodus to work great for me over deserts and have been the envy of camp with little to no blistering or rubbing throughout.*
- Sand gaiters:** These are a must for the desert to keep the sand from going in your shoes. A good pair that is well attached will spare you the horrors that a tiny amount of sand could do inside your shoes – even a few grains can be enough to ruin your feet before you even finish day one.

*Darren: The Raidlights have been great for me across two deserts, and whilst others are available, I'll stick with these, "if it ain't broke...". You'll need to get a local cobbler to stitch/glue velcro around the edges of your shoes for the gaiters to attach to as they use a Velcro attachment system typically. This will pretty much guarantee keeping all the sand outside of your shoes and save your feet from misery. If you live in the UK and if you choose gaiters from MyRaceKit.com they offer in-house stitching*

*although you might get a better price locally, I paid about £25. The absolute go-to guy in the UK, who does this for many desert runners is a chap called Alex who runs Alex Shoe Repairs in Wandsworth, London. It's not a cheap service, but nearly 8 months after the recce trip, with pretty much weekly use since then and a few Ultras under his belt too, bossman Jim's Velcro is still fully intact with a completely unbroken ring of Velcro around the shoes, glued firmly on them still. Not very fetching, but you absolutely NEED the Velcro to be bombproof to make this system work. Alex is available on +44 (0) 207 223 4931.*

- **Nightwear:** You'll want to change into some non-running gear at the end of each day, and it cools down a fair bit at night, in Namibia (especially towards the coast when the fog forms at night with the cool sea air hitting the hot desert sand), so pack a few base layers for top and bottom halves, maybe some favourite PJ's. A lightweight down jacket like the Rat Race Challenger jacket or fleece is also recommended for evenings as they do get cool. For your feet, some comfy slippers/sliders or crocs will air your feet and give you something to wear around camp. It is very important to give your feet a break each evening.

## Equipment

- **Poles:** These are mandatory for this event. It is our strong view that without poles, you will struggle on this event. Even if you don't use poles normally, you WILL use them on this one. Lightweight is good and if you want to splash the cash, carbon poles like the Black Diamond Carbon Z range is the gold-standard. Carbon is by no means required though; just a good, robust trekking or ultra-running pole.  
*Darren: When used properly, poles are a huge benefit on sand, and definitely on the dune climbs, oh the climbs! Even if you don't normally use them for running, I highly recommend them for desert crossings. There will be many sections where you'll resort to a steady march or a long difficult climb and poles will really help to propel you forwards, you'll be glad you have them. Go for the larger baskets to reduce how much they sink into the sand.*
- **Daypack or Ultra Vest:** You only need a handy day pack as the crew will carry your full load of gear from camp to camp. 15 – 20l is recommended. Although it is up to you – you will need to fit the mandatory kit inside, plus 2l of water, food (min 400 kcal) and spare clothing. It's entirely up to you. Check out the Rat Race Great Glen running pack here.
- **Waterproof liner or drybag for daybag:** This may sound strange in a place which has pretty much zero rainfall. The simple answer is that, if it's waterproof, it's sandproof. A waterproof liner or drybag will prevent sand getting all over your items inside your bag, which it will. It gets everywhere.  
*Darren: Personally, I've been really pleased with the Salomon 12 set (I also have the 5L) both of which have been amazing for several years. These are the top end of the price range and cheaper packs are available, however, you usually get what you pay for when it comes to cheaper day packs, and I'm more than happy I got my money's worth with these. So be smart about where and when to save money. There's space for a bladder in the back as well as two 500ml soft bottles at the front on both the Salomon and the Rat Race one, plus so many pockets for all the things you never realised you'd need or want.*
- **Water carrying system:** We will ask that you have a MINIMUM carrying capacity of 2 litres on you at any one time. You may carry bladders, plastic 'hard' bottles or flex

bottles. Soft flex bottles or something like this raidlight (with a straw for easy access and continual sipping) work well. A combo of both systems (flex flasks and bottles) will also work. Bladders are also fine. Anything combination is fine. Provided you can carry 2 litres.

*Darren: I'd recommend going with the soft flexi-bottles that come with the Salomon set (or similar, such as the Rat Race ScRUNch), it's great that they squish away as they empty, instead of large empty rigid bottles with the last of the liquid swishing around. The current scientific thinking is to DRINK TO THIRST. We'll have no shortage of water although there will be a personal allowance. You should therefore not concern yourself with running out. Mores-o think about how and when you are going to drink. Regularity is key here – set up a regime and sip to it. whether it's three minutes, five or ten it doesn't matter as long as it's regular and you sip to thirst. This regularity will prevent slipping into heat injury and just as important it'll avoid hyponatremia (see attached). This is such a simple thing to get right but regularly claims victims in all desert events. So keep it simple, drink to thirst within a regime and focus on the run without worrying about hydration.*

- **Head torch:** waterproof to IPX7 standard, minimum 150 lumens + spare batteries or second headtorch.

*Darren: You need to find your way around camp at night, and just in case you get caught out on the trail after sunset, you'll want to find your way to back. The Black Diamond 325 is neat and effective, offering red and green light too, which saves blinding your campmates when chatting at night. Petzl also do fantastic head torches such as the ubiquitous Tikka. Don't forget spare batteries!*

- **Portable charger:** for that phone for selfies! But also for the charging of your GPS device – see below.

*Darren: I've been using the Anker Powercore 20100 for a few years and it's been flawless, offering almost 7 full phone charges for an iPhone and five for my Galaxy S8, and two USB ports so you can help out a mate at the same time!*

- **GPS device:** We require that you have a GPS device that is capable of having a GPX file downloaded to it. This can be a watch (See below) or a handheld device. This is an important piece of equipment that will assist you with following the GPS-generated route line on the ground. If you are not familiar with such devices don't worry – they are easy to use and just like a satnav for people (vs cars). You should practise with your device prior to arrival at the event but we will also assist you on arrival with these GPX files and ensure you know to download them to your device. The key is that is **MUST** have enough battery life to last a full 15 hr day and you must have the ability to re-charge it (portable charger, see above). You absolutely must have enough power to ensure your GPS device can be powered on each day for all 5 days on the trail.

- **GPS watch:** (Not mandatory). Your GPS device **CAN** be a watch or it **CAN** be a handheld. So a watch per-se is not mandatory.

*Darren: Imagine sharing 130 desert miles to Strava when you get home! For multi-stage ultras with some days up to 15 hours long, there are only a few real contenders to keep recording and to also join up the days. The Garmin Fenix 5 is unquestionably one of the best on the market, the price tag is pretty beefy though, so you could look for an older 2nd hand model if you wanted to save a few bucks. I've been more than happy with my older Fenix 3HR since about 2014 and it's not a great deal different to the latest model.*

- **Compass:** Ideally you won't need this or you might have a compass built into your watch, but an old-skool physical compass a must have 'just in case' your GPS device fails and you need to take a bearing. One like this will do the trick
- **Mirror:** Not for checking your make-up, but for reflecting the sun to flash for attention/help if you get into trouble. You can get these within expedition first aid kits or buy here.
- **Whistle:** As long as it makes a loud toot, then you can pick one up very cheap. Some backpacks have them built in. That is fine. So it's an integrated backpack whistle; or a stand-alone one.
- **Pen knife or multitool:** any type of leatherman is great. Or a swiss army knife. You do not need to spend megabucks on this gadget. It is very useful however for kit repairs and for general camp life.
- **Gaffer tape or electrical tape for unexpected kit repairs.** *Top Tip: to prevent you having to carry a full roll of duct tape, use a hotel key card or credit card-sized item and wrap the tape around it.*

## Food

We will provide you with Pit Stop support along the route. We ask that you maintain some emergency rations on you at all times. As a minimum, 400kcal. This equates to 4 gels or similar energy bars products.

You may also want to take your own foodstuffs and/ or sports nutrition as you know what works best for you and you may have a system you are comfortable with, or simply want some of your own preferred scooby snacks. Given we are transporting an overnight bag for you, there is the facility for this to be carried for you camp-to-camp and you top up with what you need prior to each stage. Darren: You'll need to keep your energy up for hours on end so whatever works best for you, snack bars with oats and seeds provide good carb energy, I can honestly say the Rat Race Pit Stop Bars are great, and pack a lot of energy into a few easy bites. Include electrolytes in the mix as you'll lose a lot of salts through sweating, I personally like to add powders to one of my water bottles so I get a constant top-up to prevent hitting a wall, SIS powders are always very good. Stash your favourite salty/savoury items, peanuts, gels and some sweets for a nice sugary hit when you need it.

- **Electrolyte tablets, salt tablets or Sticks** – To be clear, these are mandatory kit. *Darren: We lose a lot of essential salts through sweat and sweating is something we do a lot in the desert. As well as the powders, gels and snacks, it's handy to have an extra dose of salts to avoid burning out and dehydrating. These salt capsules are a sure way to keep topped up and moving forwards. NOTE on SALT and ELECTROLYTE intake: Folks sometimes do not believe us that you may find yourself literally swallowing sodium tablets whole and regularly. It feels like an alien concept to be taking on board that much salt. But constant electrolyte intake is absolutely key on this event. If you have not used salt tablets before (i.e. the tablets that are linked above, which are just sodium), then be advised that some people do find them to induce some nausea. That is the case for some folk; yet others swear by them.*

## Blister care

Ok this is a biggie. We have now laid out a 'mandatory' kit which is the minimum mandatory blister and foot care kit you should bring. Having said which, decisions such as whether you want to tape toes and 'hot spots' to prevent blisters in advance; or whether you treat blisters if/when they occur is personal and entirely up to you. Each school of thought has its merit. We have also therefore laid out some guidance and advice below, which we hope you find useful. Again, this is all from personal experience of this particular environment. So what you have here is the mandatory kit required as a minimum; and some further advice upon which you can build a good footcare strategy.

### Footcare Kit – Mandatory:

- Zinc Oxide tape (Recommended brands: Rock tape or Tiger Tan tape)
- 4 x sterile needles
- 4 x scalpel blades
- Small pair of scissors or penknife with scissors
- Gauze swabs (2 x packs of 5 swabs – used for drying/cleaning before applying tape)

### Footcare Kit – Recommended:

- Compeed blister plasters
- Haplaband tape (if you are prone to getting blisters in-between toes this is recommended)
- Disinfectant solution
- Foot lube (silicon based)
- Rubbing alcohol (used for drying feet and help prevent fungal infections)
- All footcare kit should be stored in a dry bag.

**General footcare advice – taping:** For those wanting to do this, it's worth knowing how to tape up well; and to have the right kit for it. Our recommendation is [Rory Coleman's method here](#). For this, you will need:

- [Hapla Band](#)
- [Pen knife with scissors](#)
- [Benzoin Tincture](#) – this hardens the skin so helps prevent and dry out blisters
- **Iodine wipes and sterile blades/needles:** if you want to lance your blisters. (You might get these in your first aid kit, although you can also use the tiny scissors on a swiss army knife after a quick wipe with some alcohol.)  
*Darren: If you have known problem areas, I'd strongly recommend preventative measures and covering them before you start. [Compeed](#) blister plasters are brilliant, and whilst you can find similar from other brands like Scholl and Boots own, I find that these lead the way in my experience.*

### **General footcare advice – other products:**

- **Silicon lube:** For the ultimate anti-blister regimen, some people lubricate feet with this in the morning prior to putting on their socks. [This product is silicon based so won't wear off.](#)
- **Rubbing alcohol:** Take this to dry feet and blisters out at the end of the day. It is better than popping the blisters, which can lead to infection. There is no better way to dry feet that using [rubbing alcohol](#).
- **Another tape recommendation is [Hypafix self-adhesive dressing](#);** to tape problem toes and to tape over blisters to keep them sterile and prevent infection. *Top tip: Put a plaster on underneath.*

### **Medical**

- **Medical kit– Mandatory:**
  - Pad and bandage style dressing (large)
  - Adhesive dressing – 1x medium and 1 x large
  - 1 x conforming bandage
  - Dioralyte sachets x 5
  - Basic pain relief (Paracetamol)
  - Any personal medications
  - Over the counter antihistamine tablets
  - Savlon tube (or other brand of antiseptic cream)
  - Hand sanitiser
  - Insect repellent
  - After-bite cream
- **Medical kit – Recommended:**
  - Triangular bandage
  - Plasters
  - Sudocrem/Vaseline for chaffing

*All medical kit should be stored in a dry bag.*

- **[Sudocrem](#)** – to prevent or treat chaffing in the most inconvenient areas and promote healing of cuts and scrapes

- **[Personal First Aid kit](#)** to include adhesive dressing, steristrips and triangular bandage as a minimum. Find a decent small personal med kit and squeeze in some of the other things on this list to keep it all together in one bag
- **[Hand sanitiser](#)** – We all know is worth these days; but you won't find many washrooms on the dunes and personal hygiene is of paramount importance when you've gone remote. A simple bug can bring everyone down, do keep the handy, handy!
- **Alcohol rub for your feet** from a [bottle](#) or as [wipes](#), this can be a life saver and really sort your feet out at the end of each day. As mentioned in blister care section, above
- **[Insect repellents for skin](#) and [spray for clothing](#)** is worth having too. The rumours are true about [Avon Skin So Soft](#), proving to be a great repellent too, and it leaves your skin silky smooth as a bonus!
- **Personal medication as required** – make sure you have it all on you. You will be asked to disclose medical history to our medics nearer the time so they understand any requirements you have in this respect.  
*Top tip: Keep your medical kit separate from your footcare kit. It is likely you will be accessing your footcare kit each evening so ensuring your kits are separate will help you keep your personal admin in check with all of that gear lying about the tent!*

### **Sleeping gear**

- Lightweight sleeping bag
- Sleeping bag liner
- Sleeping mat

### **Other mandatory kit**

- Toothpaste & brush – all those gels and sugary snacks will leave your teeth feeling grim
- Personal toiletries
- Holdall or duffel for us to transport your gear between camps
- Casual clothing for transit and overnights
- Towel – travel micro towel or full-size
- Spork or other eating utensil
- Small drybag/s – for electronics. Sand WILL get everywhere and can compromise the effectiveness of your equipment and/ or scratch and damage items easily



### **Other recommended kit**

- **Phone/Camera:** Who wouldn't want a selfie or two at the top of some of the biggest sand dunes in the world?! You'll be repeatedly amazed by the views and wildlife, so it's likely your phone won't stay in your pocket for long
- **General trekking or travel trousers**
- **Robust outdoor footwear** are recommended just given the type of destination (your running footwear are fine if you do not wish to bring another pair of shoes)
- **Reading material**
- **International plug adaptor**

### **Bike Only Kit list – for those doing bike/run ONLY**

- Your bike will be provided unless you wish to use your own
- **Helmet** – you will need to provide your own helmet
- Bikes will be supplied with flat pedals. Cleated pedals (SPD) may be attached if you wish to bring your own cleats. If doing so, please also bring a pedal spanner
- Please bring a **basic tool kit** to include puncture repair patch, bike multitool and tyre levers
- Please bring a **small portable pump** (shradler valve) to carry with you on the bike. Track pumps will be available in camps

### **Cycling clothing:**

- **Padded cycling shorts**
- **Cycling jersey** – lightweight. As with the run kit above, the recommendation is to equip yourself where possible with SPF UV protective clothing
- **Cycling gloves**
- **Socks for cycling**
- **Footwear appropriate for flat pedals** (running trainers/ sneakers are fine) or SPD footwear if using cleats, Please bring your own pedals if you wish to use them
- **Chamois cream**
- **Front and rear bike lights**
- You are welcome to bring your own saddle if you wish