

ATHLETE'S GUIDE



CHALLENGE
TURKU

MIDDLE DISTANCE 2026

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WELCOME

Welcome to CHALLENGE TURKU 2026!

We are happy to have you with us and wish you the most enjoyable event.

This athlete's guide provides you with important information for your and all racers' safety.

Heikki Jaatinen
Event Director, Challenge Turku



Dear Athletes

We are delighted to be back in Finland with you and celebrating another Challenge Turku!

It's wonderful to see so many athletes lining up to enjoy this spectacular course, testament to the dedication and commitment of the local team and community. So, thank you for travelling, whether from near or far, to experience this internationally renowned event.

Thank you also for your trust in Challenge Family. And I express my thanks to Heikki Jaatinen and the rest of the team who have all worked so hard to bring this race to you. And special thanks must go to the countless volunteers, local stakeholders, sponsors as well as the local community for their continued support.

Challenge Family is committed to delivering inclusive and welcoming events around the world. This is especially so here in Turku with not only a full triathlon programme, but a host of community events for all ages and abilities. The exceptional Finnish hospitality, the stunning course and unique setting all combine to create an unforgettable weekend of sport for all.

I wish you all the very best for your race, and see you at the finish line!



Jort Vlam
CEO—CHALLENGE FAMILY



WELCOME

FRIDAY 24 JULY

16:00–21:00 Registration, Race Office open

20:00 Virtual Q&A (Facebook live)

SATURDAY 25 JULY

9:00–21:00 Race Office open

9:00–21:00. Registration for HALF DISTANCE

11:00 CHILD + ADULT START

11:45 JUNIOR CHALLENGE START

12:45 SUPERSPRINT MALE, U15, U17, U19 START

13:45 SUPERSPRINT FEMALE, U15, U17, U19 START

14:45 SUPERSPRINT AGE GROUPS START

18:00–21:00 Bike check-in HALF DISTANCE

SUNDAY 26 JULY

7:00–18:00 Race Office open

7:00–8:30 Bike check-in MIDDLE DISTANCE

8:50 MIDDLE DISTANCE START

17:00 MIDDLE DISTANCE race time cut-off

17:05 AWARDS CEREMONY MIDDLE DISTANCE (Varvintori)



IMPORTANT LOCATIONS



Race Center
Race Office
Swim Start
Transition Area
Finish Area

Varvintori Square
Konservatorio
Aura River 150 m from Transition Area
Varvintori Square
Varvintori Square

BEFORE THE RACE

Race venue

The race is held on traffic-controlled streets in the center of Turku. The Race Center, Race Office and the Transition Area are located at Varvintori square. Swim start and swim finish are about 150m from the Race Center. The CHALLENGE TURKU finish line is located at the Varvintori square.

Registration

Registration and race packet pickup is from Varvintori Race Center on Friday and Saturday. Please note that registration is not possible on Sunday morning. An information point next to the Race Office is on hand to help with any problems.

Operating hours are:

- Friday 24th July 16–21
- Saturday 25th July, 9–21

You must show a valid photo-ID to collect your registration packet.

The registration packet contains a race number, timing chip, sticker for your bike and helmet (to be placed in front) and a swim cap. You're also given three race bags: a green bag for street wear, a blue bag for bike gear and an orange bag for run gear. When you receive your registration packet, make sure that it contains all the necessary items.

We recommend that you attach the race number to a race belt or use a rubber band and safety pins around your waist to carry your race number. You should wear the race number at your back while biking and rotate it to your front when running. The race number must not be folded or cut; it must be worn as it is. For your safety, please write the name and phone number of your contact person on the back of the race number. Your contact person must not be racing at the same time as you. Attach the number sticker for your transition bag to the bag's drawstrings, or place it in the plastic pocket on the side of the bag.

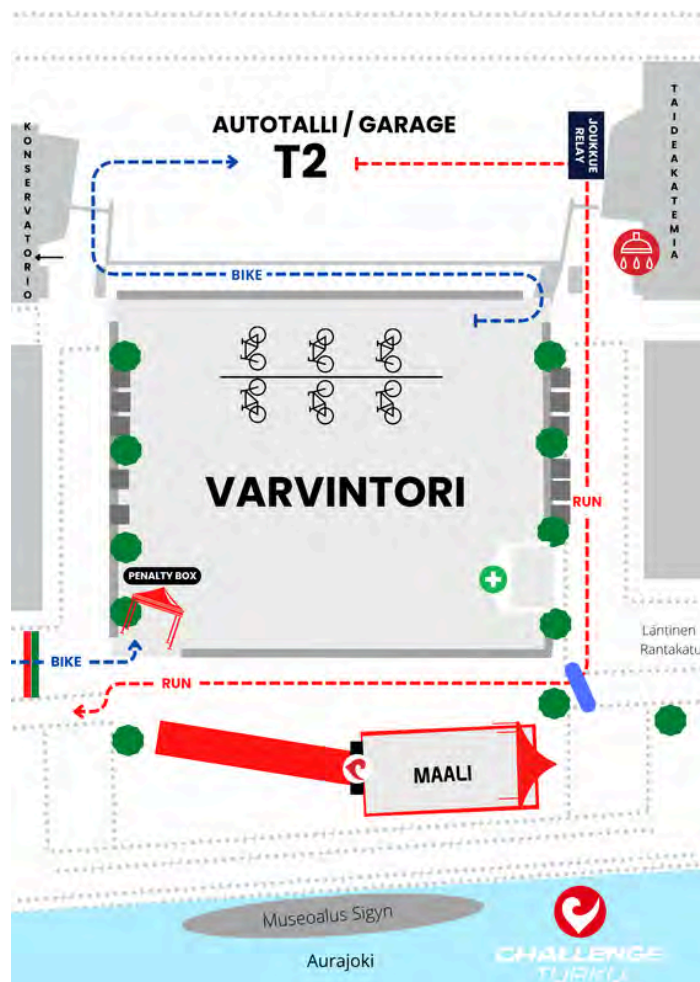
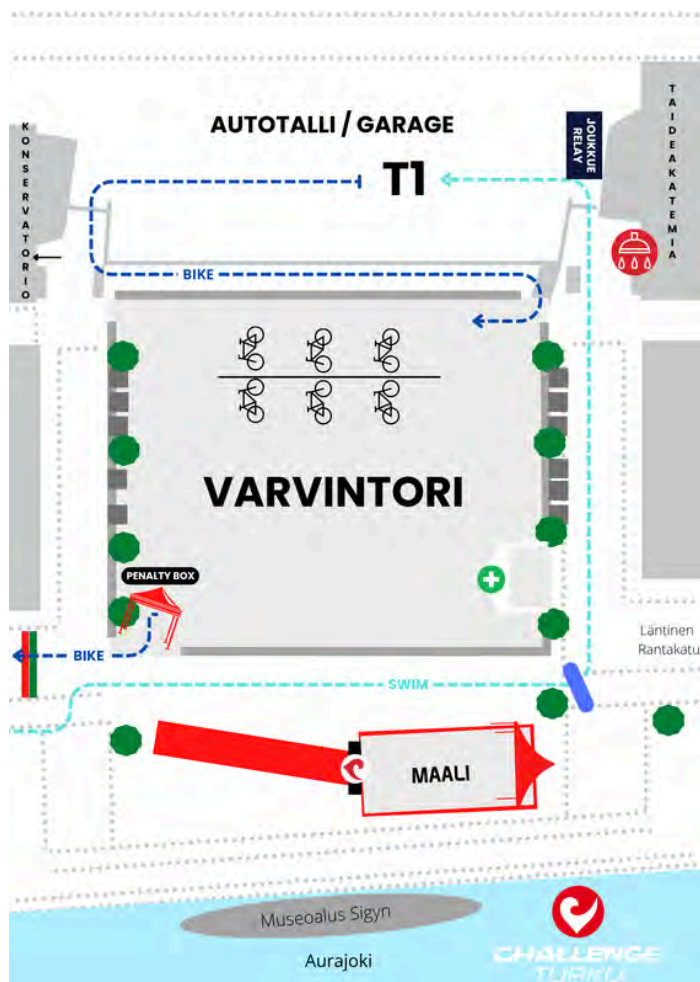
Race Briefing and Q&A

Challenge Turku will again this year have a virtual race briefing which means that there will be no mandatory race briefing in the race venue before the race. Instead, we have an optional live streamed Facebook live Q&A session on Friday at 20:00. The virtual race briefing will be published on the internet before the race and the link for athletes will be sent via email on Friday 24th July at the latest.



Transition area T1 & T2

The Transition Area is located at the Varvintori Square. The Transition Area is the same for 'swim to bike' (T1) and 'bike to run' (T2) -transitions. Changing equipment takes place in the garage. In the T1 transition, you enter from the right and exit from the left. In the T2 transition, you move in the opposite direction.



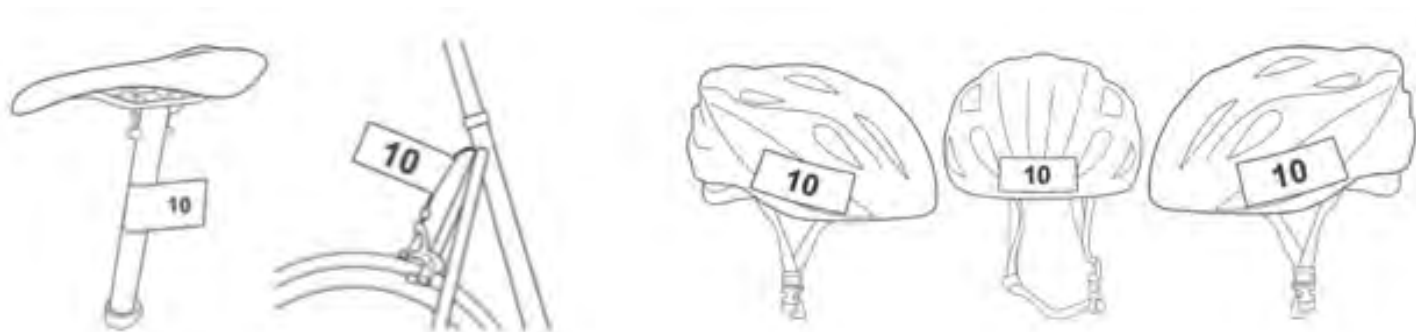
Only athletes and volunteers are allowed into the Transition Area. When checking in to the Transition Area we will check your bike and brakes, and that your helmet is approved (CE or other safety marking must be visible). Put your bike on the bike rack to the place the volunteers will assign you. All athletes are placed based on their race number. At T1, rack your bike by the saddle so that the front wheel points toward the centre aisle, i.e. the start direction. At T2 the bike may be racked either way round. Bring only items for the race with you into the Transition Area, since there is only a small area per athlete. Keep your items within your given area.

All changing takes place in the garage, and your gear is placed in the transition bags provided (green for street wear, blue for bike gear, orange for run gear). No transition bins are used. All your items should be in your bags prior to the start. **After 8:30 it will no longer be possible to deposit any biking or running clothes on race day (26th July).**

You can leave your street wear bag into the race office prior to start and collect it there after the race. You can collect your other belongings after the race when checking out your bike. Please remember to have your race number with you when entering the check-out.

Bike shoes can be attached to the pedals. Water bottles and gels could also be attached to the bike. Other equipment, including your helmet, should be placed in the appropriate transition bag.

Please remember to attach the race number stickers on your bike and on your helmet before entering the bike check-in. When checking out your bike, you must show your race number. It must match the race number sticker on your bike. Without them you are not allowed to enter the Transition Area. Do not lose your race number! Remember to wear your helmet when you come to Bike check-in. Please notice that you are not allowed to check your bike in without your helmet.



All entrance and exit to the Transition Area will be at the "check-in" sign where volunteers guide you.

The area is guarded overnight.

Bike check-in times for the Half Distance are:

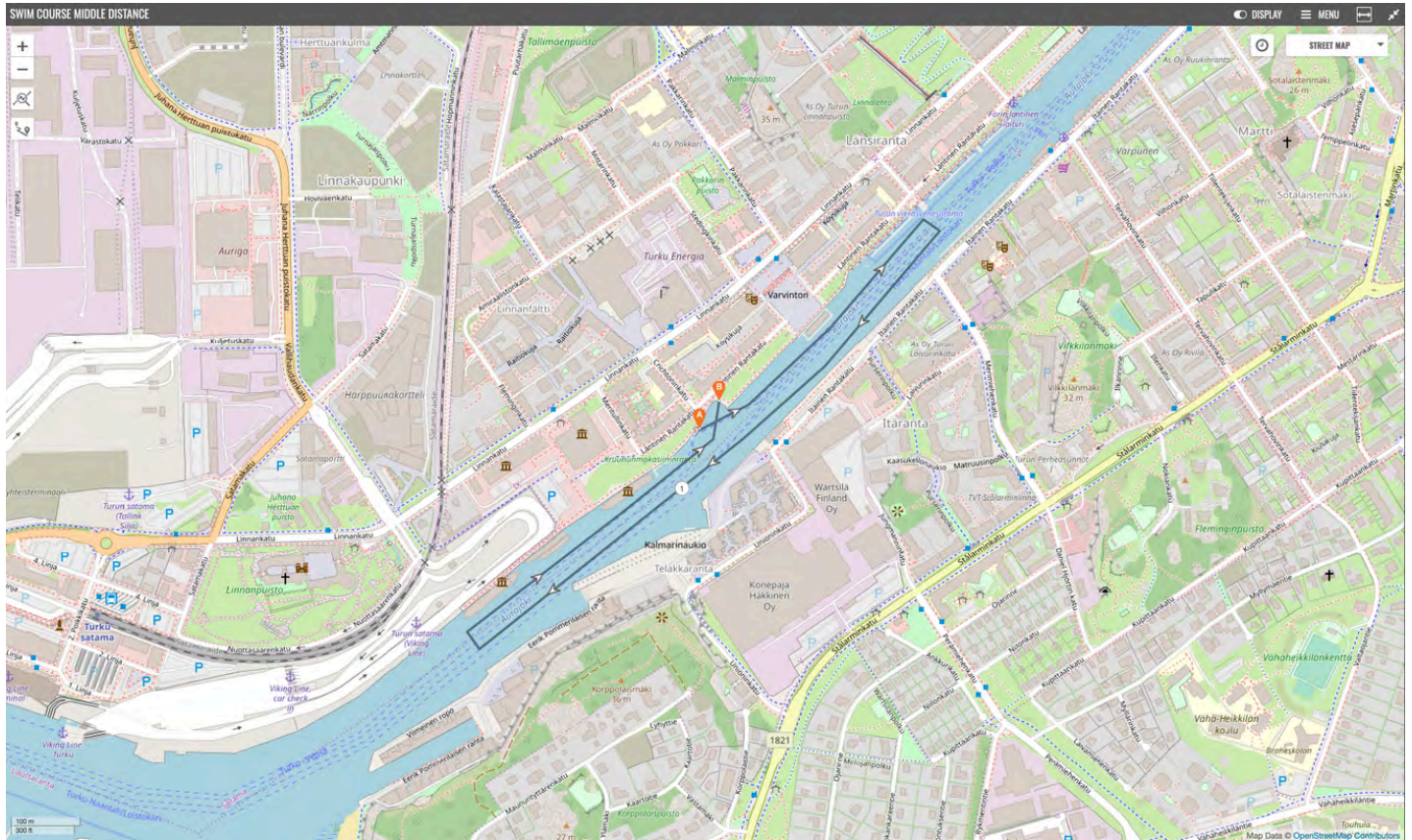
- Saturday 25 July 18:00–21:00
- Sunday 26 July 7:00–8:30

We recommend that you familiarize yourself with the Transition Area before the race in order to make sure that you recognize where to enter and exit the Transition Area at the T1 and T2.



RACE COURSES

SWIM



Link to the swim course: <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/3363874?units=km>

*Scroll down the page in case you see adds first

You must be at the swim start area at least 15 minutes prior to your start. Warm up in the water is allowed only in the specific area since there are ships still operating in the river before the start. Warming up in the water is possible between 8:20 and 8:35.

The PRO men start from the water at 8:50 and the PRO women at 8:52. The age-group athletes follow a few minutes later as a rolling start. It means that the athletes will line up on the lawn according to their realistic predicted swim time (self-seeding) and the athletes will be released to start in one line from the pier. It will take approximately 12 minutes to get the entire field across the swim start line.

Place yourself in the start waiting area as best as possible according to your predicted time. If you plan to swim under 30 minutes, then place yourself near the front. If you swim over 40 minutes, then place yourself near the back. Any swim style is allowed.



If this is your first triathlon or if you are not a strong swimmer, we strongly recommend that you start in the back of your starting group. This way you can find some space and find your own rhythm, which will help you to enjoy the race even more without the hassle that normally will occur at the start.

If you find yourself in trouble during the swim, call for help by waving your hand high. There are kayaks, sup boards and boats in the water during the swim to secure the safety of the swimmers. You can hold on to a kayak, sup board or a boat to rest for a short while, if the boat/kayak is not moving. Please note that your race is finished if you enter the boat.

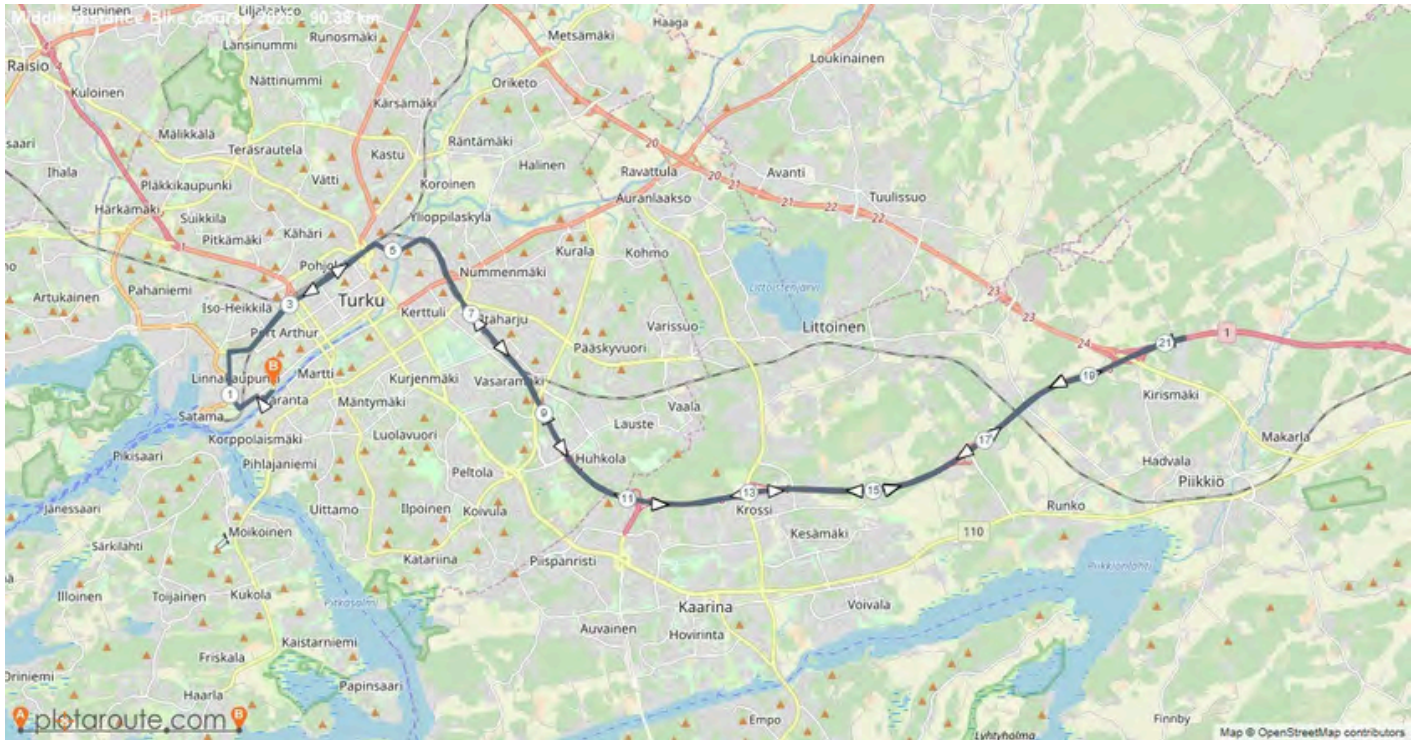
The rules regarding wetsuits are according to the regulations of World Triathlon. Wetsuits are not allowed for age group athletes if the water temperature is over 24.6 degrees Celsius. For the PRO category the limit is 22 Celsius. The temperature is measured one hour prior to start and is announced at a notice board at the help desk and at the swim start. All athletes must wear the swim cap provided by the race. The race number can be left under the wetsuit or put on in T1.

The swim consists of one (1) loop with marking buoys always on your right side. The swim course is shown in the map below and is also shown on notice boards at the Race Center.



RACE COURSES

BIKE



Link to the bike course: <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/3363874?units=km>

*Scroll down the page in case you see adds first

Helmet must always be worn when the bike is moving during the race. The chinstrap of your helmet must be securely fastened before you remove your bike from the bike rack and remain fastened until you have finished the bike course and put your bike back at the rack. It is not permitted to ride your bike in the Transition Area. You can start biking only after crossing the 'start biking' line marked right after the Transition Area. There will be volunteers guiding you at the transition and at the 'start biking' line.

There will be no traffic along the course. However, please remember that it is always possible that cars, other vehicles, and pedestrians may enter the cycling course, as the race is in the city.

PLEASE STAY FOCUSED ON YOUR ENVIRONMENT!



It is every participant's responsibility to know the course. When biking, keep to the right and be aware of participants around you. There will be referees on motorbikes along the bike course to make sure athletes follow the rules.

The bike course begins with an 8km transfer to the main bike loop (inside lines of E18 motorway). The main loop is ridden three times. The furthest turning point hosts a portable

toilet and service station. The turning points are marked clearly 100m and 50m before the turning point. After loops the course takes the same route back to the Transition Area.

All riders will share the inner lanes of the E18 highway to both directions on the main loop. Bike course is separated with cones from the right lane which is allowed for cars and other vehicles. On the E18 highway cars and other vehicles are allowed to drive with reduced speed along with the bike course. Accordingly, riding outside of the marked bike course is not allowed! Please observe the cones are placed on the left side of centre line based on the instructions of the relevant authorities.

If you have a puncture or other malfunction with your bike, please observe the traffic around you and find a safe place to fix the bike. In case you need to stop on the E18 highway, please move to the left (if possible) to the "green area" between the highway lanes.

In case the malfunction will prevent you from continuing the race, please contact the volunteers close to you or in case you will be on the E18 highway, inform the referee bikes about the situation and wait for further help. In case you are close to the turning points in the highway, please move to the turning point closest to you. Please observe the other bikes and traffic!

The bike course finishes upon returning to Linnankatu street. Dismount from the bike before the dismount line and run/walk your bike back to the original position on the bike rack where your number is and hang it back up on the rack. You can remove your helmet once your bike is properly racked. **Running straight under bike racks in the transition area is forbidden and it leads to a penalty.** There will be volunteers at the dismount line to guide you.

At the far end of the cycling loop you will find a service station where you can also throw your used bottles and trash. Disposing of trash outside of the service areas is grounds for immediate disqualification and removal from the course.



12 Meter Rule

Drafting is forbidden in all classes.

Riders must keep a 12-meter distance between bikes except when passing. Overtaking riders may pass on the left for up to 25 seconds. An overtaken rider must fall back 12 meters immediately. When passing other riders, make sure no one is trying to pass you at the same time. Riding side by side is not permitted. The draft zone behind a vehicle is 35 meters and applies to any vehicle that may appear on the bike segment; let it be a referee motorbike or some other type of vehicle.

Penalties

- **30s (yellow card)**
- **2 min penalty (blue card)**
- **Disqualification (red card)**

Penalty Box

If an athlete receives a blue card from a referee during the bike section, the athlete must stop in the penalty box. Penalty box is located at the Transition Area. After receiving a red card an athlete is disqualified from the race.

It is the athlete's responsibility to report to the volunteers at the penalty box and tell their race number before serving their penalty. The race official will mark the race number to show the penalty was served and it will also be recorded in the officials' log. If the athlete does not serve a penalty, they will be disqualified from the race. The race officials are there to provide a fair and safe race for all athletes so please respect their position and orders.



RACE COURSES

RUN



Link to the run course: <https://www.plotaroute.com/route/3363844?units=km>

*Scroll down the page in case you see adds first

The run segment begins immediately after leaving the Transition Area. The finish line is located at the Varvintori square. After leaving the race venue the run course runs around Turku Castle, then passes the finish area again heading upstream along the banks of the river Aura, and returns via Kristiinankatu and Linnankatu to the riverside, continuing after the Martinsilta bridge along Linnankatu back toward Varvintori. The run segment consists of 3,5 laps so before crossing the finish line you have to run around the Turku Castle one more time.

The run course is marked with cones and fences and volunteers will be guiding you. As the course takes you to the city center, please be aware that pedestrians and cyclists may enter the course even if we have secured it.



There will be a lot of runners out on the run course at the same time.

Keep to your right. On the course there are three service points:

- Turku Castle service point: water, High5-energy drink, High5-gel, banana and salt
- Marina Palace service point: water, High5-energy drink. In addition: toilets
- Varvintori service point: water, RedBull. In addition: toilets

RELAY

Relay teams will use only one race number. The cyclist will already have the number on while waiting for their swimmer to finish. Upon returning from the bike, the number will be given to the runner to use on the run segment.

Relay competition transitions will work as follows:

- Transition (T1): There is a marked area where the swimmer can give the timing chip to the cyclist.
- Transition (T2): There is a marked area where the cyclist gives the timing chip and race number to the runner.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Bike Check out

Sunday 26.7. 14:15–18:00. Please remember to take your race bib with you when you arrive at the bike check out.

Awards ceremony

Awards ceremony will take place at Varvintori square at 17:05 on Sunday. You can pick your Finisher T-shirt from the finish line area after your finish.

Categories

Men's/Women's: PRO, 18–24, 25 – 29, 30–34, 35–39, 40–44, 45–49, 50–54, 55–59, 60–64, 65+, relay team.

License

In registration you should show a valid proof of your national/international triathlon license. If you do not have one, you can buy it online from Suomisport, www.suomisport.fi or from the federation of your own country. If you buy it from Suomisport, please choose either an international license or a one day license which is valid for Challenge Turku.

General information

info@sbrfinland.com

Race Office

Sari Karimäki: +358 45 1144279 / sari.karimaki@sbrfinland.com

Event Director and security

Heikki Jaatinen: +358 40 7050615 / heikki.jaatinen@sbrfinland.com

Race Course

Kimmo Holmström: +358 40 5920074 / kimmo.holmstrom@sbrfinland.com

Race Venue and rules

Leevi Hietanen: +358 50 5004266 / leevi.hietanen@sbrfinland.com

Lost and found

Lost and found items will be brought to the Race Office and will remain there until the closing of the event Sunday evening. After that, all items are kept by SBR Finland Oy for 3 months, you can make inquiries at: info@sbrfinland.com.



Maximum race time and cut-off times

Swim 1 hour / 10:10 at the latest

Swim+Bike 5 hours / 14:00 at the latest

Finish 8 hours / 17:00

Medical care

First aid station is located at the Varvintori square.

Musical devices

Musical and communication devices such as iPods, mobile phones are prohibited during the race.

Pacing the athletes

It is strictly prohibited to accompany/pace participants on the bike or run course, and it will lead to the immediate disqualification of the respective participant without any warning. Outside assistance is also prohibited and may lead to disqualification; servicing is only allowed by the organiser at the official aid stations.

Parking

There are only limited parking options close to the race venue. Accordingly, we recommend that you leave the car at home/at the hotel. Harppuuna parking area (address: Vallihaudankatu 1) is located 800m from the transition area and it offers affordable parking for approximately 300 cars.

On Sunday during the bicycle check-in from 06:30–8:00, cars can be temporarily parked at the Forum Marimum parking area. Parking on Linnankatu is strictly forbidden.

Protests and race jury

An athlete can protest an officials' decision or against another athlete's behavior. Protests must be given to the Race Office in writing within 30 minutes of completing the race, and the head referee must be notified that a protest has been made. The jury delegate will handle the protests and may call the race jury for a meeting. Members of the race jury will be announced on the notice boards at the Race Center on the race day.

Restrooms

Portable restrooms are found at several places within the race venue area.



Showers and changing rooms

Showers and changing rooms are open for athletes for the whole race weekend. They are located on the ground floor of Taideakatemia (check the map).

Results

The results will be available online on challenge-turku.com.

Photos

FinisherPix is responsible for photographing the athletes and the race photos will be on sale immediately after the race weekend.

Spectators

Please see a separate Spectator's Guide. **PLEASE NOTE that the spectators are strictly forbidden to enter the E18 highway during the bike segment!**

Timing chip

The registration packet contains a timing chip with a Velcro band for timing during the race. The timing chip must be placed on your left ankle during the entire race. No chip = no time. Check carefully that the chip is still on your ankle after removing your wetsuit. Do not walk on the timing mats before the start of the race! After you finish the race there will be volunteers taking care of your timing chip. If you do not return your chip to the volunteers at the finish, we will charge you the cost of the timing chip of EUR 50.

Withdrawal from the race

If the athlete decides to withdraw from the race at any time, it is the responsibility of the athlete to report about the withdrawal to a volunteer and return the timing chip.

PLEASE NOTE! All participants are racing at their own risk. All athletes are responsible for knowing the race course and the race rules!

Welcome and good luck on the race day!

**EVERY ATHLETE,
EVERY CHALLENGE.**






**CHALLENGE
FAMILY**

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23 MAY 2027**

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CHALLENGE FAMILY

RACE CALENDAR 2026

	CHALLENGE ISRAMAN ISRAEL, 30 JAN 2026	LONG MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE SIR BANI YAS ABU DHABI, 30 JAN - 1 FEB 2026	LONG MIDDLE OLYMPIC
	GALLAGHER INSURANCE CHALLENGE WĀNAKA NEW ZEALAND, 21 FEB 2026	MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE MOGÁN-GRAN CANARIA SPAIN, 18 APR 2026	MIDDLE
	GDANSK MARATHON POLAND, 19 APR 2026	MARATHON
	CHALLENGE FLORIANÓPOLIS BRAZIL, 19 APR 2026	MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE TAIWAN TAIWAN, 23-26 APR 2026	LONG MIDDLE OLYMPIC
	CHALLENGE CESENATICO ITALY, 10 MAY 2026	MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE SALOU-COSTA DAURADA SPAIN, 10 MAY 2026	MIDDLE SHORT
	THE CHAMPIONSHIP SLOVAKIA, 24 MAY 2026	MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE ST PÖLTEN AUSTRIA, 31 MAY 2026	MIDDLE
	LOTTO CHALLENGE GDAŃSK POLAND, 21 JUN 2026	MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE KAISERWINKL-WALCHSEE AUSTRIA, 28 JUNE 2026	MIDDLE
	SAIL CHALLENGE CAP QUÉBEC CANADA, 28 JUNE 2026	LONG MIDDLE OLYMPIC
	CHALLENGE SANDEFJORD NORWAY, 28 JUNE 2026	MIDDLE
	DATEV CHALLENGE ROTH GERMANY, 5 JULY 2026	LONG
	CHALLENGE GUNSAN-SAEMANGEUM KOREA, 12 JULY 2026	MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE TURKU FINLAND, 26 JUL 2026	MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE FORTALEZA BRAZIL, 30 AUG 2026	MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE ALMERE-AMSTERDAM NETHERLANDS, 12 SEP 2026	LONG MIDDLE
	SAIL CHALLENGE ESPRIT MONTRÉAL CANADA, 13 SEP 2026	MIDDLE OLYMPIC
	CHALLENGE SAMARKAND UZBEKISTAN, 13 SEP 2026	MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE SANREMO ITALY, 4 OCT 2026	MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE VIEUX BOUCAU FRANCE, 10 OCT 2026	MIDDLE OLYMPIC
	CHALLENGE PEGUERA MALLORCA SPAIN, 17 OCT 2026	MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE MALAYSIA MALAYSIA, 18 OCT 2026	MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE SHANGHAI CHINA, 24 OCT 2026	MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE BARCELONA SPAIN, 25 OCT 2026	MIDDLE SPRINT OLYMPIC
	CHALLENGE FORTE VILLAGE SARDINIA ITALY, 25 OCT 2026	MIDDLE
	CHALLENGE XIAMEN CHINA, 7 NOV 2026	MIDDLE OLYMPIC
	CHALLENGE CANBERRA AUSTRALIA, 22 NOV 2026	MIDDLE OLYMPIC
	CHALLENGE FLORIANÓPOLIS BRAZIL, 29 NOV 2026	MIDDLE



ALL RACES ARE
QUALIFICATION
RACES FOR THE
CHAMPIONSHIP

