

Running safely on trails in FNQ

This document was last updated on 18 June 2024

The Weather

Visitors to Cairns will soon realise that it is very hot and humid any time of the year. It's unlikely that you will be cold, so don't overdress for the start. If anything, you'll get sunburnt! You can check the weather conditions prior to the event at the Bureau of Meteorology (<http://www.bom.gov.au/qld/forecasts/north-tropical-coast-and-tablelands.shtml>)



Course markers

Every effort is made to mark the course appropriately for each event. Only follow signs labelled as Dynamic Running (pink background with black arrows). We use blue and orange flagging tape to mark our courses. Study the maps provided PRIOR to the event. Follow route markers on the day. If you think you are lost, turn back and return to the last known location. Get your map out and look where you are. Wait for another runner to come past. Make sure you get your name ticked off at the checkpoints along the course.



Other Road Users

Although some of the dirt roads and trails on the courses are closed to vehicles, others are open and in use. You can expect four-wheel drive vehicles, horses, trail bike riders and mountain bikes. As a runner, you have to give way to ALL other traffic. Stay alert and move off the road when you hear vehicles approach.

Headsets

Seriously, don't even contemplate wearing this for our trail races. Stay aware of your surroundings at all times. For your own safety and also to listen out if someone else calls for help.

Condition of the roads

The dirt roads/tracks you will be on are in good condition and you can complete in most event using regular running shoes. There may be shallow creek crossings along the course and you will get your feed wet. On a few sections during the 3M3D you will be on single tracks, include Barron Gorge National Park, Snake Gully, Vivier's Track, Crystal Cascades Track and the Arrows.

Animals in the tropics

Snakes

Snakes will lie on the road in the warm sun. They may move out of your way, but be careful not to step on them. Actively look for and avoid snakes. Runners entering remote areas MUST carry two compression (snake) bandages. Protective clothing such as covered shoes and gaiters are recommended.

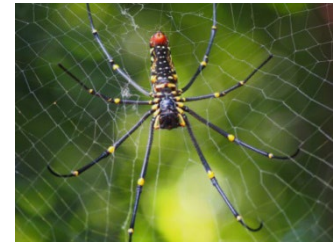


Cassowaries/Wild pigs

There is clear evidence of wild pigs in all the areas where we run. Cassowaries are often seen in Barron Gorge National Park and on Black Mountain Road. If you spot or hear any, make noise to scare them off or hide behind a tree until they wonder off. Normally they will run away if they hear you coming.

Golden Orb Spiders

They often spin their huge webs across walking tracks. The females reach 45mm body length, but they are basically harmless.



Ticks and leeches

Ticks and leeches can attach to your skin and then feed on your blood. Use an insect repellent on skin, shoes and socks. When you get home, search carefully for ticks. Good places to look are behind the ears, the back of the head, neck, groin, armpits and back of the knees. Remove a leech by flicking it off with your finger or showering it with salt. You can remove a tick with tweezers by grasping the head and rotating. Do not pull the tick by the body as this may make it release more toxin. Apply an antiseptic cream to the bite. Seek medical advice if you experience muscle weakness, paralysis or feel generally unwell after a tick bite.

Plants in the tropics

Avoid touching the sap from leaves and stems of rainforest plants.

Stinging trees

Stinging trees grow on the edges of tracks and clearings. It has fine, poisonous hairs on its heart-shaped leaves and these hairs penetrate the skin - even when just lightly brushed. The sting can be **excruciatingly painful** and can cause illness and even hospitalisation. Avoid rubbing the skin. You might try carefully but firmly applying sticky plaster over the wound. When you rip the tape off, you might be able to remove some of the stinging hairs and lessen the severity of the wound. If you stop for a toilet break, make sure you're NOT using these leaves as your toilet paper!



Wait-A-While (also called Lawyer Vine)

Wait-a-While is a climbing palm that has a main stem covered with sharp bristles; as well as long, whip-like strands that often hang down over tracks - these are covered with small hooks and will stop you in your tracks if you run into it. It loves to hang onto clothing or your naked skin! If you are caught, **stop** and gently pull the whip off you. Wear a hat to keep the wait-a-while 'whips' from ripping your face! Use sticky plaster to pull the thorns out when you get home.



Sounds like fun, hey!

Have a safe and enjoyable event. We'll see you at the race.

First aid measures in the event of a snake bite

YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILkw4BXa7pQ>

Ensuring patient is kept at complete rest.

Appropriate application of Pressure Immobilisation Technique:

Apply bandage over existing clothing if possible.

Apply a 10-15cm elasticised bandage over bite site. You should be unable to easily slide a finger between the bandage and the skin. Test the limb to ensure it is still receiving circulation – pinch the toe or finger – blood circulation should be evident within 2 seconds.

Apply a second pressure bandage, commencing at fingers or toes of affected limb extending upwards covering as much of the limb as possible.

If a pressure bandage is already in place, reapply over the existing one if not satisfied as to its integrity. DO NOT remove the bandage already in place.

Mark the site of the bite on the bandage. Record the time the patient was bitten. Record the time the bandage was applied. Record patient observations. This information will help the emergency personnel at a later stage.

Splint the affected limb, including joints on either side of the bite to immobilise fully.

The pressure bandage and splints are to remain insitu throughout patient evacuation, until patient is located in a medical facility which is resourced to manage complications of snake bite or antivenom administration.

If the bite is not on a limb, apply direct pressure.