



Cyclists' Participation Guide

Introduction

Welcome to the 2026 *Agony in the Alleghanies Gran Fondo* and thank you for your patronage of our event. We are committed to providing you with a quality cycling experience and hope you will come year after year to join us. Please read this Participation Guide prior to event day (Saturday, May 9th)

Important Locations and Times

Early Check-in

Friday, May 8th
4:30 PM – 9:00 PM
319 W. Main St.
Covington, VA 24426

Race Day Check-in

Saturday, May 9th
6:30 AM – 8:45 AM
319 W. Main St.
Covington, VA 24426

Bike Valet Check In

319 W. Main St.
Covington VA 24426

Friday, May 8th
4:30 PM – 9:00 PM

Saturday, May 9th
6:00 AM – 9:00 AM

Event Parking and Shuttle Bus Load

(please allow sufficient time before the start of your selected race to catch a shuttle and ride to Covington which is approx. a 20 minute ride).

Saturday, May 9th

6:00 AM - 8:00 AM

Rose Ave Parking Lot

Located at the corner of Rose Ave and Church St
Clifton Forge, VA 24422

Ride Start Times - Saturday, May 9th

Gran Fondo: 7:00 AM

Medio Mountain: 7:30 AM

Medio Fondo: 8:00 AM

Piccolo Fondo: 8:30 AM

Downtown Covington
Vicinity of 241 W. Main St
Covington, VA 24426

Ride Finish

Clifton Forge School of the Arts
518 Church St.
Clifton Forge, VA 24422

Packet/Number Pick-Up

Riders may pick up their packets at **319 W. Main Street** in downtown Covington on Friday, May 8th from 4:30 PM – 9:00 PM. Late packet pick-up is available at the ride start on Saturday morning from 6:00 AM – 8:30 AM.

Directions

To Friday Registration (Covington)

From I-64, take Exit 14, VA-154, toward Covington/Hot Springs. At the end of the ramp, make a left onto VA-154 North (S. Craig St.). After 1.2 miles, make a right onto W. Locust St. Take the second left onto N. Lexington Av. Then, take the first right onto Main St. Registration is on your left, 410 W. Main St. There is parking available on side building.

To Saturday Registration and Start (Covington)

From I-64, take Exit 14, VA-154, toward Covington/Hot Springs. At the end of the ramp, make a left onto VA-154 North (S. Craig St.). After 1.2 miles, make a right onto W. Locust St. Take the second left onto N. Lexington Av. Then, take the first right onto Main St. Registration is on your left, 410 W. Main St. There is parking available on side building.

To Shuttle Parking (Clifton Forge)

From I-64, take **Exit 27** (U.S. 60 Business). Take U.S. 60 towards Clifton Forge. After 2.2 miles, you will **bear left** onto **Keswick St.** (staying on U.S. 60 Business). After bearing left onto Keswick, take the **first right** onto **Rose Ave** (tight turn – less than 90 degrees). The Rose Ave lot will be a short distance on your right, at the intersection of Rose Ave and Church St. Signs will be posted.

Event Parking and Shuttle Service

The Agony in the Alleghanies Gran Fondo begins in Covington, and finishes in Clifton Forge, VA, 12 miles distant. To encourage participation in post-ride festivities (and to avoid a weary ride back to your car), we request that riders park in a designated parking lot in Clifton Forge, close to the finish.

Shuttle busses will run from the parking lot in Clifton Forge to the start in Covington on Saturday morning from 6:00AM to 8:00AM. Busses will depart approximately every 10-15 minutes. The busses are **not equipped to carry bicycles**, so please make use of the **bike valet** in Covington, which is available for overnight storage on Friday night (you may drop off your bike after number pick-up), or for temporary storage on Saturday morning (6:30-8:30am).

Bike Valet is in located at 319 W. Main St. Covington VA 24426. **Bicycles checked in for storage will be protected by an overnight, armed security guard and the building will be under extra patrol by the Covington Police.**

Use of the shuttle bus service is not compulsory, and riders may elect to ride to the start in Covington from their hotels, or from the parking lot in Clifton Forge. It is approximately 12 miles from the Clifton Forge lot to the start in Covington, so please allow the better part of an hour to complete the ride and not be rushed.

Bike Valet

If you use the morning shuttle bus service, please drop off your bike for temporary storage at 319 W. Main St., Covington, VA 24426. You may drop off your bike after picking up your packet/numbers on Friday night, where it will be stored securely with armed law enforcement. Or, you may drop off your bike on Saturday morning prior to driving to the parking lot in Clifton Forge to load the shuttle bus. Valet storage is validated by the rider's number on a tag affixed to the bike. Please wear/bring your number to valet pick up to complete the claim process without hassle.

Area Lodging and Meals

There are several lodging and dining options throughout the Alleghany Highlands region. Please visit the Alleghany Highlands tourism website (www.visitalleghanyhighlands.com) for a complete list of local options.

Ride Details

The Gran Fondo Alleghany Highlands is a supported, non-competitive ride, and not a race. *The course is open to traffic, and all stop signs and traffic lights must be followed by the riders.* ***All Virginia laws as they apply to bicycles must be obeyed:*** riders should use hand signals at turns, and may ride up to two-abreast on all roads.

□ Numbers, Timing and Results

Precision Race will again be providing premium timing and results for all riders. Every rider will receive three numbers. One contains the timing chip and should be placed on the right side of the helmet, as pictured below:



The second number is an adhesive-backed number that should be placed on the front of the helmet as pictured below. This number is for back-up photo results and so volunteers and staff can readily identify riders:



The third number is a standard pin-on racing bib that should be pinned on the back of the jersey. Again, this is for easy rider identification.

Precision Race will be timing all Gran and Medio Fondo riders on the Warm Springs Mountain climb. The “King” (top male) and “Queen” (top female) of the Mountain in both the Gran and Medio Fondos will receive trophies especially designed for this race.

Friends and family of riders in the event can track their progress and see results live at <http://www.precisionrace.com/allegghany-gran-fondo-results/>

Precision Race is pleased to feature the Agony in the Alleghanies Gran Fondo in the **ItsYourRace** smartphone app. Participants, family, and friends can download the FREE **ItsYourRace** app. Features include:

- See the **schedule of events and event locations** (including driving directions)
- Locate event **parking** (including driving directions)
- See points of interest including accommodations (with driving directions)
- See the list of **registered cyclists** to verify your registration.
- Prior to the race, find their name in the "Athletes" section and then **connect the app with your social media**. Your results will then be automatically pushed to your **Facebook** wall and/or **Twitter** feed!
- Check out the NEW **course maps**
- See searchable **LIVE race results** and the Leaderboard results during the race
- See the **awards list**
- See the sponsors that made this race possible.

Download the free **ItsYourRace** app at:

iPhone: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/its-your-race/id656514293?ls=1&mt=8>

Android:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.itsyourrace.android>

Once you install and run the app, simply search for "Fondo" and select the Gran Fondo Alleghany.

□ ***Gearing***

Riders in the Gran and Medio Fondos will ascend Warm Springs Mountain, which is a serious climb and very steep (15% or more) in sections. We recommend that riders fit a 39x27 low gear **at the very**

minimum. Larger riders or those not so proficient at climbing should use a compact crankset or a triple to ride most comfortably. Gear low; don't be a hero!

□ ***Descents***

What goes up must come down! There are several technical descents common to all routes and these are marked on the route sheets. Please be alert to regular road signage and take extra care when descending. Excessive speed or undue risks could result in a serious accident.

□ ***Road Condition***

The course uses rural and semi-rural roads typical of the Mid-Atlantic. Some pavement is pristine, other sections are bumpy and broken and there are some chip-seal sections as well. Your lightest tires and wheels for racing applications are not recommended.

□ ***Mechanical Support***

We will have a SAG wagon following the courses in a support vehicle. If you would like to place your own spare wheels in the support vehicle, you may do so with your name and event number clearly marked on a card placed in the spokes. There is no neutral support this year; we are following a wheels in/wheels out policy whereby you can only receive your own equipment that you have placed in the follow vehicle.

□ ***Rest Stops***

There are seven rest/water stops on the Gran Fondo route, four on the Medio routes and one on the Piccolo route. All of the rest stops will have water, isotonic drinks and gels, and many will have fruit, granola bars, pickles/pickle juice and other assorted snacks. All riders are highly encouraged to stop and hydrate at the rest stops – spaced approximately 20 - 25 miles apart.

Maps and Cue Sheets

Detailed course maps will be available to riders at registration and rest stops.

Course Markings

Turns and danger areas on the course will be marked with signage. Routes will be marked with arrow signs using the following protocol:

- Single arrow before the turn
- Double arrow at the turn itself
- Single arrow for confirmation

Medical Emergencies

The Event will have EMTs and rescue personnel on call throughout the courses. If you need medical attention, notify the nearest course marshal, escort police, or SAG wagon personnel, who can dispatch rescue help as needed. If you are unable to reach one of these personnel quickly or easily, please follow this protocol:

- Call **911** (true medical emergency)
- Call **540-620-0345** (Race Director - Josh Taylor) for minor health or mechanical problems

Please do not call these numbers unless you have a situation that requires immediate assistance. Mechanical issues will be handled by the support/sag vehicles and may require a wait.

Communications

Event communications will be maintained by use of police and fire/rescue communications and cell phones. Cell coverage is sporadic throughout all four routes.

Weather

The event will run rain or shine, with the exception of major flooding, which will cancel or postpone the ride. Afternoon thunderstorms are a possibility, and riders should take cover in the event of frequent lightning. Bring along a wind vest or arm warmers for the morning start – temps in the 50s are possible.

What to Bring With You

Even though the Agony in the Alleghenies Gran Fondo is a supported ride, there are some remote locations where dispatching needed supplies and attention can take time. Therefore, riders should prepare to be minimally self-sufficient anyway. Here are some things to take with you on the ride:

- Spare tube/pump/CO2 cartridge
- Money for snacks/extra food at stores along course
- Cell phone
- Maps/cue sheets
- Extra food/gels/water

Sag Vehicles and Time Limit

Each ride will have at least one sag vehicle to pick up tired/injured riders. Please do not have friends/family members drive the course behind you, although you may dispatch them to come pick you up, if an event vehicle is not nearby. All riders must complete the ride by 5:00 PM; if you are still on the course after 5:00 PM, we cannot guarantee the presence of a marshal at intersections, nor that your time will be officially recorded.

Should you choose to abandon the ride without completing the full distance, please notify event staff, who will phone the timing staff.

Enjoy the Ride!

We wish you a safe and enjoyable cycling experience, and look forward to providing this to you.