

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) for Action Asia Events **(updated Feb 21, 2008)**

How do we know if our team (or individual) is confirmed in the race?

Check for the attachment named "Entry List" or "Confirmed Competitor List" on the right bottom side each event page under the sponsor logos. We will put your individual name or team name on the list once we have received your payment. Some races newsletters are emailed to all competitors while other events newsletters are posted to the event page so make sure you check periodically and especially a day or two before the race to see if any last minute changes by the organizer incase an email didn't go through to you.

Are helmets mandatory to wear during the bike leg? (If biking is in the race)

Yes helmets must be worn anytime you're on a bike in any Action Asia Event that involves cycling.

Do I have to wear helmets all the time in other Action Asia Event races?

Rules state that you must carry your helmet with you the entire race for Action Asia Challenge and in Bonaqua Fortis Action SPRINTs. However there will be places along the course in both these races wear helmets are not mandatory to wear on the head (in some trail sections), but later in the course their could be mandatory places to wear the helmet on your head (river gorges, beach rocky coastlines, etc), hence why you must carry the helmet the entire race. We recommend wearing the helmet the whole race for your own protection, as runners have been known to fall on trails and more convenient then digging for it in your backpack. Please note for the Gatorade AA Off-Road races only the mountain biking leg requires helmets. In Eco Action Asia if you are participating in the adventure category the same as the Action Sprints. No need for Family walk in Eco Action Asia.

Can beginners do adventure racing?

Depends on which race. At least 20% of competitors are new to each race with no previous off-road racing experience. The AA Off-Road Series is designed for people who could just about walk the run and take it fairly easy on the bike and still finish within the time allowed. The kayaking has been shortened to around 2km, which is shorter than most races. This is the same with the PowerBar Bonaqua Action SPRINT series AAE organizes as you again could walk most of the course with little running and still finish within the cut-off. The Action Asia Challenge however has cut-offs in the course that are designed so that everyone will cross the finish line within 10 hours or less depending on which country. This is so that the organizer can get the final awards under way with all competitors finished and not have to worry about chasing after competitors in the dark.

Recommend to train at least 3x a week if you want to finish the AAC without being cut off anywhere.

What are the race distances of each leg in the Action Asia Challenge?

Since the AAC started it has usually been the competitors who don't want the organizers to release this course information, but to only disclose the total length of the one-day course. Usually the course made up of running, hiking, rock scrambling, biking, kayaking, swimming, technical rope sections, orienteering, etc, and between 30-40 km on average. Past AAC races have mostly had running and biking as the main disciplines with everything else around these two. If majority of competitors don't want the surprise of adventure and want to know the course we would be more than happy to disclose the whole course as it would make our life much easier, but would probably spoil some of the adventure we would think. There has been talk about disclosing only the race lengths and not the location, which we are thinking, and if we get enough email from confirmed competitors to aae@actionasia.com we will do this for specific races as in AAC Taiwan 2005. Usually in Hong Kong we will disclose the entire course 1-2 days before the race.

Do we need to rent kayaks and life vests for the race or can we bring our own?

Action Asia Events will supply kayaks and life vests for all competitors and will not allow competitors to bring their own. No protests are allowed over equipment.

Where can we practice kayaking before the race?

Sometimes depending on the country AAE will have a kayak training day which will be announced on the specific event section. Otherwise we recommend competitors to contact their own Canoe Unions, local kayak clubs or kayak associations to check on training days. In Hong Kong we know that the Stanley LCSD organizes training sessions quite inexpensively. In Singapore you can contact the Sea Sports Club, which is part of the Peoples Association.

Where can we practice our abseiling or rope skills before the race?

First the Action Asia Challenge is the only race where you need to have experience on using your climbing equipment and we recommend you to get some knowledge and training of rope skills. In Hong Kong the HK Mountaineering Mr Chung Kin Man (tel: 9483-8040) offers courses for different levels depending on how much experience you want as maybe you'll be so excited you'll want to climb a serious mtn after the race. In Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, etc there are many climbing walls and climbing clubs, associations that you can find through the local sport associations for training. In Singapore Wilderness Associates is recommended.

AAE will offer a training day before each Action Asia Challenge so read the newsletter associated with each race to check on date, time and what is offered.

Does the organizer provide mountain bikes?

No the organizer does not provide mountain bikes. Bikes can be rented at many shops in HK, Singapore with the best way calling local bike shops like Friendly Bike Shop in Mui Wo (852) 2984-2278 or others in Shatin, Tai Po in HK. We have noticed mtn bikes drop in prices as more are buying them and recommend highly to competitors to purchase their own which they can practice conveniently according to your own busy work schedule. Good bikes can be found for less than HK\$2000 (US\$ 256). Flying Ball in Cheung Sha Wan has great deals on Cannondale and other new mtn bikes as with Friendly Bike Shop in Mui Wo, Lantau Island in HK. At the same time new lightweight carbon fibre bikes can go over HK\$50,000 (US\$6,400).

How can my friends come and watch the race?

All races that AAE organizes have a map of the course on the event page with the start and finish posted except the Action Asia Challenge which only the start and finish are disclosed race week. We usually find the best place for friends to come is the finish line where they can relax, listen to music and meet others with similar interests. And of course to celebrate with you at the finish line and share your course experiences.

How can my friends volunteer for the race?

They can email us at aae@actionasia.com with “volunteer” in the headline and a request on where they would like to be on the course. The organizer needs many people before the race to get administrative things ready and on race day for water stations, checkpoint timing, security control, pre race registration, banner set-up, emergency rescue, communications, giving out shirts and sponsor products, directional marshals on roads, trails or the mountains, post race clean-up, etc. All volunteers will get drinks and a souvenir t-shirt for their generous help as well as free entry in one of the SPRINT or Off-Road races for each race they volunteer.

Can we use wetsuits for the swim?

For the AA Off-Road series this year no water. For the PowerBar Bonaqua Action SPRINT series you are only crossing a 20m river stream and in the Mui Wo race wading out in waist deep water, but again the answer is yes. For the Action Asia Challenge the answer is no as the organizer will provide life vests (flotation device) for all competitors in water sections. The rules state whatever you carry in the AAC must be carried around the entire course, so this would mean if you were given special permission, you would have to carry the wetsuit with you the entire 30-40 km.

How good of a mountain biker do I need to be to finish?

In the AA Off-Road races the course is on Chi Ma Wan which is around 15 km starting and finishing in Pui O. The course has a steep hill which is rideable in your granny gear at the start of the race. After the road section there is mainly single track trail with a few

technical sections that require you to get off your bike and carry it over some stairs and rock. Because of these sections many call Chi Ma Wan and intermediate riding trail, but many beginners have ridden the trail sections in between the technical sections. For the Action Asia Challenges many competitors rent their bikes with only 1 or 2 practice sessions which is OK, but not something organizers like to see. We do encourage competitors to try and borrow a friends bike for practicing at least half a dozen times, possibly rent a bike from a bike shop or even purchase a bike if you enjoy the sport enough as a great way to do cross training as running only can be very boring at times as your limited on how far you can go vs biking can cover a much larger area. The Tai Lam Chung reservoir course is quite flat and easy for beginners. Chi Ma Wan has had recent work on the trail making it easier for beginners.

Can I use mountain bike shoes with clips for racing?

In the Action Asia Challenge the answer is NO. Only running shoes are allowed and no cleats on your pedals. For the AA Off-Road races or AA Mountain Bike races the answer is Yes.

Where can I find people to train with for adventure racing?

Go to the www.actionasia.com/aae FORUM and list your details and what type of partner (novice, intermediate, fast, elite, etc) you're looking for or come to some of the Action Asia Event organized races either as a competitor or spectator and talk to the competitors around after the race. This is how majority of people in racing find friends with similar passions to hook up with to train. Also we have a "Partner Wanted" attachment usually up each race that is for teams so please email us your contacts to aae@actionasia.com for us to post them if you want a teammate. Put down some info about yourself like some past race results in different events and what kind of partner you want.

What if the weather is bad. Will the race be cancelled??

Generally the answer is NO as it's an adventure race. However we don't want you on your bike or on a high peak during an electrical thunderstorm and will make an announcement on the website event page if the race is postponed or if serious rain thunderstorm warnings.

What kind of clothing gear is best for adventure racing?

Depends on which country and seasonal temperatures, but generally in Asia as its mostly hot and humid, it's an advantage to wear some sort of "quick dry / dry tech" material that many of the outdoor manufacturers produce. Stay away from cotton as when you sweat, it doesn't dry and your body can loose body heat. Light weight short pants that are durable if you're sliding over rocks. Many competitors prefer wearing padded cycling shorts due to mtn biking being involved, but be warned they rip easy if scratching rocks. Trail shoes are going to be more comfortable than road running shoes due to the uneven surfaces you'll find yourself on. Fingerless gloves are more comfortable compared to full finger

gloves and allow more breathing. Suggest for rope sections carrying a cheap “gardening glove” in your hydration system that can easily be put over your fingerless gloves on the ropes and put back after. Remember in the Action Asia Challenge you must wear your racing bib (which is an extra layer of clothing itself) over your hydration system (camelback) as the most “outermost” layer of clothing. A back-up windproof or waterproof lightweight jacket is always nice to carry in your hydration system in case the temperature changes.

What are the best hydration systems to use in the races?

In the Action Asia Challenge, the rules (recommend to read them under INFORMATION at (<http://www.actionasia.com/aae>) say that your personal hydration system should be at least 2 liters or more. Many competitors even use a 2.5 or 3 liter hydration system to put extra water or electrolyte drinks inside which is always an advantage. Action Asia Challenge is designed to force competitors to get use to being self supported and purposely spaces out the water checkpoints so that you fill up every 1-2 hours depending on the course. For the shorter SPRINT series there is usually one checkpoint half way through the course but drinks are limited as all bottles must be carried into the country park so again recommend a hydration system unless you’re an experienced runner use to running with just a bottle. The same for the Off-Road Duathlons/Triathlons as no checkpoints on Chi Ma Wan so hydration systems are recommended. Chamonix outdoor store (HK Mountaineering) on #1 Fa Yuen St, Mongkok will offer competitors a minimum of 20% discount if you tell them you are entering an Action Asia event.

Size of your backpack

Really you want to make sure it is as small as possible and a tight squeeze around your hydration system. There are many new type of hydration system packs that have come out in the past 2-3 years designed for adventure racing so would leave the big “backpack” at home and check out the small new designs that are only made for your hydration system with little pockets for gels, energy bars, house keys, etc. Lastly remember you are most likely going swimming so the smaller the better to drain the water, as if to big, you’re going to be carrying extra water and that means “extra unneeded weight”.

What equipment is needed in the Action Asia Challenge?

Please see each country section for updated newsletters as sometimes equipment will change slightly race to race at www.actionasia.com/aae but if you check the top of this homepage under “GENERAL INFORMATION” there is “Mandatory Equipment” on the left side which gives the following items which we recommend.

Per Team:

1. 1 x WATERPROOF first-aid kit (adhesive plaster, sterilizing solution or antiseptic wipes/ointment, medical adhesive tape, gauze pad, triangular bandage).
Recommend zip-locks to keep waterproof.
2. 1 x bicycle pump
3. 2 x spare tubes

4. 1 x tool kit or allen key multi-tool & chain link tool for broken chain
5. 1 x patch kit
6. 1 x compass
7. 1 x whistle
8. 1 x pencil or pen

Per Competitor:

1. 1 x climbing harness - UIAA approved
2. 1 x screw gate locking carabiner FOR ABSEIL connected to Fig 8
3. 2 x screw gate or auto-locking carabiners FOR FIXED LINES connected to slings
4. 1 x helmet, either bike or climbing
5. 2 x 50-60cm slings, commercially sewn (length measured when laid out flat)
6. 1 x figure 8 descending device (size medium) NO ATCs allowed
7. 1 x mountain bike
8. 1 x pair of gloves suitable for abseiling (FINGERLESS CYCLING GLOVES ALLOWED THIS RACE)
9. Running shoes (trail shoes recommended)
10. 2 Litre minimum hydration fluid system
11. Headlamp with new batteries (for running in dark if race starts in dark only)

Recommended Items:

1. 1 x energy bar/gel for each hour on the course (waterproof packaging recommended)
2. Sunscreen (put on before race)
3. Quick dry/polypropylene clothing (i.e. shorts & shirts that dry fast when wet)
4. Salt tablets or rehydration salts (can buy at pharmacy)
5. Bike light (headlamp is ok but we recommend extra bike light if you are going to be one of the race leaders).

WRONG EQUIPMENT AT CHECK AT ACTION ASIA CHALLENGE

This could happen if you have not double checked with a climbing shop where you purchased the equipment, so highly recommend to double check with the store if purchasing new equipment and make sure you have the correct equipment or you will be forced to purchase expensive equipment if you want to race. (if available).

MANDATORY EQUIPMENT TEST – ACTION ASIA CHALLENGE – Usually the day before the race (International and local competitors together)

After your equipment has been checked you will have to go through a series of fixed lines and perform how to do an abseil by yourself. If you do not pass you will not be allowed to race so please if this is your first time we recommend you to take a training course before the race. For experienced competitors that we recognize that have done 2 or more Action Asia Challenges we will waive you through if there is a line-up to go, but remember you still need your equipment checked.

There will be an example of a tyrolean traverse and a flying fox zip line which if used in the race.

RACE REGISTRATION – ACTION ASIA CHALLENGE - Only after you have completed the equipment check **AND YOUR EQUIPMENT IS TAGGED** then you can come to the registration area and pick up your goody bag with your racing number bib, quick dry souvenir shirt, food competitor pass for finish area and possibly some other things. (Let us know if your company would like to donate anything).

MANDATORY RACE BRIEFING – ACTION ASIA CHALLENGE –Race course map to be given out at start of briefing. You must attend briefing to hear updates on any course changes and other serious safety things about the race course. Please don't be late.

OTHER RACE INFO – PLEASE READ NEWSLETTERS POSTED ON EACH EVENT THAT YOU ARE DOING OR THINKING ABOUT DOING AS THINGS CHANGE OFTEN IN ADVENTURE RACES (Compared to road running races).

IF YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS THAT YOU FEEL SHOULD BE LISTED HERE PLEASE EMAIL US AT aae@actionasia.com