



TEAM SPIRIT REIGNS AT RAID THE NORTH – APEX MOUNTAIN RESORT

Shortly after 11:00 p.m. on Friday, June 14, 120 anxious competitors gathered at The Big Peach, on the shores of Lake Okanagan in Penticton awaiting the official go from race director Dave Zietsma. These teams from across Canada and the U.S. we're dressed in layers, huddled on their mountain bikes ready to head out on the first leg of Raid the North – Apex Mountain Resort, a 36-hour adventure race.

At the stroke of midnight they were off for a 20+ km ride through Penticton, where they continued up the Okanagan Valley along the Kettle Valley Railway. [Seagate USA](#) and [Wild Rose](#) set a blazing pace from the start leaving CP 1 shortly after 1:00 a.m. All teams were through this first CP by 2:11 a.m.

The field of 30 teams began to space out heading into CP 2 /TA 1 which was located just south of the Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park. Here teams traded their biking shoes for hiking shoes, as they prepared to head out on the second leg of the course - a 22 km trek through the heart of the Provincial Park along a series of trails, thick forests and stunning canyons. Last year's RTN-Revelstoke winner, [Spirit](#) lead the pack out of CP 3, leaving at 5:52 a.m., with [Beowulf](#) right on their heels at 6:04 a.m.

By mid-morning on Saturday, the temperatures were hovering around the high 20s and the sun was upon the teams as they pushed their way through the second leg of the race, trekking through Wild Horse Canyon. In the canyon, teams followed narrow goat trails up the other side and into a semi arid and sparsely forested slope that brought them down to Okanagan Lake and CP 5 - the canoe put-in (located just south of Kelowna).

These first two legs of the race took teams a little longer than race organizers predicted. Two hours behind the estimated time of arrival at CP 4 , [Seagate USA](#) had taken the lead once again, checking out of CP 4 at 9:00 a.m. They were followed by [Beowulf](#) and [No Limits](#), both at 9:32 a.m. [Spirit](#), who had dropped back due to bike difficulties in the first leg, left CP 4 at 10:09 a.m.

The first few canoes hit the water shortly after 10:00 a.m., with Seagate USA leaving CP 5 (canoe put-in) at 10:13 a.m., followed by [Beowulf](#) at 10:40 a.m. and [Wild Rose](#) at 10:43 a.m. This 18 km paddle took teams along the edge of Okanagan Mountain's steep cliffs towards Summerland, which is located just north of Penticton on the west shore of Okanagan Lake.

Not too far behind the top five teams, were Penticton locals, Skaha and [Bike Barn](#), both arriving at CP 6 early this afternoon in sixth and eighth position. The weather at this time was still very warm and the winds began to pick up on Okanagan Lake, creating white cap conditions.

[Skinny Fat Guys](#), who had some trouble finding their way to CP 3 that morning, did eventually find it around noon and checked out at 12:40 p.m. However, they returned back to the CP, 50 minutes later, tired and a little discouraged. They took some time out to think about whether or not they will continue on, and decided to pack it in.

Even 14 hours into the race, the lead teams showed no sign of slowing down. [Seagate USA](#) remained in the lead, checking out of CP 7 / TA 2 (the canoe take-out in Summerland) at 1:14 p.m. Heading out on bikes, they made their way to CP 8 located in the Okanagan Forest south

of Trout Creek. Here the lead teams had to make a decision whether or not to continue on the regular course or to tackle the challenging Advanced Section.

If teams complete this extra 30 km mountain bike ride and finish the race, they will automatically rank higher than any other teams who complete the regular course (a shorter mountain bike section on forest service roads). Teams had to check out of CP 8 before 6:00 p.m. on Saturday night in order to head out on the Advanced Section.

Throughout the afternoon on Saturday we had seven teams drop out of the race due to minor injuries, illnesses and heat stroke. Teams [Whitelight Adventurers](#), [Synchroniz.com](#) and [No Excuse](#), each lost a member of their team due to these minor ailments and continued on as an unranked team of three.

By mid-afternoon, ten teams had still not made it to the canoe put-in at CP 5 and were forced to paddle hard to make it to CP 7 /TA2 before the 10:00 p.m. cut-off time. With the temperatures dropping and the wind picking up, the canoe leg became very challenging. As a result a few teams did not make it to CP 7 time and were taken off the course.

The remaining 23 teams reached CP 8, where lead teams Seagate USA, Spirit and Beowulf choose to take the advanced route and the remaining teams proceeded on the regular course. Heading out on foot, teams trekked 16 kms over Mount Brent, traveling through over two metres of snow. Progress was very slow for teams throughout the night and it took most teams six to eight hours to make it to CP 11 the top of the rappel on Mount Riordan.

This 200 ft rappel dropped teams into the backyard of Apex Mountain Resort where they descended the mountain to the finish line located at the base of the mountain. [Spirit](#), who did fall back during the first mountain bike leg, made up some time in the trek and paddle and made it to the head of the pack last night during the advanced section. They took first place when they crossed the finish line this morning at 7:02 a.m. with a time of 31 hrs and 2mins. A regular competitor in the Raid the North Series, [Spirit](#) also won last year's Revelstoke and Series Championship races. Spirit's team members, who will also be competing in this year's Raid the North Extreme in the Yukon Territory, hail from British Columbia and Ontario.

[Seagate USA](#) who held first place for most of the race and also completed the advance section, came in second place, crossing the finish line at 7:45 a.m. with a time of 31 hrs and 45 mins. A regular competitor in Eco-Challenge and other major international races, [Seagate USA](#) hails from Alaska, California and British Columbia.

[Wild Rose](#), from Alberta was the first team to complete the regular course and came in third, crossing the finish line at 8:04 a.m. with a time of 32 hrs and 4 min.

[Beowulf](#) who was in the top three for most of the race, did proceed onto the advanced course at 3:55 p.m. Saturday afternoon, but lost their way to CP 11 from CP 10, then misplaced their maps. With the help of race management's directions they were able to find their way out to a road on Sunday morning, where they were picked up and brought back to Apex.

A total of 10 teams of the field of 30 completed the race, six officially ranked. For official race results and course information, please visit www.RAIDTHENORTH.com.