**The Half - Course description**

The Half course starts in Pak Tam Chung on the east side of Hong Kong's New Territories and winds its way around the coast of the Sai Kung peninsula along coastal paths, across beaches, through ancient villages, over hills and through valleys before returning to Pak Tam Chung. The 56km journey climbs over 2010m and offers amazing views of this beautiful corner of the planet.

The first 800 metres are on a sealed road before a sharp right turn leads to the Sheung Yiu Country Trail, which features 5km of classic Hong Kong winding country trail with views out to the islands in the South China sea. A further 5km on sealed road over dams built to form reservoirs leads to the first support point at East Dam (12km). Don't forget to take in the views of the Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark as you refuel!

From the support point to the first checkpoint requires a climb over Sai Wan Shan (314m) and crossing Sai Wan and Ham Tin beaches. Enjoy the waves crashing into the pristine white sand and ignore the temptation to join the surfers.

From CP1 (Ham Tin - 21km) to CP2 (Hau Tong Kai BBQ site - 34km) the course undulates along Stage 2 of the Maclehose Trail to Pak Tam Au (cross the road carefully!). From Pak Tam Au you climb steeply up Ngau Yee Shek Shan which rises to almost 400m above sea level. This is a more beautiful climb than its name (“*Cow’s Ear Rock Hill*”) suggests and the views to the islands (including golfers’ paradise, Kau Sai Chau) to your left as you summit are some of the prettiest on the whole course. After the descent you turn sharply right at Cheung Sheung to fly down the Cheung Sheung Country Trail, a soft and bouncy trail runner’s dream. Turn left when you reach Hoi Ha Road and CP2 is about 300m up the road on your left.

Suitably refreshed, to reach CP3 (Pak Sha O – 43km) turn right out of CP2, cross the road (carefully!) and re-trace your steps back down Hoi Ha Road. After about 200m, turn left onto a trail which heads down to Tai Tan village. When you reach the village, turn left on the trail to Hoi Ha. Although this trail looks flat from the course profile, it is a wee bit technical, featuring rocky and rooty trails, with some wonderful sea-views to your right- hand side. Hoi Ha, at around 41km, is a marine sanctuary, where if you swapped your running shoes for a mask and snorkel you could see soft coral, anemones, clown-fish and garoupa. CP3 (Pak Sha O – 43km) is inside the youth hostel just beyond the Pak Sha O turning on Hoi Ha Road.

From CP3 to CP4 (Yung Shue O - 51km) is a mixture of fast coastal path and dirt trail. Watch out for the magnificent views across Kei Ling Ha towards Ma On Shan ("*Saddle Hill*") as you approach the CP.

As you leave CP4 one last climb awaits. It’s a gradual 200m ascent to cross the Maclehose Trail Stage 3 then charge downhill for 3km passing through Pak Tam village (ignore the dogs barking at you – they are in kennels and are just excited that you’re less than 2km from the finish) to the party and the glory at the finish line. Free San Miguel beer for everyone! Welcome back!