

Winnipeg Amateur Radio Emergency Service
in conjunction with
Radio Amateurs of Manitoba



MANITOBA MARATHON
15 JUN 2025
AMATEUR RADIO NOTES
PSE-197

Jeff Dovyak VE4MBQ
25 JUN 2025

Past reports have detailed the documentation distributed to ARES volunteers at the pre-race briefing. That is not addressed in this report.

The notes from the 2025 operation are those of the Winnipeg ARES Emergency Coordinator (EC), and comments from those volunteers that submitted comments and/or participated in our in-person debrief to a certain extent. Planning/Preparation and Operations for 2025 were all based on previous years' experience. Recruiting began mid JAN 2025. Unlike 2024, not all volunteers scheduled showed up Race Day – one pulled out 0530h Race Day morning (and another went home sick).

Recruiting for 2025 was even more difficult than last year. Ultimately we had seventy (70) volunteers Race Day, At least fifteen (15) new or newer Amateurs participated this year. A number of new Amateurs asked to borrow radios at the Amateur briefing – the only loaner radio at that meeting had been requested at least a month prior. Winnipeg ARES is likely refreshing their stock of “loaner” radios for event use when an ARES member's radio fails. The current stock of older 2m handheld transceivers (HTs) might just be dedicated to Marathon stock going forward.

Recruiting was done on-line via the Winnipeg ARES website, newsletters, targeted e-mails and voice nets.

Several operators notified the ARES EC in advance that they could not attend the volunteer briefing and indicated who would pick up their briefing package – that worked very well. When they registered, volunteers received a communication outlining briefing time, date and location. A reminder e-mail was sent in 2024 to our volunteers a couple of days before the scheduled briefing, obviating “no shows” in 2024 – we did not do that in 2025 and there were several “no shows” – briefing had been changed to Monday from Tuesday – that was covered in registration communications but some of the “no shows” had Tuesday in their minds. Changing Amateur Radio briefing back to Tuesday might also eliminate some “no shows”.

The ARES component of Comm Centre set-up is traditionally done the Friday afternoon before Race Day and 2025 was no exception. Set-up took approximately ninety minutes. That set-up is currently not documented but should be. The area used by the Comm Centre has moved south in the building due to construction of several more fan suites which necessitated utilizing two additional 100 foot runs of feedline. The additional feedline was not low-loss *LMR-400*, we must determine if additional low-loss feedline should be obtained.

ARES “shadows” at the Care Centre this year **DID** operate on UHF with their communications fed into the VHF Medical Repeater via a portable repeater. We used another local repeater last year and despite pre-event testing, Race Day medical communications were terrible in 2024. The huge challenge this year was that the ARES repeater technician was hospitalized and the planned portable repeater tutorial last winter did not occur. Several ARES members and supporters put in lots of work the 10 days preceeding Race Day to make UHF comms in the Care Centre come out on the Medical VHF Repeater. Special thanks to Bob VE4ZN, Richard VE4ESX and Sunday VE4SBS.

For 2025, there were three Wet Bulb Globe Thermometers (WBGT) deployed right on the course on tripods and used:

- adjacent to the Mile 25 Water Station
- beside the Mile 6 Water Station on Lyndale Drive
- Assiniboine Park (near the *Leaf*).

Wet Bulb operators transmitted their reading according to a pre-arranged schedule on the Medical Net and the Doctor’s Shadow operator passed the WBGT temperatures to a Marathon Physician to decide on course condition or “color”. Once decided, the Doctor’s Shadow operator advised Net Control on course color and course showers “on/off” and that was transmitted across both nets. The Wet Bulb operators’ primary communication was on Amateur Radio, secondary was trunked radio as used by non-Amateurs at the Marathon and tertiary was personal cell phone. Had UHF Comms in Care Centre to Medical Repeater not worked out this year, one contingency might have had Wet Bulb operators providing Doctor’s Shadow with their data directly on trunked radio. Trunked HTs should have been turned in to Course Closing vehicle – not all were (but were all accounted for by late Race Day).

Automatic Packet Reporting System (APRS) was utilized on three course vehicles in 2025 for automatic vehicle location:

- Lead Vehicle Full Course
- Sweep 5
- Course Closing Vehicle.

For a while this spring, it looked like there would not be any APRS in 2025 – the APRS lead was not available. A replacement APRS lead was identified about two weeks prior to Race Day so arrangements were made quickly. We definitely need to create an APRS strategy for 2026 this fall/winter, and that could ultimately free up Amateurs for other race components.

Manitoba Marathon (MM) staff arranges for a number of rental vehicles. Ideally this would be a FRI pick-up but since COVID-19 van rental has been problematic and MM staff do the best they can. Pick-up 1 day before Race Day adds to stress in ensuring vehicle is ready to go. On-course vehicles operated by Amateurs include:

1. Course Closing Vehicle
2. Sweep 5
3. Sweep 7
4. Therapy 5
5. Therapy 6
6. Medical Supply 8.

No fuel card was provided for Course Closing vehicle since it was a longer-term MM rental and would be left fully fueled at MM office – it was left at MM office but not fully fueled. Driver had to meet up with MM Executive Director to get gas card. Since more and more rental vehicles do not have ferrous bodies, this year MM issued “cling” type MM vehicle signs that were ‘peel & stick’ and fairly easy to remove cleanly. Consideration for future years would be two per vehicle (i.e. front & back).



2025 “Cling”

Photo Credit J. Dovyak VE4MBQ

2025 ARES Debrief

The 17 JUN Winnipeg ARES General Meeting was dedicated to an in-person debrief. Sixteen (16) participants were in attendance.

[Some e-mails had been received by the EC that pertained to the conduct of the Marathon rather the Amateur Radio portion – with the commenters' permission those were forwarded to MM leadership.]

The debrief was moderated by the Winnipeg ARES Emergency Coordinator and followed the following agenda:

- What We Already Identified
- Race Operations Net
- Medical Net

What we already identified:

Medical Ice and Coolers were not ready for pick-up Race Day but we knew that they wouldn't be ready going in, Amateur Radio volunteers had to fill the coolers for delivery.

- It may be advisable to mark the coolers with a permanent marker as to intended location, e.g. Mile 2 or Half Marathon
- Coolers and medical ice were delivered to all Water Stations, even those with no assigned medical personnel – this should be correlated going forward.

Volunteer recruitment difficult and insufficient number of volunteers, there were no back-ups **at all**

- Due to a new volunteer withdrawing Race Day, the operator at one Water Station was by herself with no back-up
 - Radio Operator for Therapy 5 was re-assigned to Sweep 7
 - No radio operator for Therapy 5 -> Therapy 5 driver & radio operator same person.
- An experienced Race Operations Net Controller has suggested that there is not much history of significant communications from Relay Exchange Zones and that in the future consideration should be given to leaving Relay Exchange Zones and early Water Stations not staffed in favor of Water Stations being staffed
 - That voice of experience does not seem to be shared by Marathon staff, further discussions are required
- If use of APRS is expanded, we may free up some additional volunteer resources Race Day.

In 2024 there was “de-sense” with both nets on VHF. In 2025, it was planned that Race Operations Net Control would run on UHF – that worked great until a Comm Centre radio failed and the only replacement radio on site was VHF – in future years bring a dual-band spare (e.g. Mobile Kit 10).

No bottled water was provided for course vehicles for exited and/or injured runners, that might have been due to an unforeseen contingency experienced by Marathon staff

- One flat of bottled water per on-course vehicle should be available at the stadium Race Day.

A number of Race Operations operators participated in THU evening Test Net (number of participants was not documented for 2025) – previously many of the participants found that they had to alter location slightly for good communications path, most of the participants were newer Amateurs. *Cubeits* at each Water Station site provided a metal structure that magnetic antennas “mag-mounts” could be utilized. “Rubber duck” antennas on hand-held radios are inadequate at some locations, a roll-up J-Pole seminar was run twice in 2024 but was not feasible in 2025. Six “loaner” J-Poles (owned by Wpg ARES) were on the course in Supply 8 – none were deployed

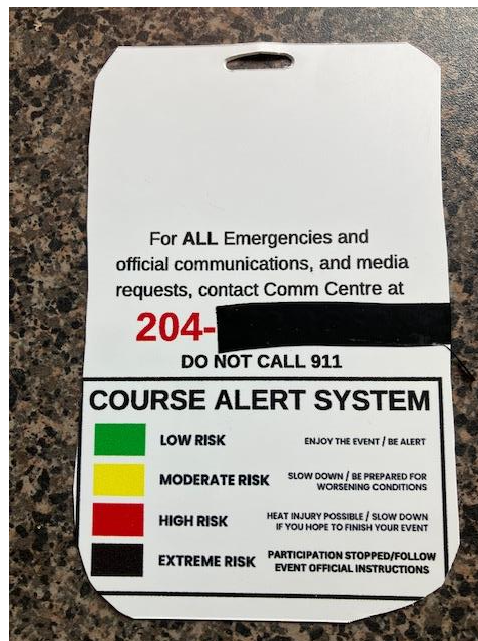
- Support posts purchased by Manitoba Marathon in 2024 could not be located
- Consider additional J-Pole building seminars.

Course Conditions & Amateur Radio Tags

The Amateur Radio Marathon tags were not ready at supply pick-up date, a marathon staff member left the briefing to pick them up. It was a surprise to many that the back of the new tag was blank instead of having course conditions listed.



2025 Amateur Radio Tag
Photo Credit J. Dovyak VE4MBQ



Course Conditions Tag
Photo Credit J. Dovyak VE4MBQ

In-Person Debrief and Some e-mails

Recruiting/Briefing

- Get URL for volunteer registration into body of e-mails announcing newsletter edition (rather than just in a newsletter article)
- Stress that stock “rubber duck” HT antenna is likely inadequate at many locations
- Dedicate additional time for discussion with new Amateurs at briefing (there is already a separate session for new Amateurs on the Race Operations Net)
- Have course instructors encourage communications about potential equipment loans in advance.
- Emphasizing expectation to familiarize oneself with briefing material if missing briefing

Medical Net

- For participants in distress, need civic address if in a residential area
- Assiniboine Park Wet Bulb location might be a bad spot for communications
 - Investigate further.

Race Operations Net

- Despite briefing this and being documented in the MM Amateur Radio Guide, it seems that at least one Race Operations Net participant used Voice Operated Exchange (VOX) Race Day!
 - Using VOX at a noisy event may cause one’s radio to go into transmit due to ambient noise
- Poll volunteers for contribution of complete APRS stations [we have past negative experiences with equipment from various lenders being cobbled together to make 1 station]
- Mile 2 may be a “bad” spot for communications
 - Investigate further
- Virtually every participant passes thru Relay 1 station – lots of people there so might be best to staff it even if other Relay Exchange Zones go uncovered
- Seemed to be some stations sharing a radio – remind Amateurs at briefing that each Amateur needs an HT Race Day
- A Winnipeg ARES member agreed to be the custodian of “legacy” Winnipeg ARES HTs that may be replaced by newer HTs
- Not all medical assistance requests from Mile Stations are concise – format is on each Amateur Radio operator’s Marathon tag

2026 Manitoba Marathon Things to Tweak

- E-mailing a briefing reminder about a week before the briefing seems to have

eliminated most of the "no-shows" previously. Maintain the practice of sending out a reminder and explicitly telling registrant who withdraw to notify ARES leadership directly. In 2025 the reminder didn't happen

- Consider changing Amateur Radio briefing back to Tuesday evening*
- Consider "expectations" memo for volunteers who miss the Amateur Radio briefing
- Insufficient number of Amateur Radio volunteers
 - Insufficient number of back-up or reserve operators, goal is to have at least two back-up operators per course sector (two sectors now) and two back-up operators for Care Centre/Comm Centre
 - Going-forward will ask MM to prioritize locations to be staffed again*
 - Consider asking a prominent Amateur Radio organization to list Marathon Volunteer Registration URL in the body of e-mail announcing a newsletter edition (rather than just being mentioned in a newsletter report)
- Explicitly remind Wet Bulb operators to pass their trunked radios to Course Closing vehicle -when it goes by or ARES Coordinator Race Day
- Expand APRS to Sweep 5 & Sweep 7 vehicles
 - Assemble equipment list with pricing
 - Consider seeking MM purchase support
- Consider providing gas card to drivers of all MM rental vehicles*
- Consider providing two (2) cling signs for each course vehicle (i.e. front & back)*
- Consider providing Amateur Radio volunteers with Amateur Radio tag **and** a Course Conditions tag (could be printed duplex)*
- Continue to encourage Test Net participation for operators assigned to Race Operations Net from operating location.
- Consider facilitating a subsequent roll-up J-Pole making seminar or seminars fall or winter considering the popularity of this seminar previously and potential Race Day utility
 - Remind participants at briefing that "rubber duck" antenna might be inadequate

- Bottled water should be provided for participants picked up by course vehicles*
- Remind participants once again to disable VOX Race Day!
- Document Comm Centre Set-Up
 - Decide if additional low-loss feedline should be obtained
- Remind volunteers about concisely transmitting medical assistance requests (Amateur Radio Marathon booklet **and** Amateur Radio tag)
- Investigate
 - Mile 2 transmitting location
 - Assiniboine Park Wet Bulb transmitting location/manner
- Mini-education at 2026 briefing with regard to people sending numeric values – saying “thirty” may be difficult for Net Control to grasp in a noisy Comm Centre, saying “three zero”
 - There was at least one instance of a medical communication that was incorrect, an operator transmitted incorrect oxygen saturation number (an almost impossible value that Medical NCS picked up on instantly)
 - Unknown if it was operator error or if the Paramedic misspoke.

*For attention by MM staff.

**ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING
MANITOBA MARATHON AMATEUR RADIO OPERATIONS**

loaned equipment or facilities, assisted with volunteer
recruitment

Winnipeg ARES
Radio Amateurs of Manitoba
Pathfinders Amateur Radio Club
South-Central ARES

Special Thanks

Special thanks to Dave VE4DJS for maintaining our volunteer database and those who helped out at the 11 JUN briefing with materials distribution:

Richard VE4ESX
Susan VE4SYM
Mark VE4MWH
Steven VE4FTS.

Very Special Thanks

VE4TWO UHF wouldn't have been up and running Race Day without the work of:

Richard VE4ESX
Bob VE4ZN
Sunday VE4SBS.

2025
Manitoba Marathon ARES Volunteers

Net	Assignment	Secondary Assignment	Call Sign	First Name	Last Name
Race Operations	Mile 2		VA4LMK	Larry	Konowalchuk
Race Operations	Mile 2		VE4JSH	John	Hancharyk
Race Operations	Mile 4		VE4DAE	Ernelyn	Hingada
Race Operations	Mile 4		vacant		
Race Operations	Mile 6		VE4SNI	James	Snidal
Race Operations	Mile 6		VE4ADB	Aaron	Brisnik
Race Operations	Mile 8		VA4CAT	Catherine	Suarez
Race Operations	Mile 8		VA4DON	Don	Suarez
Race Operations	Mile 10		VE4DBV	Drago	Lambeta
Race Operations	Mile 10		VE4MIA	Brigitte	Hamilton
Race Operations	Mile 12/Mile 18		VE4JDH	Hamish	Donaldson
Race Operations	Mile 12/Mile 18		VE4LBN	Laura	Bennett
Race Operations	Mile 14		VE4NOL	Nolan	Harriott
Race Operations	Mile 14		VE4EVN	Evan	Harriott
Race Operations	Mile 16		VE4MHZ	Paula	Ehn
Race Operations	Mile 16		VE4GLS	Gord	Snarr
Race Operations	Mile 18		VE4JDH	Hamish	Donaldson
Race Operations	Mile 18		VE4LBN	Laura	Bennett
Race Operations	Mile 19		VE4DBZ	David	Ziegler
Race Operations	Mile 19		VE4VLP	Connor	Genyk
Race Operations	Mile 20		VE4JUB	Jean	Jubinville
Race Operations	Mile 20		VE4SIC	Quintin	Gelinas
Race Operations	Mile 21		VE4AQU	Richard	Banack
Race Operations	Mile 21		VA4YYZ	Caiden	Willey
Race Operations	Mile 22		VE4FTS	Steve	Harrison
Race Operations	Mile 22		VA3KCP	Ian	Clarke
Race Operations	Mile 24		VE4HK	Dick	Maguire
Race Operations	Mile 24		VE4MMG	Mariska	Maguire
Race Operations	Mile 24.5		VE4NQ	Wayne	Pettapiece
Race Operations	Mile 24.5		VE4AYM	Andrew	Mogk
Race Operations	Mile 25		VA4CQD	Marc	Collette
Race Operations	Mile 25		VA4PMA	Patrick	Martens
Race Operations	Half Marathon		VE4RBB	Robert	Kozakewich
Race Operations	Half Marathon		VE4ZWR	Proggy	Moulik
Race Operations	Relay 1		VA4DUG	Doug	Cross
Race Operations	Relay 1		VA4WAL	Walter	Motuz

Race Operations	Relay 2		VE4BRE	Brendan	Campbell
Race Operations	Relay 2		VA4JLB	Jordan	Bass
Race Operations	Relay 3		VA4MAJ	Mark	Jenkins
Race Operations	Relay 3		VE4JAX	Jarold	Fabregas
Race Operations	Relay 4		VE4MMB	Janice	Behrens
Race Operations	Relay 4		VA4SPT	Stephane	Teffaine
Race Operations	NCS		VE4HAY	Derek	Hay
Race Operations	NCS		VE4HAZ	Harm	Hazeu
Race Operations	Lead Vehicle Full		VE4GZ	Jim	Griffiths
Race Operations	Lead Vehicle Half		VE4GIS	Kurt	Sargent
Race Operations	Closing Vehicle Driver		VE4JFK	Jeff	Kazuk
Race OperationsClosing Vehicle	Closing Vehicle student		n/a	Kristin	Lepage
Race Operations	Sweep 5 Radio Operator		VE4CLK	Ian	Clark
Race Operations	Sweep 5 DRIVER		VE4QV	John	Pura
Race Operations	Sweep 7 Radio Op		VE4GWB	Garth	Blumm
Race Operations	Sweep 7 Driver		VE4GCV	Jerry	Volkers
Race Operations	Start Line	Meghan's Shadow	VA4OHM	Vikash	Sinha
Race Operations	APRS		VE4TQ	Scott	Mayo
Medical	Medical NCS		VA4PNO	Jack	Peters
Medical	Medical NCS		VE4DWG	Don	Gerrard
Medical	Wet Bulb -University Cr		VE4ZN	Bob	Myatt
Medical	Wet Bulb - University Cr		KD0ZXI	Steve	Buchy
Medical	Wet Bulb -Lyndale Drive		VE4ABT	Bruce	Taylor
Medical	Wet Bulb-Lyndale Drive		VE4RDO	Andy	Fenstad
Medical	Wet Bulb - Assiniboine		VE4GS	Glenn	Siefert
Medical	Wet Bulb- Assiniboine		VE4MWH	Mark	Havens
Medical	Intake/Triage 2		VE4LYN	Linda	Satiada
Medical	Intake/Triage Area		VE4SBS	Sunday	Satiada
Medical	Meghan's Shadow		sick		
Medical	Dr's Shadow		VE4ESX	Richard	Sheridan
Medical	Therapy 5 - driver	ARES Coordinator	VE4MBQ	Jeff	Dovyak
Medical	Therapy 5 - radio		vacant		
Medical	Therapy 5 Therapist		n/a	Matt	Short

	Therapy 6 - driver		VE4MAB	Mark	Blumm
Medical	Therapy 6 - radio		VE4VT	Ed	Richardson
Medical	Therapy 6 Therapist		n/a	Ty	Hassel
Medical	Supply 8 - radio		VE4SYM	Susan	Collings
Medical	Supply 8 - Driver		VE4TRO	Fred	Collings
Medical	Supply 8 EMR		n/a	Loic	Bazin
Spare 111	East of the Red		vacant		
Spare 22	South of the Assiniboine		vacant		
Spare1	South of the Assiniboine		vacant		
Spare 33	vacant				
Spare 333	vacant				
Spare 2	2nd East of Red	vacant			
Database			VE4DJS	Dave	Stimpson
Post Event			n/a	Rhonda	Dovyak
J-Pole Seminar	not done this year				

18 JUN 2025
Final