

Run event concept

The island’s history spans Spanish rule for more than 300 years beginning in the 16th century, followed by German administration, and subsequently 30 years of Japanese governance after World War I. During the Japanese era, nearly 30,000 Japanese citizens resided here, and Saipan flourished as a hub for sugarcane cultivation—the largest in Asia at the time.

A 50-mile (approximately 80.5 km) narrow-gauge sugarcane railway once encircled the island, transporting sugarcane and goods. Though much was lost during World War II, portions of the route and remnants remain today, serving as a valuable cultural and historical legacy.

The year 2026 marks the 150th anniversary of Haruji Matsue, known as the “Sugar King,” who laid the foundation for modern industry in the Marianas. To commemorate this milestone, the Sugarcane Railroad Journey Run will be held, offering participants an opportunity to experience Saipan’s rich history, nature, and culture along the remnants of the sugarcane railway.

Run Information Guide

When: Saturday, January 17, 2026
Where: American Memorial Park, Micro Beach, Garapan
Runs: Course 81 km journey run

The course begins at American Memorial Park on the west coast of Saipan. Participants will ascend Mt. Tapochao (473m), explore the scenic northern coastline and World War II heritage sites, and return once to the start/finish area. The route then continues around the southern part of the island, finishing back at American Memorial Park.

Start time: 4:30 – Start Ceremony at American Memorial Park
5:00 – Race Start
21:00 – Course Closure (finish line closes)

All participants must be at the start line at least one hour prior to their race start

Long Course: \$80

Islands Relay (Local Participants Only): \$80 as a team entry

- Runner exchanges permitted at the four main aid stations, with up to six members per team. Teams of 2-6 participants may be formed. Vehicles are required to transport runners between stations (except for 2-person teams exchanging only at AMP)

Final Registration Deadline:

Local entry: December 19, 2025

Overseas entry (Japan): December 5, 2025 (via Sports Entry site in Japan)

Eligibility: Must have completed a Marathon (42.195 or longer) since October 2022.

(Excluding Island relay runners)

Finishers Certificate

- Digital certificate available online after verification

Participation Awards

- Official race t-shirt, Local specialty product

Participants Guidelines:

- There will be no course marshals. Runners must navigate using the official course map (print version and google maps)
- Runners must pass all checkpoints in order. Missing a checkpoint will result in disqualification
- Retired runners must register their withdrawal via the official race form and return to the finish line independently. If this is not possible, contact race headquarters.
- Use sidewalks wherever available, prioritizing pedestrian safety.
- Carry sufficient nutrition and hydration for your needs.
- Mandatory night gear: 2 headlamps, spare batteries/power pack, rear reflectors, and a flashing light. These must be worn after sunset. Insufficient equipment or visibility may result in disqualification.
- Keep your mobile phone switched on, as organizers may need to contact you.
- Course or schedule changes may occur due to weather or unforeseen conditions. Follow all organizer instructions.
- For Island relay only (Local participants)
For safety reasons, vehicles are not permitted to accompany runners on the course.
All vehicle arrangements and driving responsibilities lie with participants.

Additional Information:

- Pre-Event reception (January 16, 2025): included in entry. Light food, drinks, and performance at AMP.
- Post-Event Party (January 18, 2025): Optional, \$40 participation fee. Dinner, drinks, music, and local cultural performances. (Venue is to be announced later)
- Optional Tours: Sightseeing programs after the event will be available for overseas participants.

Saipan Sugar Cane Lail Road 81km Aid Station & Checkpoint Schedule

CP	AS/WS	Location	distance (km)	interval (km)	AS operating hours
START		Race Headquarters (AMP)			
CP1		Mt. Tapochao Summit	6.9	6.9	
CP2	AS1	Capitol Hill Ground	10.6	3.7	5:30~7:30
	WS2	In front of Kingfisher Golf Course	15.5	4.9	6:00~8:30
CP3	WS3	Kalabera Cape	19.7	4.2	6:30~9:20
CP4		Bird Island Lookout	21.7	2	
CP5		The Grotto	24.2	2.5	
CP6		Sugarcane Railroad Trail	25.9	1.7	
CP7		Last Command Post	28.9	3	
CP8	AS4	Banzai Cliff Memorial	30.4	1.5	7:20~11:30
	WS5	In front of Aqua Resort Club	37.8	7.4	8:30~12:45
CP9	AS6	Race Headquarters (AMP)	44.7	6.9	9:05~14:15
CP10		Sugar King Park (Haruji Matsue Statue)	47.1	2.4	
CP11		CNMI Museum	47.3	0.2	
	WS7	In front of Saipan World Resort Hotel	53.0	5.7	10:40~15:50
CP12		Sugar dock	54.0	1	
CP13		Coral Ocean Resort (Tenian lookout)	59.2	5.2	
CP14	AS8	Banker Field	62.9	3.7	11:30~17:55
CP15		Sugarcane Railroad Trail (Cut-through)	69.7	6.8	
CP16	AS9	Capitol Hill Ground	75.2	5.5	12:50~20:20
GOAL		Race Headquarters (AMP)	81.4	5.8	

Running course map

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1uQbXqiDmRBmLLR86xHWM39NZgUEmi x8&ll=15.199553046733516%2C145.75928994454443&z=12>