

Borneo Ultra Trail News - December 2024

We wish all runners happy holidays and a **Happy New Year**. Borneo Ultra Trails look forward to welcoming you back on the trails in 2025. In this edition of the newsletter, we offer a brief overview and some updates for the events currently scheduled for 2025. Sign up now as an added incentive to fulfil that New Year resolution of a healthier lifestyle that I think many of us wish we could but struggle to fulfil ☺.

Borneo Ultra Trail Marathon (BUTM)

Venue: Kiulu Valley – known for more than 300 hanging bridges
Dates: 22nd & 23rd February 2025
Categories: 9 km, 30 km, 50 km and 100 km categories.
Info & Registration: <https://borneoultra.com/butm/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Borneo-Ultra-Trail-Marathon-BUTM-915375448554890/>
Video: [BUTM - Borneo Ultra Trail Marathon - YouTube](#)



Don't Miss Out: REGISTER BEFORE 2nd JANUARY 2025

The Borneo Ultra Trail Marathon (BUTM) has been set within the Kiulu Valley – popularly known as the Adventure Centre of Sabah – for 9 years. It is held during what is statistically the driest period of the year and is mostly known as a “hot” race, but the weather patterns are now less predictable, and rain can add to the challenge of the event. You may find pictures from previous events at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/148519785@N03/albums/>

The courses traverse the river valleys and surrounding ridges of the Kiulu valley, passing through a mix of jungle and farmland on trails and tracks with aid stations located in quaint remote villages. The Start & Finish is located centrally at the Kiulu River Side with easy access to optional bus transfers from Kota Kinabalu to Kiulu and back.

We have been working hard on **course updates** and finally have some news on this – **read more below**.

Every accomplishment starts
with the decision to try.
**YOUR ONLY LIMIT
IS YOU!**

SCOTT
BORNEO
ULTRA-TRAIL® MARATHON
22-23 February 2025
organised by BORNEO ULTRA TRAILS

REGISTER NOW
www.borneoultra.com/butm/

The BUTM courses include a combination of ridges with good views over the surrounding jungle and river valleys and being immersed within the jungle and cultural landscape on small trails.

BUTM Course Updates



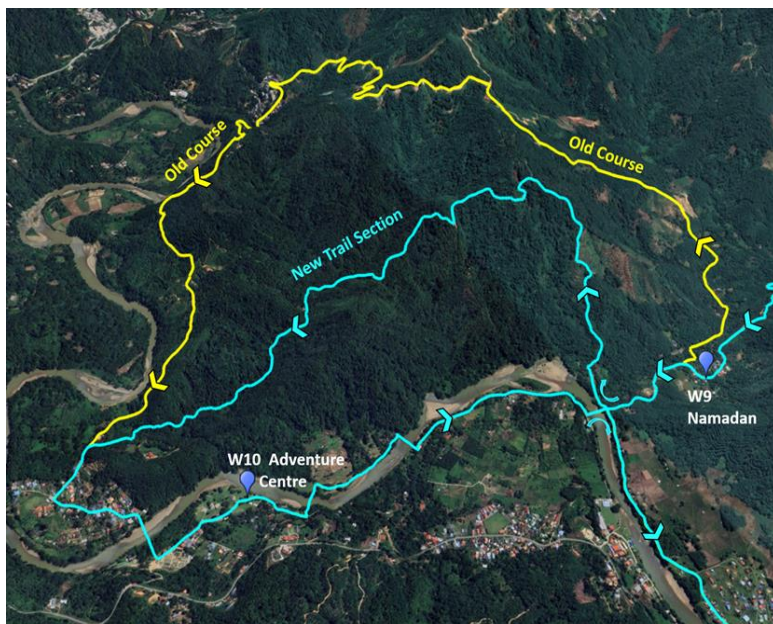
Spectacular view over the BUTM racecourse area from one of the tested trail options between W2 and W3.

Over the past months we have worked hard on testing different trail options for potential course updates for BUTM 2025. Overall, the previous courses have worked well, but we would like to shake things up a bit to give repeat runners some new trail experience and reduce sealed roads. We have found some fantastic trails! Some of these are a little remote/inaccessible and steep from a safety perspective and require additional work before being included in the race, but we have several updates that we will include for the different courses for 2025.

100 km:

The main change for the 100 km trail is a brand-new trail between W 9 and W10. The old route via Kiwoi had become increasingly sealed, and this has now been replaced by a new full trail section. Compared to the previous exposed route on sealed road, the new trail is mostly shaded and follows and crosses small streams with refreshing water to cool down on a hot day. This will be a relief to the back of the pack of the 100 km course in particular who would typically hit the steep exposed part of the previous course in the midday sun – leading to heat exhaustion and DNF for some in past years.

Streams are easily crossed in dry conditions, and we have a Plan B for safety in case of heavy rain and flooding. We also have new trail sections at the start and midway. The total distance of the “100 km” is slightly reduced to ~104 and with slightly less elevation gain, but with the extended trail section



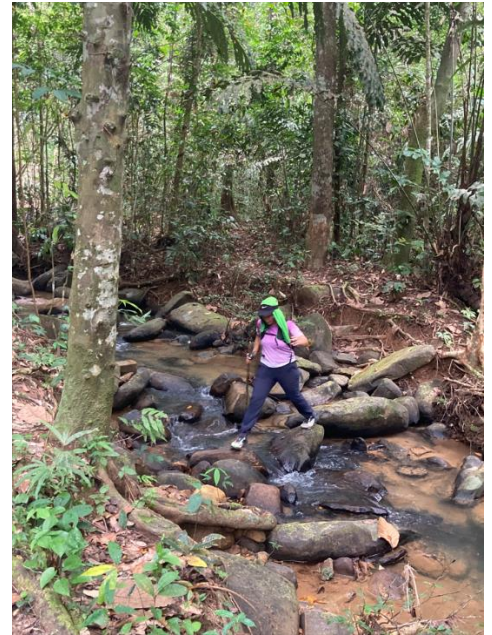
New trail section between W9 and W10 will be used for 30k, 50k and 100k

50 km:

After two years of following “the first loop” of the 100 km course, we are swapping to following the second loop of the 100 km course. This includes the brand-new trail section between W9 and W10 as well as the trail updates between W8 and W9 and at the start of the race. The total distance of the “50k” category will be close to 50k.



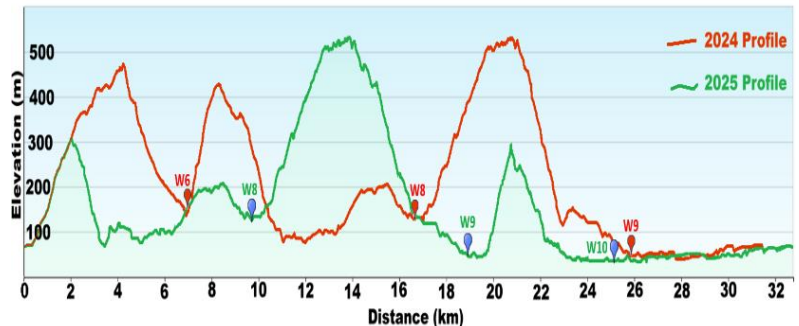
View over Kiulu Valley from new trail section between W9 and W10.



Stream crossing on new trail

30 km:

The “30 km” will see significant changes – see comparison of profiles in plot to the right. The new route excludes W6 and the infamous two large hills at the start of the previous route (see red profile in plot to the right). This is substituted for a smaller hill and more direct route to W8. The new course has been extended after W9 to include the new trail section and W10. The total distance is slightly longer at about 33 km, but with less elevation gain and is overall considered about the same in terms of physical requirements.



Revised 30k elevation profile for 2025 (green) compared to 2024 (red)



We are maintaining the 9 km course with a nice variation of landscape as an attractive option for families with kids and newcomers to trail running who would like to get a first taste of it. The 9 km starts Sunday morning and finishes together with the second half of the 100 km runners.

You may think that 9 km sounds too far for kids, but you may be surprised. We see many cases where quite young kids are pushing their parents – and remember there is a very generous cut-off time that will allow you to fully enjoy the journey at a leisurely pace if you are not competitive.

Cutoff Times

The difficulty of all courses is probably slightly reduced with the course changes compared to the previous routes, although the new trail is more technical than the old trail. We are always keen to give all participants a good chance to complete the course, and we therefore maintain the already generous cut-off times that we have for all courses.

Championships and Qualifying

Both the BUTM and the TMBT are part of the Asia Trail Master (ATM) Championship. The ATM circuit now operates with national teams for a “Winner Takes It All” final race – see <https://www.asiatrailmaster.com/>. The BUTM is part of the National League Championship under the International Trail Running Association (ITRA), a qualifier for the UTMB world series races and for the famed Western States Endurance Run for the 2026 season. The ITRA ratings for the courses remain and 5, 3 and 2 points for the 100km, 50 km and 30 km courses



2025 QUALIFYING RACE

T-Shirts & Merchandize

Our designer has produced the Shirt designs for BUTM for 2025 below



Event shirt for all registered participants



Finisher shirt for the 100 km category



50 km category finisher shirt



30 km category finisher shirt

Exchange T-shirt(s) for Donation.

We continue to offer the option of substituting the T-shirts for donation to the needy in the local community. If you want to use this option, please chose "No Thanks - Donate" option under the shirt sizing on the registration page. You will then not receive an event or finisher T-shirts but the corresponding cost of the shirts will be donated to needy in the local community.

Souvenir Shirts for Sale

For those who love the memorabilia, we have an additional set of "souvenir" T-shirts and a tubular head-gear up for order - please see designs below. For details of ordering, please refer to the "registration" page on the web site. Please note that orders need to be submitted by close of normal registrations on 2nd January. Shirts will be provided at the Race Pack collection



The Most Beautiful Thing (TMBT) Ultra Trail Marathon



Venue: Set around Mt. Kinabalu from the western flanks in Kota Belud till the eastern ridges at Mesilau

Dates: 30th and 31st August 2025

Categories (tentative): 7 km, 12 km, 30 km, 37 km Night run, 50 km and 100 km categories.

Info & Registration: <https://borneoultra.com/tmbt1/>
<https://www.facebook.com/Borneo-TMBT-Ultra-Trail-Marathon-197986800284621/>

The TMBT - Malaysia's oldest and "original" 100 km trail run remains one of the largest and most international of events in the trail running calendar in Malaysia. The challenges and scenic beauty of the TMBT trails are legendary, and to many this is a key race on the bucket list.

The 13th edition will be held on 30 & 31 August 2025. Registrations are planned to open in March. Whereas there may be course amendments, the race is expected to have 5 to 6 categories ranging from a "short" family run to the 110 km signature event. There will again be a night run which has gained popularity and sees the highest percentage of finishers – likely associated with cooler weather and a tendency to a more controlled pace in the dark.

2024 Race

The 2024 event was challenged by severe weather leading up to the race, forcing some course amendments due to flooded rivers and infrastructure damage. The heavy rains stopped less than ½ hour before the first start, and then remained good throughout the event with dramatic cloud cover over Mt. Kinabalu adding to the spectacular views.

For 2024, TMBT had the pleasure and honor to host the Asia Trail Master (ATM) Finals Championship Race. The ATM Championship Finals race, conducted over a shortened version of the classical 100 km course, was hotly contested with 82 top athletes representing 12 teams - touted to be the strongest lineup for the championship race till date. Full reports can be found on the ATM website and social media platforms.



Jeffrey Campbell representing Hong Kong taking the win in a tight battle to the finish



Jeffrey Campbell, Hisashi Kitamura of Japan and Arnie Macaneras of the Philippines making up the men's podium.



Priya Rai of Nepal, Vanja Cnops of Belgium representing Singapore and Rashila Tamang of Nepal making up the women's podium



A strong team Nepal took the national championship with pride.

In the “normal” TMBT race categories, some of the strong Sabahan runners who had not made it onto the Malaysian team for the ATM Championship showed their qualities with Oswald Maikol taking the honors by a margin of more than 2 hours in the men’s 100 km, and Daved Simpat taking an equally impressive win by more than an hour in the 50 km race. Laetitia Renaux came all the way from New Caledonia to win the women’s 100 km race.

Full results can be found at: <https://www.racematix.com/site/#results:grp/TMBT-2024> . More than 7000 race photos can be found at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/148519785@N03/albums/72177720320911149/> - thanks to our extremely dedicated photographers!

A few selected photos are shown below. We salute everyone who took part in our races in 2024 and look forward to welcoming you back in 2025 to experience the special trails around the UNESCO World Heritage site of Mt. Kinabalu and the “Adventure Valley” of Kiulu for the BUTM.



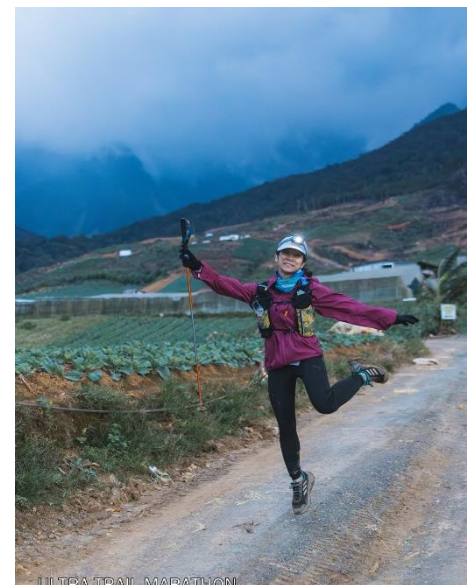
Technical terrain is part of the TMBT



Mt. Kinabalu as backdrop with lenticular clouds signifying strong winds



Leaving the river to start the climb of (in)famous Pineapple Ridge



Welcoming sunrise after a long night on the trails

