

Virtual IceBreaker Challenge

It is with great sadness and a heavy heart that we have made the difficult, but unavoidable, decision that the IceBreaker 5K cannot go forward as planned, at least not as an in-person race (more on that below). Just a few days ago we had every reason to believe that the event would go forward with a 250-person cap on registrations and appropriate precautions in place. However, as you all know, the situation with the global COVID-19 pandemic has been rapidly evolving, and we are in a far different place today than we were even a few days ago. With the CDC's revised recommendation that public gatherings be limited to no more than 10 people, it would be irresponsible to all of you, to our rowers, and to our community at large to continue with our plans to hold this event in person.

We will, however, still hold the event virtually. We want to encourage everyone to continue to get lots of exercise, stay fit, and get outdoors as much as possible during this health crisis. We all know the benefits of regular exercise for our immune system and our mental health. Here is how this virtual race will work:

1. Run a 5K any time between 12:00 noon on Friday, March 27 and 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, March 29. Your options are:
 - o Run the IceBreaker 5K race course! Ever the optimists, we continued with our plans to measure and mark the course this past weekend. The course map is [here](#). The start and finish, mile markers, and turn-around point are marked in orange spray paint and labeled "IBC", starting in the parking lot by the Albany Rowing Club boathouse and heading north on the rail trail. A rough map and photos of the start and finish area, mile markers and turn-around points may be found [here](#). So come on down when you can and run the course that we had all hoped to run together! OR,
 - o Run any 5K route of your choosing; OR,
 - o Run 5K on a treadmill.
2. Send your results to icebreaker@albanyrowingcenter.org
 - o If you have a GPS watch or a run tracking app on your smartphone, upload your data and send us a screenshot.
 - o If you run outside but don't have a run tracker, just track your time with a watch, stopwatch, or timer, and send a date-stamped photo of that (or just email us with your time. We will include it in the results as an unverified time. Unverified times will not qualify for age-group or overall winner medals).
 - o If you run on a treadmill that does not have the capability to upload data, just take a photo of your screen and send it to us.
3. In keeping with our unique theme of rower versus runners, we will issue a challenge to our Albany Rowing Center members (who are deeply saddened by the indefinite postponement of their spring season) to complete a 5K on a rowing machine (erg) during the same time frame. They will submit photos of their erg screens and we will have a runner versus rower comparison in the posted results.

Because we are a small non-profit and because many of our costs must be paid in advance, we are extremely limited in our ability to provide refunds. The loss of anticipated revenue from this event -- our second largest fundraiser each year -- combined with the loss of revenue from registrations for the spring rowing season, which has been postponed indefinitely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has had devastating financial consequences to our organization. Your options are as follows:

1. Make the most of the virtual race, have fun, and stay healthy! We will include your time in our results posted on-line, and mail medals to overall and age-group winners.
2. Defer your registration to next year's race (date to be confirmed, but the event is almost always held on the last Saturday in March).
3. Come row with us!! In exchange for your registration fee, join us for a free learn-to-row session once we are operational again, or apply your registration fee towards enrollment in our 4-week learn-to-row program. Or just come learn proper form and technique on a rowing machine. Many runners have come to appreciate the sport of rowing as a low-impact full-body exercise that increases both strength and endurance with minimal stress on joints. Rowing is fabulous cross-training for runners! We have learn-to-row, novice, recreational, and competitive programs for masters, in addition to our modified, novice, and varsity junior programs for students in grades 6-12.
4. Support a local non-profit during these difficult and challenging times. Let us know that you would like your registration fee to be considered a donation to Albany Rowing Center, and we will send you a tax receipt. We are a 501(c)(3) corporation and your donation is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Please complete the following [form](#) to let us know what option you choose:

Thank you for your understanding during this difficult time. Take good care, be well, and keep running! If you have additional questions or comments, feel free to send us an [e-mail](#).

Sincerely,
The ARC Board of Directors