

# D-Day 44 Challenge



**Blesma**  
THE LIMBLESS VETERANS



**COMBAT  
STRESS**  
FOR VETERANS' MENTAL HEALTH



## CHALLENGE HIGHLIGHTS!

- Takes place on D-Day
- Ultra marathon challenge event: 44 mile run or 22 mile walk
- Run/walk through stunning historic countryside
- Visit D-Day monuments en-route
- Spectacular finish at Pegasus Bridge
- Run across the five beaches of Utah, Omaha, Gold, Sword and Juno

## FACT FILE!

- **Cycle Days:** 3 days total – 1 day active
- **Level:** Very Challenging
- **Accommodation:** Static Homes

# DETAILED ITINERARY

## Day 1: Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June

Participants make their own way to London to pick up the coach transfer down to Dover. Day crossing over to Calais. On arrival into Calais port we travel to our overnight accommodation to fuel up with a nutritious dinner. We then have the challenge briefing about the day ahead.

## Day 2: Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June – D-Day Challenge Day

**44 Mile Challenge:** Early morning wake-up as we board the coach at 05:30 to be at the start point for 06:00.

**22 Mile Challenge:** Morning coach transfer to start point to begin walking for 09:00.

We start the challenge from Pointe du Hoc, where Colonel Rudder led an elite group of 200 rangers up the chalk cliffs using ropes and ladders. After dispatching the German sentries at the top of the cliff, their mission was to find and destroy large battery guns; this action was crucial as these large guns were capable of firing shells several miles out to sea and would therefore have claimed many men's lives who would be arriving at Utah beach the following morning. After destroying the guns, but alerting a large German infantry force, Colonel Rudder and his men fought bravely with their backs to the sea and suffered large casualties, not only at the hands of the German infantry force but also due to friendly fire coming from naval ships at sea. Colonel Rudder and 30 of his men survived the mission.



From the Pointe du Hoc, we head east with the sea on our left beating up against the rocks below. Immediately the striking countryside takes hold as you run through crop fields, passing evidence of the German defensive line in the form of concrete bunkers and the occasional burnt out WWII vehicle.



As we head down towards Arromanches 22 mile participants then begin their challenge and join the 44 mile runners. As we head down to the small Norman village there is an incredible descent as we look out to sea. You will get fantastic views of the emotive scene of what is left of the Mulberry harbours. These were huge sections of floating concrete roads dragged across from Britain and fastened together at Arromanches forming a temporary harbour for ships to unload their cargo in support of the soldiers who had recently landed on the beaches. Over 19 million tonnes of supplies were off-loaded at the Mulberry Harbour of Arromanches.

The route then continues to Ouistreham where the course heads south along the Orne canal. Pegasus Bridge looms up ahead, its structure an icon of the first few hours of the D-Day invasion. It was here where Horsa gliders, part of the three airborne divisions deployed during the night of June 5th, landed 50 metres away from the canal bridge. The gliders broke up on impact as they hit the field and soldiers scrambled out through the broken sides. Led by Lieutenant Brotheridge, the small platoon of commandos (the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire light infantry) charged across the bridge. Their mission was to take it intact in order to aid the main landing force which would be arriving in the morning at Sword Beach. But by the time Brotheridge's platoon reached Pegasus Bridge, the German guards had got themselves organised enough to open fire. Brotheridge was the first casualty of D-Day after being mortally wounded from a shot through the neck. The bridge was quickly over-run with reinforcements in the form of charging Willis Jeeps fitted with Browning machine guns.



It is here at Pegasus Bridge that the epic D-Day 44 Challenge concludes. On arrival at the finish line you will be greeted with a celebratory drink and some well earned food. Our overnight accommodation is a short journey from the finish line.



### **Day 3: Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June**

Mid-morning departure back to London via Calais.

***Please note this is a complex itinerary which is subject to change  
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