

# La Grand Raid - Diagonale des Fous - La Reunion



2 years ago the seed was planted to run La Grand Raid. After running the 63K "La Mascareignes" (which actually was my first serious trailrun ever) I knew I had to come back some day to run the big madmen's race.

Last August I reviewed the past 2 years and realized I'd done enough to go for it; the CCC, Limburgs zwaarste, festa trail, the Ultra Trail di Corsica, La Courchevel and many other nice trails.

The deadline for registration however was already closed for some time so I sent a special request email to the attention of mr. Robert Chicaud, the President of The Diagonale des Fous, the next day the positive answer arrived on my inbox.

Still in serious doubt if I could do this.. it took me two weeks to find the courage to register.

I decided to do some preparation weekends in the alps, very good exercises where I catted up with trailbuddy Sean Clifford and trailfriends I met in Chile at El Cruce.

A week before D-day I traveled 11 hours to la Reunion from Paris Orly, as always on stand-by basis so very challenging to get on the flight..

Getting there offered a warm welcome with local food and welcome by me Chicaud, the chap even gave me a ride to the gare routieres. I have done all traveling on the island by bus, very well system and extremely cheap.

Then the news arrived that the race was extended because of earth glitches, 9km added incl 1000 hm; "Le plus longue parcours de l'histoire"

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# Le Journal

de l'île de la Réunion

Bateau de la SNSM

Polémique  
autour d'un  
nauffrage

P. 6

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First I stayed for 2 days st Paul to visit Maido and Roche plate; great hike, take the bus at 06:00 !

Then moved on to St Pierre and from there did a 2 day hike to Piton the Neiges incl overnight stay in the Refuge; 2 hrs busdrive to Cilaos at €1,30

Sunrise ! Very technical paths





Then... 2 days of absolute rest and chill, meeting with Sean and Anne for beer and dinner and excited pre-talks



Finally race day came, did a morning swim, took loads to eat and even more sleep, all day long; at six the last dinner

People on the island are so enthusiastic about the Grand Raid, it raideurs, kind of "Elfstedenkoorts" so I got a ride to start in 10 seconds; amazing how many people came to the start to cheer and taste the atmosphere.



Take off at 22:30, warm crowded, first roads to carry 2.500 coureurs, going into sugarcane fields and very, very dusty tracks

then bushbush jungle with a lot of delay caused by trafficjams

After getting in running flow the night hours quickly passing by, the morning arrived with rain, wind and cold temperatures

Now it got really muddy slippery, finally after 40K the refreshment station on top of the mountain came, many runners were totally cold and uncomfortable, I took dry stuff on, ate soup and poulet and continued (many others dropping out already)



Stomach and durchfall made the first big descent quite uncomfortable, I decided to continue moving, the mud bath was to good to get spoiled by this :)

Night progresses, the atmosphere was very humid. A lot of runners are taking some sleep alongside the track, I decide to take a 20 mins nap, set my alarm and am off to sleep before my head hits the soil. I wake up in pooring rain and continue the journey.

Every now and then I find myself running amidst small groups of locals, they are endlessly Chatting these guys, hard to understand because of dialect

I arrive in Cilaos, it is hot and I am happy to get my bag with dry and clean clothes! I am doing very well on my shoes so I decide not to change. I have a good meal and continue to the long uphill climb in to Piton de Neiges.

The whole day passed quickly and the evening hour hits the island when I arrive at Hellbourg just before darkness, some food and prep for second night, new batteries.



That night i run into tree branch, full speed, this HURTS and seems very serious...

Think this can be the end... Hand And face instantly full of blood; my first thought... I must finish! Why did this happen...; 100% focus and visibility on the path, the tree branch simply was not seen. I decide to let it blood and have it looked after next refreshment station. There's nobody near, suddenly I realize how lucky I am the branch didn't end up in my eye....

10K later the wound gets checked by volunteers, they put some bandage and strips on me and instruct me to see Le docteur 30 km ahead at Maido; most likely the wound needs stiches.



I arrive at Roche Plat at sunrise, take all refills and decide to take my second 20 min nap, knowing Maido is coming...

Up to Maido! just in time to avoid killing heat. i notice how locals go up more easily, chatting.. all the time, worse than women :)

At Maido I take refills and food and get to see the docteur, we decide for stitches, also ask to have my feet checked, all taken care of when I sleep another 10 minutes.

During the very long downhill from Maido I get a phonecall from Jérôme and Maria :) The ones who took me to Reunion in 2012; they have been following me online all the time and are very excited I am progressing very well and wish me all the luck, really nice! I realize now i should be able to get to the finish but... know what is about to come...

I am so happy to not cross the small river but take 4 minutes IN it to cool down :)



I arrive at the next refreshment station with an empty camelbag and am soooo thirsty; it is f.....g hot, am still ok and it looks like my prayers for some clouds are fulfilled.

At Halte La I take loads of delicious food, take a couple of items from my second bag and have my toes treated while having a 5 minutes nap

Possession! This part of the race is carved in my memory from 2012; unbearable heat, no wind and body temp going fully in red. Some clouds prevent this from happening again, also the time I get there is a bit later in the afternoon and that helps as well.

The stone path, endless and heavy climbs, legs and feet going crazy on this path, sun going down so it is bearable

Ghhtg, more Stones and move to Colorado, it gets dark for the 3rd time !

I go like a kangaroo over the beautiful sandhills and finally make the very technical descent into Stade la redoute, in 2012 a very painful and time consuming exercise, this time I run downhill like a mountain goat, I can hear and smell the finish line, yach !

Amazing how good the legs are and the souplesse I can apply till the very end

The relief entering the stadium La Redoute is unheard, sooo happy to have this completed!



**Some thoughts:**

Approach this a journey, not a race

Take it easy and enjoy the beauty of the island and the company of fellow raideurs

Belief in my strength and endurance, I can do this

Pain (there is pain!) is temp, the glory will be forever

Never be disappointed about the km done/togo

Allow yourself to have some weak moments, your still human, not robotic

Let the engine run smoothly; don't get overheated, get constantly fueled drink, drink and eat!

Spare energy for the second part

Follow your own pace, it's not a race with others, the ones you take-over or those who pass you

On this island a Grand Raid raideur has status "Hero"

People constantly congratulate, stop you to hear your story

This island, it's tracks and the constantly changing circumstances are not comparable to any other trail

Many raideurs do the race multiple times, so.....

## COUREUR : DOSSARD N°1677

## JANSZ Marc

Diagonale des Fous, Individuel  
Catégorie: VETERANS 2 HOMMES

Point de passage	Heure de passage	Temps de course	Cumul Km	Alt.	Scratch	V2H
St Pierre Ravine Blanche	23/10 22:30	0h00mn00s	0km	6m		
Domaine Vidot	24/10 00:34	2h04mn46s	14km	660m	1426ème	252ème
Forêt Mont Vert les hauts	24/10 03:22	4h52mn03s	24km	1565m	1293ème	231ème
Piton Sec	24/10 05:25	6h55mn11s	35km	1850m	1107ème	196ème
Piton Textor	24/10 06:34	8h04mn36s	40km	2165m	1036ème	178ème
Mare à Boue	24/10 08:01	9h31mn25s	50km	1594m	891ème	150ème
Mare à Joseph	24/10 11:36	13h06mn26s	61km	1387m	799ème	134ème
Cilaos	24/10 12:22	13h52mn57s	65km	1210m	776ème	125ème
Le Bloc	24/10 13:45	15h15mn50s	69km	1387m	665ème	99ème
Gite du Piton des Neiges	24/10 16:07	17h37mn00s	74km	2478m	678ème	104ème
Bélouve	24/10 18:34	20h04mn57s	83km	1500m	656ème	96ème
Hellbourg	24/10 19:41	21h11mn08s	87km	1000m	644ème	96ème
Plaine des Merles	25/10 00:06	25h36mn35s	101km	1820m	540ème	75ème
María	25/10 02:12	27h42mn28s	106km	1580m	466ème	66ème
Trois Roches	25/10 03:40	29h10mn26s	109km	1220m	412ème	54ème
Roche Plate	25/10 05:15	30h45mn33s	114km	1110m	403ème	52ème
Maido tête dure	25/10 08:12	33h42mn04s	121km	2030m	430ème	59ème
Sans Souci	25/10 11:24	36h54mn23s	133km	350m	431ème	61ème
Possession Haite là	25/10 12:34	38h04mn57s	139km	230m	413ème	59ème
Chemin Ratineau	25/10 14:45	40h15mn47s	144km	430m	406ème	57ème
Possession école	25/10 16:28	41h58mn19s	152km	15m	404ème	59ème
Grande Chaloupe	25/10 18:31	44h01mn41s	159km	10m	401ème	57ème
Colorado	25/10 20:42	46h12mn55s	168km	683m	392ème	55ème
Redoute arrivée	25/10 21:50	47h20mn55s	172km	53m	378ème	53ème



## SON DÉNIVELÉ



