Epic Wilderness And Championship Glory At The ARWS Oceania Championship 2026

X-Marathon Adventure Race returns to the stunning Central Coast of New South Wales with a brand-new course, world-class terrain, and an ARWS title on the line.

Coastal Trekking at X-Marathon

BENTONVILLE, AR, UNITED STATES, September 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- CENTRAL COAST, New South Wales, Australia — With a few days until the start, excitement is reaching fever pitch for the return of the X-Marathon Adventure Race, which will proudly host the 2026 Adventure Racing World Series (ARWS) Oceania Championship from September 4-6, 2026.

Nestled just 1.5 hours north of Sydney, the breathtaking Central Coast of New South Wales will serve as the battleground for this premier endurance event. This year's edition marks the second time X-Marathon has been selected to host the prestigious ARWS Oceania Championship. It promises an entirely new course design, pushing elite and weekend warriors alike into undiscovered sections of this spectacular coastal playground, while highlighting the region's rich Aboriginal heritage and spectacular natural scenery.

> The 2026 courses showcase the Central Coast at its best; challenging, beautiful, and full of variety. Every part of the race tests teamwork, navigation, and endurance in the most spectacular scenery."
>
> *Maria Plyashechko - Race Director*

ARWS Support from CEO Heidi Muller

Heidi Muller, CEO of the Adventure Racing World Series, will be attending the event in person to support the teams and organizers.

"We are incredibly proud to have X-Marathon hosting the ARWS Oceania Championship on the

stunning Central Coast," said Muller. "The Race Directors, Serge and Maria, are legendary figures in our global adventure racing family, and their pedigree as world-class athletes and meticulous Race Directors is second to none. I am thrilled to join the race and feel the energy of the Oceania adventure racing community. With the Oceania title and a ticket to the 2027 World Championship in Croatia on the line the stakes couldn't be higher, and I know Adventure Junkie will deliver an unforgettable event."

World-Class Course Design

At the heart of X-Marathon's reputation is its meticulous course design, crafted by two of Australia's most respected names in the sport: Sergey Kurov and Maria Plyashechko of Adventure Junkie.

Serge and Maria bring over twenty years of international adventure racing experience to the drawing board. They found their passion in Australia's wild places, competing together in over a dozen of the world's most gruelling international expeditions—including Eco-Challenge Fiji, the Patagonia Expedition Race, and Godzone New Zealand. Over the last 14 years, their company, Adventure Junkie, has delivered more than 80 successful races across Australia, earning acclaim for high-quality, inclusive, and environmentally responsible events.

"We don't just build courses—we build journeys," says Sergey Kurov. "Having lived here for years, we know these

Trekking at X-Marathon

Sea kayaking at X-Marathon Adventure Race

Mountain Biking at X-Marathon

trails, waterways, and hidden spots intimately. Our goal is to create a race that is fair, safe, and memorable — one that celebrates adventure racing while connecting participants to the history and culture of this amazing region."

Navigation at X-Marathon

Maria Plyashechko shares her excitement: "We've designed the 2026 courses to showcase the Central Coast at its best — challenging, beautiful, and full of variety. Every part of the race tests teamwork, navigation, and endurance while rewarding you with some of the most spectacular scenery in NSW."

A Course of True Exploration and Heritage

The Central Coast's diverse geography provides an unmatched playground for adventure athletes, seamlessly blending convenience with untouched, raw wilderness.

In keeping with the spirit of respect and connection to the land, the event organizers formally acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, water, and community on which the race is held, paying their respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

The 2026 courses will lead teams through iconic natural landmarks while highlighting the region's deep cultural significance:

The Bouddi Coastal Walk: Famous for its sweeping Pacific Ocean views, dramatic sandstone cliffs, and secluded golden beaches.

The Brisbane Water Inlet: A complex network of tidal channels and hidden bays that will challenge teams with technical paddling and intricate navigation.

Ancient Aboriginal Heritage: The course is designed to respect and showcase the area's rich Indigenous history. Racers will traverse landscapes featuring ancient rock carvings and sacred sites scattered throughout the terrain, offering a powerful connection to the history and culture of this amazing region.

Two Distances, One Shared Spirit

The 2026 X-Marathon offers two distinct courses to accommodate a variety of athletic goals,

though both demand sharp navigation and resilient teamwork across three core disciplines: kayaking, mountain biking, and trekking:

The Full Course (ARWS Oceania Championship - 24 Hours / 160 km):

Designed for seasoned teams of 2 or 4 seeking the ultimate test of endurance. Racers will be transported by bus to a secret, undisclosed start location and dropped off before sunrise to begin their epic adventure. Grounded in pure adventure racing ethics, this course relies entirely on traditional navigation with map and compass and will only be completed with exceptional teamwork and spirit.

The winning four-person mixed-gender team will earn a free entry to the 2027 ARWS World Championship in Croatia, representing Oceania on the world stage.

The Half Course (12 Hours):

Perfect for intermediate racers looking for a shorter yet physically and mentally demanding introduction to expedition-style racing. It offers advanced navigation and longer stages, making it an excellent stepping stone for those moving up from sprint formats.

Race Schedule and Event Facts

Event Dates: September 4-6, 2026
Location: Central Coast, New South Wales, Australia (1.5 hours north of Sydney)
Disciplines: Kayaking, Mountain Biking, Trekking, and Compass Navigation
Team Format: Teams of 2 and 4 (The Oceania Championship title is contested in the Premier 4-Person Mixed category)

Title Contenders

A strong field will line up for the X-Marathon Oceania Championship, with 43 teams set to take on the challenge in all divisions, including leading New Zealand team Forever Forests Racing (world ranking #10), making the trip across the Tasman to test themselves on Australian soil. The highest world ranked Australian team is Broken Compass who are currently #15.

Other teams to watch are Wildflow Tigers and Keen Talkers, led by Del Lloyd, though with so much depth in the field the race is likely to be closely contested by all teams.

A special mention goes to pairs team Mooners Gone Mad, with Jack Slykhuis stepping up to the 24-hour course. A highly accomplished surf lifesaver and adventurer, Jack has completed a solo paddle across Bass Strait in a surf ski; a remarkable achievement which shows the calibre of athlete joining the X-Marathon field.

Follow the Drama: Live Race Coverage

With elite teams from across Australia and New Zealand converging to battle for the Oceania crown, fans worldwide won't miss a second of the action. The 2026 X-Marathon will feature live GPS tracking and race coverage.

To follow the live race coverage, tracking, and latest updates, visit:

ARWS Live Tracking: https://arworldseries.com/live
Official Race Website: https://xmarathon.com.au

The race can also be followed on social media at @adventurejunkie.com.au and @arworldseries

About Adventure Junkie

Adventure Junkie is one of Australia's premier outdoor events companies, organising adventure races year-round, including stage, sprint, and women's races. Run by Sergey Kurov and Maria Plyashechko, the company brings decades of international experience to delivering elite-standard, community-driven, and sustainable outdoor events.
Learn more at: http://www.adventurejunkie.com.au

About the ARWS Oceania Series

The Adventure Racing World Series (ARWS) regional championships provide a structured pathway for athletes across six continents. In 2026, the Oceania Series features five key races across Australia and New Zealand, offering athletes accessible, high-calibre weekend events that feed into the annual Adventure Racing World Championship.

Learn more at: https://arworldseries.com/series/oceania-series

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