



2021 PUBLIX GASPARILLA DISTANCE CLASSIC RACE WEEKEND RESCHEDULED TO MAY, 2021

Tampa, FL (December 10, 2020) – In response to ongoing public health concerns brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Gasparilla Distance Classic Association, announced today that the 44th Running of the Publix Gasparilla Distance Classic Race Weekend Events, originally scheduled for February 19-21, 2021, will be moved to Mother's Day Weekend, May 7-9, 2021.

On October 21, 2020, the Gasparilla Distance Classic Association announced its plans for an in-person 2021 Publix Gasparilla Distance Classic (PGDC) Race Weekend in February. The organization's extensive and detailed 2021 PGDC Race Weekend COVID-19 Mitigation Plan had been reviewed and approved by the city and Tampa General Hospital's Infectious Disease Services Team. At the time, Hillsborough County's COVID-19 Statistics showed a COVID-19 Positivity Rate of just over 5%. The Association was encouraged and eager to move forward safely.

The landscape has changed dramatically. Today's COVID-19 Positivity Rates, as posted on the Hillsborough County website and featured below, have risen and are projected to increase even further in the coming months.

- **Positive Test Percentage**
 - 14-Day Average: 7.99%
 - 7-Day Average: 8.14%
 - Total of Positive Tests: 8.63%

"The Gasparilla Distance Classic Association's decisions made up to this point have been carefully vetted and not taken lightly. They've been based on the Association's love for Tampa Bay, and always with the knowing we would never act in a manner that would place the runners, walkers, volunteers, staff, City of Tampa personnel, or event sponsors in harm's way," said Executive Director, Susan C. Harmeling. "With Mayor Castor's support, instead of canceling the events, we're thrilled to be able to offer race weekend in its entirety on new dates."

Mayor Jane Castor praised the Association's decision.

"With their 2021 race weekend planning, the Gasparilla Distance Classic Association has worked diligently to protect the health and wellbeing of Gasparilla's runners, walkers, and the Tampa Bay community – rescheduling the 2021 events further demonstrates the Association's commitment to our community," said Tampa Mayor Jane Castor.

The Association recognizes the new May dates could mean warmer temperatures. If warm weather is in the forecast on either Race Day, the Publix Gasparilla Distance Classic Race Weekend participants can trust they'll be well-taken care of with additional Aid Stations, on-course misters and ice cold towels.

“As a Florida based running event organization for 44-years, the Association has faced multiple warm and humid years and understands how best to care for its participants. We’ve got this!”
added Harmeling.

All participants who are currently registered for one or more of the 2021 events will be given the option of running in-person in May or, if they choose, converting their registration to run virtually.

For the latest updates and information on the 2021 Publix Gasparilla Distance Classic, please visit: www.rungasparilla.com.