



THE ROYAL MANTICORAN NAVY

Office of the First Space Lord

RECONNAISSANCE CHALLENGE (Geocaching Challenge – Black Sphinx Cup) 2017 Rules and Information

OVERVIEW & PURPOSE:

The Reconnaissance Challenge is a competition in which the chapters of a fleet strive to officially discover and create the most Geocaches by the end of the 3 month challenge period allotted by their Fleet Commander. These rules are based on similar Challenges conducted by TRMN fleets in the past in an effort to standardize them for unified competition under the 2017 Black Sphinx Cup.

The chapter that accumulates the greatest number of instances of officially logged geocache finds and creations and correctly submits this information during the Challenge period, wins the Reconnaissance Challenge. This Challenge requires the use of a registered Geocaching.com account, which is free, and while use of a smartphone is recommended, it is still possible to geocache without one and register your finds manually on the website via a desktop based internet browser.

RECONNAISSANCE CHALLENGE RULES:

In order to be compliant with the Black Sphinx Cup, the Fleet Cup's Emergency Relief Challenge must adhere to the following rules.

- The Fleet Commander must designate a **Challenge Director** to run the Challenge. This can be any member of the Fleet's Staff, or the Fleet Commander themselves. It is suggested that Fleet Staff Intelligence Officers perform this duty.
- Each Chapter must select one **Challenge Liaison** to keep records for their Chapter. This may be any member of the Chapter with the approval of their CO.
- The Challenge Liaison is responsible for accurately keeping records for their Chapter and submitting them to the Fleet Cup's Challenge Director by the deadline for submissions.
- **The deadline for records submission shall be before midnight of the last day of the Challenge Period. No records will be accepted after this cutoff.**
- Chapter Liaisons must conduct and submit their records as a spreadsheet, as detailed below in **RECORDING & REPORTING THE RECONNAISSANCE CHALLENGE**.
- Chapters may, and are encouraged to, submit reports to the Challenge Director frequently to provide updates on standings during the Challenge Period.
- **Chapter Liaisons are required to submit a final report within the final 7 days of the Challenge period.** This final report will be the records by which the Challenge Director determines the Challenge winner.
- The Reconnaissance Challenge must be held in one of three Challenge periods, as determined by the Fleet Commander. A Challenges period is a **3 month period** where one Challenge is conducted at a time, with buffer for follow up and preparation for the next Challenge.
- The Challenge Periods must adhere to the following schedule:
 - **Challenge Period 1:** February 15th – May 15th
 - **Challenge Period 2:** May 30th - August 30th
 - **Challenge Period 3:** September 15th - December 15th
- **No extensions** will be permitted.
- Fleet Commanders may choose to repeat the Reconnaissance Challenge for multiple periods.
- **Only Full Chapters may participate in the Fleet Cup Challenges.** A Full Chapter is defined as any hyper-capable naval unit or LAC under the command of that Fleet's Fleet Commander. HMSS Greenwich may participate, other stations and pinnaces may not.
- If a Chapter **upgrades to a larger vessel between Challenge periods**, and retains 90% of their previous crew listed at the end of the previous Challenge, the previous Challenge win will carry over and be credited to the newly upgraded chapter. If the 90% threshold is not met, the situation will be reviewed and ruled upon by the Staff Intelligence Officer for the First Space Lord and a decision will be made on a case-by-case basis.
- If a Chapter **downgrades to a smaller vessel between Challenge periods**, their previous Challenge win will carry over and credited to the newly upgraded chapter.
- **At the end of EACH Challenge Period, the officially listed CO, XO and Bosun of a participating Chapter must have met their rank testing requirements.** Chapters

who submit a final Challenge report or submission whose current CO, XO and/or Bosun have not met their rank testing requirements, **will be disqualified from the Challenge**. It is the responsibility of the Fleet Commander to confirm that these rank testing requirements have been met before declaring a winner for each Challenge, and for the overall Cup.

- Only the Training activities or contributions of officially listed members of a specific Chapter on the TRMN Medusa Database may be submitted for that Chapter.
- If a member moves chapters during the Challenge period, **they must be removed from their previous Chapter's records**. As members change chapters, their Recon Challenge records move with them. As such, **the final report from a Chapter must only include their current official members records**. It is the responsibility of the Challenge Director to check and confirm that these final reports are accurate.
- **All participants must create a FREE account at www.geocaching.com**. Premium memberships are not required for participation in this challenge. All geocaches that are discovered and reported must be officially registered on the Geocaching.com website.
- For this challenge an **“officially logged find” instance is defined as** a participant, or team of participants acting as a group, signing the geocache's log, signing in to the Geocaching.com website, and logging their visit on the specific geocache's page.
- For this challenge an **“officially logged hide” instance is defined as** a geocache that has been created and hidden by a participating member, or team of participants acting as a group, then submitted for and cleared by Geocaching.com volunteer review, and be listed as a discoverable geocache on the Geocaching.com website.
- All Geocaches that are created by participants **must fully follow the Geocache Listing Requirements / Guidelines** as found here:
<https://www.geocaching.com/about/guidelines.aspx>
- A geocaching instance can be achieved by an individual or a group, but are worth the same single point. **The number of individuals involved in a find or a hide is not relevant to this challenge, only the total number of instances of hides and finds correctly reported by the chapter**. Example: Spacer Bill finds a geocache, signs its log, takes a photo for evidence, and then officially logs the find on Geocaching.com. This is a single officially logged find instance, worth a single point. Spacer Jane, Spacer Dave, and Ensign Fuzzy find a geocache together, all sign the log, take a photo for evidence, and each officially log the find on Geocaching.com. Despite the fact that three individuals have each logged the find on Geocaching.com, for the purpose of the Challenge this will only count as one single officially logged find instance, worth one point, not three. The instance should be recorded as only a single instance for the Challenge, with the lead member of the group listed. **The same applies for instances of officially logged hides**.
- **While group and individual instances are worth equal points, the same geocache can be found as a separate instance by a member of the same crew, so long as it occurred on a different date**. Example: Spacer Bill finds geocache “alpha” on Tuesday and records an instance of an officially logged find. Spacer Jane, from the same chapter, later also finds geocache “alpha” on Wednesday, and is permitted to also record an instance of an officially logged find because the instances occurred separately.
- While the same geocaches can be found and recorded as instances multiple times within the same Chapter, **each geocache can only be found and recorded as an instance once per Chapter member during the Challenge Period**. Example: Spacer

Bill finds geocache “alpha” on Friday and records it as an instance. He can not personally find and record geocache “alpha” as an instance again during the challenge, though any of his Chapter-mates who have not already recorded geocache “alpha” may.

- When possible and appropriate, it is suggested that members photograph or video themselves wearing TRMN related attire, such as con minimum uniform, while performing their geocaching activities. This is not a rule, just a recommendation that could further bolster their portfolio for the Black Sphinx Cup.
- The Reconnaissance Challenge will be **scored based on the total number of officially logged and created geocaches per chapter**, based on the reporting method outlined in RECORDING & REPORTING THE RECONNAISSANCE CHALLENGE.

WINNING THE RECONNAISSANCE CHALLENGE:

At the conclusion of the Challenge period, the chapter who has submitted a report that indicates they have accumulated the highest number of points from hiding and finding geocaches as outlined in the rules above, wins the Challenge.

In the event of a tie, the tie will be broken by comparing the photo/media documentation of the Chapter's geocaching activities, as judged by the Fleet Commander. In the event that the Fleet Commander is a member of a Chapter involved in a tie-breaker, or is otherwise featured in their submitted photos, videos or other media, they are disqualified from judging and must recuse themselves from the process. Authority to judge the winner is then given to the Fleet Challenge Director. In the event that the Fleet Challenge Director is also a member of a Chapter involved in a tie-breaker, or is otherwise featured in their submitted photos, videos or other media, they must also recuse themselves from the judging process. Authority to judge the winner is then given to the Staff Intel Officer for the First Space Lord. If this individual also is disqualified and must recuse themselves for the same reasons as above, authority to judge the Fleet's winner is given to the First Space Lord. This process continues until a Space Lord can be found who does not meet the criteria for disqualification.

RECORDING & REPORTING THE RECONNAISSANCE CHALLENGE .:

Chapter Liaisons are required to create a spreadsheet to record their Chapter's activities in the Challenge. This Spreadsheet must include:

- A header with:
 - Chapter Name
 - CO Name and contact information
 - Chapter's Challenge Liaison name and contact information
 - The most recent date updated
- Numbered rows.
- **Each row represents one instance of a geocaching activity.**
- Each Geocaching Instance row must include the following information in the columns:

- Date of instance.
- Member rank, name, branch, TRMN ID number (Lead member if a group instance)
- Type of geocaching instance ('find' or 'hide')
- URL link to the found log (if a 'find', mark N/A if a 'hide') on Geocaching.com
- URL link to the geocache's listing on Geocaching.com
- A footer with the total number of hides, finds, and total points of chapter.

AMBIGUITY CLAUSE:

In any instance that the Black Sphinx Cup rules, or the specific rules of Approved Challenges, are found to be unclear or ambiguous by a Fleet Commander or their subordinate, it is essential that they immediately confer with the First Space Lord's Staff Intelligence Officer (intel@1SL.trmn.org). A final ruling will be made by the Office of the First Space Lord and must be adhered to. Failure to adhere to this ruling will result in the Fleet being made ineligible for the Black Sphinx Cup. If a Fleet is found to have made their own interpretations of the rules without consulting the Office of the First Space Lord, they will be made ineligible for the Black Sphinx Cup.