

FOOL'S GOLD MTB RACES

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

2018



Welcome to the Fool's Gold 38 mile and 55 mile mountain bike races. You are sure to be challenged by the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains of the Chattahoochee National Forest. Whether you are a local, or have traveled from afar to take part in this event, we are happy to have you join us. There are sure to be moments of terror, bliss, fatigue, exhilaration, distress, and pure joy along the way. In the end, we hope it becomes one of those glorious memories we all seek in life. Enjoy the ride.

DIRECTIONS TO START/FINISH

MONTALUCE WINERY
946 VIA MONTALUCE
DAHLONEGA, GA 30533

The race begins and ends at Montaluce Winery. Put the above address into GoogleMaps and it will get you there. Please follow black/white arrow signs to parking and registration area once you turn into the Montaluce property. Venue and camping area opens at 2 pm on Friday, September 14th.

BIKE SHOP SUPPORT

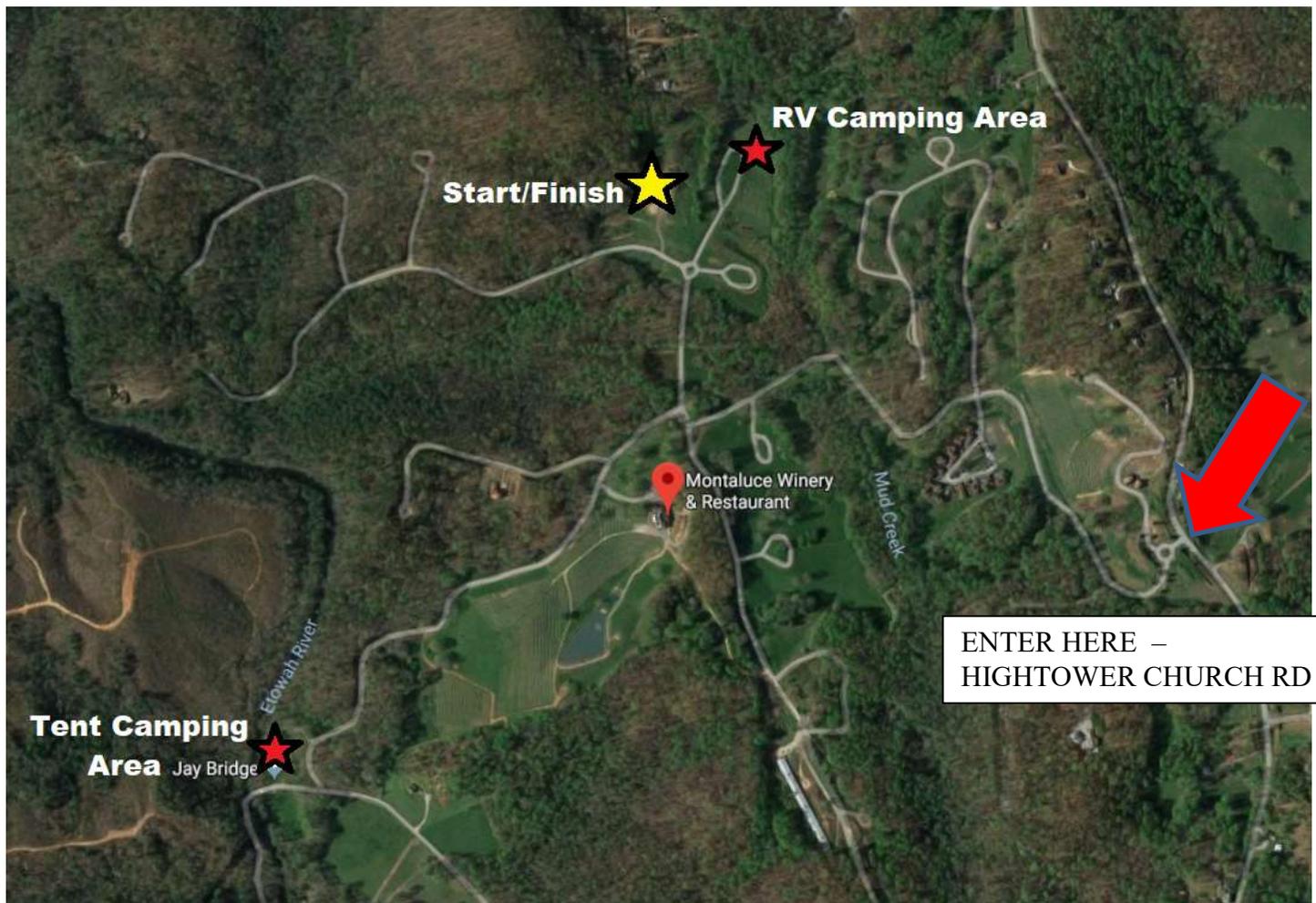
If you would like to ship your bike and have a local shop reassemble and race prep it for you, we have partnered with Cartecay Bikes in Downtown Ellijay. The cost is \$85 for reassembly. Cartecay bikes is around 30 mins from the start/finish.

If you plan to take advantage of this, please email ben@cartecaybikes.com and let him know you are sending a bike his way.

Cartecay Bike Shop
123 North Main Street
Ellijay GA. 30540
Phone: 706-635-2453

Hours: Mon.-Fri. – 10 AM-5 PM, Sat. – 9 AM-5 PM, Sun. – Closed

Montaluce Map – the yellow star indicates where parking, registration, and the start/finish and will be. You will need to enter the property from Hightower Church Rd. Please note the locations of RV/Trailer Camping and Tent Camping. No vehicles larger than a Sprinter Van will be allowed in the Tent Camping area. You must reserve your camp site by emailing lisa@mountaingoatadventures.com by September 1st. Camping is included with your entry fee.



SPECTATORS/SUPPORT CREWS

To cut down on traffic along the course we encourage spectators to stay at Montaluce Winery to watch the race. No spectator vehicles are allowed at Winding Stair Gap (Aid Station #1 on 55 mile course). We do not want crew vehicles attempting to make the climb up Cooper Gap through the pack of cyclists, nor do we want your support crew to be driving UP Winding Stair Gap while cyclists are descending. This is a major hazard for our participants. We will assess a 60 minute time penalty to YOU if we find your spectators/support crews in this area.

To access Aid #2/3 and #4, you will need to go back out to Hwy 52 and drive around on paved and gravel roads. While this is a bit longer distance-wise, it will take you half the time. Please, no parking at the aid stations per USFS rules – you will need to park roughly ¼ - 1/3 mile away and hike in if you want to cheer on your racers. Please park in the Bull Mountain Parking area for aid station #2/3 and along the side of FS 28B near the FS 28-1 intersection for aid station #4.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday 9/14/2018

- Noon to 8:00 pm – Camping areas open. Please follow race crew directions upon arrival as we have specific areas for you to set up camp.
- 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm - Race number and t-shirt pickup at Big White Tent near Montaluce Pool - Use address above to main entrance, then follow signs to parking and registration once on property. **There is no rider meeting this year on Friday night - this will take place at 7:30 am on Saturday morning.**
- 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm – Food Truck on site for meal purchases (see menu below)

Please Note: There is no race-day registration or distance changes. All registrations, distance changes and transfers must be completed by September 12th at 8 pm - NO EXCEPTIONS THIS YEAR. If you have questions, changes, or need to speak with the Race Director, you will need to do so on Friday evening (or earlier via email - preferred). We will not be able to accommodate any changes on Saturday morning.

- ✓ We will not be able to accommodate any registration changes on Saturday morning
- ✓ Photo ID may be required to pick up your packet. If you are under the age of 18, a parent or legal guardian must also be present or have sent a signed waiver with the participant under the age of 18.
- ✓ Drop bag cutoff is 7:30 am on Saturday morning, no exceptions. If you check in on Friday, we highly recommend getting your drop bags in the bins on Friday night so you do not miss the cutoff.

As in the past, there will be an opportunity for a representative to pick up your race packet for you if you cannot get to the venue on Friday. **The representative will have to present an accident waiver signed by you to collect your race packet. No Waiver = No Race Number...No Exceptions.** A handwritten permission note is NOT a race waiver.

Accident Waiver is located on the race website – You can print and fill out ahead of time and bring to race to save some time.

<http://mountaingoatadventures.com/forms/2018FGWaiver.pdf>

If you do not travel to Montaluce on Friday or have someone pick up your packet, you may pick it up between 6:00 am to 7:30 am on Saturday morning – This is for race number and t-shirt pickup ONLY. NO DISTANCE CHANGES, NEW REGISTRATIONS OR TRANSFERS CAN BE ACCOMMODATED AT THIS TIME.

NOTE ALL DROP BAGS ARE LEAVING AT 7:30 AM AND NEED TO BE IN THE BINS BY THIS TIME!

Optional BBQ Dinner Available Friday Night – 4 pm to 7 pm (additional cost)

Montaluce will have an on-site BBQ dinner available on Friday for an additional cost. This is an optional meal and is not included with registration fee. Montaluce can accept cash or cards.

Dinner includes BBQ Pulled Pork, Mac and Cheese and Baked Beans.

Saturday 9/15/2018

- 6:00 am - Parking lot opens
- 6:00 am to 7:30 am - Race number and t-shirt pickup (NOTE - ONLY pickup, NO DISTANCE CHANGES, NEW REGISTRATIONS OR TRANSFERS CAN BE ACCOMMODATED AT THIS TIME.)
- 7:30 am - DROP BAG CUTOFF - Drop bags will leave the venue promptly at 7:30 am...if you miss the cutoff you will need to carry your drop items or rely on the aid stations for fuel. If you plan to check in

on Saturday morning, I highly recommend showing up with your drop bags pre-packed so you don't miss getting them here on time. Gallon size ziplocs are fine, as are standard grocery bags - just ensure your bottles won't leak on everyone else's stuff. We will have ziploc bags for you to use.

- 7:30 am - Pre-Race Meeting (all riders need to attend)
- 8:00 am - 55 mile race start with neutral-ish rollout
- 8:10 am - 38 mile race start with neutral-ish rollout
 - ✓ All racers will need to ensure they ride over the timing mats at the START so we can account for you on the course and to receive an overall finishing time. Your start time begins when the horn is blown, not when you cross over the mats. Disposable timing chips are adhered to the back of your race number which should be mounted to your handlebar. Chips do not need to be returned after the race.
- 12:00 pm to 6 pm - Post-race meal available at the finish line.
 - ✓ If you would like to order an additional meal for spectators, family, and friends, you will need to do so ahead of time by emailing lisa@moutaingoatadventures.com so that our caterer can bring plenty of food for everyone. Extra meals are \$10.
- Awards will be presented near the finish line when the top 5 finishers in each class have crossed the finish line. Approximate timing for awards will be around 1 pm for the 38 mile race and 2 pm for the 55 mile race. Cash prizes will be distributed as follows:
 - Top 3 Open Men in the 38 mile is: \$150/100/100
 - Top 3 Open Women in the 38 mile is: \$150/100/100
 - All other categories in the 38 mile will receive handcrafted awards for the top 3.
 - Top 5 Open Men in the 55 is: \$250/200/150/100/100
 - Top 3 Open Women in the 55 is: \$250/200/150
 - All first place finishers in the remaining 55 mile classes (excluding Tandem) receive \$100 cash.
 - All other top finishers in the 55 mile will receive handcrafted awards and prizes from the race sponsors a minimum of 3 deep. The larger the category, the deeper we will go with prizing. Money classes may also go deeper with sponsor prizes, depending on number of entrants.

FREE CAMPING AT MONTALUCE WINERY (INCLUDED WITH RACE ENTRY FEE)

If you plan to camp, you MUST RESERVE YOUR SPOT by emailing lisa@moutaingoatadventures.com no later than Sept. 1st. Please include the type of camping unit...RV, Sprinter, Tent or Sleeping in car/SUV, so we can ensure we have space for you. No ground fires are allowed so bring a camp stove if you plan to cook. NOTE THIS IS PRIMITIVE CAMPING - ESSENTIALLY A NICE FIELD WITH A VIEW BUT THERE IS NO DRINKING WATER, ELECTRICITY, or OTHER HOOKUPS. THERE WILL BE PORTA-POTTIES ON SITE.

For those tent camping, we have a nice area for you along the Etowah River approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the start/finish. No vehicles larger than a Sprinter Van are allowed in the tent camping area. For those with RV's or Trailers, you will be camping in one of the cul-de-sacs near the start/finish.

ALL campers – plan to take ALL trash with you...we do not/will not have a dumpster, please throw your weekend trash away at home. Please practice leave no trace ethics so we can continue to camp here.

RV campers – we will have at least one, likely two porta-potties in the RV camping area. Please use them – do not throw baby wipes or TP into the woods or pastures. This is highly disrespectful of the land owners and disgusting to clean up.

Camping is available Friday and Saturday nights only. Sorry, but campfires are not allowed. Please bring stoves if you plan to cook.

Dogs are welcome at our events, but please keep them on a leash for their own safety and that of the other racers. You must also clean up after your pets. Starting a race with poop on your front wheel is a real drag.



DAHLONEGA AREA LODGING

There are also plenty of lodging and camping options in Dahlonega and those can be found at dahlonega.org.

The closest lodging to Montaluce is the Mountain Top Lodge: 706-864-5257. The Mountain Top Lodge is 4.8 miles from the race venue and offers a Bed and Breakfast atmosphere. <https://mountaintoplodge.net/>

You can also search Dahlonega, GA on AirBnB.com and bring up a number of cabins and houses that are available for rent if you are bringing a larger group.

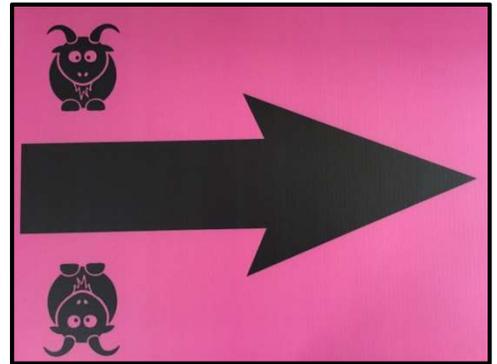
The closest campground with amenities and full hookups is Etowah River Campground: (706)867-7528. Etowah River Campground is 2 miles from the race venue on quiet, back roads. <http://etowahrivercampgro0.wixsite.com/mysite-1>

There is also free primitive camping within the Chattahoochee National Forest if you don't want to join our little party down by the river.

If you are in town for a few days and desire a bed, AC and home cooked meals, I highly recommend Mulberry Gap Mountain Bike Getaway in Ellijay, GA. Mulberry Gap offers camping or air conditioned cabins as well as delicious, home cooked meals that are sure to provide enough calories to get you through the event. They are offering 10% off your stay for Fools Gold Racers, as well as a crazy early morning breakfast before the race. Please mention Fools Gold to receive the discount when making your reservation. Please note that Mulberry Gap is 45 minutes away from the race venue. <http://www.mulberrygap.com/>

COURSE GUIDELINES/MARKINGS

- ✓ The course itself will be marked primarily by black arrows on a pink background. We utilize both 8.5"x11" laminated paper placards and 18"x 24" plastic signs. PINK ribbon will be used in addition to the arrows for both reassurance and as a back-up in case arrows are removed by other trail users.
- ✓ If in doubt, look for pink tape at intersections and go towards the pink tape. Each intersection will have three pieces of tape hanging or tied around a tree in the vicinity IN THE DIRECTION THAT YOU WANT TO GO.
- ✓ Rest assured that the event staff & volunteers work very hard to ensure you have a good trail to follow. Approximately 150 course arrows are used. Additional natural trail indicators and barriers are used frequently and should be obvious. The course is open to the public during the race so we are not able to block or tape off any trail or road way. That being said, look for course markings at any intersections before blazing off down the trail in the wrong direction. "Wrong Way" signs will be placed in areas where the penalty for misdirection is severe.
- ✓ There will be a course making official out on course for the duration of the race, patrolling the forest road sections and replacing any signage as needed. If you see any major intersections that do not have arrow signs or you see signs on the ground or knocked over, please let the next aid station know so they can relay that info to the course marking official.
- ✓ Ultimately, no matter how many steps are taken to mark the course, it is the rider's responsibility to stay on course. If you stray, you must use the given resources, such as GPX data, cue sheet and map, to return on course at the point at which you erred. Doing otherwise results in a non-finish. One of the best hints for staying on course is to keep looking for the pink ribbons. The ribbons are the least likely course markers to get removed. Download the GPX files. If you are low tech, take the map and directions with you – paper weighs next to nothing.
- ✓ Links to Maps, cue sheets, and GPX Files can be found here on the event website: <http://mountaingoatadventures.com/foolsgold/course>
- ✓ Finally, this is your strong reminder that it is the rider's responsibility to cover the course in a safe manner. Please ride within your ability level, know and heed all warning markings, and do not rely solely on warning markers as the only indication of dangerous terrain. Course conditions change throughout race day, racer ability levels are varied, and there is a limit to the effectiveness of adding another warning marker to a long course. Be aware---Just because you can go fast, does not necessarily mean that you should.



Common Course Markings

- ✓ Course marking arrow signs – large black arrow on pink background, either left, right, or straight ahead as shown above. Pink signs are always for bike traffic and denote the course.
- ✓ Caution Bike Race in Progress signs to alert oncoming traffic that there will be bikes on the road. All roads and trail are open to public during the event, so always be aware and yield as needed. There will be some vehicle traffic on the gravel and paved road sections. Stay on the right hand side of the road. Do not cut the corners on ANY road sections.

A Note about our GPX Files...

Both of the GPX files on our website have the time data stripped as they are map files, not "activity" files. They are intended to be loaded into a device such as a Garmin Etrex 30 or similar so you can still find your way if a sign is missing. That being said, you CANNOT upload these files into Strava or Garmin Connect. You CAN upload them to Google Maps, Google Earth, Viking and they will also

upload on devices such as a Garmin Etrex 30. A link to instructions on how to upload a GPX to Google Maps are on the course maps page, so check it out if interested.

COURSE MAPS

Course maps, GPX files, and Cue Sheets are available on the event website:

<http://mountaingoatadventures.com/foolsgold/course>

- The course begins at Montaluce Winery and will have a neutral rollout for approximately 3 miles on pavement, then transition to gravel roads. The 55 mile course begins with a stout 3 mile gravel road climb and some ridgeline gravel, followed by a fast gravel descent and then turns onto the singletrack of the Turner Creek Trail. The 38 mile course heads directly to the Jones Creek Ridge Trail singletrack.
- The 38 mile course essentially just cuts off the first section of gravel road climbing and ridge riding, and heads directly to the singletrack loop.
- Much of the singletrack is newly re-constructed and flowy, with an assortment of fast gradual climbs to short grunts. There is another 3 mile climb up Bull Mountain, and the descent on the Bull Mountain Trail is one of the best in the Southeast. This course has a good mix of all trail types and does not cater to any one particular style of rider, though fitness is rewarded due to the abundance of climbing. In terms of technical difficulty, the most demanding sections would be considered moderately technical.

The elevation profile for the 55 mile course is shown below:



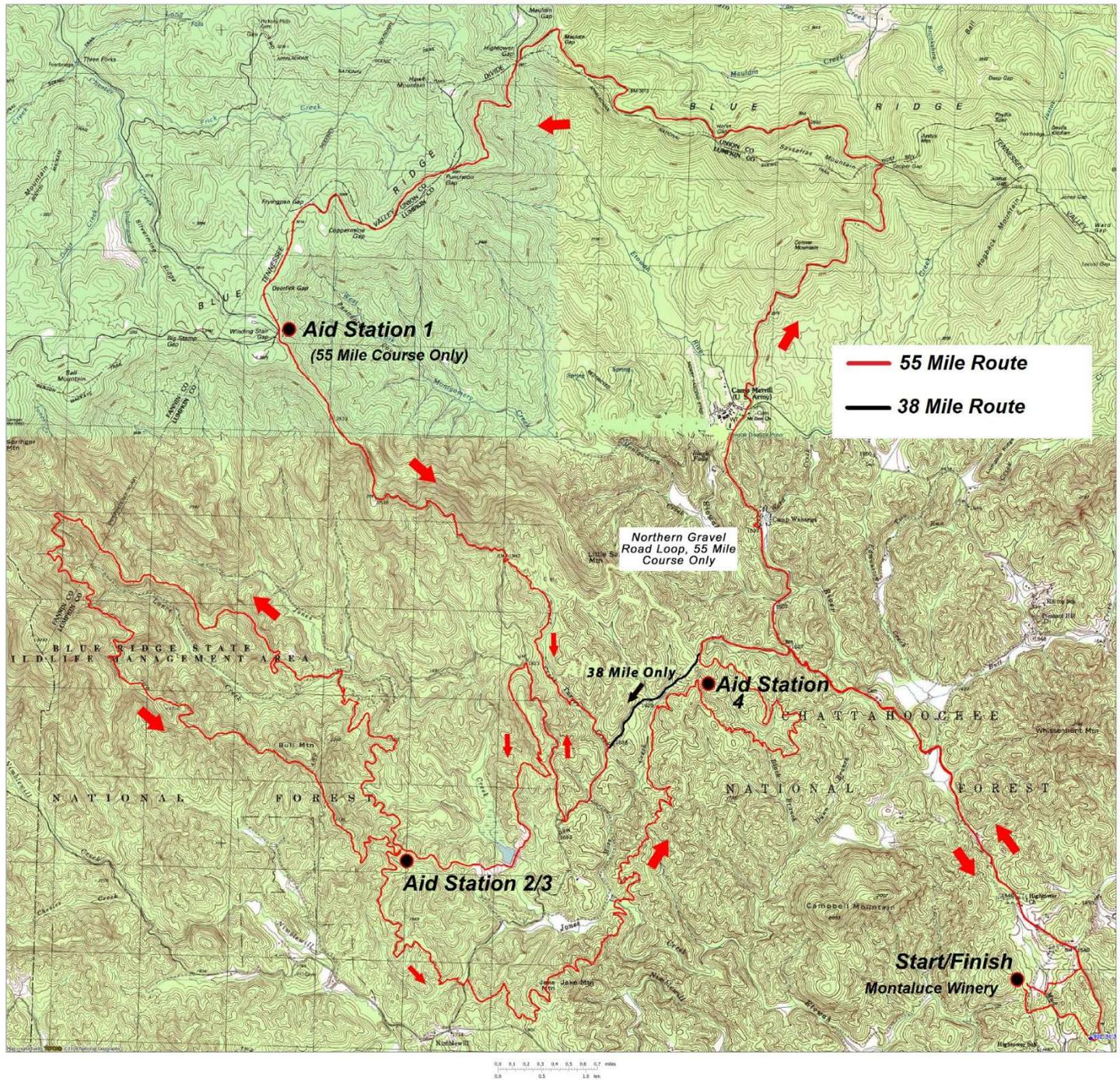
Please note the Bull and Jake Mountain Trails are Multiuse, including Hikers and Horseback Riders. You **MUST YIELD** to Horses and Hikers. If you encounter a horse head-on, dismount your bike and move off the trail to allow the horse to pass. Horses are prey animals and can spook easily, causing the rider to be thrown and badly injured. Please exercise trail courtesy and help provide a safe environment for all users. While we do our best to spread the word to the equestrian, hiking and biking community that there is an event going on, there may still be other users out there who are unaware. Please use caution at all times and be nice to anyone you encounter. The horseback riders do a great deal of trail maintenance on these trails to keep them in shape for all – please be respectful and courteous.



38 AND 55 MILE COURSE MAP

Also available here: <http://mountaingoatadventures.com/images/2018FGMapDryRoute2.jpg>

Mountain Goat Adventures Fool's Gold MTB Race

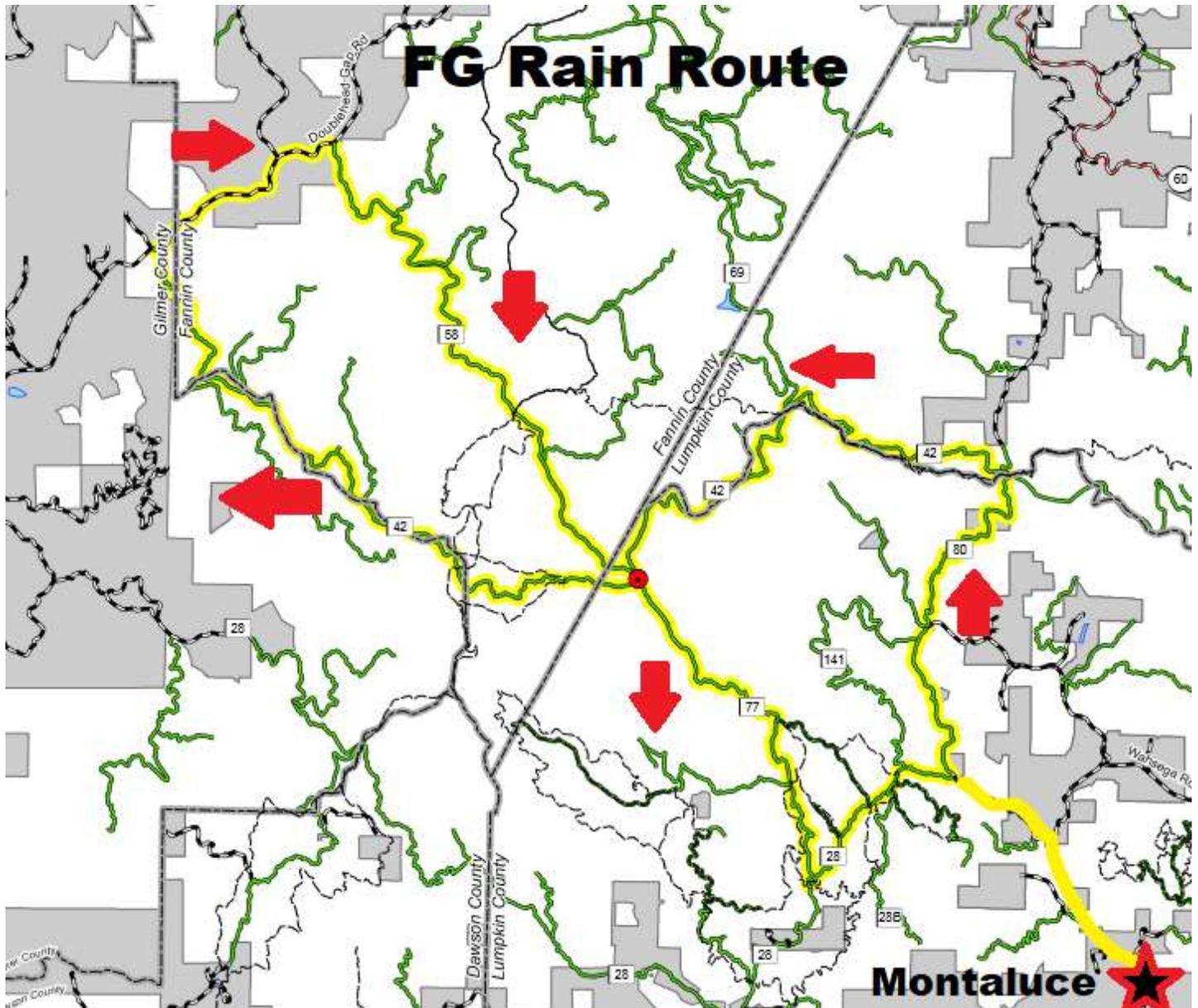


RAIN ROUTE

We are required to have an alternate course that does not include singletrack trail in the event of extremely wet weather or saturated soil conditions leading up to the race. This is for preservation of our wonderful trails as well as your equipment. The "Rain Route" will be similar to our Southern Cross Course with riders leaving Montaluce and taking Hightower Church Road to FS 28-1. Riders will turn right on FS 28-1 and continue climbing FS 80 to Cooper Gap. From Cooper Gap, riders turn left and continue on FS 42 to Winding Stair Gap. From there riders will continue on FS 42 past Springer Mountain, and down to Doublehead Gap Road. Riders

will turn right on Doublehead Gap Road, then make another right onto FS 58 where they will climb back up to Winding Stair Gap. Once up at the Gap, they will descend down FS 77, all the way to FS 28-1. At FS 28-1, riders make a left and continue to Hightower Church Road where they turn right to head back to Montaluce.

The decision to use the rain route will be made no later than Friday September 14, however, we will do our best to announce it as soon as we know that we are required to use it.



AID STATION DETAILS, MILEAGE, AND CUT-OFF TIMES

Aid Station Details:

- ✓ Feed stations, staffed by volunteers and bike shop personnel, will be positioned at approximate 10 mile intervals. Locations are marked on the course map. Items provided at these locations will always include water, sports drink, and a varied assortment of other items, such as bananas, Hammer gels, chips, pretzels, fig newtons, cookies, soda, peanut M&Ms, and other snack foods. No one has ever claimed to go hungry on course.

- ✓ Drop bags and coolers will be collected before start of the race on Saturday near the start/finish area. Look for signs designating Aid Station numbers in front of the bins. **All Aid Station drop bags and coolers must be dropped off by 7:30 AM, no exceptions.** This is the same location where you can find your items after the race. Please note drop bags need to be picked up by 8:00 pm on Saturday night or they will be broken down and any usable contents recycled/donated. Every year a mountain of drop bags are left behind that need to be disposed of.
- ✓ **DO NOT DROP ANY WATER BOTTLES OR GEL WRAPPERS ON COURSE**, except in the trash cans at the feed zones. Doing so will jeopardize such resources being offered in the future and if we see you do it, we will disqualify you.
- ✓ No outside assistance is allowed except at the three official Aid Station locations.
- ✓ We are limited to two vehicles per Aid Station location by the USFS, and these are limited to official race volunteers. We are discouraging spectators from driving along the course as it is dangerous to the riders and we are not allowed to have large clusters of vehicles along the roads per the USFS. **NO SPECTATOR VEHICLES ARE ALLOWED TO PARK AT AID STATIONS.**
- ✓ 55 miler racers are allowed three (3) Aid Station drop bags, 38 mile racers are allowed two (2) drop bags.
- ✓ NO SPECTATORS/CREWS AT WINDING STAIR GAP AID STATION (AID STATION #1)
- ✓ Aid Station Drop bags should be 1 gallon zip lock bags and no larger. Mark your bags with your race number. There will be Ziploc bags and Sharpies available on Friday from 4-8pm but feel free to use your own packed ahead of time. Just make sure you mark your bag very well with your race number.
- ✓ The cut-off/closing time for each Aid Station is for the safety of the racers and the volunteer staff. We cannot allow racers to continue into/after dark. If you are informed of not making the cut-off time, you will receive an "X" on your number plate and you will be directed to follow a shortened route back to the start/finish. **If you are short coursed or DNF, please check in at the timing tent when you return to the start finish so we do not go out looking for you or have an incorrect finish time for you.**
- ✓ Drop bags will be spread out, in numerical order of race plate number, as written on the bags. Any illegible or unmarked bags will be placed at the end of the line of the marked bags. As you approach, your number will be called out and volunteers will do their best to retrieve your bag in a speedy manner for you. BE NICE TO MY VOLUNTEERS! Do not yell at them or have a hissy fit under any circumstances – they are there to help you so smile and be pleasant even if you are having a bad day.
- ✓ DROP BAG PICKUP: PLEASE NOTE--- it is your responsibility to pick up your drop bags at the start/finish. No mailings or shipments will be made of items left behind at the end of the day. Nor will we be responsible for any lost items. You must pick up all drop bags no later than 8:00 pm on Saturday night. Bags left after this time will be broken down with the water bottles and any usable gels, tubes, or tools being donated or recycled. If you are running a few minutes late, you can text me at 770-653-4614 with your race number and ask that your bag be set aside, but it must be picked up that evening. We need to leave Montaluce in a spotless condition, and that includes removing all drop bags and trash associated with them. Depending on the aid station and when it closes, some drop bags may not return to Montaluce until 6 pm.

Aid Station Mileages and Cutoff Times:

- ✓ All racers must complete either course and be in by 7:00 pm to have an official finish time. There will be time cutoffs at the aid stations to ensure all riders can make it back by 7:00pm.
- ✓ If any competitor arrives at an aid station after its established closing time, they will **not** be allowed to continue and will be returned to the FINISH via the shortest route possible.

55 mile race - You can send THREE gallon-sized drop bags out to the aid stations, 38 mile race – You can send TWO gallon sized drop bags. Bring your own or we will have ziplocs that you can label and use. The better labeled it is with your race number, the quicker the volunteers can find your bag for you at the aid stations. CUTOFF FOR DROP BAGS IS 7:30 AM ON SATURDAY MORNING - NO EXCEPTIONS!

38 Miler Aid Stations:

AID STATION #1 - Intersection of FS 83, Jones Creek, and Bull Mountain Trail, aka Base of Bull Mountain Trail. Approximately 11 miles from the start. Water, HEED, drop bags, mechanical support from Cartecay Bikes, soda, Hammer Gel, granola bars, Rice Krispy Treats, fig bars, peanut M&Ms, Skittles, Cookies, Bananas, and Endurolytes. Cut-off time for all racers: 2 PM to START the Bull Mountain loop

AID STATION #2 - Intersection of FS 83, Jones Creek, and Bull Mountain Trail, aka Base of Bull Mountain Trail, i.e. same as #1. Approximately 23 miles from the start. Cut-off time for all racers: 4 pm aid station closes.

AID STATION #3 - Intersection of FS 28B, 28G, & Black Branch Trail. Approximately 31 miles from the start. Water, HEED, drop bags, mechanical support from Sixes Pit Bike Shop, soda, Hammer Gel, granola bars, Rice Krispy Treats, fig bars, peanut M&Ms, Skittles, Cookies, Bananas, and Endurolytes. Cut-off time for all racers: None - keep going to finish..8 miles to beer and tacos!

55 Miler Aid Stations:

AID STATION #1 - Intersection of FS 42, 58 & 77, aka top of Winding Stair. Approximately 17 miles from the start. Water, HEED, snacks, drop bags, mechanical support. Cut-off time: None

AID STATION #2 - Intersection of FS 83, Jones Creek, and Bull Mountain Trail, aka Base of Bull Mountain Trail. Approximately 28 miles from the start. Water, HEED, drop bags, mechanical support from Cartecay Bike Shop, soda, Hammer Gel, granola bars, Rice Krispy Treats, fig bars, peanut M&Ms, Skittles, Cookies, Bananas, and Endurolytes. Cut-off time for all racers: 2 PM to START the Bull Mountain loop

AID STATION #3 - Intersection of FS 83, Jones Creek, and Bull Mountain Trail, aka Base of Bull Mountain Trail, Same as #2 Approximately 40 miles from the start. Water, HEED, drop bags, mechanical support from Cartecay Bikes, soda, Hammer Gel, granola bars, Rice Krispy Treats, fig bars, peanut M&Ms, Skittles, Cookies, Bananas, and Endurolytes. Cut-off time for all racers: 4 pm Aid Station Closes

AID STATION #4 - Intersection of FS 28B, 28G, & Black Branch Trail. Approximately 48 miles from the start. Water, HEED, drop bags, mechanical support from Sixes Pit Bike Shop, soda, Hammer Gel, granola bars, Rice Krispy Treats, fig bars, peanut M&Ms, Skittles, Cookies, Bananas, and Endurolytes. Cut-off time for all racers: None - keep going to finish..8 miles to beer and tacos!

If you ignore volunteer instructions and choose to continue up Bull Mountain after 2 pm, YOU WILL BE DISQUALIFIED AND YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN. The aid stations will be packed up by the time you reach them. Please be courteous to our aid station volunteers and race staff.

38 MILE AID STATION MILEAGES/CUTOFFS:

Aid Station #1 (Bottom of Bull) – 12 (2 PM Cutoff)
Aid Station #2 (Bottom of Bull) - 23 (Closes 4 PM)
Aid Station #3 (Black Branch) - 30
Finish (Montaluce) – 38 (7 PM)

55 MILE AID STATION MILEAGES/CUTOFFS:

Aid Station #1 (Winding Stair Gap) – 17
Aid Station #2 (Bottom of Bull) – 29 (2 PM Cutoff)
Aid Station #3 (Bottom of Bull) - 40 (Closes 4 PM)
Aid Station #4 (Black Branch) - 47
Finish (Montaluce) – 55 (7 PM)



CUT THESE OUT AND TAPE THEM TO YOUR TOP TUBE!!

SAFETY ISSUES AND EMERGENCIES

- ✓ Yellow Jackets and Hornets - Wasps and hornets are very aggressive in Georgia this time of year and they like to make their nests in the ground, sometimes only inches from the trail. A couple of riders passing through may not disturb them, however, with 350+ riders out on course, the chances of a nest being disturbed are pretty high. I recommend that EVERYONE carry Benadryl or other anti-histamine with them just in case. We will have it at aid stations, but it may be up to an hour before you reach an aid station. If you are allergic, pack any meds you may need and please be prepared.
- ✓ We DO NOT have a shuttle service for battered, tired or injured riders. If you have a life threatening emergency, we will call EMS and you should take a ride in an ambulance to the hospital. If you have a non-life threatening condition and just want to quit, you can either call a friend or family member to pick you up or wait for the aid station crew to return and maybe they can give you a ride. **AID STATION CREWS CANNOT LEAVE MID-RACE TO GIVE YOU A RIDE BACK TO THE START**
- ✓ Course sweeps will follow the racers, ensuring no participants are left on the course.
- ✓ The entire course is open to the public during the event and the IMBA rules of yielding to hikers and horses apply. There will also be vehicle traffic on the forest roads. Be aware and stay on the far right side of the road. Do not cut to the inside on corners, as vehicles will not be able to see you. Always stay under control so you can safely stop if a vehicle approaches unexpectedly.
- ✓ If you cannot finish the course, **DO NOT PACK UP AND LEAVE WITH YOUR FRIENDS OR FAMILY!** We need to account for all racers by the end of the day, so **ALWAYS NOTIFY THE TIMING STAFF AT THE FINISH IF YOU ARE NOT COMPLETING THE RACE.** Please do not let us spend the night searching for you and calling/worrying your loved ones if you decide not to finish the race.
- ✓ Each feed station will have a self-serve first aid kit for minor cuts/scrapes. If you, or another rider, need professional medical attention, there are several ways to let us assist. If there is not already an event volunteer present to call in medical professionals, please call 911. It will be important to know, as closely as possible, what course mile you are located at. We will handle it from there, as EMS will contact us for more details on the best place to extract you.
- ✓ If you spot another rider that you believe will need assistance (due to either injury or bike issues), please call us or report in to the next course marshal. It is extremely helpful in these cases to have the potentially disabled rider's race number and brief description of the issue. Occasionally we will receive report of a rider needing assistance, but cannot locate them. Without a race number, they cannot be tracked down and accounted for.
- ✓ There will be marshals noting racer numbers and order of passing at certain checkpoints.

RULES OF RACING

These rules address areas such as required safety equipment (including a helmet), trail race etiquette, self-sufficiency, and unsportsmanlike conduct. Violations may result in disqualification of the racer.

1. Racers are not allowed to change wheel sets or bikes during the competition.
2. Spare parts and supplies may only be used that were either carried on course by the participant, included in normal size drop bags, provided by fellow competitors, or offered by any neutral on-course event staff (such as any neutral mechanic stations, feed station volunteers, or sweep riders). In general, the racers are expected to be self-sufficient, and no support crews are allowed for mechanical assistance.
3. Littering the course is a violation of the Rules of Racing, as well as being plain disrespectful of the environment and landowners. We are all ambassadors to the sport of mountain biking. As such, racers are expected to carry out all their own gel wrappers, flatted tubes, etc. These items may be dropped off at the next aid station. The future of the event depends on participants showing the utmost respect for the land they are allowed to travel on.

4. The race route is open to hikers, bikers and horses. Please yield the trail according to the IMBA rules of engagement:
 - ✓ **Yield Appropriately:** Do your utmost to let your fellow trail users know you're coming — a friendly greeting or bell ring are good methods. Try to anticipate other trail users as you ride around corners. Bicyclists should yield to ALL other nonmotorized trail users.
 - ✓ Bicyclists traveling downhill should YIELD to ones headed uphill.
 - ✓ In general, strive to make each pass a safe and courteous one.
 - ✓ If you encounter horses while on any singletrack trail, you MUST DISMOUNT, announce your presence to the horseback rider and ask them if you can WALK past. Do not ride up high speed behind a horse (on trail OR road), hit your brakes, skid your tire, etc. – as this can spook a horse resulting in the horseback rider being thrown or the horse kicking you.
5. Please limit your music devices to one ear bud so you can hear riders wishing to pass or in need of assistance.
6. All racers who are currently serving a WADA or USADA suspension should not participate. These racers will be disqualified if they participate.
7. The race director reserves the right to shorten the race or alter the course if weather conditions become unsafe. The times for each racer will be recorded at the designated finish line and the race will not be restarted.

Equipment Requirements

1. Every rider, while on bicycle at each event, shall wear a protective, securely fastened helmet meeting the standards of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).
2. Footgear shall be fully enclosed.
3. All bicycles shall have at least two brakes that are in good working order.
4. Bar ends and handlebar extensions shall be plugged and shall not have any sharp or jagged edges.
5. Eye protection is strongly recommended.

Racing Regulations

1. Racers shall complete the entire event, and complete it on the same bicycle upon which the event was begun.
2. All repairs during the event shall be performed by the individual racer and/or fellow competitors and/or aid station volunteers or mechanics. No outside assistance is allowed.
3. Water shall be available to anyone from anyone at any point along the course as long as rider safety is not threatened.
4. Racers riding bikes have the right of way over racers walking bikes. When practical, racers walking bikes should stay on the least rideable section of the course when being passed. A racer walking or carrying his/her bike can overtake a racer riding as long as they do not interfere with the other racer's progress.
5. Lapped riders must yield to leaders. Leaders should verbalize the command "track" when overtaking another. It is the responsibility of the challenging rider to overtake safely. You must yield to the passing rider on the first command.
6. In the event two racers are vying for position, the leading racer does not have to yield his/her position to the challenger. However, a racer may not bodily interfere, with the intent to impede another racer's progress. Traditional rules of racing apply: the leading racer owns the track.
7. Shortcutting and/or cutting trail switchbacks shall result in disqualification.
8. Unsportsmanlike behavior and/or the use of profane language are grounds for warning, relegation, or disqualification. The penalty imposed shall be determined by the race official or race director.

9. All local laws, rules and ordinances shall be observed during the participation in any event.

Protests

1. Protests can be made by any registered race participant or race staff. The participant shall file the protest in person to the race director. The protest period is immediately following the race and up to 15 minutes following the posting of the results for his/her class.
2. The race director will be permitted to make the final decision regarding an occurrence at an event not addressed in this set of rules.
3. All results inquires, including placement and class considerations, must be made at the venue during the protest period. Once the protest period is over, results become final.