

## 2015 Southern Cross Racer Update

Thanks for signing up for the 2015 edition of the Southern Cross Ultra Gravel Grind. We are sorry that the original date of this event was not possible but are glad you are joining us for the reschedule date.

**Directions:** This event is based out of Montaluce Winery, 946 Via Montaluce, Dahlonega, GA 30533. Once on the Montaluce property, please follow arrow signs to start/finish, which will be near the pool. Volunteers will direct you where to park on Saturday morning.

**Race Check-In:** You will have two options for this – Either Friday night or Saturday morning:

Friday, March 13 – 4 pm to 8 pm at big white tent

Saturday, March 14 – 7:30 am to 9:30 am at the big white tent

You will need to fill out a waiver at check-in or bring one with you (see link in email). **You may pick up a number for another rider ONLY IF YOU BRING A WAIVER SIGNED BY THEM.**

**Drop Bags:** You get (1) one gallon Ziploc bag to use as a drop bag. We will have bags and sharpies at check-in or you may pre-pack your bag at home. Drop bags need to be in the aid station bins **NO LATER THAN 9:20 AM ON SATURDAY MORNING**. If you arrive late and miss the drop, you will need to carry all your supplies with you. Do not worry, the aid station has plenty of food. Drop bags and any items left at the aid station will arrive back at Montaluce at roughly 3 pm and 5:30 pm. They need to be picked up by 6:30 pm Saturday evening or they will be considered abandoned and broken down with items donated or recycled.

**Race Start:** 9:30 am mandatory race meeting at start/finish and 10 am sharp START with a neutral rollout on paved roads. There will be no grass or CX type obstacles at the beginning of the race. We did this to eliminate the bottlenecks that always occur. You will get a nice steady warmup on Hightower Church Road before you hit the climbing. If you arrive after 9:50 am, you will not be allowed to drive into Montaluce until AFTER the peloton has come through – so make sure you are on time.

**Aid Stations:** There will be one aid station that you will pass through twice at Mile 17 and 37. The aid station will have water, Hammer HEED, Endurolytes, Hammer Gels, cookies, granola bars, bananas, Skittles, M&M's, fig bars, and other snack food. They will also have HOT, SALTY CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP! Northstar Bicycles will also be providing mechanical support...this means they will fix or help you fix any bike related issues, but you will need to carry your own tubes, CO2s, chain links and any other supplies you may need. If you have a major meltdown and need a new chain or break a derailleur and John just happens to have one in his van, be prepared to pay him for it. We will have Squirt lube at the aid station, so if you prefer a different type, carry it or put it in your drop bag.

**Cut-offs:** You need to arrive at the 17 mile aid station by 2 pm to stay on course. If you arrive after 2 pm, you will be directed onto a short course and your number plate will be marked by the aid station staff. You will not receive a finish time if you are directed onto the short course.

**Finisher Awards, Post Race Food and Beer** – Please pick up a finisher award as you cross the line...you will need it for later. We'll have Moe's Fajita bar for you with your choice of steak, chicken or tofu and all the veggies and fixin's. Terrapin Beer Company is providing cold beverages for those over 21 and we'll also have water, Gatorade and soda. You may leave cold, but you won't leave hungry. PLEASE NOTE: There is a 2 BEER LIMIT...you will receive "beer bracelets" that you will need to turn in to receive your beer. Sorry that we have to do this, but we need a way to ensure that there is enough for everyone.

**Course and Weather:** The course is tough....55 miles with 6400' of elevation gain. You can check out a detailed Garmin file with all the stats on the event website. Mostly gravel roads, two miles of singletrack and some pavement. The weather may be beautiful at Montaluce, but might be foggy or sleeting at higher elevations. Depending on the what the weather actually ends up doing (changes on a daily basis), there may be snow/slush on the roads at the higher elevations. Carry a jacket, garbage bag or space bag so you don't freeze on the descents if the weather turns bad. It is typically 15 degrees colder on the ridgeline where you will be spending a good bit of time. Come prepared!

If we get a lot of rain the week before the race, or in the days leading up to the race, we will need to omit the singletrack section and instead use the 2014 course per USFS (all road). We may also need to omit this section if the trail is not cleared of downed trees by March 14. We probably will not know for sure until Thursday or Friday. If Saturday's weather is rainy AND cold, there is the possibility that the course may be shortened/alterd for your safety. We appreciate your understanding when dealing with unpredictable weather.

The course is open to vehicle traffic so keep your head up and stay on the right side of the road at all times. Assuming we are able to use it, the new singletrack section starts at mile 12 and continues to mile 14. It is all rideable on a cross bike but it will make you tired. You're welcome! Be prepared for some non-UCI approved CX obstacles before the finish after you arrive back at Montaluce.

**Payout/Awards:**

Payout for Top 5 Overall Open Men will be \$250/\$200/\$150/\$100/\$100

Payout for Top 3 Overall Open Women will be \$250/\$200/\$150

All other podium finishers will receive prizes from the race sponsors, and we will likely go deeper in the open divisions with sponsor prizes as well. The larger the category, the deeper we will go with prizing.

Due to a high number of pre-registered riders, we have added a 60+ Category, so those over 60 will be scored in a separate category.

**Cancellations/Refund Policy:** Any refund requests or transfers to another race due to the reschedule date MUST be requested no later than Friday February 27<sup>th</sup>. You may transfer your entry to another racer in this year's event up until Monday March 9<sup>th</sup>.