

## 2018 Southern Cross Racer Update

Thanks for signing up for the 2018 edition of the Maxxis Tires Southern Cross Ultra Gravel Grind. Its looking like a warm year and we are excited to have you join us!

**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 2nd – 4 pm to 8 pm at the big white tent or Saturday, March 3rd – 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:** NOTE NEW DROP BAG CUTOFF TIME!!!! 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 9:00 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 and fluids. Drop bags and any items left at the aid station will arrive back at Montaluce at roughly 3:30 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 Procedure:** 9:30 am mandatory race meeting at start/finish and 10 am sharp mass START with a 3 mile neutral-ish 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 are late and arrive at Montaluce 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 12 and 32. It is always at the top of the big climbs. The aid station will have water, Hammer HEED, Endurolytes, Hammer Gels, Payday Bars, Goldfish Crackers, Pickles, Pringles, Pretzels, Granola Bars, cookies, bananas, Skittles, M&M's, fig bars, and other snack foods. They will also have HOT, SALTY CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP! Cartecay 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. We have a very limited number of tubes and CO2s in our "free" bin from last year. If you have a major meltdown and need a new chain or break a derailleur and Cartecay happens to have one in their van, please be prepared to pay 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. We are making every effort to get drop bags back to Montaluce by 3:30 pm, however if you pass through the aid station for the second time after 2 pm, your bag may not make it back until 5:30 pm. Bags need to be picked up by 6:30 pm or they will be broken down and any usable items left behind will go in the "free" bin for next year's race.

**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.

**Post Race Food and Beer:** 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.

**Course and Weather:** The course is tough....50 miles with 6000' of elevation gain. **Due to the upcoming rain in the forecast for this week, we will not be able to use the Jones Creek Singletrack in this year's race.** We should have nice weather on race day with highs in the 60's and clear skies. You can check out a detailed map on the event website – click on the one that says "Rain Route". The course is mostly gravel roads, some pasture/trails around Montaluce, and some pavement. The weather may be beautiful at Montaluce, but might be foggy or windy at 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 15-20 degrees colder on the ridgeline where you will be spending a good bit of time. Come prepared! The course is open to vehicle traffic so keep your head up and stay on the right side of the road at all times. Bring some climbing gears for Winding Stair Gap – the road is already steep and it is in especially bad shape this year! Be prepared for some non-UCI approved CX obstacles before the finish after you arrive back at Montaluce.

**Payout/Awards:** Minimum Payout for Top 7 Overall Open Men will be \$250/\$200/\$150/\$100/\$100/\$100/\$100 Payout for Top 5 Overall Open Women will be \$250/\$200/\$150/\$100/\$100. First place finishers in each age group category also receive \$100 cash. All other podium finishers will receive prizes from the race sponsors. The larger the category, the deeper we will go with prizing.