

FOOL'S GOLD MTB RACES

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

2026



Welcome to the Fool's Gold 38 mile and 54 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 12 Noon on Friday, September 11th.

BIKE SHOP SUPPORT

The closest bike shop is Nimblewheels Bicycles in downtown Dahlonega, GA. If you are coming to the race and need mechanical assistance on Friday, they will be best available to help at their shop - please call and give them a heads up if you have a more complicated issue so they can ensure they have the right parts, etc. They will also be at the Winding Stair Aid Station on Saturday during the race to offer neutral mechanical support.

Nimblewheels Bicycles
582 North Grove St., Suite A
Dahlonega, Georgia 30533
706-973-1249

Thursday, Friday, Saturday 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

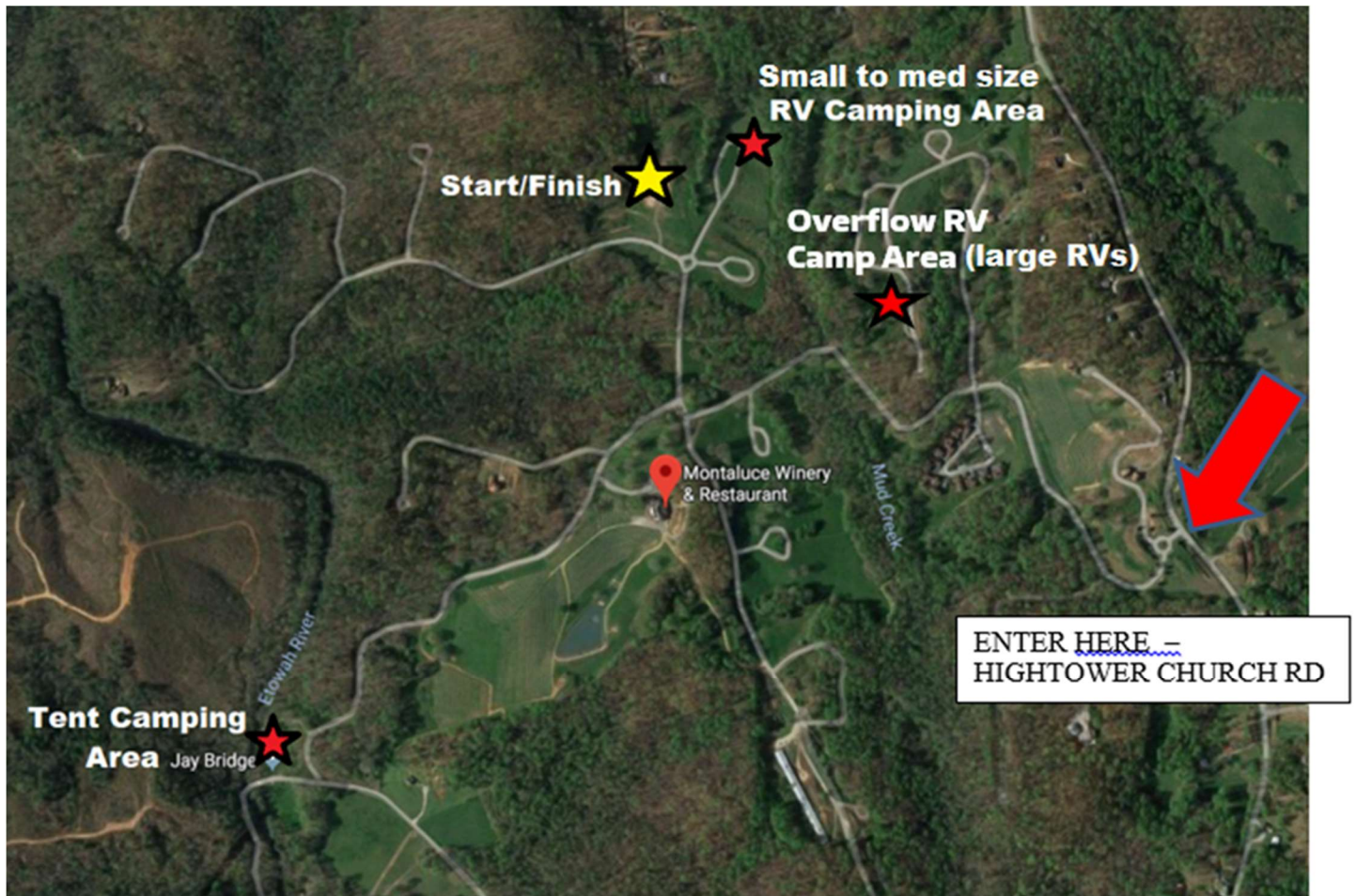
If you are staying in the Ellijay area, Cartecay Bike Shop is your nearest shop. They will also be at the Bull Mountain Aid Station on Saturday during the race to offer neutral mechanical support.

Cartecay Bike Shop and Brewery
493 North Main Street
Ellijay, Georgia 30540
706-635-2453

Wednesday and Thursday 10:00 am - 5:00 pm, Friday and Saturday 10:00 am – 8:00 pm, Sunday Noon – 5:00 pm

MONTALUCE MAP

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 – all other access points are gated. Please note the locations of RV/Trailer Camping and Tent Camping. No vehicles larger than a Sprinter Van and no generators will be allowed in the Tent Camping area. You must reserve your camp site by emailing lisa@mountaingoatadventures.com by September 8th so we ensure we have enough space. Free Friday and Saturday night primitive camping is included with your entry fee. No ground fires, and there is no water, power or hookups available. All campers must pack out their weekend trash, there is no dumpster on site.



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 54 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 FS 77 while cyclists are descending. This is a major hazard for our participants. **We will assess a 60 minute time penalty to your race time if we find your spectators/support crews in this area.**

To access Aid #2/3, 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. **If you have someone who wants to hang out at the aid stations to watch, make sure they know where they are going as well as ensure they are on their way well before the race begins. Race staff will not have time to give your friends/family driving directions in the morning nor can they be held up by having someone try to follow them. Cell service near Montaluce and in the forest is really spotty so load your driving directions/maps BEFORE arriving at Montaluce.**

- **No bottle handups or support at random places along the course – 15 minute penalty each offense. Support can only be offered within 100 yards of the Aid Stations and may not interfere with other riders.**

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday 9/11/2026

- Noon to 8:00 pm – Camping areas open. Please follow race crew directions and signs 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. Please Note: There is no race-day registration or distance changes. All registrations, distance changes and transfers must be completed by September 7th at 8 pm - NO EXCEPTIONS. 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.
 - ✓ **Waivers should be printed at home and brought to the event - see link below for waiver (we will have some extras if you do not have a printer)**
 - ✓ <http://mountaingoatadventures.com/forms/2020FGWaiver.pdf>

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. Waivers can be emailed ahead of time to lisa@mountaingoatadventures.com, however do not wait until Friday as I will not have reliable cell service at Montaluce to check my email and confirm you've sent the waiver.

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/AID STATION CREWS ARE LEAVING AT 7:30 AM AND NEED TO BE IN THE BINS BY THIS TIME!

Saturday 9/12/2026

- 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.
- 8:00 am - 54 mile race start with neutral-ish rollout
- 8:30 am - 38 mile race start with neutral-ish rollout NOTE: IF YOU ARE REGISTERED IN THE 38 MILE YOU WILL BE DQ'ed IF YOU START WITH THE 54 MILERS. **IF YOU ARE REGISTERED FOR THE 54 BUT ONLY WANT TO RIDE 38, YOU MUST MAKE THE CHANGE BEFORE STARTING THE RACE AND START IN THE 38 MILE WAVE OR YOU WILL RECEIVE A DNF.**
 - ✓ 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 before 9/7/26, so that our caterer can bring plenty of food for everyone. Extra meals are \$15.
 - ✓ **Post Race meal will be pre-made bagged lunches from Moes Dahlonga that will be handed out by our crew. You may also choose a soda, Terrapin Beer or Bottled Water. Hand sanitizer will be available at the tent.**
 - ✓ **Hand wash stations and porta-potties available at start/finish area, porta-potties available in the two main camping areas.**
- **Results will be available on our results tablets located near the finish line. Hand sanitizer will be available at results kiosk.**
- 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 54 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 and prizes for the top 3.
 - Top 5 Open Men in the 54 is: \$250/200/150/100/100
 - Top 5 Open Women in the 54 is: \$250/200/150/100/100
 - All other top finishers in the 54 mile will receive handcrafted awards and prizes from the race sponsors a minimum of 3 deep.

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

If you plan to camp, you **MUST RESERVE YOUR SPOT** by emailing lisa@mountaingoatadventures.com no later than Sept. 7th. 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.

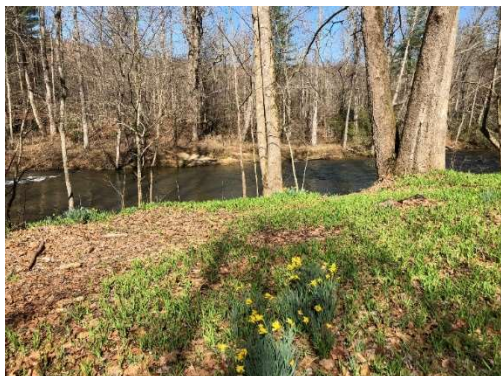
For those tent camping, we have a nice area for you along the Etowah River approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the start/finish. No vehicles larger than a Sprinter Van are allowed in the tent camping area. For those with RV's or Trailers, you will be camping in one of the cul-de-sacs near the start/finish. If you have an especially long travel trailer, there is a large RV area a bit further away from the start/finish that will be available.

ALL campers – plan to take ALL trash with you so we can keep offering camping for FREE...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 a porta-potty in the RV camping area. Please use it – do not throw baby wipes or TP into the woods or pastures. This is highly disrespectful of the land owners and really gross to clean up.

Camping is available Friday and Saturday nights only. Sorry, but ground fires are not allowed, Solo Stoves are ok. Please bring camp stoves if you plan to cook.

Friendly 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.



DAHLONEGA AREA LODGING

The closest campground with full hookups is Amicalola State Park <https://www.amicalolahallslodge.com/ga-state-park/>

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

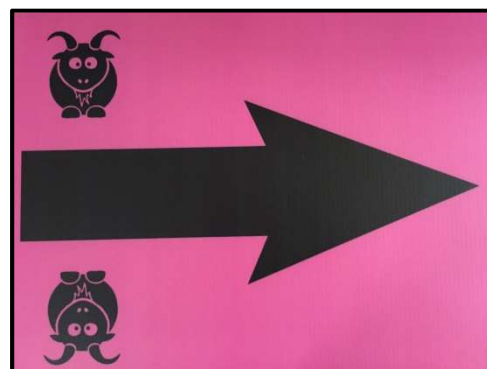
The closest lodging to Montaluce is the Mountain Top Lodge: 706-864-5257. The Mountain Top Lodge is 4.8 miles from the race venue and offers a Bed and Breakfast atmosphere. <https://mountaintoplodge.net/>

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. There is also free primitive camping within the Chattahoochee National Forest

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. Please note that Mulberry Gap is 45 minutes away from the race venue. <http://www.mulberrygap.com/>

COURSE GUIDELINES/MARKINGS

- ✓ **The entire course is open to traffic and other trail users. Always stay on the right side of the road and make sure you aren't riding faster than you can see ahead. Vehicles tend to drive down the middle of the gravel roads so USE EXTREME CAUTION ON ROADS, ESPECIALLY THE WINDING STAIR GAP DESCENT.**
- ✓ The course itself will be marked primarily by black arrows on a pink back ground. 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 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 marking 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>
- ✓ **One final 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.**

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 54 mile new course begins with a stout 3 mile gravel road climb followed by a rolling ride along the ridgeline, then a fast gravel descent down from Winding Stair Gap and then turns onto the singletrack of the Turner Creek Trail. The 38 mile course follows gravel roads and 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. (see black line on map)
- 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 intermediate to advanced level riding, however these sections are quite short and riders should dismount if needed.

The elevation profile for the 54 mile course is shown below:



The elevation profile for the 38 mile course is shown below:



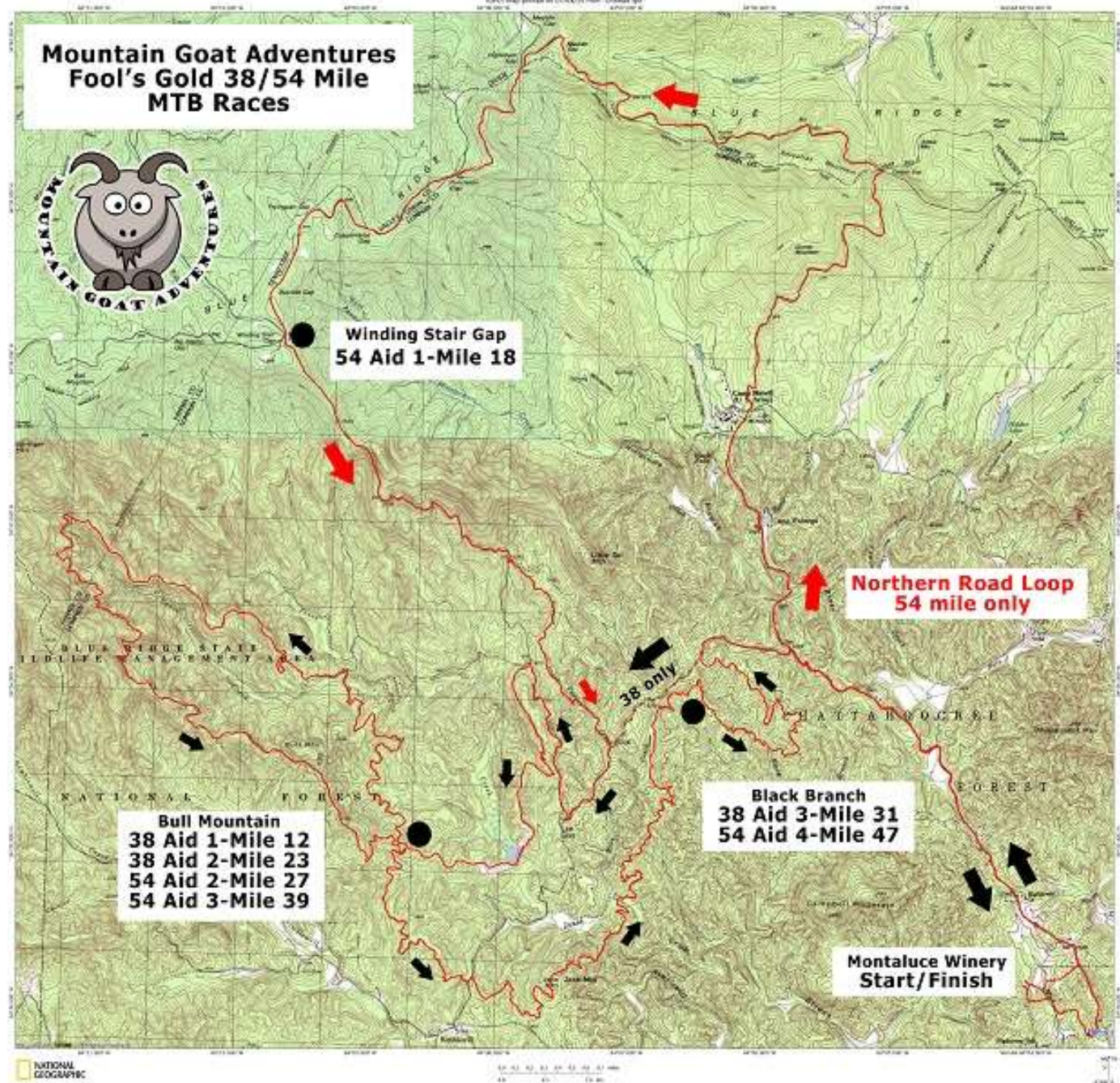
Please note the Bull and Jake Mountain Trails are Multiuse, including Hikers and Horseback Riders. You **MUST YIELD** to Horses and Hikers. If you encounter a horse head-on, dismount your bike and move off the trail to allow the horse to pass. Horses are prey animals and can spook easily, causing the 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. Do not ride up behind a horse and lock



up your brakes – the horse will spook. Approach slowly, announce your presence to get the riders attention and allow horse to move off trail. Listen for directions from the horse rider then walk your bike past.

38 AND 54 MILE COURSE MAP

Also available here: <https://mountaingoatadventures.com/images/2023FoolsGoldMap.jpg>



RAIN ROUTE

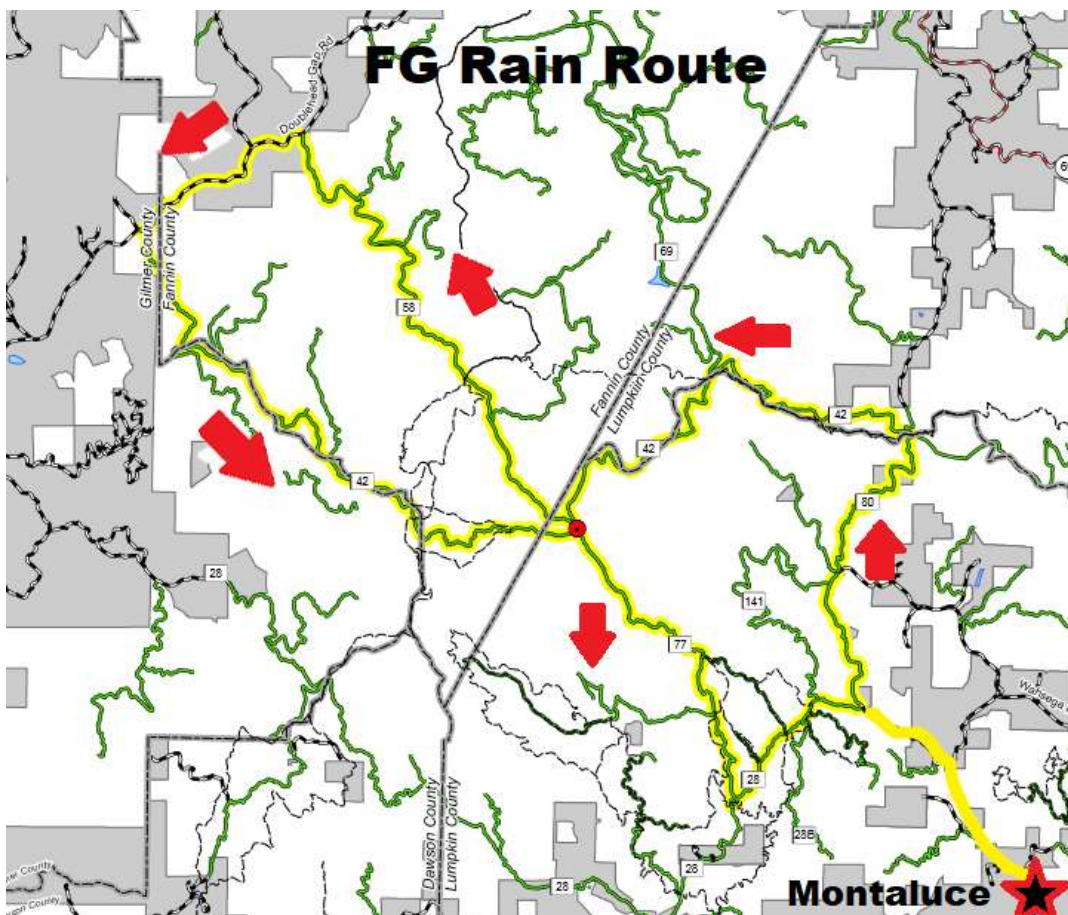
We are required to have an alternate course that does not include singletrack trail in the event of wet weather or saturated soil conditions **leading up to the race**. This is for preservation of our wonderful trails as well as your equipment. The "Rain Route" will be similar to our Southern Cross Course 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 turn right and continue downhill on FS 58 to Doublehead Gap Road. Riders will turn left on Doublehead Gap Road, then make another left onto FS 42 where they will climb back up to Springer Mountain and then on 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 full rain route will be made no later than Friday September 11, however, we will do our best to announce it as soon as we know, if we are required to use it.

We do not issue refunds or transfers due to using the rain route as it is outside of our control. We cannot control weather and the USFS stipulates whether or not we have to use the rain route. Their Land = Their Rules.

IF THE RAIN ROUTE IS USED, YOU MUST STILL USE A MOUNTAIN BIKE - NO GRAVEL OR CYCLOCROSS BIKES.

If heavy rain or unsafe conditions (lightning, high winds) occurs DURING the race, portions of the singletrack may be omitted and volunteers will divert riders. This may include skipping the Bull Mountain Loop and/or staying on gravel after the Bull Mountain Trail to the finish (skipping the Jake Mountain/Black Branch Singletrack). These changes will result in a shortened course and any such changes will be communicated on course via signage and course marshals.



AID STATION DETAILS, MILEAGE, AND CUT-OFF TIMES

Aid Station Details:

- ✓ Feed stations, staffed by volunteers and some with bike shop personnel, will be positioned at various intervals along the course. Locations are marked on the course map. Items provided at these locations will always include water, Hammer Heed, Hammer gels and a varied assortment of snacks.
- ✓ **Mainly pre-packaged snacks and Hammer Gels/fuels will be available at the aid stations**
- ✓ **Drop bags will be laid out numerically as you enter the aid station. Riders must retrieve their own drop bags. Once you are finished with your bag, you must re-seal it and place it in the "DONE" bin at the end of the row of drop bags. We do not want our volunteers having to handle all your used bottles, etc and then touch other riders bags/bottles. Your bags won't come back until the aid station closes if you don't put your bag in the DONE bin.**
- ✓ **Riders will have separate drop bags this year for the entrance of Bull Mountain Aid Station and exit of Bull Mountain Aid Station.**
- ✓ **If you need to refill water, we will either have a foot pump operated fill station (Aid 2/3) or volunteers pouring water into your bottles and camelbaks from pitchers (Aid 1 and Aid 4). Riders must open and hold bottles and camelbaks for filling.**
- ✓ **If you need minor first aid supplies, let the volunteers know and they will hand these items to you.**
- ✓ **Hand sanitizer is available at the aid stations.**
- ✓ **Drop bags need to be picked up at the finish by 8 pm on Saturday night or they will be discarded. We are not bringing these items home with us nor will we sort through them to look for your bags – you must do this yourself. Send bottles that you don't care about if you know that you don't want to wait for the drop bags to come back. Depending on your time through the aid station, it may be 6 pm before some bags make it back. Bring a plastic bag to transport your used drop bags home in – they will likely be sticky and gross when they come back from the aid stations.**
- ✓ **All Aid Station drop bags must be dropped off by 7:30 AM, no exceptions.**
- ✓ **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 within ¼ mile of the Bull Mountain and Black Branch Aid Station locations. No crews at Aid Station 1 (Winding Stair) of the 54 mile course.
- ✓ **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 – YOU'LL NEED TO HIKE IN.**

Aid Station Mileages and Cutoff Times:

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.**

- ✓ 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.
- ✓ **38 mile racers may send up to TWO drop bags (mile 23 and 31). You also have access to an aid station at mile 12 if needed, but there will be no 38 mile drop bags here.**
- ✓ **54 mile racers may send up to FOUR drop bags (mile 18, 27, 39, and 47)**

38 Miler Aid Stations:

AID STATION #1 - Intersection of FS 83, Jones Creek, and Bull Mountain Trail, aka Beginning of Bull Mountain Trail. Approximately 12 miles from the start. Cut-off time for all racers: 3 PM to START Bull Mountain **NO DROP BAGS HERE FOR 38 MILER**

AID STATION #2 - Intersection of FS 83, Jones Creek, and Bull Mountain Trail, aka End of Bull Mountain Trail, i.e. same as #1. Approximately 23 miles from the start. Cut-off time for all racers: 5 pm aid station closes.

AID STATION #3 - Intersection of FS 28B, 28G, & Black Branch Trail. Approximately 31 miles from the start. Cut-off time for all racers: None - keep going to finish..8 miles to beer and tacos!

54 Miler Aid Stations:

AID STATION #1 - Intersection of FS 42 and FS 77 (Winding Stair Gap Rd), aka Winding Stair Gap. Approximately 18 miles from the start. Cut-off time: None **NO CREWS ALLOWED HERE**

AID STATION #2 - Intersection of FS 83, Jones Creek, and Bull Mountain Trail, aka Beginning of Bull Mountain Trail. Approximately 27 miles from the start. Cut-off time for all racers: 3 PM to START Bull Mountain

AID STATION #3 - Intersection of FS 83, Jones Creek, and Bull Mountain Trail, aka End of Bull Mountain Trail, Same as #2 Approximately 39 miles from the start. Cut-off time for all racers: 5 pm Aid Station Closes

AID STATION #4 - Intersection of FS 28B, 28G, & Black Branch Trail. Approximately 47 miles from the start. 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 3 pm, YOU WILL BE DISQUALIFIED AND YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN. The aid stations will be packed up by the time you reach them and you will be caught out in the dark. Please be courteous to our aid station volunteers and race staff.

38 MILE AID STATION MILEAGES/CUTOFFS:

Aid Station #1 (Bottom of Bull) – 12 (3 PM Cutoff)
 Aid Station #2 (Bottom of Bull) - 23 (5 PM Cutoff)
 Aid Station #3 (Black Branch) - 31
 Finish (Montaluce) – 38 (7 PM)

54 MILE AID STATION MILEAGES/CUTOFFS:

Aid Station #1 (Hightower Gap) – 18
 Aid Station #2 (Bottom of Bull) – 27 (3 PM Cutoff)
 Aid Station #3 (Bottom of Bull) - 39 (5 PM Cutoff)
 Aid Station #4 (Black Branch) - 47
 Finish (Montaluce) – 54 (7 PM)



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

SAFETY ISSUES AND EMERGENCIES

- ✓ Yellow Jackets and other asshole 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 300 riders out on course, the chances of a nest being disturbed are pretty high. It has happened before. 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/Epi-pens you may need and please be prepared.
- ✓ We do not have a shuttle service for battered or tired 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 or 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 if they are comfortable with you riding in their car. **AID STATION CREWS CANNOT LEAVE MID-RACE TO GIVE YOU A RIDE BACK TO THE START AND IF IT IS WET OR MUDDY, THEY MAY BE HESITANT TO OFFER YOU A RIDE. HAVE A BACK UP PLAN.**
- ✓ Course sweeps will follow the last racer, ensuring no participants are left on the course. **IF YOU TAKE A RIDE FROM THE SWEEP VEHICLE, IT WILL BE A VERY SLOW RIDE BACK TO MONTALUCE – THE SWEEP VEHICLE CANNOT LEAVE THE COURSE TO TAKE YOU BACK.**
- ✓ 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, flattened 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.
8. E-bikes are not allowed in any categories of the Fool's Gold Mountain Bike Race. Do NOT start the race on an e-bike thinking you will just ride the course and be unofficial. E-bikes are not allowed on USFS trails and having participants on e-bikes jeopardizes our permit with the USFS.

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 inquiries, including placement and class considerations, must be made at the venue during the protest period. Once the protest period is over, results become final.