

THE MUNGA - BURNING QUESTIONS ANSWERED



After the post-launch dust had settled, *The Munga*, cycling's most talked about new race, was left with some key questions being asked. Race Director, Alex Harris, who seemed eager to allay high levels of wariness about the event answers the questions here:



Some seem to think *The Munga* is using its entry fees to fund the prize money and the race costs. And that if the event doesn't get enough entries, it won't take place. Is this true?

Not at all. I guess in this day and age we've become so used to major sports events being attached to a corporate sponsorship and branding. With *The Munga*, we secured the money to fund the running of the event AND the prize money before launching it. That way we could focus on building *The Munga* as a brand from the outset. It may change in the future, but for now, *The Munga* is called just that and the funding required has been secured.

With prize money at the level of *The Munga*, it is life changing for the winners. We therefore decided to get external certification from our Legal Team at Eversheds (SA) confirming that the prize money is not just a novel concept to create race excitement, but rather a secured reality.

"As legal counsel to *The Munga*, we can confirm that \$1 million has

been guaranteed for the purposes of race prize money," confirmed Wynne Kossuth at Eversheds (SA) in a recent media statement.

***The Munga* is an 'unsupported race'. Can you clarify what this means?**

In order to make the race as fair as possible for all participants, we've made a rule that there can be no outside support for competitors. This means no team support back-up like you get at most races where a mechanic, a masseuse, a manager and, in some cases, a chef, look after their riders. Once *The Munga* start-gun fires, no interaction between participants and outside support is permitted. That is what we mean by 'unsupported'. *The Munga* itself is a fully catered race and will provide all of these support elements for the riders – equally to all participants to make it fair. We will supply quality food, qualified sports massage therapists and comfortable sleeping and ablution facilities at each of the five race villages. The only thing we won't have are mechanics. Riders will have to do their own repairs, but we'll have a fully stocked workshop

at each race village for this purpose.

Some people think that you have what it takes to win *The Munga*. But you're not competing are you?

Ha ha! I wish I was competing! But as the organiser, no, I won't compete in *The Munga*. It's got all the elements that I think are needed in a real tough, rewarding bike race, so I'm sure that all the participants will create great moments and memories from the event. And that will be rewarding for me.

How will you prevent teams from collaborating during the race?

This is one of the most important areas that we will focus on because it's where there's a high chance of riders taking chances. The drafting rule covers this. There will be no drafting permitted whatsoever of any rider other than your teammate after the first Race Station. A rider that's closer than five metres to another rider from another team will be deemed to be drafting. Each team gets one warning and then disqualification if there's a second offence. We feel this should ensure teams will be unable to collaborate while moving.

The full race rules can be downloaded from www.themunga.com

THE WORLD MEETS THE MUNGA

The 2014 UCI Marathon World Championships took place in Pietermaritzburg at the end of June and *The Munga* was there in force!

The Munga organisers saw the event, which was broadcast live via livestreaming across the world, as a good marketing platform to grow local and global awareness and stimulate entries for the 2014 debut edition of the 'World's Toughest Race'.

Where ever you looked, there was *The Munga* – all 510 riders got a copy of *TREAD* Issue 29 when they registered, a *The Munga* bookmark indicating the article describing the launch of the race.

There was *The Munga* branding aplenty in the race village; every podium finisher over the two days of racing got a bottle of

Waterford Estate wine with a *The Munga* promo decal on it. *The Munga* logo was prominent on the livestreaming broadcast and *TREAD* editor, Sean Badenhorst, was asked to be '*The Munga Man*' who did live video interviews for the livestreaming feed with team crew members out on the race route during the Elite men and women's race.

"I want everyone here to have no doubt about what *The Munga* is; I want everyone that watches the event on livestreaming around the world to know about *The Munga*," said Michael Griffin of *The Munga* organising team.

And to complete *The Munga* message, a lucky draw *The Munga* entry worth US\$10000 was given out at the Rainbow Challenge

on the Saturday, won by Team Mutual Safes' James Ross and Nicky Booyens. Then on the Sunday, Annika Langvad, winner of the Elite women's XCM World title was presented with her *The Munga* entry, a gesture by *The Munga* organisers to encourage the participation of a strong women's team in the inaugural event.

"We don't have a women's category at *The Munga*, but we believe that a strong women's team or even a mixed team could challenge for the podium places. In endurance events, women have proven they're able to out-perform all but the fastest few men. If you have the world's strongest female marathon racer on your team, there's a good chance you're in with a shot at the top three," said Griffin.



Far left: James Ross and Nicky Booyens won *The Munga* lucky draw entry.

Left: Annika Langvad won the world title and an entry to *The Munga*.

Below" There was no chance anyone at the UCI Marathon World Champs couldn't have known about *The Munga*.

