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A. INTRODUCTION TO THE EPIC SERIES RACE RULES

1 Included Epic Series Races

These rules (the "**Rules**") apply to the mountain bike multi-day stage races (each, a "**Race**") that collectively constitute the Epic Series™ (the "**Series**"). The Races in the Epic Series™ are:

- Absa Cape Epic® (South Africa)
- Andorra Epic® (Andorra)
- Swiss Epic® (Switzerland)
- FNB Wines2Whales® (South Africa)
- The Epic Series may announce other races from time to time.

2 Structure, Applicability, and Interpretation of the Rules; Certain Defined Terms

2.1 Sections. The Rules are set out in the following four sections:

2.1.1 **Section A** Introduction to the Epic Series Race Rules

2.1.2 **Section B** General Rules – Applicable to All Riders

2.1.3 **Section C** Penalties & Fines

2.1.4 **Section D** Rules Applicable to Elite Category

2.2 Applicability. Where indicated herein, specific Rules apply only to a particular Race, and specific Rules apply only to the Elite Category.

2.3 Completeness; Later Updates. The Rules are intended to be definitive and complete. Unless the Rules specifically and expressly incorporate any rules or regulations from an external source (see, for example, **Rule 36**), such external rules and regulations do not apply to the Races. The Rules may, however, be updated and amended from time to time. The version of the Rules in force on the start date of a Race in any year will remain applicable to that staging of such Race in such year.

2.4 Non-Compliance. Failure to comply with any of the Rules will result in a penalty, which could include a rider's disqualification in certain circumstances. The penalties for violations of specific Rules are set out in **Section C** below. For violations of any other Rules, the penalties will be at the discretion of the Race Jury.

2.5 Interpretation of Rules; Finality. The interpretation of any Rule (including evaluation of any protest, any other matter relating to the Rules, or any other matter related to participation in the Race, whether the Rules address such matter) will be made by the Race Jury, and will be final and binding on all Race participants.

2.6 Decisions. Unless otherwise provided for in the applicable Rule, decisions of whether a Rule is violated will be made (a) by the Race Director or race official, where the decision requires, as a practical matter, to be made immediately or promptly during a Race stage, or (b) by the Race Jury, in all other cases (including where the decision is to be made after or before a stage).

2.7 Language. If the Rules are translated into any language other than English, the English version will govern and control in the event of any conflict with the translated version.

2.8 Section Headings. The section, subsection, paragraph, and item headings, subheadings, and captions shown in the Rules are for convenience of reference only. They will not affect or be utilised in construing or interpreting any word, phrase, provision, section in, or all or any portion of, any Rule or set of Rules.

2.9 Certain Defined Terms. For purposes of the Rules, the following capitalised terms are defined as follows:

- "**DNF**" means the status of "did not finish the applicable stage."
- "**DNS**" means the status of "did not start the applicable stage." A rider whose status is DNS, by definition, also has DNF status.
- "**DSQ**" means "disqualified".
- "**GC**" means "General Classification", calculated by time as accumulated stage results.
- "**Organisers**" means the Organisers that represent the owner of the Race.
- **Outcast Rider**" means any Elite Category rider whose team member is no longer in the Race and continues to complete the remaining stages, as set out in Rule 34.
- "**Race Director**" means the primary supervisory Race Operations staff member employed or contracted by the Organisers.
- "**Race Jury**" is defined as follows: If the Race is not UCI-registered, the Race Jury consists of the persons appointed by the Organisers in their sole discretion. If the Race is UCI-registered, the Race Jury consists of the Race Director, acting jointly with the commissaire(s) appointed by the UCI and/or by the national cycling federation of the Race's host country.
- "**UCI**" means the Union Cycliste Internationale.

B. GENERAL RULES – APPLICABLE TO ALL RIDERS

3 Riders; Registration; Briefing

3.1 Eligibility.

3.1.1 The minimum age to participate is 19 years old as of 31 December of the year in which the Race takes place.

3.1.2 At Race registration, each rider must:

(a) produce a valid, government-issued identification confirming the rider's identity,

(b) meet all requirements of the Race's national cycling federation (including but not limited to licensing and/or insurance requirements), and

(c) have completed the rider's medical form, if required by the Organisers.

3.2 Race Registration.

3.2.1 Riders must register as a team.

3.2.2 All riders must have registered by the registration cut-off time indicated on the Race website by the day before the race's first stage (or prologue, if applicable).

3.2.3 No category changes will be permitted after Race Registration closes.

3.3 Team Categories.

3.3.1 Each Race offers several riding categories based on gender and age.

(a) Elite Men & Women (Professional riders registered with a UCI Elite racing license)

(b) Open Men & Women (19 - 39 years old)

(c) Master Men & Women (40 – 49 years old)

(d) Grand Master Men & Women (50 – 59 years old)

(e) Great Grand Master Men & Women (60+ years old)

(f) Mixed (19+ years old, one male and one female rider)

3.3.2 Age is calculated as of 31 December of the year the Race takes place, and the age of the younger team member determines the team category.

3.4 Special Jerseys.

3.4.1 In addition to the team categories, the Races may feature one or more 'special jerseys'.

3.4.2 Absa African Jersey. Applicable at the Absa Cape Epic only, the Absa African Jersey is open to:

(a) Men's teams racing in all race categories

(b) Women's teams racing in the Elite women's category

(c) Provided that they meet the following additional criteria:

- both riders must have a valid African passport.
- both riders must choose their African nationality during online registration. No changes will be permitted after Race registration closes.

3.4.3 Exxaro Jersey. Applicable at the Absa Cape Epic and FNB Wines2Whales only, the Exxaro Jersey is open to all teams meeting the following criteria:

(a) both riders must be Historically Disadvantaged South Africans (HDSAs). As used herein, "Historically Disadvantaged South Africans" means, with respect to any Race in South Africa, any person, category of persons or community disadvantaged by unfair discrimination before the interim Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1993 (Act No. 200 of 1993) came into operation.

(b) both riders must be 26 years or younger in the Men's Open Category and 30 years or younger in the Women's Open category on 31 December of the year the Race takes place.

3.5 Briefing. A pre-race briefing will occur at the time and place indicated on the Epic Series App; the briefing may be online. Each rider is responsible for knowing the content of all Race briefings (including, without limitation, all nightly Race briefings). Non-attendance at any Race briefing, for any reason, will not excuse any ignorance of the contents of the briefing.

3.6 Award Ceremonies. Podium finishers and GC category leaders must be present at the finish line awards ceremony (if applicable) and the evening awards ceremony (if applicable) as advertised in the event programme, including the final ceremony.

4 Medical

4.1 Responsibility. Each rider must ensure they are in good health and well-trained for the Race.

4.2 Medical Removal. The Organisers reserve the right to prevent a rider from starting or continuing the Race upon receiving medical advice from an official Race medic or any other medical doctor recognised by the Organisers. The decision of the Organisers in this regard is final.

5 Bicycles

5.1 Responsibility. Each rider is responsible for maintaining their bike for the duration of the race.

5.2 Race-Ready.

5.2.1 Only riders whose mountain bikes are, in the opinion of the Race Jury, in good working order and race-ready at the start of each stage will be allowed to start that stage.

5.2.2 For purposes of Rule 5.2, "**race-ready**" means the following:

5.2.2.1 The front number board is securely fitted and is always visible from the front.

5.2.2.2 The frame marking is displayed as per instructions received at registration.

5.2.2.3 The bike is in safe working order, as determined at the discretion of the Race Jury.

5.2.2.4 Standard mountain bike handlebars must be used with bar ends plugged and no sharp or jagged edges.

5.3 Propelling. Bikes may be propelled only through a chain (or belt) without any assistance (electrical, mechanical or otherwise), subject to Rule 22.3. Note that some Races may add an e-bike category, and event-specific e-bike rules will be applicable.

5.4 Tandem Bikes. Tandem bikes complying with the requirements set out in Rule 5.2 above are allowed, although not recommended, and require an extra level of rider proficiency. Each rider will be allocated a number board that must be displayed on the bicycle.

5.5 Same Frame.

5.5.1 Riders are required to complete the Race on the same frame.

5.5.2 Should a frame change between stages be required due to mechanical failure, approval must be obtained from the Race Jury.

5.5.3 However, it is permitted for a rider to receive a bicycle frame from another rider in the same category during a stage (excluding a prologue or time trial), provided that the transponder and number board are also swapped.

6 Helmets and Attire

6.1 Helmet Requirement. Each rider must always wear a helmet while riding during the Race.

6.2 Helmet Standards. All helmets must comply with international safety standards.

6.3 Proper Cycling Attire.

6.3.1 Appropriate cycling attire must always be worn, including a cycling jersey and bib shorts.

6.3.2 Sleeveless jerseys are not permitted.

6.4 Identical Team Jerseys. Both team members must ride in identical cycling jerseys at all times.

6.5 Prohibited Jerseys. Unless otherwise expressly approved under the Rules, no rider may wear any original or replica version of a leader jersey contemplated in Rule 6.6 and/or any Outcast Rider jersey contemplated in Rule 34.1, including any such jersey from a prior year's Race.

6.6 Leader Jerseys. If a rider qualifies for a leader or special jersey, they must wear it during the applicable stage(s).

6.7 Restriction on Logo Use.

6.7.1 No rider may display or reproduce the official Race or Series logo, or any derivative thereof on any riding attire, the bike or equipment, and/or team clothing without the written approval of the Organisers (which approval may be withheld in its sole discretion), which should be obtained *before* any such riding attire or team clothing being manufactured.

6.7.2 An official race rider badge will be available for registered teams.

7 Compulsory Equipment

7.1 Race number board. Every rider is required to race with the number board issued to them at race registration.

7.2 Tracking Device. If issued by the Organisers, each rider (or, as applicable, each team) must carry it.

7.3 Emergency Device. If issued by the Organisers, each rider (or, as applicable, each team) must carry an emergency SOS device.

7.4 Additional Compulsory Equipment. Races may require riders to carry additional compulsory equipment, such as bad weather gear. Any such additional requirements will be communicated via the applicable Epic Series App.

8 Team Riding

8.1 Teams of Two. Teams must consist of two riders, who must race together, subject to the Rider Separation Limit, for the entire Race distance (e.g., X-1 & X-2).

8.2 Rider Separation Limit. The maximum time separation allowed between team members at any time during the Race is two (2) minutes. A Separated Rider is any rider who, at any time during the Race, has been separated from their team member more than the Rider Separation Limit.

8.2.1 Compliance will be checked and enforced at the start and finish of each stage and at various designated checkpoints during the stage, but it may also be checked and enforced at any point during the race.

8.2.2 Compliance with the Rider Separation Limit may be checked and enforced more than once during any stage, and penalties may be applied to each occurrence of rider separation outside the Rider Separation Limit during a stage. In other words, riders can be subject to multiple Rider Separation Limit violations during the same stage.

8.2.3 The Rider Separation Limit will not apply if one rider on the team continues ahead or doubles back solely to request or obtain assistance (medical or technical), provided that during such time, the waiting rider does not advance their position on the course until the assistance-seeking rider returns to the waiting rider's position.

8.3 Rogue Riding. Riders who either ride on public trails without a permit or trespass on private land.

8.3.1 Riders are only permitted to train on trails open to the public, and it is the rider's responsibility to ensure they buy the necessary permits.

8.3.2 No rider may trespass, at any time of the year, on land that is not open to the public for mountain biking and that forms part of the Race route of any edition of the Race.

8.4 Doubling Back. A rider can "double back" on the route at any time to rejoin their team member or to request or obtain assistance (medical or technical), provided that they do not endanger any other rider.

8.5 Unsafe Conduct. Any rider's action on the course should not impede the safety of other riders or the public during the race.

9 Rider Identification

9.1 Displaying Race Numbers.

9.1.1 Both riders in a team must display their race numbers at all times.

9.1.2 The front race number board must remain firmly fixed on the handlebar, may not be obscured by cables or other items, and must be legible from the front.

9.1.3 Race back numbers (if provided) must be attached to the rider at all times in a visible position, either on the rider's jersey

or on the back of their hydration pack. A rider will not be penalised if their number is obscured while wearing a jacket.

9.1.4 Race number boards may not be modified or mutilated in any way, including, without limitation, cutting, bending, trimming, adding stickers, or removing existing stickers. Replacement number boards and timing chips will be at the rider's cost.

9.1.5 No official sponsor logos may be removed from race numbers and/or be obscured in any way.

9.1.6 No personal sponsor logos may be added to the race numbers.

10 Time Trial/Prologue

10.1 Applicability. The Race may feature a prologue, and one or more of the stages of the Race may take the form of a time trial. Unless otherwise set out in the Rules, each Rule that applies to any "stage" of the Race will apply equally to a time trial/prologue.

10.2 Participation. Participation in the time trial/prologue is compulsory for all teams.

10.3 Results Count. A team's time in the time trial/prologue counts towards the team's GC time and GC ranking.

10.4 Physical and Technical Assistance. Teams may not give physical or technical assistance to another team during a prologue or time trial. (e.g. Team A and Team B)

10.5 Drafting.

10.5.1 Riders may only draft behind their team partners (e.g., X-1 & X-2).

10.5.2 If a team catches another team, a visible gap of at least 5 metres must be maintained between themselves and the other team/s.

10.6 Start Times.

10.6.1 Each team will receive a pre-allocated start time for the time trial/prologue. It is each rider's responsibility to know their start time. In case of a prologue, the start times will be advertised via the Epic Series App. In case of a time trial after stage 1, the start times will also be published in the Epic Series App by posting the previous stage's results.

10.6.2 Riders must report at the entrance to the start chute at least 15 minutes before the allocated start time for the time trial/prologue.

10.6.3 If a team misses its time trial/prologue start time, they will be allowed to start at the discretion of the Race Jury, but the team's time for the time trial/prologue will be measured from the team's originally allocated start time.

10.7 Maximum Time. The Maximum Stage Time for the time trial/prologue will be measured individually for each team, commencing at the team's actual start time.

10.8 Course Practice. The Organisers may provide a course practice for a time trial/prologue, but are not required to. No riders are allowed on the course outside the official practice times (if applicable) or on Race Day before their allocated start time.

11 Stage Starts

11.1 Chute Opening Time. The start chutes open fifteen (15) to twenty-five (25) minutes before the start of each stage unless communicated otherwise.

11.2 Start Batches.

11.2.1 Start batches will be allocated according to overall ranking in the Race (as indicated in the seeding index), and the Organisers may allocate different (i.e., "staggered") start times for each start batch. Any reference to start times in the Rules will be the start time applicable to the rider's start batch.

11.2.2 Riders must enter the start batch as a team with their bikes, and once they are entered, they must remain in the start batch with their bikes.

11.2.3 The start batches will close five (5) to ten (10) minutes before their start time. Teams arriving late will start in a later start batch.

11.3 Call Up. In start batches where provision for a call-up has been made, eligible teams are entitled to line up at the front of their respective start batch. Such teams must assemble in the call-up area no later than fifteen (15) minutes before their start time.

12 Route and Stages; Finishing

12.1 Completing Routes.

12.1.1 Riders must complete all stages' full, final designated route and distance, including the time trial and/or prologue.

12.1.2 Only riders who complete each stage within the Maximum Stage Time will qualify as official Race finishers.

12.1.3 A rider must always follow the official route, obey the directions of the course marshals, and may not take any shortcuts or take any other advantage of a similar nature against other riders.

12.1.4 Each rider is responsible for following the official route.

12.2 Route/Distance Variances. The actual Race route or distance may vary from the published or briefed distance.

12.3 Exit and Re-entry. Riders who exit the route for any reason must re-enter the course at the same point from which they exited.

12.4 Activity Outside of Route. Any walking, running, or riding by a rider outside the Race Route that is carried out without the intention of promptly re-joining the Race Route, or any other activity in violation of the Rules that takes place outside of the marked Race Route area, is not permitted.

12.5 Finishing on Foot. Riders may cross any stage's finish line on foot, provided they have their complete bike with them.

12.6 GPS Data. With respect to the Absa Cape Epic and the FNB Wines2Whales, no rider may upload or distribute any GPS-based files of the Race route at any time (including but not limited to uploads onto online platforms such as Strava) unless expressly authorised in writing by the Organisers.

13 Prohibited Equipment

13.1 Audio. The use of earphones/earbuds or two-way radios (i.e., 'walkie-talkies') is not allowed during the Race.

13.2 Cameras.

13.2.1 Cameras (including video cameras) may be mounted on the rider's bike but not on the rider themselves (including the rider's helmet or chest).

13.2.2 Cameras mounted on the rider's bike must be positioned in a safe location and manner (and otherwise in compliance with any applicable UCI regulations) and cannot protrude an unreasonable (in the Race Jury's opinion) distance from the bike (for example, no 'selfie' sticks).

13.2.3 Should a camera be used during a stage, the Race organiser has the right to obtain the footage.

13.3 Handlebars. Drop or modified handlebars (e.g. road or gravel type bars), clip-on extensions, aerobars, inner bar ends, or non-commercially available bars are prohibited.

13.4 Other Equipment. The Race Jury may at any time prohibit any other item of equipment (other than essential cycling equipment) at its discretion, and riders shall comply with any such prohibition at all times.

13.5 Inspection. The Race Jury reserves the right to inspect, at any time, any rider's bike, apparel, gear, equipment, components, and
accessories used in the Race to determine compliance with the Rules.

14 Race Timing; Late Starts

14.1 Transponders. Each rider must wear their transponder at all times during the Race. No rider may carry more than one (1) transponder at any time, and no rider may pass their transponder on to anyone else at any time.

14.2 Advertised/Recorded Times. Only team times will be advertised, but individual rider times will be recorded for purposes of determining compliance with the Rider Separation Limit.

14.3 Timing Start. Timing will start at the applicable start time in each stage, as set out in Rule 11.2. The start line will remain open fifteen (15) minutes after the final start batch.

14.4 Late Starts.

14.4.1 Any rider who cannot make their start time must report to the Race Commissaire at the start line to request a late start.

14.4.2 No rider is allowed to start late without approval. If no approval for a late start is given, the rider will be considered a DNS and, therefore, a DNF for that stage.

14.5 Non-Starting. Any rider who does not start a stage will automatically be deemed DNS and, therefore, a DNF for that stage.

14.6 Team Finish Time. The team time is the time at which the second team member passes the stage finish line. All finish times recorded by the timekeeper shall be rounded down to the nearest one-tenth of a second.

14.7 General Classification. The general classification is based on the team's cumulative rounded finish time (as per 14.6) for each stage. Where two or more teams make the same time in the general classification, the classifications obtained in each stage are added, and, as a last resort, the place obtained in the last stage is taken into consideration.

14.8 Effect of Time Penalties. All time penalties under the Rules will be applied at the discretion of the Race Jury.

14.9 Stage Time Adjustments. The Race Jury reserves the right to adjust the race time of teams who stop to assist injured riders on the route.

15 Maximum Stage Times

15.1 Definition. The maximum amount of time allowed (as determined by the Organisers) to officially complete any stage of the Race. Riders who finish outside this time will be classified as "Over Time Limit" (OTL).

15.2 General. Maximum Stage Times are determined according to the length of each stage and the terrain to be covered but may be adjusted at any time by the Race Director according to Rule 15.3. Maximum Stage Times will be available on the Epic Series App. The maximum stage time will not be adjusted for any rider permitted to start late and/or who started in a start batch with a later start time than their own.

15.3 Formula. The Maximum Stage Time for each stage of the Race will be greater than

(a) the Maximum Stage Time advertised for such stage or

(b) double the 'winning' time for such stage (i.e., the time of the first finisher team for that particular stage).

15.4 No Extensions to Maximum Stage Times. In all cases of maintenance and repair of bicycles or other equipment, riders are required to complete the full distance of the stage and must complete the stage within the Maximum Stage Time. Time spent on maintenance and repair will thus not entitle a rider to any extension of the Maximum Stage Time.

15.5 Time Penalties Disregarded. No time penalties under the Rules will be considered in determining whether the rider has exceeded the Maximum Stage Time.

15.6 Intermediate Cut-Off Points.

15.6.1 The Race Director may, at any time, designate intermediate cut-off points on each stage, which must be reached by specific times. The Race Director may also impose additional Cut-Off Points and Cut-Off Times due to safety reasons.

15.6.2 Any teams that fail or will, in the sole opinion of the Race Director, be unable to reach any Cut-Off Point by the applicable Cut-Off Time will be prevented from continuing to ride, removed from the course, and classified as DNF for that stage.

15.6.3 The Race Jury has the discretion to waive a Cut-Off Time in special circumstances, such as mechanical problems or injured/sick team members, if the Race Jury believes the team or rider will ultimately be able to reach the next Cut-Off Point by the applicable next Cut-Off Time (or, as the case may be, to reach the finish of the stage within the Maximum Stage Time).

15.7 Notice of Change. Any change to the Maximum Stage Time and Intermediate Cut-Off Points will be communicated to riders at the stage briefing the night before the relevant stage. If applicable, the adjusted Maximum Stage Time and Intermediate Cut-Off Points will be signposted at the active water points/service stations once the first finishers have crossed the stage's finish line. If applicable, the adjusted Maximum Stage Time will be communicated via the Epic Series App and at the Race Office for retrospective adjustments.

16 Blue Board Rider

16.1 Definition. A rider who has failed to complete a stage within the Maximum Stage Time but is permitted to continue the Race. (Not applicable at FNB Wines2Whales.)

16.2 First Shortfall. Any rider who does not complete a stage within the Maximum Stage Time for the first time will be classified as a Blue Board Rider. Blue Board Riders may continue the Race (i.e., they may start the following stage) but will not be classified as official Race finishers. They will be classified as a BR on the official results.

16.3 Second Shortfall. If any Blue Board Rider again fails to finish a stage within the Maximum Stage Time, they will not be allowed to continue the Race (i.e., they will not be allowed to start the next stage or any subsequent stage).

16.4 Effect on the Team Member. Any rider whose team member is a Blue Board Rider (or who exits the Race under Rule 16.2) will (provided that such rider has completed all stages within the Maximum Stage Times) be entitled to continue riding in the Race and may qualify as an Individual Finisher, but will not qualify for any rankings.

17 Abandoning or Cancellation of a Stage by Organisers

17.1 Organisers' Discretion. The Organisers may abandon, shorten, or cancel any stage at any time, in their sole discretion, due to safety concerns or any other reason they consider appropriate. In case of an abandoned or shortened stage, the following Rules will apply:

17.1.1 If three teams have completed the stage before it is abandoned, it will be classified as an official stage of the Race and count towards the GC results. Otherwise, it will not constitute an official stage and will be disregarded for purposes of the GC results.

17.1.2 Where an abandoned stage will count towards the GC results, each rider who is on the course (and otherwise not disqualified or withdrawn) when the stage is abandoned will be allocated a projected stage-finish time estimated by the Race Jury, where such estimate is calculated taking into account the stage winner's time, and based on the rider's position in the field at the time the stage is abandoned or the last timing point or other relevant point (e.g., Cut-Off Point, official water point, etc.).

17.1.3 Riders will be classified as DNF if they withdraw from the stage or do not reach any Cut-Off Point by the applicable time before the stage is abandoned or shortened.

18 Roadways; Compliance

18.1 Closed Roads. Some sections of the route (including some public roads) may be closed to non-race-related traffic. All must respect their closure.

18.2 Shared Roads. Riders might not always have exclusive use of certain public or private roads (or other pathways) during the Race.

18.3 Traffic Regulations. All traffic regulations, including riding on the correct side of the road, must be complied with at all times.

18.4 Marshal Instructions. Riders must strictly adhere to all Race Route-related instructions from Race marshals.

18.5 Railway Crossings.

18.5.1 It is forbidden to cross level crossings when either the barrier is down or closing, or the warning signal rings or flashes, or when told to stop by a race official.

18.5.2 Where riders are held up at a level crossing (or similar situation, e.g., road crossings, obstacles on the route), the Race Jury has the discretion to classify this as a race incident or award a time bonus.

18.5.3 Any time bonus awarded will be applied to GC results and will not affect stage results.

19 Checkpoints

19.1 Checking Separation Limit. The Rider Separation Limit will be checked at multiple checkpoints for each stage.

19.2 Non-Detections. Teams that are not detected when passing the checkpoints may be disqualified.

19.3 Hidden Checkpoints. The location of the checkpoints will not be published, and the Organisers may utilise hidden checkpoints.

20 Nutrition and Hydration

20.1 Responsibility. Riders are responsible for carrying enough water and nutrition with them during the Race.

20.2 Water Points/Service Stations and Use. The Organisers will provide water at official water points/service stations on the route, intended only for drinking. No excessive water use for other purposes will be permitted at official water points/service stations.

20.3 Minimum Water Limit. Organisers may enforce a minimum amount of water a rider must carry when leaving a water point/service station in extreme weather conditions.

21 Drafting

21.1 Drafting.

21.1.1 Riders may draft behind team members (e.g., X-1 & X-2) and teams in the same race category but not behind teams in different race categories, Outcast Riders, or any person who is not an active participant in the Race.

21.1.2 No other form of drafting is permitted, including but not limited to drafting behind private vehicles, motorcycles, trucks, or official Race vehicles.

22 Assistance

22.1 Outside Assistance. No outside assistance is permitted under any circumstances. For purposes hereof, "outside assistance" includes Physical or Technical Assistance by any person other than

(a) their team member participating in the Race,

(b) a fellow rider participating in the Race, or

(c) an accredited Race crew member (provided the crew member's assistance is within the scope of their official duties for the Race).

22.1.1 Support Vehicles. No escort or seconding vehicles are permitted on the Race route unless the Organisers provide such vehicles and display the relevant accreditation. However, supporters may drive their vehicles along public roads (only if they are open during the Race) to reach vantage points to support riders vocally, provided they do not assist riders.

22.2 Technical Assistance. The sharing of bike parts and accessories (including the swapping of bike frames), and assistance with maintenance and repair, is only permitted

(a) between teams in the same race category,

(b) or an accredited Race crew member (provided the race crew member's assistance is within the scope of their official duties within their designated zones).

22.2.1 Neutral Support Zones. Some races offer technical assistance for riders at neutral tech support zones along the race route, and riders will be informed in the Race briefing.

22.2.2 Spare Parts. Any spare parts must be paid at the time received – either by credit card or cash.

22.3 Physical Assistance. Direct contact between riders of the same team (e.g., X-1 & X-2).

22.3.1 Towing/Pushing. Towing between or pushing of riders is permitted by direct hand contact (e.g., hand-to-hand or hand-to-bike), but it is prohibited using any mechanical or physical devices (including, without limitation, a rope, tube, or cable).

23 Withdrawals

23.1 Duty to Immediately Inform. Teams or riders that cannot continue the Race must immediately inform the Race office. This can be done at the Race start, the finish, water points/service stations, or by calling the emergency hotline specified in the Race registration packs and/or the rider accreditation wristband.

23.2 Cost of Search and Rescue. If any rider or team fails to inform the Race office of their/its withdrawal, and if a search and rescue operation is initiated for such rider or team, such rider or team (as the case may be) will be responsible for the cost of such search and rescue.

23.3 Remaining Team Member. If riders cannot continue the Race, their team member will be entitled to continue riding subject to Rule 16.4.

24 Code of Conduct

24.1 Sportsmanship. All riders must display good sportsmanship at all times and must not use offensive or abusive language during the Race, act in an unsporting manner, or be disrespectful to anyone, including without limitation the members of the Race Jury, other riders, Race crew members or service providers (e.g., course marshals, medics, water-point crew, etc.), or spectators.

24.2 Littering; Detouring; Smoking. Riders must always respect the environment, and no littering or damage to the environment will be tolerated. In particular, but without limiting the generality of this Rule, the following actions are specifically prohibited: throwing away water bottles, packaging, or bike spares along the Race route, deviating from the Race route, and smoking.

24.3 Restricted Areas. No rider and/or team supporter may access any restricted and/or prohibited area in connection with the Race (including without limitation any such areas in connection with the Race route, the Race village, etc.).

24.4 Shortcuts. No shortcuts will be tolerated at any time. The course must be ridden as it was intended to be ridden.

25 Race Protests

25.1 Formal Requirements. Any protests related to the Race must be submitted to the Race office in writing on the official protest sheets provided in the Race office.

25.2 Deadline. Race protests must be submitted within two (2) hours of the preliminary results for the relevant stage being posted.

25.3 Cash Deposit. Before a protest will be considered, the protesting rider must make a cash deposit to the Race office, along with the submitted protest. If the protest is upheld, the deposit will be refunded. If the protest is not upheld, the deposit will be forfeited and donated for trail development.

25.3.1 Absa Cape Epic – R300

25.3.2 Andorra Epic – EUR 30

25.3.3 Swiss Epic – CHF 30

25.3.4 FNB Wines2Whales – R300

26 Sanctioned Persons

26.1 Sanctioned Persons. Any person who is under provisional or final sanction by the UCI, a national federation, or by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) is prohibited from participating or being involved in the Race, whether as a rider, team manager, official or in any other capacity whatsoever. If, after having accepted the rider's entry and/or team manager or official's participation in the Race, the Organisers become aware that such rider, team manager, or official is a Person Under Sanction, such entry or right of participation shall immediately be cancelled.

26.2 Right to Test. The Organisers reserve the right to test all riders for doping and the use of any illegal substances, and bicycles/ equipment for mechanical doping. Consenting to such testing is a condition to competing in the Race.

26.3 Test Results. All test results will be forwarded to the UCI and/or applicable national cycling federations, and positive results will lead to penalties as set out in Section C below.

26.4 Disposition of Prize Money. If Race prize money is paid to a rider who is later disqualified from the official Race results due to a doping violation (or any other violation), the Organisers may be unable to recover any such monies from such rider. Accordingly, the Race (and the Organisers) cannot be held liable by any party for damages suffered as a result of the loss of any such prize money (including without limitation any rider who would have received the prize money but for the doping-violation rider). The Organisers reserve the right to remit any recovered prize money (or any portion thereof) to the Anti-Doping Organisation applicable to the Race, which Anti-Doping Organisation may allocate such funds as it, in its sole discretion, deems fit.

27 Suspension/Ban from Race or Series

27.1 Discretion to Sanction. In addition to any other penalties available under these Rules, the Organisers may suspend any rider for any fraudulent conduct or representation or for illegal transfer of entries, repeated Rule violations, intentional course-cutting or dangerous or unsportsmanlike conduct. Such sanctions may be imposed for any time period up to and including the rider's lifetime and may be imposed either with respect to any Race or the Series.

C. PENALTIES & FINES

28 Penalties for Violations of Rules

Rule # and/or Offence	First Offence	Second Offence	Third Offence	Remarks
Section B Penalties - Applicable to All Categories				
3.2 False information in Race registration	Denied Start			
3.6 Award Ceremonies	5 min 30 min for Elite	30 min 1 hr for Elite	1 hr DSQ for Elite	
5.2 Race Ready	Denied Start	DSQ		
5.5 Same Frame	30 min	1 hr		
6.1 Helmet Requirement	Denied Start			
6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5 Helmets & Attire	Verbal warning	1 hr	DSQ	
6.6 Leader Jerseys	30 min	1 hr	DSQ	
7 Compulsory Equipment	15 min	1 hr	DSQ	
8.2 Rider Separation Limit	30 min 1 hr for Elite	1 hr DSQ for Elite	DSQ	Penalty will not apply if the team member is DNF.
8.3.1 Riding without a permit	30 min	DSQ		Time penalty will be applied to GC results after the first stage.
8.3.2 Trespassing on private land	Denied Start			Depending on the severity of the violation, lifetime ban may be issued.
8.5 Unsafe Conduct	30 min	1 hr	DSQ	
9.1 Displaying Race Numbers	Verbal warning CHF 300 for Elite	30 min	DSQ	
10.8 Course Practice	1 hr	DSQ		
11.2.2, 11.2.3 Start Batch Loading	5 min	15 min	30 min	
11.3 Call-Up	5 min	15 min	30 min	
12.4 Activity Outside of Route	1 hr	DSQ		
12.6 GPS Data	30 min	1 hr	DSQ	
13 Prohibited Equipment	1 hr	DSQ		
14.1 Transponders	DSQ			
18.4 Marshal Instructions	15 min	1 hr	DSQ	A serious first offence can result in higher time penalty or DSQ.
21 Drafting	1 hr	DSQ		
22.1 Outside Assistance	1 hr	DSQ		
22.2 Technical Assistance	30 min	1 hr	DSQ	
22.3 Physical Assistance	30 min	1 hr	DSQ	
24.1 Sportsmanship	1 hr	DSQ		A serious first offence can result in higher time penalty or DSQ.
24.2 Littering	1 hr	DSQ		
24.3 Restricted Areas	Verbal warning	15 min	1 hr	
24.4 Shortcuts				At the discretion of the Race Jury.
26 Sanctioned Persons	Denied Start			
Section D Penalties - Applicable to Elite Category only				
31.1 Kit Design	1 hr	DSQ		
31.2 Team Managers Meeting	CHF 500			
32.3.1 Sharing of Pro Tech Equipment	DSQ			
34 Outcast Riders	CHF 300	DSQ		

D. RULES APPLICABLE TO ELITE CATEGORY RIDERS

29 Applicability

29.1 Elite Category Only. The Rules in this Section D apply only to Elite Category Riders.

29.2 Definition. "**Elite Category Rider**" means a rider who is (and whose team member is) registered for the Race in the Elite Category in accordance with Rule 31.

29.3 Inapplicable Rules. All Rules apply to Elite Category, except as set out in the table below, and except any Rule that expressly excludes applicability to Elite Category.

Rule In Amateur Category	Rule Applicable to Elite Category
3.5 Race Briefings	31.2 Pre-Event Team Manager Meetings
6.4 Identical Team Jerseys	31.1 Team Kit/ Jerseys
16 Blue Board Riders	33.1 Exceeding Maximum Stage Time
5.4 Tandem bikes	No corresponding applicable Rule
23.3 Remaining Team Member	34 Outcast Rider

29.4 Inconsistencies. If there is any inconsistency between a Rule in Section D and any Rule outside of Section D, the Rule in Section D will apply to the Elite Category to the extent of the conflict with such other Rule.

30 Registration; Team Rankings

30.1 Eligibility Requirements.

30.1.1 Any team wishing to compete in the Elite Category (and to be eligible for prize money and for earning UCI points toward accumulated UCI point rankings) must produce their current international UCI Elite racing licenses at Race registration.

30.1.2 The Organisers reserve the right to invite teams to participate in the Elite Category as entries are limited. Teams not invited to participate in the Elite Category will be entered into the Open category.

30.2 Team Rankings.

30.2.1 The Team rankings are determined by combining the UCI points of both riders.

30.2.2 Should riders not have UCI XCM points, 50% of UCI points in other disciplines will be used.

30.2.3 Organisers reserve the right to place teams higher in the team rankings.

30.3 Team Names. Team Names are limited to 3 sponsors and cannot be longer than 28 characters in length.

31 Elite Category Rider and Team Requirements

31.1 Team Kit/Jerseys

31.1.1 Team Kit Design. All teams competing in the Elite Category are required to wear identical kit (jerseys and shorts) for the duration of the race. Changes to colours or logos are not permitted once the race has started. This rule does not apply to FNB Wines2Whales.

31.1.2 Rider Sponsors. Riders may print different logos (i.e., non-matching, as between the two riders) on jerseys and shorts, provided they follow the design requirements set out by the Organisers. This rule does not apply to FNB Wines2Whales.

31.1.3 Champion Jerseys. Any Elite Category rider who is a current world, continental or national champion in the UCI XCM Elite category will be required to wear their world, continental or national champion jersey at all times (including the time trial/prologue), unless required to wear a category leader's jersey.

31.1.4 Leader Jersey Logos. Riders are permitted to have different logos (i.e., non-matching, as between the two riders), provided that the design is similar between riders, at the discretion of the Organisers.

31.2 Pre-Event Team Managers Meeting. All teams racing in the Elite Category must have a representative at the Elite Category race briefing, as communicated by the Organisers.

32 Technical Support

32.1 Feed Technical Assistance Zones.

32.1.1 The Organisers will provide one or more designated FTZ (herein referred to as Pro Tech zones) for the exclusive use of the Elite Category on each stage, which may exclude a time trial/prologue, if applicable.

32.1.2 Each Pro Tech zone is a self-service station, and Elite Category Riders will not be allowed to accept any physical or technical assistance from outside parties unless authorised by the Organisers. Any unauthorised assistance will be deemed Outside Assistance **(Rule 22.1)**

32.2 Pro Tech Equipment.

32.2.1 Each team can check in Pro Tech Equipment unless the Organisers approve of an exception to this limit:

32.2.1.1 Absa Cape Epic – 1 Pro Tech box plus wheelset in a wheel bag per Pro Tech zone.

32.2.1.2 Andorra Epic – 1 Wheelset plus spares in a wheel bag per Pro Tech zone.

32.2.1.3 Swiss Epic – 1 Wheelset plus spares in a wheel bag per Pro Tech zone.

32.2.1.4 FNB Wines2Whales – No Pro Tech check-in.

32.2.2 If the Organisers provide riders with a Pro Tech box, the riders must use only that box for the Race. If Organisers do not provide riders with an equipment box, all spares must be placed inside the wheel bag with the spare wheels.

32.3 Sharing of Equipment.

32.3.1 No rider may use the equipment of any other team deposited at a Pro Tech zone unless the lending team's rider consents before the event, or both the borrowing rider and the lending rider are at the Pro Tech zone at the time such consent is given.

32.4 Feed Zones

32.4.1 Availability. The Organisers may, but are not required to, provide a race nutrition service to the Elite Category on the basis as may be set out in the Event Technical Guide. If Organisers do not provide this, rider bottles must be checked in with the Pro Tech equipment.

32.4.2 Permitted Feeding. The Organisers may authorise accredited team staff to feed their riders at designated feed zones. These points will be communicated in the Event Technical Guide.

32.4.3 Rider Responsibility. The Organisers will not be liable for tampering with riders' bottles or other items. The race nutrition table is a self-service station, and the riders are responsible for collecting their bottles.

33 Timing

33.1 Exceeding Maximum Stage Time. Any Elite Category Rider who does not complete a stage (including the prologue and/or time trial, if applicable) within the Maximum Stage Time will be a DNF and not allowed to continue the Race.

33.2 Out of Bunch Limit. Organisers reserve the right to move teams racing in the Elite Category into later start batches should the Race Jury feel they are impeding the riders of other categories.

33.3 Time Bonuses. Time bonuses may be awarded on selected stages and will be applied to GC results. Details of any time bonuses will be included in the Event Technical Guide.

34 Outcast Riders

34.1 Definition. Any Elite Category Rider whose team member is no longer participating in the Race may continue as an Outcast Rider. Outcast Riders will be required to wear the official jersey if provided to them by the Organisers.

34.1.1 For the avoidance of doubt, the timing for when a rider will become an "Outcast Rider" is as follows:

34.1.1.1 If their team member fails to start a stage (DNS), with effect from the start of that stage, or

34.1.1.2 If their team member is classified DNF on a stage, with effect from the start of the next stage.

34.1.2 Outcast Riders may not actively participate in the Elite Category or provide any assistance to other teams still in the race.

34.1.3 Outcast Riders will start in the C batch, with no exceptions.

35 Financial Penalties for Elite Category Riders

35.1 Payments to UCI. Elite Category Riders shall pay to the UCI any financial penalties issued to such riders in accordance with the official processes and procedures of such riders' national federations and/or teams.

36 External Rules Incorporated Herein by Reference

36.1 UCI Anti-Doping Rules. All Elite Category Riders must comply with Part XIV of the UCI Regulations (Anti-Doping Rules).

36.2 UCI Discipline and Procedures. All team managers and other applicable licensed officials involved with the Race must comply with Part XII of the UCI Regulations (Discipline and Procedures) and will be subject to the penalties set out therein.

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