

A. INTRODUCTION TO THE RULES

1. Included 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 are:

- Absa Cape Epic® (South Africa)
- Swiss Epic® (Switzerland)
- 4Islands® (Croatia)
- Andorra MTB Classic Pyrénées® (Andorra)
- Other races as may be announced by the Series 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:

• Section A (Introduction to the Rules)
• Section B (General Rules – Applicable to All Riders)
• Section C (Penalties & Fines)
• Section D (Rules Applicable to Only UCI Pro-Elite Riders)

2.2 Applicability. Where indicated herein, certain Rules are applicable only to a particular Race, and certain Rules are applicable only to UCI Pro-Elite Riders.

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 38](#)), such external rules and regulations are not applicable 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. For violations of certain Rules, the penalties are set out in [Section C](#) below. For violations of any other Rules, the penalties will be in the discretion of the Race Jury.

2.5 Interpretation of Rules; Finality. The interpretation of any Rule (including evaluation of any protest, or any other matter related to the Rules; or any other matter related to participation in the Race, whether or not such matter is addressed by the Rules) 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 language version of the Rules 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 and will not affect or be utilised in construing or interpreting any word, phrase, provision, or 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 capitalized terms are defined as follows:

- “**Blue Board Rider**” means members of a team who have failed to complete any stage within the Maximum Stage Time, but are allowed to continue the Race in terms of [Rule 16](#).
- “**DNF**” means 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.
- “**DQ**” means “disqualified”.
- “**GC**” means “General Classification”.
- “**Maximum Stage Time**” means the maximum amount of time allowed (as determined by the Organisers from time to time) to officially complete any stage of the Race.

- “**Organisers**” means the Race organisers that represent the owner of the Race.
- “**Outcast Rider**” means a UCI Pro-Elite Rider, whose partner has withdrawn (or been removed), but who continues to participate in the Race, as set out in [Rule 33.3](#). For the avoidance of doubt, the timing for when a rider will become an “Outcast Rider” is as follows:
 - if his/her team member fails to start a stage, with effect from the commencement of that stage; or
 - if his/her team member withdraws from the Race during a stage, with effect from the commencement of the *next* stage.

(Please note: The label “Outcast Riders” itself is not used at all Races; for example, at the Absa Cape Epic, Outcast Riders are instead referred to as “Leopard Jerseys”.)

- “**Physical Assistance**” means the sharing of water and nutrition, sharing of bike parts and accessories (including the swapping of bike frames), assistance with maintenance and repair, and pushing/towing by physical contact only (but excluding any pushing/towing using any mechanical or physical devices).
- “**Podium Contender**” means a rider in a team that, at the beginning of any stage, is in the top 5 positions in the relevant category or whose total time is not more than one hour off the total time of the 3rd placed team in the relevant category at the beginning of such stage.
- “**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.
- “**Rider Separation Limit**” means the maximum allowable time separation between team members at any time during the Race, namely two (2) minutes.
- “**Separated Rider**” means any rider who, at any time during the Race, has been separated from his/her team member in excess of the Rider Separation Limit.
- “**UCI**” means the Union Cycliste Internationale.
- “**UCI Pro-Elite Rider**” means a rider who is (and whose team member is) registered for the Race in the UCI pro-elite category in accordance with [Rule 32](#).
- “**UCI Pro Rider Guide**” means the Race information booklet distributed to UCI Pro-Elite Riders prior to Race registration.

B. GENERAL RULES – APPLICABLE TO ALL RIDERS

3 Riders; Registration; Briefing

3.1 Eligibility.

- 3.1.1 The minimum age of participation is determined by the Organisers, and may vary by Race.
 - 3.1.1.1 With respect to the **Absa Cape Epic**: 19 years old, as of 31 December of the year in which the Race takes place.
 - 3.1.1.2 With respect to **The Pioneer** and the **Swiss Epic**: 18 years old, as of the day the Race starts in the applicable year.
- 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 (available on the Race website).

3.2 Registration.

- 3.2.1 Riders must report to registration as a team.
- 3.2.2 All riders must have registered by the registration cut-off time indicated on the Race website on the day preceding the first stage of the Race (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 has the following five (5) riding categories for teams: men, women, mixed, masters, and grandmasters. However, any one or more of the Races may feature additional riding categories and special jerseys.
- 3.3.2 To start in **(a)** the masters category, both riders must be 40 years or older and **(b)** the grandmasters category, both riders must be 50 years or older, respectively, on 31 December of the year in which the Race takes place.
- 3.3.3 With respect to transgender athletes in the Race, the Organisers will determine eligibility for the men's and women's categories, as applicable, in accordance with the transgender-related policies and guidelines adopted by the International Olympic Committee.

3.4 Special Jerseys.

- 3.4.1 In addition to the riding categories, the Races may feature one or more 'special jerseys' for the team classification.
- 3.4.2 With respect to the **Absa Cape Epic**, there are 2 'special jerseys' for the teams, namely the Absa African Jersey and the Exxaro Jersey.
 - 3.4.2.1 (*Absa Cape Epic only*) In the men and women categories only, the Absa African Jersey is open to all teams meeting the following additional criteria: **(a)** both riders must be in possession of a valid African passport; **(b)** both riders in a team must choose their African nationality during online registration; **(c)** both riders must have registered as a UCI Pro-Elite Rider subject to [Rule 32.1](#) reflecting their African nationality; No changes will be permitted after Race registration closes.
 - 3.4.2.2 (*Absa Cape Epic only*) Regardless of the category in which a team has registered, 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 (other than white females) 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 on 31 December of the year in which the Race takes place; and **(c)** both riders in a team wishing to compete for the Exxaro Jersey must declare their HDSA status during online registration. No changes are permitted after Race registration closes.

- 3.5 Briefing. A pre-Race briefing will take place at the time and place indicated on the Race website. It is each rider's responsibility to know 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.

4 **Medical**

- 4.1 Responsibility. Each rider must ensure that he/she is 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 on receipt of 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 the maintenance of his/her own 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 (defined below) 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 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 in the discretion of the Race Jury; and
 - 5.2.2.4 handlebar ends and handlebar extensions must be plugged and must not have sharp or jagged edges. The use of tri-bars is not allowed.
- 5.3 Propelling. Bikes may be propelled only through a chainset (or belt) and only by the rider's leg action, without any form of assistance (electrical or otherwise), subject to [Rule 23.4](#).
- 5.4 Tandem Bikes. Tandem bikes complying with the requirements set out in [Rule 5.2](#) above are allowed.

6 Helmets and Attire

- 6.1 Helmet Requirement. Each rider must wear a helmet at all times while riding during the Race.
- 6.2 Helmet Standards. All helmets must comply with international 'ANSI' standards.
- 6.3 Proper Attire. Appropriate riding attire, including a shirt, must be worn at all times.
- 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 33.3.1, including any such jersey from a prior year's Race.
- 6.6 Leader Jerseys. If a rider qualifies for a leader jersey or a special jersey, he/she must wear it during the applicable stage(s).
- 6.7 Restriction on Logo Use. No rider may display or reproduce the official Race logo (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 *prior to* any such riding attire or team clothing being manufactured.

7 Compulsory Equipment

Each rider (or, as applicable, each team) must carry a tracking device (if the Race issues tracking devices). **The Pioneer** requires, and other Races may require, riders to carry additional compulsory equipment, such as bad weather gear. Any such additional requirements will be communicated via the applicable Race website.

8 Team Riding

- 8.1 Teams of Two. Teams must consist of exactly two riders, who must race together (subject to the Rider Separation Limit) for the entire distance of the Race.
- 8.2 Separation Limit Enforcement.
 - 8.2.1 Compliance with the Rider Separation Limit may be checked and enforced at the start and finish of each stage and at various designated check points during the stage, but 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 (as set out in Section C below) 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 more than one Rider Separation Limit violation 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 for the purpose of requesting or obtaining assistance (medical or technical), provided that during such time the other rider on such team does not advance his/her position on the course until the assistance-seeking rider returns to the waiting rider's position.
- 8.3 Doubling Back. A rider is allowed to "double back" on the route at any time in order to re-join his/her team member or for the purpose of requesting or obtaining assistance (medical or technical), provided that he/she does not endanger any other rider in doing so.

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, and may not be obscured by cables or any other item.
 - 9.1.3 Race numbers on the rider's back must be attached to the rider at all times in a visible position either on the rider's jersey or on the back of his/her hydration pack. A rider will not be penalised if his/her number is obscured while wearing a jacket.
 - 9.1.4 Race numbers may not be modified or mutilated in any way, including without limitation cutting, adding stickers, or removing existing stickers or trimming.
 - 9.1.5 No official sponsor logos may be removed from race numbers and/or be obscured in any way.
- 9.2 Presence at Ceremonies. Podium finishers and GC category leaders must be present at the finish line awards ceremony (if applicable) and the evening awards ceremony as advertised in the event programme, including the final ceremony.

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. The provisions of this [Rule 10](#) will apply to the Race in any such year in which the Race includes a prologue and/or 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 **Start Times.**
- 10.4.1 Each team will receive a pre-allocated start time for the time trial/prologue. It is each rider’s responsibility to know his/her start time. In case of a prologue, the start times will be advertised via the Race website. In case of a time trial after stage 1, the start times will also be published at the Race office together with the posting of the previous stage’s final results.
 - 10.4.2 Riders must report at the entrance to the start chute at least 15 minutes before the allocated start time for the time trial/prologue.
 - 10.4.3 If a team misses its time trial/prologue start time, it 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.
- 10.5 **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.
- 10.6 **Course Practice.** The Organisers may, but are not required to, make provision for a course practice for a time trial/prologue. 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 chute opens 30 minutes before the start of each stage, unless communicated otherwise.
- 11.2 **Start Zones; Staggered Starts.**
- 11.2.1 Differential start zones 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 zone. Any reference to start times in the Rules will be to the start time applicable to the particular rider’s start zone.
 - 11.2.2 The start zones will close strictly ten (10) minutes before their start time. Teams arriving late must start at the back of the field.
 - 11.2.3 Riders must enter the start zone as a team with their bikes, and once entered must remain in the start zone with their bikes.
- 11.3 **Call Ups.** In start zones where provision for a call up has been made, eligible teams (as indicated in the seeding index) are entitled to line up at the front of their respective start zone. Such teams must assemble in the call-up zone immediately next to the start line no later than ten (10) minutes before their start time. Additional requirements for call-ups may be applicable to specific Races.

12 Route and Stages; Finishing

- 12.1 **Completing Routes.**
- 12.1.1 Riders must complete the full, final designated route and distance of all stages, including the time trial and/or prologue.
 - 12.1.2 Only riders who complete each of the stages within the Maximum Stage Time will qualify as official Race finishers.
 - 12.1.3 A rider must at all times 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 The responsibility for following the official route lies with each rider.
- 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 course area, is not permitted.
- 12.5 **Trespassing.** 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.
- 12.6 **Finishing on Foot.** Riders may cross any stage’s finish line on foot provided that they have their complete bike with them when doing so.

12.7 GPS Data. No rider may distribute any GPS co-ordinates in respect of the Race route at any time (including but not limited to, uploads onto online platforms such as Strava), unless expressly authorized in writing by the Organisers.

13 Prohibited Equipment

- 13.1 Audio. The use of earphones/ear buds or two-way radios (i.e., 'walkie-talkies') is not allowed during the Race.
- 13.2 Cameras. Cameras (which includes video cameras) may be mounted on the rider's bike, but not on the rider (including the rider's helmet or chest). 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).
- 13.3 Other Equipment. The Race Jury may at any time prohibit any other item of equipment (other than essential cycling equipment) in its discretion and riders shall at all times comply with any such prohibition.
- 13.4 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, in order to determine compliance with the Rules.

14 Race Timing; Late Starts

- 14.1 Transponders. Each rider must wear his/her transponder at all times during the Race. No rider may carry more than one (1) transponder at any time, and no rider may pass his/her 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 each Race day as set out in Rule 11.2. The start line will remain open for 15 minutes after the start time.
- 14.4 Late Starts.
- 14.4.1 Any rider who cannot make his/her start time must report to the Race Jury at the start line within 15 minutes after the start time to request approval for 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 as a DNF for that stage.
- 14.5 Non-Starting. Any rider who does not start a stage at all will automatically be deemed 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.
- 14.7 Effect of Time Penalties. All time penalties under the Rules will be added to the rider's time for the stage in respect of which the penalty is given (and as such to GC time), but, pursuant to Rule 15.6, will not be taken into account in determining whether the rider has exceeded the Maximum Stage Time.

15 Maximum Stage Times

- 15.1 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 pursuant to Rule 15.2. Maximum Stage Times will be included in the Race registration pack. The Maximum Stage Time will not be adjusted for any rider who is permitted a late start and/or who started in a start zone with a later start time than his/her own.
- 15.2 Formula. The Maximum Stage Time for each stage of the Race will be the greater of **(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).
- 15.3 Notice of Change. Any change to the Maximum Stage Time will be communicated to riders at the stage briefing on the night before the relevant stage. If applicable, the adjusted Maximum Stage Time will be signposted at the final water point on the stage once the first finishers have crossed the stage's finish line.
- 15.4 Intermediate Cut-Off Points.
- 15.4.1 The Race Director may, at any times, designate intermediate cut-off points on each stage ("**Cut-Off Points**") which must be reached by specific times designated by the Race Director ("**Cut-Off Times**"), and may at any time impose additional Cut-Off Points and Cut-Off Times due to safety reasons.
- 15.4.2 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.
- 15.4.3 The Race Jury has discretion to waive a Cut-Off Time for certain riders, 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).

15.5 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.

15.6 Time Penalties Disregarded. No time penalties under the Rules will be taken into account in determining whether the rider has exceeded the Maximum Stage Time.

16 Blue Board Rider

16.1 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.

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

16.3 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 a 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 or cancel any stage at any time, in their sole discretion, due to safety concerns or any other reason that they consider appropriate. In case of an abandoned stage, the following Rules will apply:

17.1.1 If three teams have completed the stage prior to the time at which it is abandoned, the stage will be classified as an official stage of the Race and count towards the GC results. Otherwise, the stage 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, before the stage is abandoned, they withdraw from the stage or do not reach any Cut-Off Point by the applicable time.

18 Roadways; Compliance

18.1 Closed Roads. Some sections of the course (including some public roads) may be closed to non-Race-related traffic. Their closure must be respected by all.

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 must be complied with at all times during the Race.

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

19 Checkpoints

19.1 Checking Separation Limit. There will be checkpoints on each stage, during which the Rider Separation Limit will be checked.

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 utilize hidden checkpoints.

20 Nutrition and Hydration

20.1 Responsibility. Riders retain the ultimate responsibility to carry enough water and nutrition with them during the Race.

20.2 Water Points and Use. The Organisers will provide water at official water points on the route, which water is intended for drinking purposes only. No excessive use of water for any other purpose will be permitted at official water points.

21 Outside Support; Drafting

- 21.1 No Outside Assistance. No outside assistance is permitted under any circumstances. For purposes hereof, “outside assistance” includes Physical Assistance by any person other than **(a)** his/her team member participating in the Race, **(b)** a fellow rider participating in the Race, or **(c)** an accredited Race staff member (provided the staff member’s assistance is within the scope of his/her official duties for the Race).
- 21.2 Drafting.
- 21.2.1 Riders may draft behind team members and fellow competitors, but not behind an Outcast Rider or any person who is not a participant in the Race. Additionally, no riders (other than female UCI Pro-Elite Riders themselves) may draft behind any female UCI Pro-Elite Riders. (Drafting by UCI Pro-Elite Riders is subject to additional restrictions; see [Rule 36.2](#).)
- 21.2.2 No other form of drafting is permitted whatsoever, including but not limited to drafting behind private vehicles, motor cycles, trucks, or official Race vehicles.
- 21.3 Support Vehicles. No escort or seconding vehicles are permitted on the Race route unless such vehicles are provided by the Organisers and display the relevant accreditation. However, supporters may, subject to [Rule 18](#), drive their own vehicles along public roads (only if they are open to the public during the Race) to reach vantage points to vocally support riders.

22 Technical Assistance

- 22.1 Neutral Support Zones. Some Races offer technical assistance for riders at neutral tech support zones along the Race route, and riders will be informed on the Race website if such assistance will be available.
- 22.2 Spare Parts. Any spare parts must be paid at the time received – either by credit card or cash.

23 Physical Assistance

- 23.1 Permitted Assistance. In addition to the other assistance restrictions in the Rules (e.g., other subsections of this Rule 23), riders cannot receive Physical Assistance from anyone other than **(a)** his/her team member participating in the Race, **(b)** a fellow rider participating in the Race, or **(c)** an accredited Race staff member (provided the staff member’s assistance is within the scope of his/her official duties for the Race). However, UCI Pro-Elite Riders are subject to different restrictions regarding assistance; see [Rule 36.1](#).
- 23.2 Outcast Riders Cannot Assist Podium Contenders. Podium Contenders may not receive Physical Assistance from an Outcast Rider.
- 23.3 Prohibited Assistance from Separated Riders. No rider may receive Physical Assistance from a Separated Rider, unless, at the time such assistance is provided, the Separated Rider is separated from his/her partner because such partner had withdrawn from the Race.
- 23.4 Towing/Pushing. Subject to the other provisions in this [Rule 23](#), towing between or pushing of riders is permitted by direct hand contact (e.g., hand-to-hand or hand-to-bike), but is prohibited by means of any mechanical or physical devices (including without limitation a rope, tube, or cable).
- 23.5 Restriction on Ongoing Assistance. No rider may receive ongoing or excessively repetitive assistance from any other rider *whose team is in a different category*, even if the type of such assistance is otherwise permitted by the Rules.

24 Withdrawals

- 24.1 Duty to Immediately Inform. Teams or riders that cannot continue the Race for whatever reason must immediately inform the Race office. This can be done at the Race start, the finish, water points, or by calling the emergency hotline as specified in the Race registration packs.
- 24.2 Cost of Search and Rescue. If any rider or team fails to inform the Race office of his/her/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.
- 24.3 Remaining Team Member. If either member of a team is incapable of continuing the Race, his/her team member will be entitled to continue riding subject to [Rule 16](#).

25 Code of Conduct

- 25.1 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 staff members or service providers (e.g., course marshals, medics, water-point staff, etc.), or spectators.

- 25.2 Littering; Detouring; Smoking. Riders must respect the environment at all times, 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 of water bottles, packaging, or bike spares along the Race route; deviating from the Race route; smoking.
- 25.3 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.).
- 25.4 No Improper Interference. No rider competing in a different category may interfere with the racing dynamics of the women UCI Pro-Elite Riders (e.g. by blocking or inhibiting a female UCI Pro-Elite Rider).

26 Protests

- 26.1 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.
- 26.2 Deadline – Stage Result Protests. Stage result protests must be submitted within two (2) hours after posting of preliminary results for the relevant stage.
- 26.3 Deadline – Race Protests. Race protests must be submitted within two (2) hours after the rider crossing the applicable stage's finish line.
- 26.4 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, in the following applicable amount: R300 (ABSA CAPE EPIC); NZ\$30 (THE PIONEER); CHF30 (SWISS EPIC); US\$30 (all other Races). 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.

27 Anti-Doping

- 27.1 Right to Test. The Organisers reserve the right to test all riders for doping (including mechanical doping) and/or the use of any illegal substances. Consenting to such testing is a condition to competing in the Race.
- 27.2 Test Results. All test results will be forwarded to the applicable national cycling federations, and positive results will lead to penalties as set out in Section C below.
- 27.3 Sanctioned Persons. Any person who is under provisional or final sanction by an Anti-Doping Organisation with jurisdiction under the WADA Code (a "**Person Under Sanction**") 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 becomes aware that such rider, team manager, or official is a Person Under Sanction, such entry or right of participation shall immediately be cancelled. Normal cancellation fees apply.
- 27.4 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.

C. PENALTIES & FINES

28 Penalties for Violations of Rules

28.1 Penalties Table. Any violation of the Rules will be subject to penalties as per the table below. (“DQ” means disqualification from the Race.)

Rule # and/or Offence	First Offence	Second Offence	Third Offence	Remarks
Section B Penalties (generally applicable)				
Significant false information in Race registration	DQ			
5.2	Not allowed to start	DQ		
6.1	DQ			
6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5	Verbal warning	1 hr	DQ	
6.6	R5,000 / NZ\$500 / CHF500 (all riders)	1 hr	DQ	
7	15 min	1 hr	DQ	
8.1, 8.2	1 hr (30 min for UCI Pro-Elite Riders)	1 hr	DQ	This penalty will not apply if the team member of the Separated Rider withdraws from the stage.
9.1	Verbal warning (plus, for UCI Pro-Elite Riders only, R1,000 / NZ\$100 / CHF100 penalty)	DQ		
9.2	If prize money (a prize) is awarded, the team forfeits the prize money (the prize) of that day (if one rider is not present the team still forfeits the prize money) If no prize money is awarded, R500 / NZ\$50 / CHF50 per rider that is not present will be deducted off overall prize money awarded over the duration of the Race.			
10.6	1 hr	DQ		
11.2.2, 11.2.3	R1,000 / NZ\$100 / CHF100 penalty for UCI Pro-Elite Riders. 5 min penalty for all other riders	15 min	1 hr	
11.3	R1,000 / NZ\$100 / CHF100 penalty for UCI Pro-Elite Riders.	5 min	15 min	
12.4	DQ			
12.5	DQ			Depending on severity of the violation, penalty may extend to a lifetime ban from riding the Race
13	1hr	DQ		
14.1	DQ			
18.4	15 min	1 hr	DQ	A serious first offence can result in higher time penalty or disqualification
21	1hr	DQ		

23.2	1 hr	1 hr	DQ	
23.3	1 hr	1 hr	DQ	
23.4	DQ			
25.1	1 hr	1 hr	DQ	A serious first offence can result in disqualification
25.2	1 hr	DQ		A serious first offence can result in disqualification
25.3	Verbal warning	15 min	1 hr	A serious offence can result in higher time penalty or disqualification
25.4	Verbal warning	1 hr	DQ	A serious first offence can result in higher time penalty or disqualification.
27	DQ			

Section D Penalties (applicable to only UCI Pro-Elite Riders)

33.1	R5,000 / NZ\$500 / CHF500	DQ		
33.3.1	DQ			
33.3.2	DQ			
34.1.2	1hr	DQ		
34.2.3	1hr	DQ		
34.3.1	DQ			
36.1.1, 36.2	1hr	DQ		
36.1.2	15 min			
36.1.3	DQ			

29 Financial Penalties for non-UCI Pro-Elite Riders

29.1 Prompt Cash Payment. Any financial penalty under the Rules against a rider (excluding UCI Pro-Elite Riders) must be paid in cash by no later than the start of the immediately following stage, failing which the rider will be prevented from starting. (*Payment of financial penalties for UCI Pro-Elite Riders is addressed in Rule 37.*)

29.2 Amounts are Per Rider. Financial penalty amounts are per rider (not per team) in violation of the relevant Rule.

30 Suspension/Ban from Race or Series

30.1 Discretion to Suspend/Ban. 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, doping, mechanical doping, or dangerous or unsportsmanlike conduct. Such suspensions 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.

D. RULES APPLICABLE TO ONLY UCI PRO-ELITE RIDERS

31 Applicability

31.1 UCI Pro-Elite Riders Only. The Rules in this Section D are applicable only to the Races that have a UCI Pro-Elite category, and such Rules apply only to the UCI Pro-Elite Riders in such Races.

31.2 Inapplicable Rules. All Rules apply to UCI Pro-Elite Riders, except as set out in the table below, and except any Rule that expressly excludes applicability to UCI Pro-Elite Riders.

Rule Inapplicable to UCI Pro-Elite Riders	Rule Instead Applicable to UCI Pro-Elite Riders
16 (Blue Board Riders)	33.2 and 33.3 (Outcast Riders)
5.4 (Tandem bikes)	No corresponding applicable Rule
23 (Physical Assistance)	36.1 (Certain Permitted Assistance)
24.3 (Remaining Team Member)	33.3 (Outcast Rider)

31.3 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 UCI Pro-Elite Riders to the extent of the conflict with such other Rule.

32 Registration; UCI Points Ranking

32.1 Eligibility Requirements. Any rider wishing to compete in the Race as a UCI Pro-Elite Rider (and to be eligible for prize money and for earning UCI points toward accumulated UCI point rankings), must, at Race registration, (a) produce his/her government-issued, photo identification, (b) produce his/her valid and current international UCI elite or U23 racing license (national licenses or any other license issued by any federation are not acceptable to compete in the Race as a UCI Pro-Elite Rider), and (c) have at least one valid UCI point in any UCI elite or U23 mountain bike or road discipline in the then-current or then-previous season. No riders will otherwise be permitted to compete in the Race as a UCI Pro-Elite Rider unless granted prior written approval of the Organisers.

33 Rider and Team Requirements (UCI Pro-Elite Riders)

33.1 Kits/Jerseys.

- 33.1.1 Each UCI Pro-Elite Rider must wear the identical kit (jerseys and shorts) during each day of the Race that he/she wears on every other day of the Race (i.e., different colours and logos may not be worn on different days), subject to any reasonable, minor deviation that the Organisers may, in its sole discretion, approve in advance.
- 33.1.2 Sleeveless jerseys are not permitted.
- 33.1.3 Teams may consist of riders who are not members of the same UCI-registered trade team.
- 33.1.4 Team members may print different (i.e., non-matching, as between that team's two riders) logos on jerseys and shorts, provided they are in accordance with the design requirements laid out in the UCI Pro Rider Guide.
- 33.1.5 Notwithstanding Rule 33.1.1, any UCI Pro-Elite Rider who is a current world or national or continental champion in the UCI XCM elite category will be required to wear his/her world or national or continental champion jersey at all times (including the time trial/prologue), unless required to wear a category leader's jersey.

33.2 Exceeding Maximum Stage Time; No Blue Board Riders. Any UCI Pro-Elite Rider who does not complete a stage (including the prologue and/or time trial, if applicable) within the Maximum Stage Time will not be allowed to continue the Race (i.e., he/she will not be allowed to start the next stage).

33.3 Outcast Riders.

- 33.3.1 Any UCI Pro-Elite Rider whose team member is no longer participating in the Race for any reason may continue in the Race as an Outcast Rider. (see Rule 2.9 for definition of Outcast Rider). Outcast Riders will be required to wear the official jersey if provided to them by the Organisers.
- 33.3.2 Outcast Riders may not take an active part in the Race and/or provide Physical Assistance to any other UCI Pro-Elite Rider or Podium Contender.

33.4 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 UCI Pro Rider Guide.

34 Technical Support Zones (UCI Pro-Elite Riders)

34.1 Exclusive Tech Support Zones.

- 34.1.1 The Organisers will provide one or more designated tech support zones for the exclusive use of UCI Pro-Elite Riders on each stage, which may exclude a time trial/prologue (if applicable).
- 34.1.2 The number and location of these designated zones will be published in the UCI Pro Rider Guide. Each tech support zone is a self-service station, and UCI Pro-Elite Riders will not be allowed to accept any assistance from outside parties (including their support crew) in the zone.
- 34.1.3 Each tech support zone will remain open until the first 50 teams (on overall GC results) that have deposited equipment at a specific tech support zone have passed through that zone. The zone will also remain open for the first 5 women's teams and all other UCI Pro-Elite Rider women's teams within one hour behind the 5th women's team on GC who have deposited equipment at the relevant zone (should these teams not be within the first 50 teams on overall GC).
- 34.1.4 UCI Pro-Elite Riders are also allowed to utilise the neutral tech support zones (if any) provided to non-UCI riders, as set out in [Rule 22.1](#).

34.2 Wheel-Set Bag and Equipment Box.

- 34.2.1 Each team will be allowed to check-in one (1) wheel set (in a bag to be provided by the team) per tech support zone, unless the Race organisers approve of an exception to this limit.
- 34.2.2 Each team will be allowed to check-in one (1) equipment box per tech support zone. If the Race organisers provide riders with an equipment box to use, the riders must use only that box for the Race. If Race organisers do not provide riders with an equipment box to use, the equipment box used by riders for the Race must comply with the permitted size and dimensions as set out in the UCI Pro Rider Guide.
- 34.2.3 Check-in of the wheel set (and bag) and equipment box will be allowed during only the specific hours set out in the UCI Pro Rider Guide.
- 34.2.4 Each team must clearly label its bag and equipment box, as directed by the Race Organisers. Equipment boxes cannot have any strap, any item sticking out of the box, or anything taped or affixed onto the outside of the box.
- 34.2.5 Riders will be entitled to place any item of their choice in the equipment box (provided such items are not in violation of any other Rule).
- 34.2.6 Equipment checked in for a specific tech support zone will be transported to that tech zone only and cannot be moved to any other tech support zone during the stage.

34.3 Sharing of Equipment.

- 34.3.1 No rider may use the equipment of any other team deposited at a tech support zone unless the lending team's rider consents, and both the borrowing rider and the lending rider are at the tech support zone at the time such consent is given.
- 34.3.2 Teams wishing to share their equipment deposited at the tech support zones with any other team must declare this in writing to the Organisers before the start of the Race (i.e., before the prologue, if applicable, or the first stage). The agreement to share must be reciprocal. The UCI Pro Rider Guide may set out additional details regarding sharing

35 Race Nutrition Service (UCI Pro-Elite Riders)

- 35.1 Availability. The Organisers may, but are not required to, provide a race nutrition service to UCI Pro-Elite Riders on the basis as may be set out in the UCI Pro Rider Guide.
- 35.2 Rider Responsibility. The Organisers will not be liable for any tampering with riders' bottles or riders' other items. The race nutrition table is a self-service station and it is the rider's responsibility to collect his/her own bottle.

36 Assistance; Drafting (UCI Pro-Elite Riders)

36.1 Permitted Assistance.

- 36.1.1 Subject to [Rule 36.1.3](#), UCI Pro-Elite Riders may receive Physical Assistance and technical assistance (including replacement bike parts/frame) only from other UCI Pro-Elite Riders in the same gender category (i.e., women from women, and men from men). However, during any prologue or time trial, UCI Pro-Elite Riders cannot receive any Physical Assistance.
- 36.1.2 Subject to rule 2.9 (Definition Physical Assistance) and 36.1.1 (Permitted Assistance) it is permitted for a rider to receive a bicycle frame from another UCI-Pro Elite Rider in the same gender category during a stage (excluding a prologue or time trial), provided that the transponder and number board are swapped, too. If the two riders within the same team of two (i.e. rider x-1 and x-2) swap bikes, it is not necessary to change over the timing transponder and number board.

36.1.3 UCI Pro-Elite Riders may not receive Physical Assistance, technical assistance, or any other assistance from any Outcast Rider.

36.2 Drafting. UCI Pro-Elite Riders may draft behind only other UCI Pro-Elite Riders in the same gender category (i.e., women behind only women, and men behind only men). However, during any prologue or time trial, drafting by UCI Pro-Elite Riders is disallowed.

37 Financial Penalties for UCI Pro-Elite Riders

37.1 Payments to UCI. UCI Pro-Elite 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.

38 External Rules Incorporated Herein by Reference

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

38.2 UCI Discipline and Procedures. All team managers and other applicable licenced 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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