

Grizzly 100 Attracts International Roster of Racers

With nearly 10,000 feet of climbing on single track trails and fire roads, participants in the Grizzly 100 mountain bike race should be exhausted after they complete the 100 kilometers or nearly 62 miles in and around the Big Bear Valley in Southern California on July 25. This is just one event of the National Ultra Endurance (NUE) races held across the US and Costa Rica in 2015.

The Grizzly 100 course begins in the Village of Big Bear Lake with lots of early morning fanfare. Racers will leave the Village at 7:00 am, head up single track and fire roads to the ridgeline near Grandview Point. Exciting single track awaits as they begin the descent into Seven Oaks and the Santa Ana River Trail. In areas of steep drop-offs, many of the riders, even the pros, will chose to walk their bike through a few narrow areas.

What goes down must come back up! And after hours of technical riding, participants will begin the five mile ascent up the Radford Climb, sponsored by Essentia Water. This climb is so steep and so exposed to sun and elements that event organizers have established four aid stations within the five miles. Aid station number three on the Radford Climb is dubbed "Hell," for obvious reasons...full exposure to the sun on a large turnout. No shade, just coolers of iced Essentia Water and Heed electrolytes.

Once racers reach the top, they enter the gates of "Heaven," where they are met by medical staff in an angel costume. Here they are quickly assessed for heat exhaustion and exposure. After more single track, the slow descent finally begins back into the Village.

The Grizzly 100 attracts professional mountain bike racers from various countries around the world as well as many states throughout the US. This year, participants have registered from Hong

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Kong, Brazil, Mexico, and Canada. Last minute registrations are expected from other countries as well. Professional men and women mountain bikers, along with the additional categories of Master's Men 50+ and Single Speed will attack the mountain to demonstrate their strengths. Many of them will be using this event as preparation for the Leadville 100 in Colorado two weeks later.

According to Race Director Derek Hermon of Bear Valley Bikes, "In 2014, we had the most amazing sprint finish after about 64 miles between Tinker Juarez and winner Julien Bourdevaire with less than six seconds apart after a winning time of 5:00:43. It was one of the most exciting finishes in mountain bike racing between the Bourdevaire, of France, and Juarez, a mountain bike legend for decades." Jason Siegle placed 3rd, Ben Bostrom 4th, and Dana Weber 5th. Jean-Louis Beaudevaire finished in 6th place.

In addition to cash prizes the first 100 finishes receive antique brass belt buckles; everyone else is awarded a finishers' medal. The Grizzly 100 winners will divide a cash purse of over \$5,000 between the professional men and women. The fastest times on the Radford Climb will be awarded King of the Mountain and Queen of the Mountain prizes. Lauf Forks offers a \$1,000 mountain bike fork to one lucky winner, while sponsors such as Kenda Tire, Darn Tough Vermont, KMC Chains and others will also provide awards.

The public is invited to enjoy the Expo area and Beer Garden during the event and to cheer on racers as they make their way through the Valley. For more information, check out Big Bear Valley Race Association website (BBVRace.com) or contact them at BBVRace@gmail.com.

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