



# THE MIDLANDS

## MTB STAGE RACE

June 29-July 1, 2018 Howick/Karkloof



### *KZN Midlands Stage Race Media Release*

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#### **Andrew Hill excited about new Midlands Stage Race**

ONE of KwaZulu-Natal's most experienced mountain bikers, Andrew Hill, is looking forward to the prospect of competing in The Midlands MTB Stage Race in and around Howick on the weekend of June 29 to July 1.

"It is so exciting to be able to do a stage race on such nice trails right on my doorstep," said the 36-year-old Kloof resident who will be partnering 19-year-old Henry Liebenberg in the three-day stage race. "I think some of the best riding in South Africa is in the Howick and Karkloof area and so to have access to that in a race – and to be riding in some new trail as well – is a fantastic opportunity."

This new event within the trail-rich Howick forests offers riders a completely new experience in one of the country's original mountain biking destinations, and that has captured the interest of experienced old riders and the newer generation of cyclists.

"I believe the area lends itself to a stage race. There is such a variety of riding in the Hilton, Howick and Karkloof areas and we are really spoiled ... and now this race is opening up some new routes and creating some exciting new sections that even the locals have not seen yet. That is what excited me the most about this race," said Hill.

Just as the route is a combination of new routes in a traditional local mountain biking Mecca, so the Hill / Liebenberg combination is a classic mix of young and experience.

"Henry is young and like so many of the newer generation of riders he is really good on the technical stuff, and now that he has moved up to the Hilton area he will have some local knowledge as well, so I think we can do well.

"The fact there may be some solo riders in the mix makes things interesting for us from a tactical point of view as well. Obviously we want to be the first across the line and we will be looking to win overall, but at the same time may have to make sure we race within our race."

Hil who rides for Team TIB Insurance, has already had some success in stage races this year with a win in the three-day PwC Great Zuurberg Trek with Shaun-Nick Bester, while also picking up wins in the PE Plett, Berg 100 and Drak Descent MTB Challenge.

"I have been concentrating more on stage races lately. I like the longer races and as I get a bit older I think they suit me more. I like playing the longer game, and it suits me to race events that rely more on endurance and tactics which suit my age and experience."

The Midlands MTB Stage Race is a "family-orientated" three-day stage race that offers achievable 50 to 56km stages, a two-day half distance event on Saturday and Sunday and a short 10km ride. According to Race Director Gavin Ryan, all routes are "carefully designed to be manageable, but packed with safe, fun riding."

All races are open to solo entries as well as two-person teams while Ryan added that the half-distance routes are suitable for parents to ride with their children, or perfect for riders looking to experience their first stage races.

Entries are via [www.roag.co.za](http://www.roag.co.za) and entries close on June 22. For more information visit [www.themidlandsmtb.co.za](http://www.themidlandsmtb.co.za)

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	Andrew Hill (pictured) and partner Henry Liebenberg are the favourites to claim victory in the inaugural The Midlands MTB Stage Race on June 29- July 1.	No photo credit required	<a href="#">Download Here</a>
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