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ATLAS
MOUNTAIN
RACE

#AMR2020

RACE MANUAL

Issue 0 : Preliminary information for 2020 riders

INTRODUCTION

The Atlas Mountain Race is a serious undertaking that should not be underestimated. It takes place in an environment that can be as tough as it is beautiful. It requires not only the ability to ride big days back to back, but also knowledge and experience of being self-reliant in a desertous mountain environment. Although it is definitely a race, your primary concern should always be your own safety. Riders will experience the natural beauty of Morocco, and the warmth and generosity of its people. It is an experience that will stay with you a lifetime.

This race was primarily born out of my experiences racing the Transcontinental Race: an incredible adventure and now Mike Hall's legacy. He was personally involved in the Silk Road Mountain Race, the AMR's Kyrgyz sister race, prior to his tragic death during the Indian Pacific Wheel Race. He should have been a part of it. I hope that making it happen is a worthwhile contribution to the unsupported racing scene that he was instrumental in helping to create. He is sorely missed.

Nelson Trees - Race Director

The Race Manual

Welcome to issue 0 of the race manual for AMR 2020. This edition of the Race Manual contains preliminary information for 2020 racers. It details the course, the environment and climate of the race. This document is your primary source of information about the Atlas Mountain Race.

The manual is the result of months of research and multiple scouting trips on the ground in Morocco. We have put a lot of time and energy into making sure that everything you find here is accurate and up to date. We have driven or ridden every single kilometre of the route. Please take note, however, that things do change and it is possible that there are minor discrepancies compared with the situation on the ground.

All information is provided in good faith and is believed to be correct at the time of writing. Whilst the general lines of the manual are unlikely to change, preparations for the race are ongoing and subject to modification until close to the start of the race. Please check that you have the latest version of the manual before taking any actions based on the information given. Any major updates to the manual will be notified to participants via email. Please make sure that you are able to receive our newsletters and that our emails do not end up in your spam inbox. Each updated version of the manual has a quick reference guide giving major changes, compared to previous versions.

If in any doubt, do not hesitate to direct your specific questions to the race organisers via email only, at **race@atlasmountainrace.cc**. Messages to the personal email or social media accounts of members of the AMR team concerning the race will not be systematically dealt with and may remain unanswered. The AMR Facebook discussion group is also a great resource to share information and preparations with other riders, but is not a means of communication with the race organisation.

Why Morocco?

If you are reading this manual, you most likely have some ideas about Morocco and why it would make a good place for an unsupported bikepacking race. If not, let us tell you a little more about the destination before you embark on your adventure.

Morocco is a country where African, Arab and European cultures are entwined. Located at the mouth of the Mediterranean Sea, Morocco is the closest point of contact to Europe for Africa as a continent. It is a land of tolerance, a blend of cultures and religions, a country known for its amazing hospitality. The fascinating mixture of history, art, food, music and architecture makes Morocco an unforgettable destination.

The ever enchanting labyrinths of bazaars and souks in the old Medinas, the incredible historical monuments, the friendly people, the vast and stunning snow-capped Atlas Mountains, the never ending warm and windy Atlantic ocean coastline, and the impressive Sahara Desert, famous as a location for many Hollywood movies, are just some of the country's natural and cultural beauties that never fail to leave a lasting impression.

The first edition of the Atlas Mountain Race will start in Marrakech, and take you on a tour of some of the least travelled parts of the country, all the way to the village of Sidi Rabat, a few kilometres south of Agadir. You'll primarily be riding on unpaved 'pistes' (gravel roads), many of which date back to the colonial era, when they were the only way to reach out of the way villages, lost up in the mountains. You'll climb up and over the High Atlas, descending via an old mule trail, you'll ride through rocky canyons, palm filled gorges, pass by hidden oases and even have to make a couple river crossings...

Race Route

The race route is available on Komoot, the world's leading route planning and navigation app, boasting a community of over 6 Million users. The Komoot mobile phone app is available for iOS, Android and web and Komoot has integrations with Wahoo and a range of Garmin devices. Komoot's map, route planner and navigation is available globally. As the official route partner of the 2020 Atlas Mountain Race, Komoot is offering each participant a complete package voucher for komoot. This enables you to download the entire map of Morocco for offline navigation with your smartphone.

You can download the GPX directly from Komoot in the 8 sections it has already been split into. We will also send out the final GPX as one piece and in shorter GPS friendly sections closer to the start of the race. The resupply and other route information in this manual will be included in the GPX as POIs (Points Of Interest).

You can find the route at this address:

<https://www.komoot.de/collection/888220/atlas-mountain-race-2020>

The 2020 Atlas Mountain Race will start within riding distance of Marrakech, an old capital of Morocco and a city of great historical importance. It will cover around 1145 kilometers for approximately 20,000 meters of climbing. Below, you will find a brief outline of the route for the second edition of the race.

Unlike for the SRMR, I was unable to ride the entire route by bike due to an inconvenient appendicitis just before heading out. For that reason the majority of the scouting was done by car. That won't affect the quality of the track but it does mean that having not experienced it from behind handlebars, I can't be as precise in letting riders know exactly how tough the terrain is.

We have taken great pains for the GPS track to be correct, but there may still be some slight deviations required due to changes on the ground from one season to the next. In the unlikely case that you come across a section where you feel the track is incorrect but see an obvious alternative, please make a note and tell us about the deviation you took and why. It will help us to make a fair decision should any action need to be taken at the end of the race. Another thing that we'd like to mention is that the quality of the road surface can vary a lot over time, even in the time since scouting. If the track follows a bad section of washboard but there is a smooth trail that runs parallel a few meters away, you may ride there. The race is tough enough without imposing endless washboard on participants when there are other options readily available. This does not, however, give riders license to follow any track they please. We will be checking everyone's GPS data at the end of the race to make sure that no shortcuts were taken.

We have also checked out potential resupply points and have included those that we are reasonably certain to be in operation at the time of the race. There will likely be more available in reality. Nothing is 100% guaranteed, so whilst you should be able to rely on this information for your resupply strategy, always take extra precautions and give yourself some margin as you make your plans. We encourage riders to do their own research on resupply and Morocco more generally.

Route Outline

The race will begin in Marrakech, we have yet to finalise the exact location for the start of the race, but the aim is for registration and the start to take place at the same hotel to the southeast of the city centre. This will allow a swift departure from Marrakech. We will have volunteers and/or local police in place to calm traffic for the first few kilometres as required.

The route will then head straight into the mountains for a number of solid climbs on the way to an all-piste crossing of the High Atlas. The road up to the summit of the pass is all driveable, albeit rough at times (barring any recent water damage...). The last few kilometres to the summit have actually just been completed recently and a road down to Telouet is planned. At the time of writing, however, the descent will follow an old mule track. It'll be about 4km with a fair bit of hike a bike depending on your mountain bike skill levels.

After the mule track, riders will reach Telouet, which is significant for the presence of the old Glaoui family Kasbah, once the main residence of this influential family under colonial rule. Having backed the french colonisers, they suffered a rapid fall from grace after independence. It is now much diminished but some small signs of its previous splendour remain for those willing to take the time to visit its interior.

After leaving CP1 behind, riders will head east on a short section of tarmac before going off road again as they make their way through red earth villages near Anmiter. They'll then head into the foothills of the Atlas and past Ouarzazate's impressive solar power station. A man-made beacon that can be seen from miles around.

They will then head south, briefly crossing the main road near Imassine. This will be the opportunity to have some food and stock up on supplies before heading back out into the wilderness of the Anti-Atlas. This next section is wild and remote, and stunningly beautiful. For SRMR veterans, there is even a river crossing! There is likely to be some pushing to make it up to the summit of the plateau but once up there, it's well worth the effort. This old colonial piste, built atop a network of canyons is sure to be one of the highlights of the race.

Past Afra, the going gets a bit easier in terms of elevation, with the route finding its way through a network of disjointed tracks among the hills. It's sandy at times but generally rideable. Eventually, riders will reach the waterfall at Tizgui and it's permanent resident, Omar. He'll certainly invite everyone for tea in this little oasis lost in the Moroccan hills. If you call ahead, he can actually have some food prepared too.

The route then briefly rejoins the main road (the other option was around 20km of hike-a-bike...), riders will be able to resupply at Ait Saoun before heading back into the mountains for the next remote stretch to Taznakht. It's all dusty pistes and endless mountain vistas during this section of the race.

Taznakht is one of the bigger towns en route, there are guest houses and restaurants and shops; everything you'll need to refresh before heading out onto the piste. Riders will then continue west, taking detours to avoid the main road and find more unspoilt backcountry gravel tracks.

They will then head south, eventually reaching Aguinane, a palmery hidden in an enclosed valley. The road down into the village is another highlight of the route. You'll certainly be happy that you're heading down rather than up, this vertiginous path. It's technically a paved road in places, although the rough concrete surface may have you wishing to be back on gravel. The Checkpoint will be hosted by the 'Auberge Le Paradis D'Aguinane'. It makes for an extremely scenic spot for a brevet card stamp.

On their way out of the valley, riders will be treated to a short stretch of tarmac before heading off-road once more. The piste gets rough here and there will likely be some pushing required. Resupply is scarce, so be careful that you have enough to get through this section. It's beautiful, but you'll have to earn every kilometre. These old colonial roads haven't been maintained and the surface has been badly eroded.

The next section between Tagmout and Issafen may be our personal favourite. It's an old piste that cars can no longer take because of two broken sections of road. That won't stop us though, a short walk down and around the wash out, and you'll be back on the road. The sheer enormity of the effort required to build this road, by hand, up in the Moroccan hills is staggering. It's a truly stunning section of gravel.

After Issafen, riders head into another remote section, likely one of the most difficult and frustrating. We took a long time looking for alternatives, but in the end could find nothing better to get us where we wanted to go, than a piste that follows a river bed. The stones are large and loose and it will likely be a hike for several kilometres. There is also very little resupply in this whole area. Do treat this section with caution and make sure you don't get caught short with supplies. It will take longer than expected.

When you do finally make it through, you'll come out in the Ait Mansour palmery, another green oasis in a land of arid rock and stone. You'll be able to try the famous Berber Omelette cooked up by our Checkpoint 3 hosts at the 'Auberge Ait Mansour'. For a more substantial resupply, you'll have to wait until Taфраoute.

After Taфраoute, riders will have some relatively long sections of tarmac that will speed things up, before being sent off on some pistes that have been paved with concrete. Again, the views are incredible and the roads you'll follow themselves are as well. The landscape changes again and you'd be forgiven for thinking that you're on the other side of the mediterranean. There will be one last major challenge, involving a short hike-a-bike to get onto one final, remote piste before you finally head out of the Anti-Atlas and ride down towards the ocean and the finish line.

The finish itself will be hosted at the 'Auberge La Dune', right out on the coast, south of Agadir. This cosy hotel will make for the ideal spot to relax and have a few beers. As always, there will be an afterparty on the last day of the race with the opportunity for a few small prizes and to tell tales from the road.

Breakdown of the distance between checkpoints

Marrakech to Telouet : 123 km / 3500m

Telouet to Aguinane : 539 km / 7600m

Aguinane to Ait Mansour : 275 km / 4000m

Ait Mansour to Sidi Rabat : 209 km / 3000m

Brief outline of resupply points

Distance (km)				
Origin	Destination	Total	Leg	Notes
Start	Tamazouzte	27	27	Resupply point
Tamazouzte	Small shop	36	9	Resupply point
Small shop	Tidili Mesfioua	49	13	Resupply point
Tidili Mesfioua	Small shop	55	6	Resupply point
Small shop	Arba Teghedouine	61	6	Resupply point
Arba Teghedouine	Shop	75	14	Resupply point
Shop	Zerkten	80	5	Resupply point
Zerkten	Spring water	118	38	Resupply point
Spring water	Auberge Restaurant Telouet / CP1	123	5	Checkpoint
Auberge Restaurant Telouet / CP1	Ghassat - Bar/shop	183	60	Resupply point
Ghassat - Bar/shop	Toundoute shop 1	213	30	Resupply point
Toundoute shop 1	Toundoute shop 2	213	0	Resupply point
Toundoute shop 2	Imassine restaurant 1	249	0	Resupply point
Imassine restaurant 1	Imassine restaurant 2	249	0	Resupply point
Imassine restaurant 2	Imassine shop 1	249	0	Resupply point
Imassine shop 1	Imassine shop 2	249	0	Resupply point
Imassine shop 2	Highway restaurant	252	3	Resupply point
Highway restaurant	Afra - shop	350	98	Resupply point
Afra - shop	Afella N'Dra - shop	378	28	Resupply point
Afella N'Dra - shop	Cascade de Tizgui	389	11	Resupply point
Cascade de Tizgui	Ait Saoun	414	25	Resupply point
Ait Saoun	Tigonsa Cafe	416	2	Resupply point
Tigonsa Cafe	Amagha - drinking water	481	65	Resupply point
Amagha - drinking water	Taznakht	491	10	Resupply point
Taznakht	Tasousfi - shop & restaurant	539	48	Resupply point

Tasousfi - shop & restaurant	Ait Marouf - shop 1	574	35	Resupply point
Ait Marouf - shop 1	Ait Marouf - shop 2	574	0	Resupply point
Ait Marouf - shop 2	Tamskrout - hotel / resupply	607	33	Resupply point
Tamskrout - hotel / resupply	Aguinane - small shop	661	54	Resupply point
Aguinane - small shop	Auberge Paradis d'Aguinane / CP2	662	1	Checkpoint
Auberge Paradis d'Aguinane / CP2	Aka Ghuiren	693	31	Resupply point
Aka Ghuiren	Tagmout - cafe & restaurants	778	85	Resupply point
Tagmout - cafe & restaurants	Auberge Tagmout	836	58	Resupply point
Auberge Tagmout	Issafn - small shop	841	5	Resupply point
Issafn - small shop	Auberge Ait Mansour / CP3	937	96	Checkpoint
Auberge Ait Mansour / CP3	Tassirt - shop	948	11	Resupply point
Tassirt - shop	Tagouramt - shop	954	6	Resupply point
Tagouramt - shop	Tafraoute - shops & hotels	990	36	Resupply point
Tafraoute - shops & hotels	Ait Omgas - shop	999	9	Resupply point
Ait Omgas - shop	Gite Amakhir - hotel	1041	42	Resupply point
Gite Amakhir - hotel	Aouguenz - cafe & shop	1041	0	Resupply point
Aouguenz - cafe & shop	Sidi Abdallah El Bouchouari - shops & restaurants	1085	44	Resupply point
Sidi Abdallah El Bouchouari - shops & restaurants	ZIZ - petrol station - shop	1098	13	Resupply point
ZIZ - petrol station - shop	Belfaa - shops on main road	1135	37	Resupply point
Belfaa - shops on main road	Auberge La Dune / Finish!	1146	11	FINISH

Toughest sections & notable difficulties

Unlike for the Silk Road Mountain Race, I was unable to scout the entire route by bike due to an inconvenient appendicitis just before heading out. This means that the tough parts of the route are not quite so firmly seared in the memory. We've done our best to evaluate the difficult parts from the comfort of a 4x4 but it's not quite the same. Please do look carefully at the route and do your own research to get an idea of where the going will get tough. Gradients and remoteness will be a good sign of when it'll be hard. Below is a short list of the sections that we estimated should be particularly difficult on a bike. It is not exhaustive though, so there may be some surprises. This is, after all, a first edition!

Telouet Pass

The highest point in the race. At 2600m, in February, it's entirely possible that there will be snow up towards the pass. There is a proper gravel road the whole way up, but the descent is loose and rocky and will likely require some hiking. Don't make the mistake of riding when it gets too loose. I can personally attest that falling head first into large stones isn't that fun and leaves a few marks...

Imassine to Afra

This remote section of the race is one of the most beautiful but it will also be tough. It's remote and dry and rocky. The ascent will likely require some hiking due to the incline and surface. Think carefully about supplies. The views do make up for the hardship though...

Aguinane to Tagmout

After you come out of the Aguinane valley and get off the tarmac again, the road deteriorates. There will likely be some hiking involved.

Tagmout to Issafen

This is the broken old colonial piste that features in the teaser. It's an incredible place but is also pretty hard going. Well worth the effort though.

Issafen to Ait Mansour

Probably one of the toughest sections of the race. The rocky track that follows the riverbed will likely have you cursing us, with reason. It will be a frustratingly slow section of the route. If there had been another viable option, we would have put it in the race!

Piste after KM1067

One of the last, if not the last time you'll have to push your bike. The ascent is quite short but it'll certainly involve some hiking.

Race Categories

The Atlas Mountain Race is primarily designed as a solo challenge, but to make it more accessible to less experienced riders or those that want to share the experience, we have also included a pairs category. We will not be accepting teams or groups of more than two riders to enter the race.

The Atlas Mountain Race may be raced as a **SOLO** rider or as part of a **PAIR**. These will be the two finishing categories. The final race rankings will reflect these two categories with finishing times and positions in these categories only. For more information on how this will work, head to the rules section further down in this race manual.

Solo riders are expected to be entirely self-sufficient. They must not receive any outside assistance, be that private resupply, navigation information, information on where they are in the race rankings, drafting other riders, etc. The same rules apply for pairs riders but to the pair as a whole. They are allowed to assist and support each other within the pair, but the pair as a whole cannot receive any assistance from outside of the pair. If you have any doubts as to what constitutes outside assistance and private resupply, we are happy to answer any of your questions.

We feel that a little further clarification can be helpful when it comes to solo racers riding together. We don't want to discourage people riding together intermittently and sharing the experience because of a fear of being declassified or disqualified. At the same time, this is a race, and the rules need to be fair to riders that truly ride the entire route solo. We're not going to quantify precisely how much time can be spent with another rider before it constitutes riding as a pair. Essentially, if you ride with someone, it should be because you happen to be riding at the same pace at that time. What you should not be doing is the following: planning to sleep in the same place, waiting for each other, etc. for days on end.

*Please note that you are only allowed to finish in the general classification in the same category as you started in. For instance solo riders cannot finish as a pair if they decide to team up in the middle of the

race. The same applies if a Pairs rider finishes without their partner. In both cases, riders will be given a finishing time, but will be removed from the general classification.

Race Coverage and Rider Updates

There will be three main channels for spectators to follow the race. First and foremost will be the Race Map and rider 'dots'; the go to resource for your family, friends and followers to check on your progress. We expect many an hour will be spent by dot watchers poring over the race map to see how the dots are progressing.

The second main channel is the podcast that we will be producing during the race. Planning is still ongoing but it will likely include a number of introductory episodes and then some content live from the field. The podcast will be available to stream on the AMR website, details will be announced after we publish the first episode.

We will also be posting daily images on our social media channels. Look out for one of our two control cars as they make their way along the race route on the lookout for riders. We may also be placing photographers in some pretty remote and hard to reach spots, so keep an eye out, you never know when they might come across you.

In addition to this, we will be keeping an eye on your social media. We recommend that riders get a local sim card on arrival and add some credit, it's very affordable and easy to do. You should be good to go with around 100 dirhams of credit if you pick an internet only plan. You can ask one of the sellers of sim cards to help you set up internet on your phone. While a lot of the coverage will go to those at the sharp end of the race, our control cars will be spread throughout the field and we will do our best to post updates on as many riders as possible, regardless of where they are in the race standings. It's not all about winning.

The official hashtag for this edition of the race is **#AMR2020**

In addition to this, each rider will also be encouraged to use a personal hashtag unique to them in this edition of the race. This will be comprised of the official hashtag above and the cap number given in 3 digits, for example: **#AMR2019cap001**

This will allow us and your followers to easily see a feed of all your updates across various platforms as well as those who are posting about you. Cap numbers will be allocated shortly before the start of the race.

While the race is in progress, the ways to get in touch with us will be printed on your Brevet Card and these will include:

Email: **race@atlasmountainrace.cc**

SMS / Helpline: **TBD**

Trackers: SOS/Assistance: ***The use of the tracker buttons has precise instructions that must be strictly adhered to, see details lower down in this manual***

Atlas Mountain Race will be making updates via the following channels:

Instagram: **@atlasmountainrace**

Facebook page: **facebook.com/atlasmountainrace**

On the blog section of our website: **atlasmountainrace.cc**

Our YouTube Channel: **http://bit.ly/2YYIHnq**

Twitter: **@atlasmountainrace**

Next of kin following the race

The primary means of following the race will be the race map and the dots. However, please remember that the information provided by the system is not infallible. As with other events where the system is used, there may be periods where tracking is incomplete or less than 100% reliable. There can be tracker failures and issues with tracker reliability. The race organisation has a number of designated "Dotwatchers", but welcomes information from those who are also watching their loved ones. It is natural for people, especially friends and family, to worry about riders when their tracker stops moving for any length of time. Please do not panic as there are any number of reasons why this could be the case. If you are particularly concerned, you can send an email to **race@atlasmountainrace.cc**, with a rider cap number and **TRACKING** in the title. The person on duty at HQ, can then act accordingly and compare with other data from the control cars and latest dotwatching logs. We will do our best to get back to you in a timely manner and check on riders as necessary, but please understand that we are very busy during this time.

Finally, for followers' peace of mind, don't forget that whilst the AMR is held in a wild and remote location, the fact that all riders follow the same route, will ensure that if a rider does encounter a problem, another rider will soon pass the same way. The control cars will be spread out amongst the field of riders and traveling along the same route also. Finally, remember that there are usually locals about, even in the most seemingly remote parts of the country.

Scratching from the Race

If you end up in the situation where, for one reason or another, you cannot continue with your race, and wish to drop out or 'scratch' from the race please get in touch with us as soon as possible by sending an email to **race@atlasmountainrace.cc**. If you are unable to do so, please use one of the contact methods above. Include in your email as much information as possible regarding the circumstances of your withdrawal from the race, including your full name and race number. Note that all riders are welcome to celebrate with us at the finish regardless of how they get there. If you scratch from the race you are responsible for your onward travel to the destination you choose.

“Never scratch at night” is good advice from accomplished endurance racers. That is to say always wait until morning to make any big decisions, things have a habit of looking a lot better after a night’s sleep. That advice has saved many a successful race campaign, including my own.
- MIKE HALL

Contact with AMR during the race

AMR will be operating a mobile Race Headquarters (HQ), that will function 24/7 during the race period and will be best equipped to respond to any urgent enquiries. The official race email, **race@atlasmountainrace.cc** is the best way to get in touch with staff at race HQ. AMR staff will then be able to quickly get in touch with the teams out in the field and pass on information as required to best respond to any situations that arise. Details of how to get in touch with the HQ will also be printed on the Brevet cards that will be given to riders at registration the day before the start of the race.

For the duration of the race, the main assets that AMR will have in the field are the two control cars and medic car that will be traveling along the race route. These will likely be the most expedient means of checking on a rider and responding to any situations that arise. They will all be carrying satellite communication devices, and so will always be contactable.

Prior to the race we will be getting in touch with the emergency contact that riders provided during the application procedure with more information on how best to get in touch with AMR. We will also provide a brief guide on what is to be expected as a first time dot watcher and avoid any unnecessary worries caused by such issues as intermittent tracking.

It is crucial for riders and their next of kin to understand before entering the race that informing your next of kin of any relevant information may well be the only action that AMR are able to perform in the event of an accident. Riders need to understand that they are fully self-reliant and responsible for themselves and it simply may not be possible for AMR to provide any assistance, which therefore carries no obligation. Riders will need to sign the Rider Agreement prior to their participation in the race being accepted. It will be provided to them online before the start of the race.

Registration and Race Start

Registration

Friday 14th February 10 am - 3 pm

Location : TBD

ADDRESS : TBD

Coordinates : TBD

Please make sure you bring all the documents with you that are outlined below in this manual or any more recent communications from AMR. Copies of insurance documents are acceptable and you can leave the copies with the registration team. We recommend that you carry a copy of your insurance documents with you during the race.

Tracker deposit payment will be made available online in January through paypal, allowing for quicker registration. Your deposit payment will also be reimbursed using paypal when you return your tracker. This will be possible at the finish line in Sidi Rabat until it closes at midnight on Saturday the 22nd of February (the evening of the party).

To avoid tedious queuing there will be a reception and seating area. Give your name at the desk and take a seat. We will check your records and call you up to take care of any parts of the process we need you to complete. You can then take your tracker and various goodies.

If you have your own tracker please turn it on and test it after registration. We will have checked all trackers to ensure they have registered a pre-race position and they are working properly but please also do so yourself. If you fail to test the tracker we may not get a chance to check for errors before you leave and you may experience tracking problems.

The AMR podcast host will also be present at registration and will be looking for riders to talk to for the official race podcast.

Shuttle back to Agadir/Marrakech

Transport will be organised for all riders to Agadir or back to Marrakech, should they require it on the day after the finisher's party (23/02). This will also include transport of your bike but is not included in the entry fee, you will be able to sign up and pay for a spot online. The cost of the transfer back to Agadir or Marrakech is not yet fixed, but will be, well ahead of the start of the race.

Bag Transfer

AMR will be providing a free bag transfer service for riders. You will be able to leave one small bag with us at registration which we'll then transport to the finish line for you. The idea is for you to have a change of clothes and a few extra belongings that you wouldn't want to carry during the race itself. Although the bags will be kept in a secure place, please do not leave any valuables to avoid any risk of lost items. The bags will be transferred from Marrakech to the finish line on the **15th of February**. You will need to make

your way to the finish line to pick up your belongings.

Rider Briefings

The rider briefings will take place at (location TBD) **at 4pm on the 14th of February**. This briefing is **mandatory for all riders** and will either confirm or update you on the information provided in this manual. Brevet cards are your official record of race times and may only be issued at the rider briefings, so make sure you attend. Without a Brevet Card, you may not appear on the race results. **You MUST attend or you will not be allowed to race.**

AMR Control and Media Crew on the Road

Atlas Mountain Race will be out in the field for the duration of the race in our two official control cars with photographers. We will also be catching up with riders to talk with them for the race podcast that will be published every two days throughout the race. Our media teams will have been briefed to capture the race but not get in your way. Do please feel free to chat with us of course. Remember that if you want to be left alone and get on with things though, you are under no obligation to stop and pose for the camera!

AMR Volunteers at Control Points

Please be mindful that most of the people you will meet at the start, finish and control points will be volunteers who are giving their time to make all this possible. Please be kind and courteous to all volunteers, no matter how tired you are, without these people there would be no race.

Race Start

Start: TBD

Coordinates: TBD

Race Starts: Saturday 15th February 09:00 (GMT+1) (Please arrive 30 minutes before this time)

For the first edition of the race, we will start in Marrakech. The exact location of the start has not yet been fixed. We are working on a suitable, combined registration and start location. If necessary, we will work with local authorities to ensure rider safety on any busy sections on the way out of town.

Please be at the start line, all packed and ready to go at least 30 minutes before the official start. Head to the GPS coordinates written above and look out for signage and volunteers waiting to welcome you for the start of the race.

The Checkpoints

There will be three mandatory checkpoints in Atlas Mountain Race 2020. They will begin operation at the arrival of the first rider and they will close as indicated below. Checkpoints are used as a means of confirming the passage of race participants along the route both as proof of full participation and as a safety check for the organisers to confirm the physical location (and condition) of participants compared to the satellite tracking data.

Passage through each checkpoint is confirmed by a stamp by the duty AMR representative in your brevet card. Each checkpoint is located where there are certain resources or services. In accordance with the principles of unsupported racing, any services are limited to those generally commercially available. The race organisers and volunteers may provide you with information at their discretion. The checkpoints are the best place for friends, families and supporters to cheer on riders should they decide to do so. We recommend that anyone coming out to support riders get in touch with AMR before hand.

Checkpoint Cut-offs

AMR will not be operating hard cut-offs for the race checkpoints. You will be free to continue on your way around the race course even if you are outside the time frame of the race. You will be able to self validate using a recognisable photograph at the checkpoint location. However, please be aware that if you are outside the checkpoint closing times AMR will not be in a position to provide even the most basic assistance should you require it.

Operating Hours (Local Times)

The checkpoints will be open 24 hours, but please do take care to consider others when arriving outside normal daytime hours.

CP1: Glaoui Kasbah, Telouet



Control: Auberge Restaurant Telouet

Coordinates: 31.289832, -7.236634

Closes: Sunday 16th February (GMT+1) at 07:00

Distance from start: 123 Kilometres

The passage of merchant caravans, which connected the desert with the large cities situated on the other side of the Atlas, and the proximity of the salt mines, made the wealth of the Pashas inhabiting Telouet. The current kasbah was built from the 1860s by the El Glaoui family. Their power grew during the colonial era, where their support for the French in turn gave them greater power. Their fall from grace following independence is one of the main reasons why the Kasbah is in such a state of disrepair. An interesting and somewhat forgotten piece of Morocco's heritage.

Food

The checkpoint itself will be at the Auberge Restaurant Telouet. Our hosts are well aware of the demands of the event and will do their utmost to ensure that riders will have plentiful food, regardless of their time of arrival. Discussions are ongoing, but they plan to have hot food ready to eat as riders come in. With the checkpoint so close to the start, it's going to be a busy one!

CP2: Aguinane Palmery



Control: Auberge le Paradis d'Aguinane

Coordinates: 30.206576, -7.562

Closes: Wednesday 19th February at 21:00 (GMT+1)

Distance from start: 662 Kilometres

The Aguinane Palmery, built into the steep sides of this narrow valley is a truly spectacular site. Even more impressive is the narrow dirt road that climbs at an incredible gradient up the cliff where a waterfall can sometimes be seen in winter. Luckily, riders will be heading down the valley on this vertiginous, piste. Truly a descent to enjoy at a casual pace given the width of the road and the great drops that await at every bend, with no safety barriers in sight...

Food

Essentially the same as for CP1. We are working to ensure that our hosts at the Auberge will be offering food at any time of day or night. Preparations are ongoing to ensure that they are ready for riders' arrival. Keep an eye on this section in future updates to the race manual as it will be updating as we talk with local partners. At this point, we cannot yet guarantee that the Auberge will be well equipped for night-time operation.

CP3: Ait Mansour



Control: Auberge Ait Mansour

Coordinates: 29.547983, -8.87816

Closes: Friday 21st February at 19:00 (GMT+1)

Distance from start: 937 Kilometres

Another incredible, palm filled oasis hidden in an even narrower valley than Aguinane. It may not have the incredible steep switchback climb up a vertiginous cliff, but it more than makes up for it with the verdant palm fronds that cover the road at Ait Mansour. It will be a welcome change from the sun scorched terrain before and after...

Food

The Auberge that will be used as the location for the checkpoint is a little more rustic than for the other checkpoints but they serve an excellent Berber omelet. We will again work with our hosts to keep up a steady flow of food as riders arrive. We will release more precise details of arrangements as they become available.

Finish: Sidi Rabat



Finish Line: Auberge La Dune

Coordinates: 30.085717, -9.663953

Closes: Saturday 22nd February at 24:00 (GMT+1) (midnight on the evening of the party)

Distance from start: 1145 km

Sidi Rabat, a small seaside village some 60 kilometres south of Agadir, will be the finish for the first edition of the race. It will make for a relaxing place to finish the race and start recovery on the stunning and wild Atlantic coast on the edge of the ecologically important, Souss Massa National Park.

Accommodation at the finish line

There are several accommodation options available at La Dune itself, from hotel suites to Berber style tents. It will be a bit tight for everyone to stay, but there are a couple of other options nearby. We are discussing with the owners to ensure that everything is done to accommodate as many people as we can. In future editions we'll be forced to go somewhere larger, but for the first edition we thought we'd make the most of the more limited numbers and choose a picturesque spot on the coast.

Finisher's Party

There will be drinks, back-slapping and some speeches and small prizes on Saturday 22nd of February from 7pm until late. It'll be the opportunity to chill out, exchange stories from the road and generally recover from the ride.

Shuttle back to Agadir/Marrakech

Transport will be organised for all riders to Agadir or back to Marrakech, should they require it on the day after the finisher's party (22/02). This will also include transport of your bike but is not included in the entry fee, you will be able to sign up and pay for a spot online. The cost of the transfer back to Agadir or Marrakech is not yet fixed but will be, well ahead of the start of the race.

Safety throughout the Race

Entering this race should not be taken lightly, it is a serious undertaking that will require a high level of fitness, extensive preparation and carefully selected equipment. As the organisers, safety is our primary concern. The vast majority of the route is on 4x4 tracks or gravel roads with very little traffic. Nonetheless, there are sections where you will not be alone on the road and as we have seen from the recent tragedies in our community, sharing the road with cars can be dangerous.

The entire route has been checked and a full risk assessment conducted. It shall also be taken as a clear indication to riders that the AMR is an ultra endurance bike packing race that pushes the boundaries of races of this type and each and every participant must pay particular attention to his/her race preparations. Your bike should be appropriate for the terrain and in perfect working condition. Lights and brakes shall be in full working order. Use your lights in all conditions of darkness or reduced visibility. **We will be conducting a brief bike check at registration to ensure that brakes and lights are fully functional.** Almost the entire race takes place in a desertous mountain environment. **We may also check your equipment to ensure that you have everything on the mandatory equipment list.** There are long stretches of the route where there is no shelter, no habitation, and no services of any kind available to compensate for poor preparation or inadequate equipment. Riders are advised to be particularly vigilant with regard to the additional consequences of exhaustion, sleep deprivation and extremes of temperature, where they may be completely alone for substantial periods during the race.

It is compulsory to wear a helmet compliant with EN1078 at all times when riding during the event. Finally, take care to keep your insurance, identification and next of kin contact documents with you in a safe, dry place at all times.

AMR teams on the road

Although it still remains to be confirmed, we should have a medic car on the race route. We will keep it off the race map to avoid alarming loved ones and followers of the race. Please do not count on this safety net, nor expect them to help in any way unless there is an emergency. They are there for your safety but should not affect the way you ride this race.

Warnings about riding the Atlas Mountain Race

As we have previously stated, entering into this race is a serious undertaking. It takes place in a developing country where services and infrastructure are more limited than what you may be used to. This is part of the attraction of the race, but you must also understand the risks that this entails. We will go over some of the major risks that are inherent with taking part in this adventure below.

Terrain

The race takes part in serious, mountainous terrain. There may not be the altitude of other places in the world, but it is nonetheless a difficult place to ride a bike. The tracks vary from smooth tarmac to unrideably steep piste, and on to loose, rocky, riverbeds. It is almost all rideable but the going will be tough. The trails also have a tendency to be rocky and there are loose rocks in many places. It is very easy to crash out. Help will take a long time to arrive, so please do ride conservatively. The hike a bike sections will be shorter than in SRMR but there will still be many points when you'll need to get off the bike and push. There are two river crossings, they shouldn't be above knee deep, but the water is cold.

Climate and Weather Conditions

Conditions in the Atlas and Anti-Atlas are generally dry but it is entirely possible that it will rain or snow during the race, particularly at the higher altitude of the first pass. The rest of the race deliberately takes place further south and at lower altitude. That being said, it can get below freezing at night. During the day expect around 15-20 degrees and at night around 0-8 degrees celsius. You may not need to use it, but you must have wet weather gear and proper equipment to sleep at night comfortably at 0 degrees.

Emergency and medical services

Morocco is a developing country with extremely difficult terrain. Medical services are very limited outside major urban centres. High quality medical facilities only really exist in major cities. There are also extremely limited emergency response teams. There is no helicopter on standby to come to the assistance of people in remote areas like there is in Europe or North America. It may take hours or even days for emergency services to reach you, even with the SPOT trackers that all riders are required to carry.

Resupply

Due to the wild and remote nature of some sections of the route, resupply will be one of the major challenges that you will face to remain safe and ride efficiently. Information on resupply points that we consider are reasonably certain to be in operation at the time of the race is provided in this manual. Please be warned, that this information is for guidance only. There are also no doubt more potential resupply points, so do your own research. It is good policy to keep some reserves in case you are unable to get resupply. Keep in mind that re-supply options are also far more limited in Morocco. Most small village shops will not have a great selection of snacks and high energy food that is convenient to bring with you on the road. The distance between resupply points is up to 100km. Make sure you have the reserves to pass these sections.

Water

The race may take place during the winter months but water is still extremely scarce. There are times when you will need to take significant water reserves with you to make it from one resupply point to the next. It may also be worth bringing electrolyte tablets with you to help with dehydration.

Food

More often than not, the food and sanitary conditions will be vastly different from those in your home country and your stomach might not cope well with the change. Arriving just a few days in advance doesn't leave you much time to acclimatize to the local diet, so please remember to take with you medication approved by a medical professional to relieve traveller's stomach. The best plan is prevention, so please use your judgement and take the necessary precautions to mitigate the risk of illness. Be diligent about where you get water and what you eat.

Mandatory equipment list

There will be a mandatory equipment list for all participants in the race. We will keep this as short as possible. It is essentially a minimum checklist to make sure that you do not head out into remote areas with inadequate equipment.

- Front and Rear lights
- Helmet
- Basic first aid kit - this includes bandages, antiseptic/sterile wipes, medication
- Suitable sleeping system. We won't be enforcing a specific temperature rating for each piece of equipment, but rather, you should have with you equipment to be comfortable sleeping at 0°C.
- Down jacket or synthetic equivalent. Something warm if you get stuck in cold/wet weather.
- Waterproof jacket
- Survival blanket : they're super light and could prove invaluable in an emergency.
- Gloves : These are to protect you from the weather rather than cycling specific. You should have two pairs, one waterproof and one warm.

Bike recommendations

There are a number of bike options that would all be solid choices for this race. There are few extremely technical sections but you will benefit from wider tyres, flat bars and mountain bike geometry on the rougher sections and on descents. When it gets very tough, you probably won't be able to ride, regardless of the bike you choose.

I think the ideal bike is something fast and light with at least 2.0" tyres. When it comes down to it, it will depend on you: your bike handling skills, how much comfort you need for long days in the saddle, and the bike that you have available. What I would recommend though is low gearing, with, at the very least, a 1 to 1 ratio for your lowest gear. There are some steep, steep sections. You may well also want to go with front suspension, but it is not required.

Emergency Situations

Regardless of how competitive you are or where you stand in the race rankings, safety should always be your primary concern. Please think carefully about your personal safety at all times and avoid unnecessary risks. Many sections of the race route are remote and difficult to access. Help will most likely take hours to arrive at the best of times.

In the event that you do find yourself in a life threatening situation, check your spot tracker and activate the SOS function. If you are within cellular reception, please call us immediately. Contact information will be given during the rider briefings and will be printed on your brevet card. If none of these options are available to you, due to tracker malfunction, etc. you will need to find your own assistance.

We do not want to discourage people from using the SOS function on their tracker, but please know that we take distress signals very seriously and getting help to the location of the incident often requires massive coordination by the organisation. Please think carefully before using this function and **use the SOS only in a life threatening situation**. We will not be able to establish the reason for the SOS call until someone is physically on location.

We will have a team of Dot Watchers who will be monitoring your track very carefully for the duration of the race and if we spot something unusual, we will likely make sure things are okay. We will put systems in place to ensure that in the event that something happens to a rider, but that they are unable to notify AMR, there will still be a response. An analysis will be made of the conditions before the period of inactivity: terrain, speed, location, etc. to judge the probability that there is an issue and react accordingly.

Next of Kin

All riders are required to give details of their next of kin, so that they can be contacted if AMR become aware of any incidents or accidents involving riders. Next of kin will be contacted before the race and notified that they have been nominated as a racer's point of contact. They will also be advised of some of the more important details of the rider agreement which riders have signed, the responsibilities of the riders, and the limited obligations of AMR. They will also be given information on how to follow the race and what to expect as it unfolds.

AMR advise that riders discuss their entry into the race with their next of kin well in advance of the event. Their next of kin should understand that the rider is taking full responsibility for their ride and is fully aware that they won't be getting any assistance. This discussion is key to the avoidance of any misunderstanding by participants or their next of kin.

Due to the nature of the event and the distribution of riders along the course, AMR cannot provide emergency rescue to riders. Our commitment is to help coordinate the best response possible to any incident and notify next of kin as soon as we can, once we are aware of an incident and provide them with as much information as possible. In the event of an incident, AMR will not make any public statements without first contacting next of kin, verifying information and obtaining their permission.

Registration Documents / Checklist

For registration you will need the following:

Photo ID - For example passport / driver's licence / ID card to prove it is you and so no imposter can steal your place on the starting line.

Doctor's Note - We must ask you to provide a medical note signed by your doctor to certify that you are in good physical health to undertake the demands of the event. The note must bear the name and marks of a traceable doctor's practice, confirm that there are no known health reasons that you should not participate and mention the Atlas Mountain Race by name.

We will be providing a document that we recommend you bring with you when you visit your doctor for the purpose of obtaining a doctor's note. It will provide a brief checklist of topics that it could be useful to discuss with your doctor (these are recommendations but not mandatory). This document can be found at the end of this manual but will also be sent to all riders separately.

All riders must have valid insurance which covers emergency extraction and repatriation. Please bring your policy number and the name of your insurer, or a copy of your cover certificate.

Policies are also available which will insure you for your race fee should you have an accident before the race which means you cannot participate.

It is the rider's responsibility to contact the insurer and confirm that the level of cover they require is provided and in particular for AMR, which is a competitive event. Please note that there are no cash or high value prizes in the AMR as this can affect premiums and cover.

Visas

With the Moroccan government's policy of encouraging tourism to the country, there are many countries that can enter the country for 90 days without a visa. This is the case for the countries below. If you are not a national of these countries please find out well ahead of time what the procedure is to obtain a tourist visa for the period of the race.

-  All European Union citizens¹
-  Algeria
-  Andorra
-  Argentina
-  Australia
-  Bahrain
-  Brazil
-  Canada
-  Chile
-  China
-  Dominican Republic
-  Gabon
-  Hong Kong (30 days)
-  Iceland
-  Indonesia
-  Ivory Coast
-  Japan
-  Kuwait
-  Liechtenstein
-  Macau
-  Malaysia
-  Mexico
-  Monaco
-  New Zealand
-  Niger
-  Norway
-  Oman
-  Peru
-  Philippines
-  Qatar
-  Russia
-  San Marino
-  Saudi Arabia
-  Senegal
-  Singapore (30 days)
-  South Korea
-  Switzerland
-  Tunisia
-  Turkey
-  United Arab Emirates
-  United States

Satellite Tracking

Satellite tracking is included within the entry fee. SPOT personal satellite trackers will be available for collection all day on Friday and their use demonstrated.

Private SPOT trackers

Private trackers are welcome and encouraged, there is a £40 discount for riders with their own device.

If you wish to use your own tracker we will require your share page URL and ESN number - there will be a form available to submit this on or before race day.

(note that a Garmin style GPS device is not the same as a SPOT tracker and does not perform the same function. For your SPOT you will also need an active service plan).

Prior to the start of the race you will also need to change the emergency contacts on your findmespot page to those specified by AMR, this will ensure that emergency services are coordinated as quickly as possible in case of emergency. Details on how to do this and the contacts to use will be sent to riders separately by email.

All racers who do not have their own tracker will be supplied one by AMR. It is the rider's responsibility to keep this active and replace batteries as necessary. In the event that your tracker is not active for any period of time then riders may be asked to present other evidence to confirm their ride in order to get a valid time and place in the general classification. All finishers in the top 10 will need their ride verified by a tracker.

AMR rental devices: SPOT Generation III



This is what the SPOT GEN III Units look like

Tracker Deposit

A refundable deposit of £180 against loss or damage will be required for each tracker online via Paypal. Your deposit will be returned to you via Paypal once you have returned the tracker.

Tracker Instructions

Mounting device. Ensure the tracker has the SPOT logo facing up with a clear view of the sky, this ensures the best satellite coverage. The ideal spot is up higher and/or away from you, it can be placed at the top of a bag (the right way up) and transmit through the fabric but it shouldn't be under other equipment.

Turn on. Press and hold the Power button at the top left to turn on; lights will illuminate. THEN Start tracking. Please leave your tracker on for the duration of the race. It will switch into power saving mode when you are not moving so there is no need to ever switch it off. This will prevent the risk of accidentally forgetting to turn it back on, causing concern from AMR and loved ones alike.

Start tracking. Press and hold the Track (footprint) button until the light illuminates green. The device can be left on continuously, it is motion activated so will use very little battery when stopped.

Turn off. Press and hold the Power button until the Power light blinks rapidly.

OK button. For AMR 2020 you will be able to use the OK button in two situations: at the end of the day to let us know that you have stopped for the night; and when you are stopped or plan to stop for more than 6 hours. This will let us and our dotwatching team know that there is nothing for us to worry about during a prolonged break. To ensure the message gets through, leave on under a clear sky for 20 minutes.

Help button. (hand icon) We will not be using the Help button for AMR 2020

Custom Message Button. (text message icon) We will not be using the Custom Message button for AMR 2020

SOS button. SPOT's S.O.S. function should only be used for critical, life-threatening situations. Pressing the S.O.S. button sends an alert directly to Race HQ and local authorities, who will work together to coordinate an emergency rescue as soon as possible. As stated elsewhere in this manual, please be aware that the response time may be significant, with help possibly many hours away.

Waterproof. The device is waterproof to a depth of 1 metre for 30 minutes. For more detailed information, visit www.findmespot.com and view their "SPOT Gen3 user guide"

The rules

Introduction & Clarification of the Rules

When it came to deciding the rules of the AMR for inclusion in the first edition of the race manual, I first had a look at how other unsupported races do things, and the slight differences that exist in the letter of the law for each of them. They all share the same general principles but there is some variation both in the rules that are spelled out and how strictly they are applied. In the end, I based the rules on the system that Mike Hall developed for the last edition of the Transcontinental that he was involved in before his tragic death. He was at the forefront of developing our sport and worked tirelessly to improve and update things every year, learning from the experience of putting on one of the leading unsupported races. From personal experience, I can say that the rules that he developed worked very well in the context of the Transcontinental. The addition of the distinction between a completion and category finish added another level of sophistication to distinguish between true solo finishes and riders who completed the challenge but who could not truly say that they finished the race entirely unsupported. I think that there is real value in retaining this system. It allowed for two categories of finishers, one a little more lenient that made the race more accessible, and the other that ensured that those going for the win would need to really do things entirely by themselves. Just to reiterate, here is the distinction between these two categories as defined below:

*If all **RULES** given below are observed then riders are awarded a **COMPLETION** and are included in the register of **arrivals** which will be listed in time order. Where any reasonable doubt may exist and there is no evidence of a rule breach, then benefit of such doubt is given to the rider.*

*If, as above, all **RULES** are observed **AND** the conditions for **QUALIFICATION** below are met then riders will be awarded a **CATEGORY FINISH** and be given a finishing position in the **general classification** for solo or pairs as well as being listed in the register of **arrivals**. Where any reasonable doubt may exist and there is no evidence of qualification then the rider will need to prove it.*

However, there are also some notable differences between the Transcontinental and the Atlas Mountain Race. It is more difficult navigating the grey areas between private and commercially available resupply. What is acceptable 'trail magic' and what is outside resupply that will give one rider an advantage over another? Where does the line fall between positive interaction with locals and relying on them to complete your ride? When the nearest bike shop is back at the start of the route, several hundred kilometers away, and a rider's pump is broken through no fault of their own, should that mean the end of their ride or of anyone who stops to help? How do we distinguish between these different scenarios in a way that holds riders to a high standard of self-sufficiency and ensures an even playing field while still being realistic? Following the rules is largely self-policed and riders need to feel that they can discuss any issues that they had during their ride.

From the very first edition of the AMR we need a set of rules that best reflects the reality on the ground while respecting the spirit and heritage of our sport. No doubt we will build on these rules and adapt them as we learn more about the realities of the race in future editions.

The first topic to address is the interaction between riders and locals outside of clear commercial resupply situations. In a country with a proud tradition of hospitality, it would be a real shame not to allow

riders to accept offers of this kind. However, allowing riders to accept offers of food, drink and even shelter, does create a lot of possibilities for contentious situations.

The principle that riders shall follow is this: they may accept legitimate, unplanned offers of drink, food or shelter but must not go looking for it. Any help received must not be solicited in any way. It's the difference between stopping for a shepherd who waves you over and going off route and asking for something. I absolutely do not want to hear of riders knocking on doors or going out of their way to get help from locals. Riders should not be counting on the support of locals to get them through a remote section. They should be fully self-sufficient and any offer from locals should be an opportunity for interaction and positive experiences rather than a means of carrying less supplies or gaining any kind of advantage. If they do get themselves into a situation where they came to depend on a local to get them through it, then they should tell us about it and explain the circumstances.

What this means is that we will be adding one more rule for the first edition of the AMR, on a trial basis.

- **Riders must not solicit any form of private resupply from locals on the race route, any such interaction must be freely offered and unplanned.**

For riders who are pursuing a category finish (a requirement for contesting the overall win), the same distinction when it comes to the burden of proof as in other situations will be observed. Unlike with a simple completion, where we will assume that anything offered by locals was indeed in good faith, riders seeking a spot in the general classification will need to prove that it was the case if any doubts arise. It will not necessarily be easy to do so, meaning that there is a certain risk involved. We recommend you document any of these situations to ensure that there is no doubt. Take some pictures, make a video, whatever you feel can help. If you want to be absolutely certain that no questions arise, it may be best to avoid the more substantial offers of hospitality such as shelter or a full meal. In any case, given the slower pace of life in Morocco, you'll most likely end up spending more time than planned if you do decide to stop...

The second main topic that requires some discussion is assistance between riders. There has been quite a lot of debate about what constitutes outside assistance between riders, particularly for mechanical problems. This was especially true for relatively minor infractions such as lending someone a pump. The view that we have adopted for the first edition of the AMR is that any assistance received from another rider means that you will not be disqualified but you will be eligible for a completion only. The assisted rider will not be able to receive a spot in the general classification. We will also slightly relax the rule regarding the rider doing the assisting also being penalised. Helping another rider will not affect their standing in the race. This makes the AMR somewhat more lenient than the Transcontinental but I think that in the context of Morocco, where a mechanical can mean not only the end of your race but also the ride, it is justified.

Finally, I would also like to clarify what to do if you suffer a mechanical that you are unable to fix yourself or any other issue that requires a hasty retreat towards civilisation not under your own power. We will allow you to hitch or pay for a lift out, but also back, as the distances involved are such that riding back to the spot where you had the issue would essentially mean the end of your race. However you get back to where you were, it won't be easy and it will cost you a lot of time. If you do end up needing to do this, we expect you to document the exact location where you were picked up and make sure that you return

precisely to the same spot. The best solution, of course, is to be certain of the gear you bring to Morocco, carry plenty of spares and ride conservatively to avoid breaking anything in the first place.

So that pretty much wraps it up for the rule clarifications. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any doubts or questions. The same goes for during the race. You may well have to wait until a town or checkpoint a fair bit further down the road until you can tell us about any issues you had, but please do so. There is some serious satisfaction to be had from knowing that you managed to complete the ride entirely by yourself without any outside assistance.

The Rules

The Atlas Mountain Race is a race from point A to point B, via a predefined and shared route on a bicycle for solo riders without any dedicated assistance. It's pretty simple really but some people do whatever they can to get one over on the rest of us, so we need some rules.

Put simply, there will be two types of finishes for AMR 2020.

If all **RULES** given below are observed then riders are awarded a **COMPLETION** and are included in the register of **arrivals** which will be listed in time order. Where any reasonable doubt may exist and there is no evidence of a rule breach, then benefit of such doubt is given to the rider.

If, as above, all **RULES** are observed **AND** the conditions for **QUALIFICATION** below are met then riders will be awarded a **CATEGORY FINISH** and be given a finishing position in the **general classification** for solo or pairs as well as being listed in the register of **arrivals**. Where any reasonable doubt may exist and there is no evidence of qualification then the rider will need to prove it.

To summarise: in the presence of doubt Rules compliance is generally assumed, but qualification *must be proved*.

If a category finish is desired it is in the rider's interests to actively avoid doubt.

RULES FOR COMPLIANCE

Here are the rules that **all** riders must meet in order to be awarded a completion and finishing time for the Atlas Mountain Race.

1. Ride from the designated start line to the designated finish via the route provided and the 3 manned checkpoints listed in this manual and specified on the Brevet Card.
2. No 3rd party support, private lodgings or resupply. All food, drink and equipment must be carried with you or acquired at commercially available services
3. Riders must not solicit any form of private resupply from locals on the race route, any such interaction must be freely offered and unplanned
4. No drafting (other than pairs with their partners)
5. All forward travel overland must be human powered
6. All riders must maintain evidence of their ride
7. Travel insurance, cycle helmets, lights and equipment in the required equipment list are mandatory, we may be checking
8. Riders must know and observe all local traffic laws
9. Ride in the spirit of self-reliance and equal opportunity

CONDITIONS FOR QUALIFICATION

Riders will qualify for Solo or Pairs general classification if:

- They begin and finish their race under the same classification
- They remain self-sufficient for the entire duration of their ride
- They validate at controls within the time of operation

NOTES

In order to provide a simple framework for the race this is a simplified set of rules and is therefore open to interpretation. Interpretation for the purposes of race reporting will be made by the race director. The race director's decision is final.

This is a largely self-certified race and it is taken on trust that the ride presented has been ridden in good faith. However, if that trust is found to be broken, for example if the rider is pictured drafting another, dismissal of the offending riders will be swift and definite. You are strongly encouraged to report foul play in your fellow riders. This should not be viewed as malicious against the rider(s) in question, but a favour and duty to the racing community and in the interest of preserving an honest self-policing racing culture.

Riders should act within the spirit of the rules as well as within the letter of them. This is largely what Rule no.9 means. In the event that a competitor is found to have broken, bent or attempted to circumvent the rules in order to gain an advantage, violations will be taken on a case by case basis. Just because there isn't a rule to cover the specific flavour of deviousness chosen, it doesn't mean a rider will get away with it.

Riders who do not validate at controls within their designated times of operation, by definition exclude themselves from the validation procedure provided by the event. **Riders must understand that if they are not within the time-frame of the checkpoints' operation, they are essentially entirely on their own. It is extremely important to understand this.**

Riders should talk to us. If there's ambiguity on the rules or riders don't know what to do; then they should ask. If you think you did something cheeky but you didn't mean it - tell us, explain why and surely everything will be OK. If you need to make a judgement call, think about the spirit of fair play and doing the right thing, think of the rider behind you and the rider in front, how you would feel if you were them. Tell us what you see. Collect evidence, make a video of your predicament, that kind of thing. The more up front you are, the better.

Pairs riders

In the pairs category, riders in the pair act as a unit and may share food, equipment, information and resources between themselves and help each other including riding in each other's slipstream. No support is to come from outside the pair and resources cannot be shared outside the pair. To all intents and purposes, the pair shall interact with others outside the pair as if they were a solo rider.

Solo and assisted finishes

A solo finish is regarded as a finish 'with honours' and qualifies riders to contest the overall General Classification. [I.e. a rider cannot win the Atlas Mountain Race if they do not qualify for a solo finish].

Should any rider receive outside assistance from another rider in the race then this is classed as an assisted finish and is not eligible for either Solo or Pairs classification since riders must start and finish under the rules of their classification in order to qualify. The exception for this is that riders can help another rider in an emergency situation on the understanding that the rider who needs help gives up their Brevet Card to the helping rider and scratches from the race. This allows the helping rider to help/rescue a rider in distress and also achieve a Solo Finish. If a rider gets themselves into a situation where they required rescue, but then carry on to the finish, whatever the merits of the ride, they cannot reasonably be said to have completed the Atlas Mountain Race.

Doctor's Note Checklist

The Atlas Mountain Race is a serious undertaking that will require a high level of fitness and preparation from participants. It presents a number of specific medical challenges that should not be underestimated. More information on some of the topics that we recommend riders discuss with their doctor can be found below. Please do not wait until the last minute to take care of this. For example, rabies immunization is given over a 21 to 28 day period.

The doctor's note should clearly show the name of your doctor and medical practice as well as a statement that there are no contrary medical reasons for your participation in the Atlas Mountain Race. The full name of the event must be present on the note.

- **Travel in a developing country**

Morocco is a developing country and there are a number of illnesses associated with travel there. Ask your doctor about the kind of medication that could be useful to counter the effects of traveler's diarrhea and other possible afflictions.

- **Rabies**

There is the possibility of rabies from animal bites. Please ask your doctor about rabies prevention including immunization. This is not obligatory but may be worth exploring.

- **Other Immunizations**

Please check on the appropriate immunizations for travel to the region and ensure that you are up to date on immunizations for tetanus, etc.

- **Basic First Aid/ Medications**

It may be useful to ask your doctor for recommendations on what to include in the basic first aid kit that you are required to bring with you to participate in the race. In addition to your usual personal medications, please discuss whether you should carry other medications such as antibiotics - considering the remote nature of this