

ANNOUNCEMENT

Cycling Series Introduces Junior Gravel Racing Points

Immediate amendment creates a fairer and more inclusive pathway for junior riders.

EFFECTIVE

Immediately and from the Naankuse Gravel Bike Challenge onwards.

The organisers of the Hollard Grand Prix cycling series have approved an important adjustment to the series regulations to create a fairer and more inclusive competition for younger cyclists.

Series format

The Hollard Grand Prix Series comprises five events:

- Two mountain bike races awarding points based on the Formula 1 points system.
- Two gravel races awarding points based on the Formula 1 points system.
- One road race awarding double points.

Background

Current gravel bike regulations require riders to be at least 19 years old to compete over the full race distance. This has unintentionally prevented junior riders from earning points at the gravel events, even though they are eligible to compete in the mountain bike and road races.

New youth gravel option

With immediate effect, junior riders aged 17 or 18 on 31 December will be allowed to participate in an officially approved shorter-distance race at each gravel event.

Eligible junior riders will:

- Compete in the junior age category.
- Be ranked according to their general classification in the approved shorter-distance race.
- Receive 50% of the standard points allocated to their finishing positions.
- Have these points included in their individual Hollard Grand Prix Series leaderboard rankings.
- Remain eligible to meet the series' minimum participation requirements.

The amendment applies only to junior riders aged 17 or 18 on 31 December who compete in the approved shorter-distance gravel race. It does not change their points awarded for the full-distance mountain bike races or road race.

Why the amendment is necessary

- The organisers acknowledge that regulations should be amended during an active series **only** when necessary and in the **best interests** of the competition.
- As the series continues to develop, it has become clear that the original regulation placed younger riders at a disadvantage: they could earn points in the mountain bike and road events, but not in the gravel discipline because of the minimum-age restriction.

- Expecting junior riders to compete over the full gravel distance is not an appropriate solution. A shorter-distance option with a reduced points allocation provides a more balanced solution..
- The change allows younger riders to remain part of the series without awarding them the same points available to riders completing the full distance.

Commitment to youth development

Young cyclists are essential to the future of Namibian cycling. The series aims to provide opportunities for them to compete, develop their skills and experience different cycling disciplines in a safe and structured environment.

This amendment supports:

- Fair competition across the series.
- Safe and age-appropriate race distances.
- Greater participation by younger riders.
- The development and retention of emerging cycling talent.
- Continued value and exposure for series sponsors and partners.

POINTS PROTECTION No points already earned by any rider will be removed or reduced as a result of this amendment.

The change will be implemented in accordance with the applicable cycling regulations, event safety requirements and approved age categories.

The organisers thank all riders, officials, sponsors and partners for their support and understanding. Our objective remains to build a competitive, inclusive and sustainable cycling series that contributes positively to the future of cycling in Namibia.

Johan Pretorius

Series Race Director
Hollard Grand Prix Series