



THE DOLOMITES AND THE TOUGHEST MOUNTAIN BIKE MARATHON IN THE WORLD ARE THE INSPIRATION FOR THE HERO DUBAI, THE MTB MARATHON ON THE SANDY DESERT

The international mountain bike circuit, the HERO World Series, officially kicks off on 7 February 2020 in Dubai. The most important mountain biking pros will descend from the Dolomites' summits and compete on a marathon route in Hatta, an enclave in the desert, 110 kilometres from Dubai. Hector Leonardo Paez is among these cyclists, world champion and winner of six out of ten editions of the HERO Südtirol Dolomites, the toughest mountain bike marathon in the world. The HERO World Series now crosses the Italian border to take mountain biking to locations boasting untapped potential for off road cycling.

Hashtag: #HEROWorldSeries #HERODubai #HERODolomites #HEROThai



Dedication, commitment, passion. These concepts seem to have been made specifically for a sport like mountain biking which requires tenacity from its athletes. This is truer than ever when pursuing a dream, for example facing the toughest mountain bike marathon in the world: the **HERO Südtirol Dolomites**. Over the course of the last ten years, the event has seen a rise in the number of its participants as well as greater international recognition.

The **HERO World Series**, an international mountain bike circuit, was created to instil the HERO spirit beyond the Italian borders. The event will feature the traditional routes in Val Gardena on the Dolomites (**HERO Dolomites**) as well as two other competitions in Dubai (**HERO Dubai**) and in Thailand (**HERO Thai**).

The first edition of the HERO Dubai will take place in Hatta Wadi Hub

What an incredible occasion for Dubai! 2020 will be remembered as the year when this Middle Eastern country will have hosted a mountain bike event featured in the UCI's international calendar (International Cycling Federation) for the very first time in its history.

An important goal which will boost the development of the already growing cycling movement in Dubai: countless cycling trails and relevant infrastructures are already being built, earning great esteem among mountain bike enthusiasts as well as providing the region with an enticing tool to promote tourism.



The first edition of the **HERO Dubai will take place on 7 February 2020 at Hatta Wadi Hub** – Meraas' outdoor activity destination in Dubai's spectacular National Park. The race features two routes: the first is a marathon route boasting **63 kilometres** and 1,600 elevation gain, developed around Hatta and cutting across the Hatta Dam, starting at 9 a.m.; the second boasts **30 kilometres and 800 elevation gain**, winding its way predominantly on the trails of the HATTA MTB

Trail Center. This is a brand-new venue dedicated to mountain biking which will also be the headquarters and the starting and finishing line of the HERO Dubai.

*'I am very happy and proud to inaugurate the new international HERO World Series circuit in Dubai. I would like to thank Meraas, main partner, and XDubai, event partner, for their outstanding welcome and hospitality,' says **Gerhard Vanzi**, creator of the competition. 'HERO Dubai will be an extraordinary event which I hope can really bolster the cycling movement in the United Arab Emirates and the appreciation of Hatta.'*

The world champion: facing the desert



The starting line will see both mountain bike enthusiast as well as long-distance mountain biking pros hop on their saddle to test their mettle on this epic cross-border challenge! Hector Leonardo Paez, marathon world champion, has already confirmed his presence. The Colombian athlete has won six out of ten HERO Dolomites races.

'The HERO is a race close to my heart and which I strongly identify with. That is why I am over the moon to be able to confirm I will be competing in all the races of the international HERO World Series circuit.' says **Leo Paez**, from Columbia, *'I will pull out all the stops to honour the races as well as the 2019 World Champion jersey I wear with pride.'*

The HERO Dubai Bike Festival

How could there be a HERO event without a HERO Bike Festival? Dubai will kick things off with the Festival on 6 February 2020 at 4 p.m. in Bluewaters, the sophisticated waterfront



island destination by Meraas which will be Home to Ain Dubai - the world's tallest observation wheel, standing above 250-metres! The HERO Village will boast music, entertainment and, obviously, the presence of exhibitors for cyclists and their entourage. At 5 p.m. the professional teams will be officially introduced, followed by the always enticing HERO Fashion Night and its thematic shows.

On the following day, 7 February, besides the official start of the HERO Dubai at 9 a.m. the **HERO Kids** will kick off at 3 p.m.: this is a non-competitive race for children between 4 and 12 taking place in the Hatta Mountain Bike Trail Centre. At 4 p.m. the HERO Dubai Marathon and HERO Kids award ceremony will take place.

The evolution of sport tourism



The HERO Dubai 2020 event has been organised with XDubai, a sport marketing company which promotes sport in Dubai; the event has also received the support of Meraas, a Dubai-based holding company that aims to enhance the emirate's cityscape with a human-centric approach to developing assets in the real estate, tourism, hospitality, F&B, retail, leisure and entertainment, technology, maritime, and healthcare sectors. Hatta was chosen as location

for the race because the area is destined to become an outstanding eco-friendly destination for Dubai's citizens and tourists alike: they will be able to spend their days practicing mountain sports in a markedly cooler location compared to other regions.

Registrations open

The HERO Dubai registrations are open – register now at www.herodubai.com and www.heroworldseries.com. Participants of the HERO Dubai marathon will receive a welcome pack containing the official HERO Dubai race jersey and a branded HERO cap; participants of the 30 km race will receive a HERO technical t-shirt.

For further information visit www.herodubai.com and www.heroworldseries.com

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