



MATOBO HILLS WORLD HERITAGE TRAIL RUN

“The Matopos Heritage Trail Run (MHTR)”

19-22 August 2022



EVENT HANDBOOK

containing

INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT

Table of Contents

PLACE	3
PURPOSE	3
ORGANISERS	4
PARTNERS & SPONSORS	4
EVENT HISTORY	4
GENERAL INFORMATION	4
THE EVENT	4
PROGRAMME	5
REGISTRATION	5
PAYMENT	6
ACCOMMODATION	6
EXTENDED STAY SUNDAY NIGHT	6
MEALS	6
THE COMPETITION	7
ENTRY CONDITIONS	8
PRIZES & TROPHIES	8
ECOLOGICAL REGULATIONS	8
CHECK IN	8
COVID PRECAUTIONS	8
FOOD REQUIREMENTS	9
WATER DISTRIBUTION	9
GEOGRAPHICAL CONDITIONS	9
ASSISTANCE DURING THE COMPETITION	10
MEDICAL	10
EVENT ABANDONMENT & RETIREMENT	10
INDEMNITY	10
IN CASE OF EMERGENCY	10

MATOBO HILLS WORLD HERITAGE TRAIL RUN		
Page 3	“The Matopos Heritage Trail Run” 19-22 August 2022	

ROUTE PROFILES	11
ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS	11
COMPULSORY EQUIPMENT	12
RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT	12
SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT	12
DIRECTIONS TO CAMP DWALA	13

PLACE

The Matobo Hills, affectionately known as “The Matopos”, is a very special place, both ecologically and historically. The Matobo Hills were proclaimed a World Heritage Site in 2003. The Hills are over 2.5 billion years old and have hosted mankind for the past 100,000 years. Within the historic area is found the greatest concentration of rock art to be found anywhere in the world. They have been home not just for the bushman, but for various Bantu tribes, including the Ndebele nation. They are the burial ground of Kings and Heroes, and there is a tapestry of forts and battlefields. The valleys between the Hills are seasonal wetlands, which sustain a rich number of fauna and flora species-. The Hills possess the greatest variety of tree species south of the Zambezi, a diffusion of plant species, and a rich legacy of rare and unique plants. The area also plays home to the greatest variety of birds of prey in the globe, and the largest numbers of black eagle per square kilometer. The black eagle population is the subject of the longest running bird study anywhere in the world. The Game Reserve in the Matobo Hills is reputed to have the biggest leopard concentration to be found anywhere and contains both black and white rhino. The largest black mambas are also found here. At the bottom of the food chain is a population of dassie (rock hyrax) that sustains much of the predator pyramid. The Rhodes Matopos National Park, or Matobo National Park, is the oldest in the country, with its origins in the will of Cecil John Rhodes who bequeathed his Matopos estate for the benefit of the people of Bulawayo. We will take up that legacy and use the Hills for two days of hard recreational activity as we run through the Eastern section of this special place.

PURPOSE

The Matopos Heritage Trail Run was initiated primarily as a means of promoting awareness of the Matobo World Heritage Site. The secondary purpose is to raise funds for the Matobo Conservation Society. These funds are spent on projects for the promotion of the Matobo Hills World Heritage Site. Previous beneficiaries have been the National Park, National Museums and Monuments and the local communities.

MATOBO HILLS WORLD HERITAGE TRAIL RUN		
Page 4	“The Matopos Heritage Trail Run” 19-22 August 2022	

ORGANISERS

This event is organised annually by the Matobo Conservation Society. MCS members serve on the organising committee, and volunteer to help with the waterpoints. No funds are used to enrich any of the individuals involved.

PARTNERS & SPONSORS

The event takes place with the support of Camp Dwala. There are three levels of sponsorship, GOLD, SILVER and BRONZE, and sponsors will assist with funding the event in return for advertising at the event, and preferential accommodation. Please visit our website for information about the current sponsors, or contact the Secretary if you wish to support the event as a sponsor.

EVENT HISTORY

The MHTR made its debut in 2016, and was held in late March, which is often wet. In subsequent years it was moved to May, but in 2020 was delayed until early September because of the Covid shutdown. The participants all preferred the September dates, and future events will be held in late August or early September before the hot weather sets in.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The MHTR is a two-day off-road trail run event, held entirely within the Matobo Hills World Heritage site. The route is designed to take participants through some very rugged terrain and enjoy some magnificent scenery. There are no route maps, the run is based entirely on GPS tracks that are uploaded for registered participants just before the event.

Over succeeding years, the course has been refined and altered so that today it represents one of the finest two-day routes to be found in Southern Africa. That combined with the camaraderie around the campfire each night, has created an event that is praised by all who have participated.

The 2022 has two significant changes to previous years. The first, for stronger runners, is an option to do a slightly longer more challenging route. The second is to include Sunday night, and an awards ceremony, in the event package

THE EVENT

- The MHTR is a two-day stage race through the magnificent Matobo Hills, summiting Mwazi, the highest point in the Matopos, and is run entirely within the Matobo Hills World Heritage Site, making the event unique in trail runs.
- Casual runners can also enter the second day only.
- Entries for the stage race are initially limited to 80 runners, so enter early, and get training!

- Runners will be well looked after during the full duration of the race, with meals and accommodation taken care of should they choose the “In-Village” option at Camp Dwala. They will stay in the very cozy Camp Dwala, with hot showers and either cottages or tents (allocated on a first come first served basis). This venue hosts the annual Matobo Hills World Heritage Mountain Bike Challenge, the Matobo Classic MTB, Ironwill Zimbabwe and other events.
- Please note that the “In-Village” option is primarily for runners only, and family members who are not entering the stage race can only be considered on application.
- The “Out-of-Village” option is for runners who would prefer to organise their own accommodation for the weekend, and is perfect for those who would prefer to have their families around to support them. Out-of-Village pricing options will be provided on request, and will also include meals at Camp Dwala for the participant during the race.
- The second day of the stage race is also open to runners who would prefer just to enter one day only. This day is perfect for the whole family, with plenty of activities, great food and drinks, and various race distances to choose from to keep everybody entertained. Athletes taking part in the one-day event will start AFTER the event competitors on Sunday.

PROGRAMME

Friday	Check-In	16:30 – 17:30
	Briefing	18:00
	Dinner	19:00
Saturday	Breakfast	05:30
	Transfer to start	06:15
	Start at Gulubaghwe Cave	07:00
	Lunch	12:00 – 15:00
	Briefing	18:00
	Dinner	19:00
Sunday	Breakfast	05:30
	Start at Camp Dwala	07:00
	Lunch	12:00 – 15:00
	Event Indaba (Awards)	17:00
	Dinner	18:30
Monday	Breakfast	05:30 – 07:00

REGISTRATION

- Advance registration must be done on-line.
- The link to the on-line registration will be posted on the Matobo Conservation Society web site www.matobo.org four months before the event.

MATOBO HILLS WORLD HERITAGE TRAIL RUN		
Page 7	“The Matopos Heritage Trail Run” 19-22 August 2022	

- Our caterers have agreed to half price for meals for children up to 10 years old.

THE COMPETITION

1. Each runner must carry his/her supplies for the duration of the race; these may be checked by a race official at any stage during the competition.
2. The route will not be marked but will be available on GPS and IT IS MANDATORY that you run with a GPS.
3. The route of the MHTR is mainly on paths and tracks; the overall distance is measured on these tracks which often wind their way between the hills. It is NOT PERMITTED to leave the track and deliberately take a short cut across open ground to reduce the distance and gain an advantage. Any participant seen deliberately taking a short cut off the tracks to shorten the distance of the marked route will be considered a NON-FINISHER of the event. It is permitted to run parallel to the track to find harder ground.
4. Except for first day, there may be a staggered start on the second day. These start times are based directly on the overall times of each participant. These start times are posted each evening after the last participant has finished. These start times CANNOT be altered. If you miss your allocated starting time, your overall time WILL be calculated based on your allocated starting time.
5. There are checkpoints at approximately every 10km intervals.
6. There are two water points on day one, and one waterpoint on day two.
7. It is the responsibility of the participant to ensure that the check point time keeper has listed them as having passed through the check point.
8. The route each day is over a set distance, with a timed start and finish.
9. Competitors must plan what equipment and supplies they will carry with them.
10. All equipment that you start with must be carried for the duration of the race and only food / food packaging may be discarded at the check points.
11. Participants will be required to run with their race numbers, un-obscured, on their front.
12. All other areas can be used for personal advertising on condition that it is not in conflict with any of our sponsors.
13. No competitor may interfere with another competitor.
14. Abuse directed at **ANY** other competitor or **ANY** crew member will not be tolerated and will result in immediate disqualification.
15. Should a participant see anything during the event that they are unhappy about, please discuss this with the Race Director or the Camp Master immediately. Do not leave this until the finish of the event.
16. The Race Director’s decision regarding any dispute or disqualification is final.
17. The Organisers reserves the right to modify any part of the competition as a result of circumstances beyond its control.
18. Participants can be withdrawn from the competition if instructed by the Race Director, or on advice of the medical team if it is obvious that they are not coping with the demand and extreme conditions of an event such as this.
19. **NO SMOKING IS ALLOWED DURING THE EVENT.**

MATOBO HILLS WORLD HERITAGE TRAIL RUN		
Page 8	“The Matopos Heritage Trail Run” 19-22 August 2022	

20. For safety to both the participant and other participants, earphones will not be allowed whilst on the route.

ENTRY CONDITIONS

- The competition is open to persons 16 years and over.
- Juniors 16 - 18 years must have written permission from a parent or guardian.
- It is assumed that by entering this event that each competitor has satisfied themselves as to their medical fitness to participate in this event.
- The event is run in a wilderness area and the organisers accept no liability for loss of property, accident or death that may arise during the event.

PRIZES & TROPHIES

- “Prize giving” will be held at Camp Dwala at 17:00 hrs on the second day. This will be done at the “Event Indaba” held on the dwala above the Camp.
- Recognition is for 1st, 2nd and 3rd man and for 1st, 2nd and 3rd lady, subject to number of minimum entries (ten per category)

ECOLOGICAL REGULATIONS

- The MHTR will be run over an ecologically sensitive area.
- Anyone littering or deliberately damaging any flora or fauna will be asked to leave the event without compensation.

CHECK IN

- Check in will take place at 16:30 on the Friday before the start of the first stage on Saturday.
- Anyone not present for check in will be regarded as a non-starter.
- Competitors will be required to produce their relevant medical certification, compulsory equipment, and self-sufficient provisions for the duration of the race.
- Anyone without the relevant documentation and compulsory items will be regarded as a non-starter.
- The roads to Camp Dwala are dirt, and not regularly maintained. Consequently, please allow at least 90 minutes travel if you are not familiar with the drive from Bulawayo.

COVID PRECAUTIONS

- We continue to consult with medical advisors and obtain legal opinion.
- There will be doctors on stand-by for the event.
- Participants are asked to bring their own hand sanitizer and face coverings.
- Participants are asked NOT to share drinking bottles.
- Participants are asked to practice social distancing at all times.

MATOBO HILLS WORLD HERITAGE TRAIL RUN		
Page 9	“The Matopos Heritage Trail Run” 19-22 August 2022	

- The meals and briefings will all be outdoors.
- Runners from outside Zimbabwe need to confirm entry requirements closer to the event.
- The Mater Dei hospital has been advised of the event and has appropriate protocols in place.
- The Mater Dei hospital is able to do one-hour Covid tests for participants who need these for cross border travel. Early bookings are essential, and payment is required in US dollar cash.
- We continue to monitor Government announcements.
- We continue to be guided by WHO directives and medical information.
- We cannot be held responsible for the ability of participants to travel to the event. Please ensure you adhere to the regulations and have the appropriate clearance documents for airports, borders and road blocks.

FOOD REQUIREMENTS

- Participants must carry enough food to sustain themselves during the event.
- Water points will have limited food and drink available.
- During the event, should you dehydrate or if the organisers feel you are endangering yourself, you may be stopped and possibly withdrawn.

WATER DISTRIBUTION

- Check points during the event are approximately 10 km apart. Water is supplied per participant at each check point.
- There is unlimited water at the Camp Dwala each day.
- Water is untreated, but supplied from a well.
- Additional water supplies may be issued if the conditions demand it. This water will be distributed from containers, to avoid single-use plastic pollution.

GEOGRAPHICAL CONDITIONS

- The terrain of the Matopos is varied – some long sweeping valleys, steep dwalas, and rugged boulders will be encountered. There will also be sand or loose gravel along the route.
- Areas covered will include a wildlife sanctuary, private farmlands and communal lands. Please respect the owners / residents as you pass through.
- Close any gates through which you pass, and restore any fences that you may cross.
- Day temperatures in the area during late August average between 20 – 25 degrees Celsius (in the shade) and can drop to 5 degrees Celsius at night.
- Sudden changes in weather conditions during the event are a possibility, so be prepared for a cold snap.

MATOBO HILLS WORLD HERITAGE TRAIL RUN		
Page 10	“The Matopos Heritage Trail Run” 19-22 August 2022	

ASSISTANCE DURING THE COMPETITION

- No assistance may be accepted from any person or facility not connected to the event or crew.
- Only water, food and medical assistance may be accepted from crew or family at check points and the finish.
- The organisers reserve the right to make allowances for any participants with a disability.

MEDICAL

- A medical team will NOT be in attendance throughout the duration of the event.
- Please ensure that organisers have been informed of any special conditions that may apply to you.
- You must have a valid Medical Aid / Insurance. Any medical costs are strictly for the competitor’s account.
- When available, the medical team will be there for the participants’ wellbeing, and not to dress blisters related to normal wear and tear on an extreme event. Participants must carry their own blister treatment kit and look after their own blisters. (See notes on foot care.)
- Strapping to prevent chafing must be carried by the participant.

EVENT ABANDONMENT & RETIREMENT

- There will be no refund for a participant who retires or is withdrawn from the event.
- It is essential that if any participant retires from the competition, that he/she notifies an official.
- The organising committee may cancel or amend the event for safety reasons and in such case, no refund is possible.

INDEMNITY

- All participants enter at their own risk. By its very nature, and the fact that the event passes through a natural area, it is acknowledged that inherent dangers exist (from both wildlife and the nature of the terrain), and the event organisers, Camp Dwala and the Matobo Conservation Society shall not be held responsible for loss, accident, theft, injury, or death that may occur during this event.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

- A list of emergency contact numbers will be shared via Whatsapp. Please note that some of these numbers belong to phones which may not be in an area with cell phone signal, but may have internet for Whatsapp messages.

ROUTE PROFILES

DAY ONE PROFILE



DAY TWO PROFILE



ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS

	CHALLENGE ROUTE	HERITAGE ROUTE
DAY ONE (Sat 20 Aug)	TOTAL DISTANCE 42.0 km Start adjacent to Silobi BC. The route goes south through magnificent forests. After 12km's you will arrive at Gulubaghwe cave, (and first water point) and then follow the Heritage Route as described to the right.	TOTAL DISTANCE 30.1 km Start Gulubaghwe Cave, Old Gwanda Road Highlights are Mazhowe Valley, Danamombe Climb, Mwazi (Highest point) Max Slope 27%; Average 3,3% Elevation Gain 644m Elevation Loss 444m Net Gain 200m
DAY TWO (Sun 20th Aug)	TOTAL DISTANCE 21.0 km Start adjacent to Camp Dwala, and then join the Heritage Route.	TOTAL DISTANCE 20.0 km Start Camp Dwala Highlights; Mtshabezi Gorge, Mshashasha Valley, Dwala heights Max Slope 13,9%; Average 2,4% Elevation Gain 293m Elevation Loss 293m Net Gain 0m

COMPULSORY EQUIPMENT

SURVIVAL GEAR TO BE SUPPLIED BY PARTICIPANT AND MUST BE CARRIED AT ALL TIMES

- Backpack (1.5 litre is suggested)
- Head cover (Cap)
- Eye Protection / Sunglasses
- GPS (Garmin preferred) with route loaded. There are limited markings along the route, and no facilities to copy routes at the start, so a pre-loaded GPS is essential.
- Whistle
- Torch and spare batteries
- Sun block lotion
- Toilet paper or tissues
- ID card
- Medical Aid card and some cash, US\$10 (for emergency transport)

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT

- Spare batteries or power-bank for GPS to last the entire event as charging facilities are limited
- Cell phone, fully charged and with air time. Please note there is limited cell phone network coverage in the Matobo Hills. Ask local people where the nearest signal is
- First Aid Kit consisting of three (3) wound dressings, plasters, anti-inflammatory tablets, pain relief tablets, tweezers

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

(NOT COMPULSORY) - TO BE SUPPLIED BY PARTICIPANT IF DESIRED

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sleeping mat • Additional 300ml Water bottle • Spare cotton shorts and t-shirt • Socks - 3 pairs • Small Towel • Soap • Sandals • Face cloth • Underwear • Big Plastic Bag (in case of rain) • Gaiters, to stop grass seeds in socks • Insect Repellent • Antiseptic cream • Blister treatment kit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strapping or anti-chafe cream for chafing • Foot plasters • Head ache tablets • Toothpaste • Toothbrush • Various container bags - e.g. ziplock bags • Wind Breaker • Sewing kit • Batteries (for GPS) • Space blanket • 10 x Safety pins
---	---



DIRECTIONS TO CAMP DWALA

CAMP DWALA
MATOBO HILLS
Zimbabwe

dwalas.safaris@gmail.com
Phone 0772 211156 / 0772 221 223

Directions
GPS Ref 20° 26' 19" / 28° 44' 53"; Alt 1,480m
(Route 1 is recommended in wet weather)

Route 1 – Travel from Bulawayo towards the Matobo National Park on the Matopos Road. 500m before the MNP Gate, turn left along the Fort Usher Road (Gravel). 11km along, at the junction of the Old Gwanda Rd, turn right, and proceed to Matobo Mission.

Route 2 – Travel from Bulawayo on the Old Gwanda Rd (which becomes gravel on leaving the city). Continue to the Matobo Mission - about 45Kms.

At Matobo Mission turn left onto the Quaringa Rd (Matopo Primary School) and follow the signposts to Camp Dwala.

The Matobo Hills are malaria free, but travellers to Zimbabwe should take precautions.

Ask for information on the unique Wilderness Trails and Mountain Bike Trails operated by Dwala Safaris within the Matobo Hills – go Hike the Hills !
See also www.matobo.org and www.matobotrails.com

Road conditions are variable, generally poor in years when rains have been good. Recommend allow 90 minutes for travel from Bulawayo via the Fort Usher Road.