



CAMBA FESTIVAL OF THE TRAILS Not Just Another Mountain Bike Event

The CAMBA Festival of Trails is poised to debut June 12-14, 2009. Not just another mountain bike event, the CAMBA Festival of the Trails will offer a weekend of trail-based mountain biking activities and events to showcase the ever-growing CAMBA singletrack trails in the Cable-Hayward, Wis. area. Unlike most mountain bike festivals and events around the region, however, the CAMBA Festival of the Trails will be a touring based event, with only a very minor competitive component.

After considering several possible formats that were predominantly competition-oriented, we listened to feedback from a number of area riders who advised that a touring event would better highlight the area's singletrack trail offerings, explained festival committee head and CAMBA board member Harry Spehar. A mass start mountain bike race was dismissed out of hand due to the smaller carrying capacity of the singletrack trails. However, the original concepts for the festival did include possible time trial events ranging from a one-day event to a multiple-day stage race to a summer-long time trail series. In the end, the festival schedule did retain one time trial, but it will be a low-key event, with the emphasis on participation and fun.

It's all about the trails, says CAMBA executive director Ron Bergin. Despite the fact that we have built over 50 miles of singletrack trails (and are continuing to build more), Bergin adds, there still exists a perception that the CAMBA trails are largely forest roads, ski and snowmobile trails and gravel roads. While this may have been the composition of the CAMBA trails when they were first created over 15 years ago, much has changed since that time. And changing the public perception of the CAMBA trails is, in fact, one of the primary goals of the CAMBA Festival of the Trails.

With a full slate of trail events and a healthy dose of party time, the CAMBA Festival of the Trails promises to be a weekend chock-full of all things mountain bike. Beginning Friday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. Festival participants can hit the ground riding with the first chance to Tour de Trails. The Tour de Trails runs all three days of the festival with opportunities to ride five different CAMBA singletrack trails: Hatchery Creek, Makwa, Ojibwe, Rock Lake and Namakagon. This representative selection of trails will give riders a chance to sample the primary CAMBA singletrack trails in southern Bayfield and northern Sawyer counties, each with a distinctly different feel and character. Routes of approximately five to seven miles will

be marked for these tours. To entice participants to ride as many trails as possible, they will be required to punch a card while on the trail and again at the completion of the ride. For every trail they punch, they will receive random drawing tickets for a significant amount of merchandise prizes to be awarded at the conclusion of the festival.

Those arriving a little later on Friday may instead opt for a guided night ride at 9:00 p.m. on the Hatchery Creek Trail. Friday evening winds down with a casual social gathering at Hatchery Creek Park sponsored by the Angry Minnow.

The feature event of the festival on Saturday, the Taste de Trails, will launch at 10:00 a.m. from Mosquito Brook Trailhead. This rolling food fest will tour parts of the Makwa and Hatchery Creek Trails. Along the five-mile route, several area restaurants will have food booths where they will offer samples of their finest fare. Represented in the Taste will be Angry Minnow Restaurant & Brewery, Hammer Nutrition, Mooselips Café, Rivers Eatery and the Rookery Pub. The Tour de Trails resumes that afternoon. The day concludes with a mountain bike film fest that evening at the Ideal Market/Rivers Eatery in Cable.

For mountain bikers new to singletrack trail riding, CAMBA will have instructors available to provide coaching and tips to help introduce less experienced riders to the nuances of riding singletrack. And on Saturday afternoon, CAMBA Kids, CAMBA's youth instruction program, will present a session on bicycle handling, rules of the trail and obstacle course riding for the next generation of mountain bikers.

Sunday will offer additional opportunities to Tour de Trails, but for those with a more competitive edge, the Time Trial de Trails will take place at Hatchery Creek Park at 9:00 a.m. This race against the clock will start riders five at a time on a wider, more open ski trail. After about one-eighth mile they will funnel into the Hatchery Creek singletrack. Those seeking to ride hard will be looking for the hole shot to be the first to enter the singletrack. The five-mile course will head north and loop back to Hatchery Creek. While it is indeed a competitive event and finish times will be recorded, the only awards will be bragging rights. The Time Trial de Trails is not just for the big kids (adults), as a Kiddie Time Trial will follow the adult race on a kid-size course complete with a few fun obstacles to negotiate.

The Festival concludes Sunday afternoon with one final opportunity for riders to gather, with a CAMBA sponsored barbecue at Hatchery Creek Park. Brats, salads, watermelon and beverages will whet hungry appetites as Festival participants await the drawings for over \$15,000 in merchandise awards. In addition, a separate raffle will be held to give away a Trek Fuel EX9 full suspension mountain bike (a \$3,000 value), a Rock Shox Reba suspension fork and Nite Rider light set.

CAMBA has for the past three summers undertaken a significant phase of its singletrack trail development initiative. During this time almost 15 miles of new singletrack in the Hayward area has been built, with another seven miles planned for this summer. The initiative will continue for another several years until most of the singletrack trails in southern Bayfield County and northern Sawyer County are interconnected. The Festival of the Trails, in addition to helping promote the area trails, is intended to help raise funds to continue the trail development initiative. CAMBA has raised and invested on the average of \$20,000 per year for the past three years in this initiative, notes Bergin. We expect to need to continue fundraising at this rate for another three to four years, and hope the Festival of the Trails will become a major part of our fund raising plan.

It would not be possible to put on an event as ambitious as the CAMBA Festival of the

Trails without generous support from many sponsors. Platinum sponsors for the inaugural Festival of the Trails include: SRAM and Trek. Gold Sponsors include: Bontrager, Becker Law Office and Hidden Bay Graphics. Silver Sponsors include: Hayward Lakes Visitor & Convention Bureau, Mt. Borah Custom Sublimation, Freewheel Bike, New Moon Bike Shop, Horny Toad, Rock Shox, TS Events, Nite Rider, Chequamegon Fat Tire Festival and Saris. Bronze Sponsors include: Hammer Nutrition, Salsa, KOA Hayward and . Taste and Toast Sponsors include: Angry Minnow Restaurant & Brewery, Mooselips Java Joint, Rivers Eatery, Rookery Pub and Sublime Subs. Festival marketing is underwritten in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism.

For a complete schedule of events visit www.cambatrails.org/festival-of-the-trails.html. Online registration will be available at www.signmeupsports.com until noon on Friday, June 12. Registrations may be sent by mail until Tuesday, June 9. On-site registration will be Friday, June 12 at 4:00 p.m. and Saturday, June 13 at 8:00 a.m. at Hatchery Creek Park.

For additional information, contact CAMBA at (715)798-3599 or camba@cheqnet.net.