

## Spiider enters the Munga



Duncan Riley (DWR) and Pierre Griffioen  
(Pure Event Gear)

Pierre Griffioen, owner of Pure Event Gear, will be flying the Robe Spiider flag as he participates in The Munga, a single stage mountain bike race described as “The toughest race on earth.” The 1 070 kilometer race over mostly gravel roads through the Karoo in the heat of summer, begins in Bloemfontein and ends in Wellington from 28 November to 3 December 2018. Riders have five days to finish and there are no rules stating when they should eat, sleep or ride.

Realizing he was going to have a quiet week at the office, Pierre, a cycling enthusiast and a Robe user, decided at the last moment to enter the Munga. “I called Duncan Riley from DWR Distribution and asked if he wanted to be part of it,” said Pierre. “As is always the DWR attitude, he said yes, and has come on board as a contributor which is really amazing.”

Pierre will be riding in his Spiider kit, the same gear he rode for the Epic Race in 2017. “I’m proud to be associated with Robe. I love the Spiider kit and it’s nice to be back in it again. The Munga is tougher than the Epic, and I want to see how far I can push myself.”

In South Africa, the Robe Spiider, an LED WashBeam luminaire, has become an industry standard with lighting designers. Robe and DWR are often willing to lend a hand when it comes to sponsorship and supporting the industry.



Winner of last year's competition, Marco Martins of Portugal, finished the race in a remarkable 58 hours and 5 minutes. The greatest challenge to overcome is your mind. Around 135 riders will follow a GPS route as they ramble through farms, sand roads and very little tar.

The Karoo is a semi desert and towns are far apart from each other. The Munga is described as a semi-supported race, and riders have to be self-sufficient. Water points are 60km to 90km apart from each other so carrying sufficient water and snacks is essential. While riders have to carry their own spares for repairs, they may not receive any other mechanical support along the route. Riders also have to carry their own lights, GPS and battery charges. Extra clothing for extreme conditions is also very important as the Karoo can get cold at night.

That said, there are five race stations set 150km to 220km apart from each other. The stations offer food, sleep facilities and a mechanical bay for bikes.



All set and ready to go.

"I love the Karoo and it has always been a happy place for me," commented Pierre. "It is where my mother was born. I look forward to taking photos of sunrises, sunsets, and whatever I encounter on route and sharing the experience on the social media platform."

Pierre is curious to discover what will happen to his mind and body during the race. "Obviously, I'm not going to be silly," he says. "One has to remember things like your kidneys, and to keep hydrated. Your heart rate has to

stay low from the start. You have to consider where your body makes contact with the bike. Riders often add handle bars, bar ends and tri-bars to change their hand and seating position all the time. Barrier cream and sun block is a definite must!"

He plans to only wear one bib and shirt and will take the opportunity to cool down in dams when needed to refresh... and if available! "Obviously I'll be going through the Karoo and none of the farmers will know what Robe or Spiider are all about," he laughs. "But perhaps we'll educate one or two of them along the way!"

Duncan Riley of DWR is often keen to sponsor individuals in the industry who are passionate about sport. "For Pierre, to even consider entering the Munga is an achievement," said Duncan. "I've got some background to the race, and I know someone who has entered the Munga running trail four times without completing it. His biggest goal is to achieve it. The cycling is the same... it's no simple feat. Secondly, to think Pierre is riding for Robe and DWR is a wonderful opportunity. It continues the relationship I've had since meeting him at Westgate Shopping Centre when he was doing a Patricia Lewis gig over twenty years ago! At the time he was using Strand Brio Profiles my dad had sold him."

#### **Examples of how bicycles may be loaded for an event like this:**





The Munga was created by adventurer Alex Harris, with the first race taking place in December 2015. The dream was always to create a race with a huge reward, and that's still the ultimate goal. For the time being, it's a race that teaches endurance through hardship and difficulty.