



## Hi Chaingangers

Sappi Mankele # Sabie Experience # Upcoming races # EPIC Chainsuck!

Sappi Mankele is everything we love about SA's favorite mountain bike destination distilled into one day of real mountain biking, numbers were up and the vibe was super chilled with something for the whole family. Since all the local 'Pro's' were away at the Epic it left a great opportunity for the bridesmaids to have a shake at the podiums and they turned out in force, amazing how even our amateurs these days have sponsors! The 70km was a tough as any 70km is going to be in the Sudwala mountains with big climbs and big views, the 34km still had riders enduring the Old Sabie road 'sting' but not the final push up 'Death #\$\$@%!' like the 70km guys. In the 70km race Heine Engelbrecht shook off a persistent Franco Pelsler who eventually got caught by Declan Sidey before the line. In the women's the lack of Sammy Sanders and Amy Beth gave the race to Vanessa Bell on a plate whilst the two young Valencia riders of Armand Lombard and Zandri Strydom took the 34km in style. If you missed the race you missed a great day out and the first of the new Mpumalanga Marathon Series sponsored by Malelane Toyota, a fantastic initiative giving our local marathon racers something to aim for..

BTW - 2017 A3 Race calendars are available from Valencia for FREE!!!

Upcoming!

Lydenburg Heritage THIS Saturday!!!



This is one of those little gems that's worth heading over the mountain for, the 40km might sound too short for the effort to get there but its definitely worth the trip! With a terrain that is all bushveld and game reserve it mixes climbing and single track with jeep track and wagon trails to create a mix that will keep you wide eyed for more than a few hours! Whilst the Epic has you motivated to be a better rider this will fuel the fire!

SCHOOLS RACE !!!! \_ a fantastic new initiative is the Inter Schools Competition! This handsome floating trophy above will be awarded to the best school along with some other goodies to help with their biking! Schools wishing to participate must must contact Sheena!  
[Sheenac@intekom.co.za](mailto:Sheenac@intekom.co.za)

### Sabie Experience 2017!! 29 May to 1st April

ENTRIES are open and filling up! Don't miss out on this local Classic!

Guys this is the ideal race to either one those stage race skills or test the waters with your buds! Entries are super cheap and all the best Sabie trails are covered, go to the website and get registered before it fills up! Get that Cape Epic Experience without all the travel hassle - oh and the small matter of R70000!

[www.sabiexperience.co.za](http://www.sabiexperience.co.za)

### MANKELE AVALANCHE -

Ok I know this seems to be aimed at mental down hill type guys but seriously, its exactly what your mountain bike was made for, stunning single track, no uphill (well only slightly in places!) and enough spectacular riding to tattoo a grin over your face you'll need surgery to remove! And if you think its only for said nutters think again, last year we had a dozen chicks doing it! If you think the Mopani race is too technical then maybe rather go play at the Hippo race but if

you love to rip the best single track in the SA and ride for kicks not posing then get entered and get stoked!

**VALENCIA MANKELE AVALANCHE**  
Riding the Lifestyle  
vbike.co.za

**3 & 4 June 2017**

**TRAIL RIDING AT ITS BEST!**  
Entry Fee: R990 (Includes Tented Accommodation,  
Shuttle to Start and Saturday Supper)  
3 Stages with two runs on each. Best Weekend EVER!

**MANKELE** MOUNTAIN BIKING  
Driven by: **MALALANE TOYOTA**  
We deliver Nationwide! **TOYOTA** LEAD THE WAY

www.mankele.co.za Event Info : 082 338 9532/3 Accommodation: 078 801 0453

**IT'S ALL ABOUT THE RIDE!**

### CHAINSUCK!

One of my pet hates, along with people who's only casual wear consists of 'race tee shirts' from Sani, J2C, and particularly Epic, is guys who say "when I did the Epic", but self loathing can be cathartic so here goes. 'When I did the Epic' (Doh) it was called the Epic since it was an Epic ride, not some corporate bucket list event designed for Sandton executives who train in spinning studio's then go on celebrity shoulder rubbing 'training camps' in Dullstroom. It was long hours in the saddle with days rarely under 100kms and weather whatever the heavens could throw at you, HTFU (see the Voluminati if you don't know what that means). But in 2017 it seems that much like the Argus the organizers became wet nurses for their valuable corporate clients and shortened a stage due to the heat. Is this now the Epic or like many other things in life these days has it become merely a marketing vehicle for multinationals and their overpaid execs? There is no doubt its still tough but

pictures of ex rugby players with rearranged faces doesn't mean its 'Epic' it means he overcooked it and used his face as a brake. SA Stage races in general are fast becoming a case where the focus is now on the Hospitality and VIP aspects, who gives the best cappuccino massage and chill zones like a Sheiks haram, with entry fees the average SAFFER can never afford. Epic Mountain biking is about suffering and eating and sleeping and suffering, not a beauty school outing. HTFU guys. You want Epic riding at a price you can pay? Do Sabie Experience and 3 Towers, its local and its honest.

### Social rides:

#### **MTB**

Our longstanding stalwart of our MTB rides - Alan Livingstone is still the man in Nelspruit when it comes to finding trails out in the Kaapsehoep valley, add to this our ability to use Mankele as and when gives us unique riding spaces to enjoy with trails for all abilities!

**ROAD** For 2017 there will be dedicated road rides every Saturday from Halls Gateway, we already have quite bunch of riders participating and it will be opened up for all from this year. The ride is supported by a back up vehicle so you can have extra kit or nutrition on board for those longer epics!

All the rides will be communicated via SMS so keep checking your phone and if you aren't getting any then please check with Sandy that we have your number correct.

**Cheers Brett.**

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