



[1 November 2021]

RacingThePlanet Stages Another Successful Post-COVID19 Race with a Return to the Namib Desert

After a delay of some 18 months, RacingThePlanet returned to the vast and sparsely populated country of Namibia to stage the Namib Race for what is typically the first race of the calendar year. Racers arrived via Windhoek and Walvis Bay to the host town of Swakopmund before being shuttled to the first campsite located in a completely new location from past editions of the Namib Race.

Namibia is situated on the west coast of southern Africa, with South Africa to the south and the Atlantic Ocean to the west, where crashing waves meet the Namib Desert, the world's oldest desert (*Namib* means "vast place in Khoekhoegowab, the local language). Namibia possesses some of the most stunning landscapes in Africa. The race took place in the Erongo region and within the Namib-Naukluft National Park. The Namib Desert makes up 12% of Namibia's total land mass and is also home to the largest recorded sand dunes (spanning 300 meters / 980 feet high and 32 kilometers / 20 miles long). Racers faced some 250 kilometers / 155 miles over six stages across seven days.

The overall champions were Robert Ripley, 60, of the United States, a cancer survivor, and Liss Vallestrand, 44, of Norway. Frode Lein, 53, of Norway, realized his dream of joining the 4 Deserts Club after successfully completing the final desert of the 4 Deserts Ultramarathon Series. Local hero Mabasa Mubatapasango, originally from Zimbabwe but now resident in Namibia, completed the course in 7th place.

As the champion Rob Ripley said in his blog:

"....the Namib Race, like any of the RacingThePlanet stage races, is about much, much more than how fast a guy (or gal) can run. Every competitor is facing down their own fears, and writing their own story of struggle and conquest. And the the longer a competitor is out on the course, the hotter the sand gets, and the harder the struggle. Friendships grow on the trail and in camp, camaraderie forms, and the individual becomes part of a larger body moving forward every day."

After a long delay due to the pandemic, the Namib Race 2021 came to a successful completion and no racers, staff or volunteers tested positive for COVID-19 which was also another triumph.

The Namib Race 2022 will take place beginning 1 May 2022.

