



SWISS ULTRACYCLING CHALLENGE

www.such.bike

Mail : info@such.bike
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RACE MANUAL 2023

Introduction

The **Swiss Ultracycling Challenge (SUCH)** 4th edition is an ultracycling event that takes place in Switzerland in September 2023. Other than cheese and chocolate, Switzerland is known for its beautiful landscapes and its winding mountain roads, a plethora of public transportations... providing epic and challenging rides for everyone willing to venture out there.

That being said, the SUCH was designed as an **unsupported bike race** which implies you have to be self-reliant regardless of the situation you are in.

The challenge is to ride **in all of the regions (cantons)** and be the fastest to rally the finish line. Like last year's edition, we have decided to add **some mandatory checkpoints (CP)** that must be incorporated in the route. The CPs will need to be "punched" on a Brevet Card, aka the "**SUCH-Passport**" that you will receive with your Starterbox.

With the exception of the different CPs, the planning of the route is left entirely up to you. It is our choice, as we want to give you the opportunity to visit the places of your choice.

This freedom does not mean there will not be any rules to follow; they are neither numerous nor restrictive but we will enforce them.

Depending on your planning and riding ability, overall distance should be around 1000 km which makes it feasible in a just under 5 days.

Race starts : September 6th 2023 at 10:10 am

Start line: from **any train station in Switzerland** .

Finish line : Bern, Bundesplatz (46.947190, 7.444037)

Race closes on September 10th, 2022 at 12:00 pm (noon)

A finisher's party will be held in Bern on September 10th from 11:00 am (around noon).

There will be three categories : **SOLO, PAIR or RELAY**

We want you to have fun, to discover places you have not been before and that includes a journey to the limits of your own boundaries and, this year, to discover the borders, foreign enclaves and limits of our country!

But for that to take place and the memories to build, we need you to ride safe.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

The organizers : Marc and Vincent

Registration/Fee

In order to keep our event authentic and friendly we have decided to cap the number of registrations to 90, including pairs and relay. It will provide everyone, us included, with a very pleasant, stress free and family-like race. But that doesn't mean it will be a piece of cake !

Since we are both nostalgic of the last 3 editions, in terms of participants and atmosphere, we have decided to give those who trusted us with our initial project, priority to register within a short period of time. Then the rest of the world will be able to sign up.

if the number of participants exceeds our usual quota, we reserve the right to select the participants according to criteria that we will define at the time (motivation, gender...)

Deadline for registration (forms) : April 6, 2023.

What do you get ? GPS tracking device, cap, finisher beer, finisher party, our smiles and wicked humour!

Fee :

SOLO : CHF 125.- CHF

PAIRS : CHF 200.- CHF (both riders have to sign up but on the same form, indicating the name, infos of the partner)

RELAY: CHF 160.- CHF (both riders have to sign up but on the same form, indicating the name, infos of the partner)

The fee covers the costs of the website, caps, the finisher's party, GPS-tracking, all the goodies you will receive and guarantees our enthusiasm and the organizers' beer supply throughout the event :-)).

We will be following you using online tracking, with the goal to catch up with most of you on the road.

The fee is non refundable. In case of a serious injury before July 1st (copy of a medical Certificate requested) we will do our best to refund you ...

Preferred payment is TWINT on 079.671.27.09 or PayPal (paypal@such.bike). If you do not have an account, please contact us directly and we will provide you with our IBAN.

Mandatory documents : download the Rider's Agreement, print it out, sign it and send it back to us by mail (info@such.bike).

If you live outside Switzerland, please provide us a proof of accident, rescue and liability insurance (mandatory in Switzerland).

Although it does not replace a proper bike-check, a picture of your bike setup will be asked to make sure you have both lights and brakes mounted on your ride (see Equipment chapter).

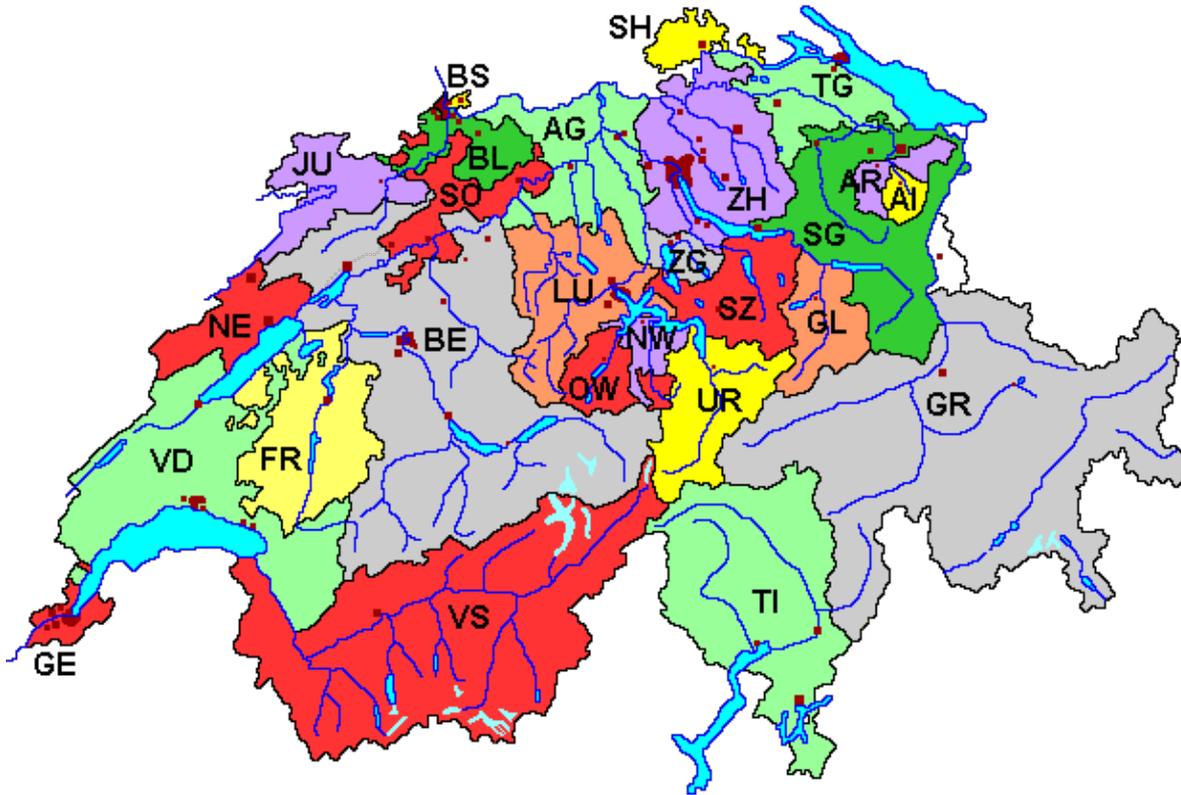
Riders'Agreement duly signed + copy of insurances must be sent by mail info@such.bike before August 15st

The Route

Switzerland, is a landlocked country situated in the middle of Europe. It is composed of 26 cantons (regions), all fairly independent, with federal authorities and parliament seated in Bern. It is bordered by Italy, France, Austria, Germany and Liechtenstein. There are three geographically distinctive regions the Jura, the Swiss Plateau and the Alps.

There are four official languages (French, (Swiss-)German, Italian and Romansh) but English is taught at a very early stage at school, making it easy to communicate for tourist visiting.

The Swiss road network is excellent and in very good state. So is the public transport system! You will find a train station in pretty much every village you will ride through.



Race validation/proof of passage/CPs and Finish

- A. **Start line:** you can start **from any train station in Switzerland on the 6th of September 2023 at 10:10 am**. You must take a photo of the clock with the name and location of your starting point. Pictures (geo tagged) need to be sent along with your name, bib# to: info@such.bike. You must have your GPS tracking system turned on at the time you start riding. **You can decide to leave later but the final time will be adjusted to the official starting time.**



- B. **Proof of riding through a Canton:** you will be provided with a GPS tracker (in the Starterbox). It must be ON throughout the entire race. Do not switch it off unless you are instructed to by the organizers or the 'Live tracking' company. In case the battery dies, you are required to charge it using the cable provided. We will be monitoring your progress and both your GPX file and live tracking trace will be used to validate your passage in a Canton. You can check your Canton's validation by looking on the live map/Canton's validation chart provided by our Tracking system (Follow My Challenge)
- The Cantons can be ridden in any order (and the same applies to the CP).**

C. Checkpoints: For this Edition, in order to let you discover some hidden places, we have chosen 5 Checkpoints next to a border of one of our neighbouring countries.

The **5 CPs** consist of **3 bridges** (across a river), each materializing a border with 3 of our neighbouring countries and **2 foreign** enclaves embedded within Switzerland and mimicking a Swiss canton.

Yes you are obliged to stamp your SUCH-Passport at each of these 5 CPs.

It is also mandatory to reach all our cantons but, **exceptionally** this year, you are not obliged to go through all the 26 official cantons; yes, you read correctly, **24 will be enough to validate your route** (since 2 CPs are foreign enclaves which will count as cantons...).



At each location, you will find a sign (A4 format) with our logo and a punch attached to it.

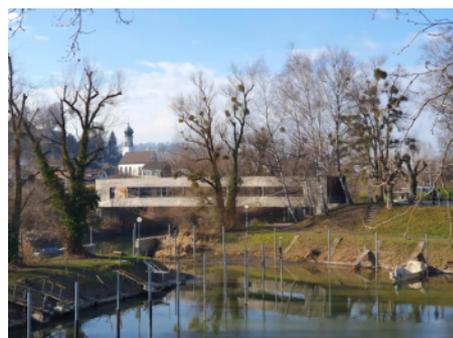
In the Starterbox, you will find your **SUCH-Passport/ aka brevet card which will contain all practical information and the location of the CPs** .

Any random order is accepted...

1. CP1 Rheinbrücke (Österreich) GPS: 47.464565, 9.593716

Austria and Switzerland share 10% of borders, mainly spread along the Rhine. It is enough to dispute the home country of Heidi though...

Let's rise above the rivalry...we discovered a bridge without cars for those who want to go and taste a alpine specialty, the Knödel. Some extra miles as it is off the course but a delicacy for your hungry tummies...



2. CP2 Pont de Grilly (France) GPS: 46.324893, 6.131768

We share nearly 30% of our border with France, and in some places like Geneva, it looks like a Pacman game where the canton is almost entirely surrounded by France.

Look at the little beauty we found for you, a small stone bridge dating from 1757 used by Madame de Staël to cross from her castle of Coppet to France.

An unpaved road will lead you there but that you will discover later...



3. CP3 Alte Rheinbrücke (Liechtenstein) GPS: 47.132332, 9.510992

A bridge to time travel back to when kingdoms and monarchies surrounded the Confoederatio Helvetica.

Welcome to Liechtenstein is a semi-constitutional monarchy headed by the prince of Liechtenstein and bordered by Switzerland to the west and south and Austria to the east and north.

It is Europe's fourth-smallest country, with an area of just over 160 square kilometres. Small does not rhyme with flat... you are warned!



4. CP4 Campione d'Italia (Italia) GPS: 45.962807, 8.968841

Ah Italia...riding south towards it is always be a pleasure if it was not for the steep passes trying to discourage you to reach the country of pasta and gelato.

It will be a highly rewarding CP and we are sure you will thoroughly enjoy it...or not 😊
This one, it's a "little Italia" , our 1st enclave into Switzerland ...



5. CP5 Büsingen am Hochrhein (Deutschland) GPS: 47.696610, 8.688667

Switzerland shares 20% of its borders with its northern neighbour. It does not sound like much but it has a considerable influence on our country and mainly the (Swiss) German speaking regions. So we leave it up to our Swiss German friends to say whether it is *too much* or *too little* common border.

Joke aside, did you know that Germany has an enclosed parcel of land in Switzerland? Well, you will soon find out and easily bridge the gap between the two countries ! But beware, it will be the only German route allowed in our race.



D. Finish line : the finish line is in Berne, on the « Place Fédérale/Bundesplatz », in front of the Swiss Parliament.



E. Finisher party : we will organise a brunch with some swiss specialities on the Bundesplatz, **from 11am on Sunday 10th (noon)**. If you do not intend to stay or be present, please let us know asap otherwise we will count you in.



Startingbox

This is all you will need to complete your Challenge through Switzerland.

It consists of:

- GPS device
- SUCH-Passport
- Cap with your number
- Important informations

This year, the «Startingbox » will be available in some Collect Points the week prior to the Start .

We will ask you to let us know **before August 15** in which Collect Point you will pick it up.

Here are our nice **Collect Points** (thanks to them :-) **(BUT TO BE CONFIRMED LATER THIS YEAR):**

- **BoldaiR, Delémont:** rue du Haut-Fourneau 1, 2800 Delémont (boldairsport.ch)
- **Voyage Cycling Store, Basel :** Grenzacherstrasse 10, 4058 Basel (voyagecyclingstore.ch)
- **Bike Passion, Genève:** rue Pictet-de-Bock 5, 1205 Genève (bike-passion.ch)
- **Atelier Ride Far, Echandens :** rue de la Petite Forge 21, 1026 Echandens, (www.ridefar.ch)
- **Tac Tac Cycling, Bern:** Gotthelfstrasse 3, 3013 Bern (www.tac-tac.com)
- **Cycle Store, Zürich:** Werdmühleplatz 4, 8001 Zürich (www.cyclestorezurich.com)
- **Kutscher Haus, St. Gallen:** Kleinbergstrasse 1, 9000 St. Gallen (deadendsandcake.ch)

if you can't make it to one of these Collect Points, send us an email before August 15th and we will see what we can do... ;-)

Important dates/deadlines

To sum up, here are **the main dates to remember** :

15th August: deadline to hand in the documents

- Rider's Agreement
- Proof of a valid traveling/rescue insurance/health and accident insurance (only for Citizen living outside Switzerland)
- Name of the Collect Point you've chosen to pick up the Startingbox

31st August:

- photo of bike setup and security equipment : helmet, lights, reflector
- A gpx file of your intended route. We do understand it might be subject to last minute changes and we promise to keep it secret, but it can help us better following you!
Please send it to us on 1 file .gpx and not cut in different files...

Equipment / Safety and Bike recommendations

Equipment

Depending on your route, you can be riding as high as 2500m where the weather can be unpredictable and quickly changing. Although we have asked for nice and warm weather, we have absolutely no guarantee you will not have to ride through storms and rain. So be prepared. We can not do a complete bike check before the start, but there is a mandatory equipment that we try to keep as short as possible. **You will be asked to send us a picture of your setup (bike, lights, brakes) before the race starts (deadline August 31st).**

We highly recommend:

- **-Front and Rear working lights.** Additional reflectors as well as high visibility vest is highly recommended.
- **-Helmet** and sunglasses
- **-Basic first aid kit** - this includes bandages, antiseptic/sterile wipes, medication as well as first aid kit for your bike!
- **-Suitable sleeping system** if you choose to sleep outdoors. Remember you are not allowed to sleep at friends or relatives'. We won't be enforcing a specific temperature rating for each piece of equipment, but rather, you should have with you equipment to be comfortable sleeping at relatively cold temperatures.
- **-Clothing** to face any given conditions that will be thrown at you.
- **A mobile phone** with internet access. We know some of you might be reluctant to it but it is a good way to communicate in case of emergency and depending on the method we opt for, it might be required for GPS tracking. Swiss mobile coverage is really good and prepaid SIM can be purchased from any shops.
- A battery pack/charger (powerbank) is often the easiest way to keep your electronic devices up and going but it is not a mandatory equipment.

Bike recommendations

There are plenty of bike options that could be considered for this race but in the end, it will be up to you, mainly based on the route you have chosen.

With that being said, most of the roads are asphalt and/or very smooth or compact gravel ones. The ideal bike is something fast and light and more road oriented but more importantly, it has to be a bike you are comfortable with, accustomed to riding.

To help you with your setup and to answer many of the questions you may have, here is a link to a very good website run by Chris White : <https://ridefar.info>

Tracking system :

Satellite tracking is included in the race fee. We have to pleasure to announce a partnership with FollowMyChallenge. Their system is simple, reliable and more so, very light.

In case of malfunction, please contact us asap. We will either try to reach you and provide you with a new device or try to fix it.

The trackers along with other practical info will be in Starterbox

The tracker and his included USB cable have to be returned on day of your arrival in Bern (or at least for the brunch on Sunday 10th of September).

In case of delay, loss or broken tracker, a fee up to 200 CHF could be asked.

Health and safety :

Riding in open traffic can be hazardous and some recent tragic events reminded us that a bike is not designed to resist to a heavy car or truck. So please, be safe on the road, make sure to be highly visible at all times, to follow the road signs and more importantly, to listen to your body! If you feel drowsy, please make a stop and rest.

COVID 19 :

The SUCH will follow all the mandatory regulations and recommendations set by the government. Having several starting points decreases the risk for large gathering. The finisher's party will be organized and venue booked but might be canceled last minute due to crowd size restrictions. Riders have to inform themselves on domestic, local and traveling restrictions at the time of the event. Violations of these will lead to immediate disqualifications.

If you are not allowed to travel or need to quarantine, please, get in contact with the organizers. Provided we are informed 10 days prior to the start of the event, we will do our best to give your spot to someone on the waiting list and refund you the entire fee.

Although we will do our best to keep the SUCH going, we cannot foresee what things will be like in September. Let's hope we all get our freedom back without any restraints.

Thanks for being understanding.

The Rules/Categories

In order to qualify as a finisher and to be listed in the general classification, you must complete the challenge **AND** follow all the rules of an unsupported bike race listed below.

The rules are set to ensure fairness and must be observed in order to be recorded as finisher. In case of doubt, please, collect evidence using your phone or camera and inform us using the official email address.

1. Ride from your chosen start line to the designated finish via the route of your choice but without ever crossing the Swiss border (exceptions: CP4 and CP5)
2. No 3rd party support, private lodgings or resupply. All food, drink and equipment must be carried with you or acquired at commercially available services.
3. Riders must not solicit any form of private resupply from locals on the race route, any such interaction must be freely offered and unplanned.
4. No drafting (other than pairs with their partners) .
5. All forward travel overland must be human powered
6. No taking public transport or boats.
7. All riders must maintain evidence of their ride.
8. Accident, rescue and liability insurances, cycle helmets, lights and equipment in the required equipment list are mandatory, we may be checking.
9. Riders must know and observe all local traffic laws. Do not ride where circulation is not permitted and in particular, where bikes are not allowed.
10. Ride in the spirit of self-reliance and equal opportunity.
11. Any recorded track must be done with the bike next to (riding or carrying)

Assistance : you are not allowed to seek any outside assistance. That being said, if you are in a position where you cannot fix a mechanical by yourself, you may ask for the help of another rider but that immediately precludes you from being listed in the general classification. In case of a mechanical you are unable to fix yourself and if you wish to stay in the race, you can use public transport to take you to a bike shop/town but **you must then ride back from the exact same location you were at the time of the mechanical**. Please, document everything as we will be asking for any proofs we think is necessary (bus ticket, taxi, shop receipts...).

Emergency : every unsupported bike race has its own policy, but we find that safety, health and ultimately, our survival is more important than anything else. It is just a bike ride after all! Therefore, we will not disqualify you if you decide to act as a good samaritan and help a fellow rider in distress. You **must however report your act using the official mail** : info@such.bike. The rider being helped, if still able to carry on, will however not qualify for the finishers' list.

Categories / Scratching

Regardless of the category you decide to sign up for it remains an unsupported bike race

There are **3 categories** : Make sure you select the right category (SOLO, PAIRS or RELAY) upon registration:

SOLO : follow the rules above-listed, especially the one saying 'no drafting' at all time, finish before noon on the 10th and you will be awarded the finisher's title.

PAIRS : riding in pairs allows you to draft (only your partner!). You must both follow the same route and finish together in the Bundesplatz in Bern. We will follow both your progress on the map. In case of issues, we might ask for your gpx data. Pairs can share information, food and shelter but cannot get any outside assistance.

In one of the rider needs to scratch from the race, the other is allowed and encouraged to carry on to the finish line but will not be listed in the general classification, be it as a pair or solo.

RELAY : a special category for those of you who cannot take a few days off or are too nervous to embark solo/pairs on this adventure. **No more than 2 people per relay!** It is basically a split pair or a double solo.

Both of you have to sign up on the same form. Make sure you select the right category.

Only 1 relay switch is allowed but it can take place anywhere along the route. **You have to document it and inform the race organizers by mail** at info@such.bike of the switch as *soon as possible after it has occurred, but no longer than 3 hours later*.

Scratching : we hope you will not have to resort to scratching from the race and strongly advise you not to take such decision after a long day on the saddle. Mike Hall used to say 'Don't scratch at night, sleep over it'.

In case your mind is still set in the morning, inform the organizers immediately via the mail address : info@such.bike or by calling **+41.79.671.27.09 or +41.76.387.28.57**

Please note you will be responsible for arranging travel back home. We will not help you nor provide any assistance with booking tickets or hotel accommodations.

Awards: There is no formal awards ceremony but finishers are encouraged to stay around the finish line and participate in the finishers' party.

Insurance: You are responsible for your own accident and liability insurance, costs of emergency evacuation, etc. International riders should verify that their insurances extends to both Switzerland and ultra-racing events. Being rescued by a helicopter is very expensive in Switzerland. Any damage claims from participants against the organizers, regardless of their legal reason, are void.

Race cancellation: The organizers reserve the right to cancel the race for safety reasons, for example if bad weather conditions prevail. Should the race be cancelled, the entry fee will not be refunded and the organizers will be released from performing their obligations.

Photographic rights : The organizers have the exclusive rights to use pictures which are taken by during, and after the event. Participants waive their right to disallow their images, voices and video to be published.