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UCT first-time host to the Absa Cape Epic Prologue

On Sunday, 15 March 2015, the University of Cape Town will be the centre of the sporting world when it hosts the Absa Cape Epic Prologue for the first time. The lush green sports fields in front of the main UCT campus will be seen by television viewers around the world when the 1,200 participants will ride 20km and climb 600m on the slopes of Table Mountain to earn their seeding in the seven days of stage racings to follow.

Dr Max Price, Vice-Chancellor of UCT, says: "This occasion gives us opportunities, before and after the race, to showcase the phenomenal research UCT is doing in various sport and sport development fields, and to display the university's most important asset: the people of UCT."

Some of the best athletes in mountain biking will be riding on and around UCT, which has been acclaimed as one of the most beautiful campuses in the world.

UCT is currently home to 33% of South Africa's top-rated researchers. They have been given a National Research Foundation (NRF) A-rating for being unmistakably recognised by their peers as leading international scholars in their respective fields.

With more than 40 sports clubs, UCT's sports and recreation programmes provide for all levels of competition: from purely social programmes to high-performance and endurance sports. UCT students are actively engaged in promoting sport in the local communities and within their clubs on campus.

The UCT Cycling Club is actively involved in a mentorship programme with 13 children from the Velokhaya Academy in Khayelitsha. With this programme, coined "Growing champions on and off the bike", members of the club are helping children with their school work, teaching them life orientation skills and providing them with knowledge on how to stay on top of their school work while training hard and racing competitively.

Hosting the Absa Cape Epic will also help to emphasise the various sustainable initiatives on campus, like the UCT Green Campus Initiative where, amongst other projects, cycling on campus is being encouraged.

Thanks to an initiative from the UCT Cycling Club, the university has declared the week of 9 to 15 March the UCT Cycling Week, UCT is using the opportunity presented by the Cape Epic

to emphasise the importance of exercise as part of a balanced student life.

In the build-up to the Cape Epic there will be two competitions for students to take part in to raise awareness of the event but more importantly the benefits of cycling. From Monday to Friday (9 to 13 March) students will be prompted on social media to find a lost bike on campus, take a picture of it and email it to socialmedia@uct.co.za. On Thursday, students are going to test their fitness during lunch hour when they will compete against each other on stationary Jammie bikes to see who can ride the fastest 1km.

For more information, please contact Petro Mostert on +27 (0)82 334 6193 or petro.mostert@uct.ac.za.

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