

## TRACK DESCRIPTION:

Start of international ultramarathon test RAS Extreme 2010 will be held in the evening hours, on 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2010 outside of Hotel Kras, in Postojna, which is the capital of destination Karst and also a hometown of very famous Postojna cave. From here on the track will lead the cyclists over the Pivka valley with its numerous disappearing lakes, through valley of river Reka to Ilirska Bistrica, which is a city that has slept behind a bit. Proceeding with shorter and not too steep ascent to village Harije, over the edge of Brkini region to industrial city of Podgrad.

Part of the track to Kozina is mainly flat, all the way to Črni Kal, where a great view to Adriatic sea and Slovenian coast opens & where the cyclists have the first chance to rest as this is the first longer and steeper descent. Under the village Črni Kal the competitors will turn to village Kubed with picturesque landscape and a few short, but steep climbs around villages of Slovenian Istria. The competitors will join the main road to Croatia in Šmarje & ride next to river Dragonja. The track will lead to the Adriatic sea, pass the famous salt lakes of Sečovlje to historic city of Izola (Island), which was actually an island years back. There they will ascend to the regional hospital get another great view to Slovenian coast and descent back down to Koper, which is the major port of Slovenia and continue over Črni Kal & Divača, where the Unesco listed Škocjan caves expand underground, back to interior.

The track continues past the Lipica stud, to Sežana, over central Karst and through beautiful old villages, famous for its wine & prosciutto, to Nova Gorica (new Gorica), which is connected to the Stara Gorica (old Gorica) on the Italian side. A bit before Ajdovščina, in the village Cesta (road), the cyclists will leave the main road and get started with strenuous climb to Lokavec and over Predmeja, Črni vrh (Black peak) & Godovič to Idrija, which used to be a very important silver mine in the times of Austro-Hungarian empire.

After Most na Soči (bridge on the river) where people come to jump from the bridge or fish & kayak in the lake under high mountains, the competitors will ride for a while next to turquoise waters of river Soča. They will pass the extreme sports center Bovec, which has a bad luck with numerous earthquakes in the last decade and come to village Trenta where a king's etape awaits them. Ascent to 1611 high mountain pass Vršič is demanding, full of steep and short bends and is also the highest point of RAS! After the rewarding descent to winter sports center Kranjska gora (ski world championship), the cyclists will ride to industrial gray town of Jesenice in the Gornjesavska valley. Under the shelter of mountain chain Karavanke, through typical villages for Gorenjska region, they will come to Tržič, Golnik, where they will have the chance to breathe some good fresh air (medical center for patients with pulmonary diseases and Kamnik).

Another steep climb to mountain pass Črnivec waits the competitors (904 m), where the name of the region changes its name to Štajerska. Ride through Šoštanj, Velenje, Mislinja & Slovenj Gradec, won't be too hard, from Dravograd the competitors will follow the flow of river Drava, all the way to the 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest city in Slovenia & the capital city of Štajerska Maribor. In Kamnica the track turns left and

climbs on the little country roads, over numerous hills, covered in vineyards to the border city to Austria, named Šentilj.

On the most northern point of the race the track leads through Gornja Radgona & Radenci, famous for its champagne Radgonska penina & spas. After that over Panonske flats, which is also the flattest part of Slovenia, through Prekmurje, Prlekija & Ljutomer to Ormož. In Ptuj the cyclists will turn towards Slovenian eastern border & through Majšperk & Rogaška Slatina follow the Štajerska roads to Bizeljsko and then to Krško where the only Slovenian nuclear plant stands.

Nice and slightly agitated road will take the teams to the farthest south south: Brežice, over Posavski ravines, hills & Kostanjevica to the capital city of Dolenjska region Novo mesto. One of the longest ascents over Gorjanci Mountain will wait on this part of the track but not too hard though. In Vahta the track spills to another region known for its birch trees & mild mixture of red sorts of wine named Cviček, Bela Krajina. Metlika, Črnomelj, Kanižarica and uphill again, through Belokrajnska villages and into the heart of the oldest forests in Slovenia, Kočevje. We have to keep in mind that the track is circular so on the way back to where we started we pass Kočevje, Ribnica & over Sodražica climb to Bloke masif, where the lowest temperature was recorded in Slovenia (-38 °C). We soon pass Nova vas and come to the land of the biggest disappearing lake in Slovenia Cerknica Lake and later on Cerknica city, which lies under the mountain of witches, Slivnica. Now we are pretty close to the end so we must use the last atoms of energy for this last part of the track, which proceeds through Rakek, Unec, over the Unica river to Planina field with its remains of once mighty castle Haasberg & Planina, where the last and probably the hardest ascent called Kačje ride (very popular spot for bikers to test their "guts") waits for the exhausted competitors. We go through Postojna gate and down through the finish line into the crowd of fans waiting for the best to come.

