

## Eighth edition of Antarctica's only multi-stage footrace begins with The Last Desert 2018

[Ushuaia, Argentina 23 November 2018]

RacingThePlanet's The Last Desert (Antarctica) 2018 gets underway today when competitors from 29 countries are set to begin **Antarctica's only multi-stage** footrace. Competitors, volunteers and organisers will depart Ushuaia, Argentina to sail across the infamous **Drake Passage** before embarking on a week-long, six stage race on several locations in and around the Antarctic Peninsula and Mainland.

The coldest of the four week-long races that make up the [4 Deserts Ultramarathon Series](#), competitors have qualified for The Last Desert by having completed a minimum of two previous races in the series, which also includes the Gobi March (Mongolia), the Namib Race (Namibia) and the Atacama Crossing (Chile). With temperatures down to -20°C, competitors are forced to contend with severe weather conditions as well as the unpredictability of the daily stage lengths and start times, which are dictated by environmental conditions.

The eighth edition of [The Last Desert](#) is proving to be one of the race's most competitive and diverse to-date. Nearly one-quarter of this edition's competitors are women, while 68% per cent of all competitors will join the prestigious [4 Deserts Club](#) upon completion. The race will also feature a number of competitors representing new countries -- while Australia, Hong Kong, the United States and South Korea are the most represented countries, **Malaysia, Belgium, Romania, Finland, Guatemala and the Netherlands** are nationalities that will be represented for the first time in both Antarctica as well as in the 4 Deserts Club.

A further 12 competitors are set to complete the [4 Deserts Grand Slam](#) (all races in the 4 Deserts Ultramarathons in one calendar year) once they cross the finish line in early December. Having completed 750 km thus far, 4 Deserts Grand Slam contenders including: Australian Jacque Bell who, at 23, is set to become the youngest female to complete the 4 Deserts Grand Slam; Malaysian William Chew; South Korean competitors Hongseok Choi, Heogwak Cheongsin and Dong Hyeon Yoo; Briton Leon Clarence; Tommy Jacobsen of Denmark; Hichame Moubarak who is representing Qatar and France, as well as Bart Van Schilt, who represents Belgium and the Netherlands. Marek Rybiec represents Poland and Takuya Wakoaka Japan, while Wong Ho Chung flies the flag for Hong Kong and is on course to win the overall [4 Deserts Championship](#).

While this year's youngest competitor is just 21, this year's oldest competitor is 66. **Camel Fung of Hong Kong is not only the oldest competitor in the race, but also the first amputee** to join The Last Desert. Fung is part of the team 5 Legs Never Quit, which also includes Fung's wife BY Cheong as well as Raymond Chak.

Also competing at The Last Desert is **Vladmi dos Santos of Brazil**. Dos Santos is blind and is competing in his sixth 4 Deserts / RacingThePlanet Ultramarathon. In Antarctica, he'll be looking to become the **second blind competitor to finish The Last Desert**. Dos Santos will be guided by Stanford University medical doctor, Dr. Rebecca Walker, who has been both a competitor herself as well as part of the race's medical team.

**Stage 1 of The Last Desert is set for Monday, November 26.**

Follow the live coverage [www.4deserts.com/thelastdesert/live](http://www.4deserts.com/thelastdesert/live)

For more information and photo requests, contact [info@racingtheplanet.com](mailto:info@racingtheplanet.com)

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**About the 4 Deserts Ultramarathon Series by RacingThePlanet – [www.4deserts.com](http://www.4deserts.com)**

RacingThePlanet's 4 Deserts Ultramarathon Series is the most prestigious footrace series in the world, ranked by TIME Magazine as the "World's Top Endurance Races" and profiled on BBC, ESPN, NatGeo, CNN, ABC, and NBC Sports.

The unique collection of world-class races takes place over seven days and 250 kilometers (155 miles) in the largest and most forbidding deserts on the planet including the driest, windiest, oldest, and coldest deserts on earth; four hostile environments on four different continents.

Racers of all levels, ethnicities and ages, from 19 to 73, must go beyond the limits of their physical and mental endurance racing self-supported in the most inhospitable climates and formidable landscapes, carrying their equipment and food on their backs; provided with only water and a place in a tent each night. They are supported by the world's most skilled professionals, wilderness medical doctors, research fellows and volunteers.

Racers from 100 nations have competed over the last 15 years, including Afghanistan and The Faroe Islands, mingling around RacingThePlanet's signature campfires with a shared commitment to adventure, authenticity and a refusal to obey limits.

Racers who complete all 4 Deserts enter the elite "4 Deserts Club". Racers who complete all 4 Deserts in the same year are part of the ultra-elite "4 Deserts Grand Slam Club".

The series comprises the [Atacama Crossing in Chile](#), [Gobi March in Mongolia](#), [Namib Race in Namibia](#) and [The Last Desert in Antarctica](#).