



The final event in the 2011/12 DuO Adventure series attracted 80 competitors which included a mix of old and new competitors and a large contingent from the ACT. There was a steady stream of competitors leaving the Belanglo House start area for the first leg of around 6.5 km on the MTB through mainly flat fire roads. The ground was generally dry with the odd patch of water/mud thrown in around the gullies. This leg took around 15 to 20 minutes to complete before arriving at the first foot transition. The control at the foot transition was busy all day as competitors punched in four times after completing each bike and foot stage.

The foot stages, although not being too long between controls were in difficult terrain, with plenty of rock faces, shelves, cliffs and scrubby gullies in between. Most of the controls took around 4 to 6 minutes to reach depending on route choice. If you planned well, there were several good single tracks to run along and lead you to the controls. Several competitors still struggled around the rocky areas and found it a little frustrating at times. The area was more challenging as far as navigation goes but most competitors enjoyed the area and the difficulty.

The second MTB stage was a little longer with around 19km for the long course and 12 km for the short course. We were required to keep off the single tracks in the area by the Forests Department. This meant that the navigation was not as challenging on the bike. There were some great flowing, bumpy trails skirting the plantation area as well as a few short sharp hills to climb. To add to the challenge some of the controls on the bike leg were placed 50 to 150 m from the tracks. Competitors dropped off their bikes at various points to grab the controls on foot, some competitors managed to get the control easily but struggled to find their bikes when they popped out on the tracks and their bikes were out of view.

The front runners in the Long course were Greg Barbour, Patrik Gunnarsson and David Simpfendorfer. They set a fast pace both on bike and on foot, with very little difference in their times between controls. Mary Fein was a clear winner in the Women's class and was very close to the overall leaders in the long course.

The Short course was another close result with Robert Prentice leading the way from Fedor Iskhakov and Andrew Power. Cath Chalmers was the winner of the Women's class with Carolyn Matthews close on her heels.

There were several competitors who tried out the MTBO course only and a good turn out of parents and children trying the novice course. It was very hard for the Dad's to keep the children on course as they spent a lot of time riding through the mud holes. Mark Shingler ran the novice course alongside his son on the bike, a good effort for 90 odd minutes.

A sausage sizzle greeted the competitors on their return to Belanglo House, thanks to Tim Hackney and Kerry Bacon for keeping up the hot food for nearly three hours. A big thanks to the organising club (Illawarra) and their members, Keith, Sue and Ian, who gave up their time to keep the start and transition area flowing steadily throughout the day. Kevin Curby was cool, calm and collected on the registration desk, with plenty of changes and enter on the day for Sport Ident system. He ensured it worked perfectly all day! There were a few mis punches and withdrawals on the day, but we have all been in the same position and hopefully all the competitors will be up to the challenge again in the next series.

GREG BACON

