

Hi All

### **Nissan Series Down & Dirty - 2nd Place**

The 4th leg of the Nissan Series kicked off at the Smuts Museum in Irene on Saturday, on what turned out to be a pearler of a Spring day. Again the starting blocks were choccas, and the racing was fast and furious from the gun. Karien van Jaarsveld (USN) got into an early lead and I immediately chased. Yolandi du Toit (Bizhub) had dropped off the pace pretty promptly so when Karien was forced off her bike with a dropped chain a few kays in, I found myself in the lead. Theresa Ralph soon joined me however and tailed me until about the 10k mark. For the following 20 kays we took it in turns swapping the lead ... Theresa pulling stronger on the straight flat terrain and myself pulling ahead on the rougher stuff.

About 30k in, riding over some wet palates that had been placed over a stream, my wheel slipped out and I was forced to unclip and lost my rhythm. Theresa pulled away at that stage and managed to get a good gap on me. I couldn't quite bridge the gap, she was riding really strong, but I tried to keep her in my sights as long as possible. About 45k in there was some confusion after a road crossing as to the direction of the route (as two different race organisers had made use of some of the same terrain). Having had the misfortune of missing route markers or being misdirected at a couple of events earlier in the year, I decided to stop, turn around and head back to the marshalls to get clarification that I was on the correct route! I lost some time in the process but once I had assurance I put my foot down and rode as hard as I could. Negotiating my way around and past the half marathon riders on the single track the last 20kays proved a little challenging - as it would have for all the 70k riders. But I managed to hold onto second place, with my trusty Specialized S-Works Era once again giving me a smooth, hassle-free, great ride.

1.	Theresa Ralph	2:52:42
2.	Carla Rowley	2:55:47
3.	Karien van Jaarsveld	2:56:34
4.	Christine v Rensburg	3:00:46
5.	Yolandi du Toit	3:02:35

Hope you're all enjoying the warmer weather! I certainly am, and am happy to see the end of a bad run of ill-health!

Be in touch again next week.

Happy trails.

Carla