

Hi All

The Karkloof Classic - 4th Place

The start line of the Mr Price Karkloof Classic just outside Howick, Natal last weekend was testament to what an awesome marathon event it really is. All the ladies teams were present ... MTN, Bizhub, Nashua, Mr Price Specialized, Jeep to name most, and of course myself, RBS Biogen. The pace was flat out from the gun and Yolande Speedy (MTN) got a gap and into the first section of single track within the first few km's. Mariske Strauss (MTN) got in 2nd, followed by myself, Cherise Taylor and Karien van Jaarsveld (both Nashua), and Caitlin de Wet (Mr Price). Cherise got a lead on me into the second section of track but unfortunately wiped out down a very technical section, which forced the whole bunch of us behind her to have to get off our bikes and walk the rest of that descent. This gave the MTN girls a good lead gap.

Cherise, Karien and I stayed together the first 25k up until 'The Gauntlet'! This was the most awesome section - rollercoaster type vibe singletrack with massive drops and berms, almost scary (even the medics were prepped and waiting) but SO exhilarating. As I dropped into it, Cherise stopped dead behind me, forcing Karien to take the chicken run (alternative easier option). I got a gap on the ladies at that stage but unfortunately the chicken run was, unusually, quicker than the 'bull run' so I ended up just behind Karien coming out of the Gauntlet. Cherise managed to impressively bridge the gap back to us and we all hit Lebanon climb together. I tried to attack the two Nashua girls a few times heading up the climb, and although Cherise stayed with me comfortably and then got a small gap on me, I eventually managed to get rid of Karien. Through the wicked single track sections after Lebanon, Cherise and I tussled between 3rd and 4th positions, until about 45k when Cherise punctured. I put the hammer down as much as I could from there to keep my 3rd position, but at about 60k Sam Oosthuysen (Karsten Cycles) appeared out of what seemed like nowhere - riding a blistering pace - and blew past me on the last climb of the day. Through the final single track zone of the course I lost more time, and crossing the finish line, had to settle for 4th place.

Speedy and Strauss in the meantime had a cracker race finishing 1st and 2nd respectively. Burry Stander won the mens race after dropping Kevin Evans on the final climb, finishing three minutes ahead of Evans, who finished 11mins ahead of the rest of the men.

1.	Yolande Speedy (MTN)	3:32:46
2.	Mariske Strauss (MTN)	3:42:15
3.	Sam Oosthuysen (Karstens)	3:53:30
4.	Carla Rowley (RBS Biogen)	3:56:41
5.	Karien van Jaarsveld (Nashua)	3:59:43
6.	Sarah van Heerden (Jeep)	4:10:23
7.	Alison Mislehorn	4:16:33
8.	Caitlin de Wet (Mr Price)	4:16:53
9.	Robyn Adendorf (Jeep)	4:19:38
10:	Jade Roberts (Bizhub)	4:19:39

Mabalingwe Lion Man report to follow.

Regards
Carla