

The Wrap Up

7-8 November, 2009
Southern Highlands, NSW

Fifth Fling Flung

Despite all our sins, the 5th Fling was held for the 5th time on a perfect sun kissed day; not too hot, not too cool. Does this prove that God cruises the heavenly forests on a mountain bike and may well have Scottish-Australian roots?

Conditions were well nigh perfect, with some rain during the week holding down dust and packing down sand. A perfect dawn on race day greeted caffeine queues and cosy campers for the most sought after MTB race in the land. Time to rise; time to ride.....

Some 1800 riders got on bikes on the weekend after entries were snapped up back in July. The racers – Half, Full, 100Mile and Threesomes accounted for 1550 spots on offer whilst 130 Casual Flingers and well over 100 Kids Flingers got out on 2 wheels.

By the end of Sunday 582 had finished the Full Fling, 101 gave it their best shot but didn't cross the finish line. 680 finished the Half Fling, 7 didn't finish. 15 Flinging Threesomes teams started, 2 didn't finish. Of the 100Mile Flingers, 26 started, 11 didn't finish. For reasons only they know, some 80 riders failed to turn up at all!

The Thanks

Our Major Sponsors in 2009 were Ground Effect cycle clothing, GU nutrition, Tertini wines, Ay Up lights, Maxxis tyres and Forests NSW. Shimano, Mountain Biking Australia magazine and Hot Designs Sportswear were Support Sponsors. Thanks to all!

Other sponsors and supporters included Todds Real Estate, Aquamann Irrigation, Ibis Bikes, Eastern Bikes, The Kids Bicycle Company, Camelbak Hydration, Horticulture Australia (for the bananas), Rock 'n' Roll Lube, Sigma Computers, Culligan Water for that refreshing Bundy on Tap, Thredbo Resort and Pigs Fly Beer.

Any of our events are nothing without the world famous Dark Side. The crew who spend days putting out arrows, working on rego, building event centres, marshaling the course,

transition etc. In our team there were 60+ people. Course Director Wayne Byard did a magnificent job as always. Alex McNee looked after our marshals with great skill. The lovely Wendy and her team looked after the administration and rego with typical efficiency and friendliness. Pete and Art made Wingello Transition zing with efficiency, Patrick controlled Penrose, Liss loved her boys (and 1 girl) in the Mile High Lounge, Nicky did likewise in the Frequent Rider Lounge. Ant and Ben made it all happen at Ferndale whilst Dawsie took control of Wingello Forest and along with Kirsty patched up those who flew and came down hard. Mark and team ran the Finish smoothly as always whilst Kerry and Kaz made it happen for the Kids Fling. Thanks to them and **ALL** the magical Dark Side.



The course you all enjoyed would not exist without Greg & Di Joice, Robert & Barbara Boag and Gladys Jeffreys allowing us access to their properties. Please **NEVER EVER** ride these sections of private property at any other time. Savour them once a year during the Fling.

The local Rural Fire Service brigades had 50+ marshals on the course and did their usual magnificent job. St John Ambulance patched up the bruised and the battered, the hot and the hurt. Paul and his wrench monkeys from 3D Race Support kept bikes on the trail and Will from mtnbike.com.au brought those who were rooted home in the Shag Wagon. Thanks too to Nina from the Resource Recovery Centre for ensuring we recycle as much as possible at the Fling.

Finally Bob, Mark and the rest of the Castech Team did a magnificent job of timing their first Fling. After the 'fun' of 2008 I thank you from the bottom of my heart!

The Riding Saturday

The Bundanoon Dash on Saturday evening was the beginning of the weekend's racing. This fundraising race had over 100 entrants but only half presented to the start line. The spectator numbers grow each year but too many riders are keen to eat and drink for the big day following than race it seems. The Dash course takes riders on a loop of the Morton National Park tracks before the final grind up the ridiculously steep Constitution Hill. 2008 Dash winner Perren Delacour took it out in 00:10:19 knocking out Andy Blair and Dennis Van Mill. Meg Ross retained her Dashing ability from 2008 to win the women's in 00:12:10 over Trudy Nicholas and Rosie Barnes.



Sunday

The Casual Fling - Proudly bearing plates declaring 'I'm Having a Casual Fling' which will be useful on Motel bedroom doors, 130 or so enjoyed this 14km untimed participation event which included the beginning and end of the main Fling course. All who started completed the Casual Fling and there were loads of smiling faces, many enjoying their first ever MTB event. We hope it has whetted your appetite for more!

The Kid's Fling - While racers were out on course, well over 100 children from 4 to 12 were enjoying their very own Kids Fling. Promoting cycling to young kids guarantees the future of our sport and encourages outdoor activity. The kids were inspired by you and it all goes some way to developing the Southern Highlands as a place that welcomes the bike. Thanks to Todds Real Estate of Bundanoon for supporting the Kids Fling and to The Kids Bicycle Company and Eastern Bikes for providing bikes for the draw. Go kids!!



The Highland Fling

The Full Fling course was around the same length as in 2008 - 112km split between the Ground Effect Stage (34km), Forests NSW Stage (54km) and the final GU Stage (25km). The major changes to the course were in the first 15km when we took Flingers on a farm tour that included paddock, trail, singletrack and the odd specially designed bottleneck to test frustration levels.....The Fling is indeed a test of endurance!



The course was in perfect condition with the singletrack along the likes of Boundary Rider, Turn Off and Head Job all fast and tacky. And how good were the painted interpretations by the local schoolchildren of named features on the course? Enough to inspire even the most weary rider.

The Fling route passes through native forest, pine forest, open farmland, tight singletrack, village roads - it is surely this variety that makes it such a great ride. The Fling is all about personal challenge: whether it be achieving a podium result, beating your mates or improving your result from last year, or just making the distance and still being able to walk afterwards (or not). Each and every rider in the Highland Fling deserves congratulations. Thanks Flingers!

The main Full Fling field with the 100Mile Flingers raced off at 7.30am followed by the Elite Full Fling and Half Flingers at 8.00am. The wave of Full Flingers parted near The Graveyard 10km into the race as the steam train of Elite Full Flingers passed through. Matt Fleming broke a chain 500metres into the race but unbelievably, caught back on. Hamish Elliot, too, after flatting. Jason English drove the train of a dozen or so into Transition after the 34km Ground Effect Stage, accompanied by Half Flinger Perren Delacour. Perren uncoupled and turned for home on the GU Stage whilst the others headed into the make or break Forests NSW Stage; 54km of flowing singletrack and ever increasing hill climbs. Up The Wall, Matt Fleming took Hamish Elliot with him and Craig Gordon and Shaun Lewis hung on. Towards the end of the stage, 2008 champion, Gordon made his break and pulled away into Transition with a 2 minute lead into the final 25km GU Stage. Hamish Elliot flattened again and the battle for to catch Gordo was well and truly on for Jason English and Shaun Lewis. They made up time but not enough and Craig Gordon took his second Highland Fling title in 4:16:26. Lewis and English crossed close with Jason taking 2nd in 4:17:45 and Shaun 3rd in 4:17:57.

In the Women's Elite Full Fling there was a tactical battle between West Australian and 2008 winner, Stephanie Russell, Jenny Fay, Zoe King and Niki Fisher. Fay blitzed the Ground Effect Stage but suffered later on and was forced to pull out of the Fling during the GU Stage with cramps. Stephanie put the hammer down in the GU Stage and pulled away to retain her title in 05:23:27 with Niki taking 2nd place (05:28:27) and Zoe up on the podium with 5:33:00

Congratulations to both Craig and Stephanie not only as Highland Fling champions but as the 2009 Australian MTB Marathon Champions and wearers of the Maillot Tartane, The Tartan Jersey.



AUSTRALIAN MTB MARATHON CHAMPIONSHIPS



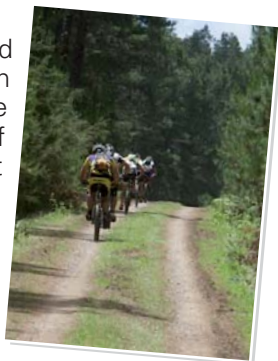


Each year more riders take on the challenge of The 100Mile Fling. 26 started in 2009 and there were expectations that 3 time winner Dennis Van Mill would be pushed harder than ever in the race he looks forward to above all other. In the end Dennis swept aside all challengers in 07:03:30. When asked at the finish how his race was, Dennis typically focused on the kids posters along the course and promptly donated his prize money to the local schools! Mark Fenner came in 2nd in 7:43:55 with Wade Carberry in 3rd exactly 10 minutes later. Only 2 women have ever fronted up for the 100Mile Fling and huge props to Clair Graydon in 2009. Sadly Clair just missed the final cut off for starting the final GU Stage after riding 140km.

25 Singlespeeders geared up for the Full Fling and Rod McGee showed them all a clean chainline in 4:57:29 and an impressive 20th overall. Those mad buggers on the Cyclocross bikes realized the error of their ways as the Fling got closer. 12 entered but by race day only 5 dropped onto their bars. Mike Blewitt (5:05:00) just pipped in from Warren Burgess.

In the Half Fling, Veteran Perren Delacour put 5 minutes on the young Daniel Macdonald (2:21:34) in each of the Ground Effect and GU Stages for a clear win in 2:12:20 with Masters rider Gary Scheld 3rd in 2:30:02. The Women's Half Fling winner was Masters Women rider Kristen Vallance in 2:49:05 ahead of Belinda Diprose in 2:54:13 and Heather Evans 3:01:59.

All other category place getters and full Interim Results can be found on www.wildhorizons.com.au. Please note these are interim results so if you have a query on your time/result then please drop an email to fling@wildhorizons.com.au and we'll make necessary corrections. Please do this asap.



The Community, the Spirit

Yet again the town of Bundanoon and the other southern villages got right behind the Fling, from the bikes lining the roads to the superb catering provided by the Bundanoon Rebels Soccer Club, Bundanoon, Exeter and Wingello School P&C's. The Bundanoon Lions, all the local RFS Brigades, Bundanoon Rugby Club, Bundanoon Pony Club, Bundanoon Carriage Club all get involved in different ways. So many riders comment on this aspect of the event and our community also comment on Flingers and their supporters for being the most polite and happy bunch of people to head into the district. Collectively local groups raised some \$40000 for local community projects.



It's a great sport

Whilst the kids bounced up and down, up and down, up and down on the Jumping Castle back at Ferndale Oval some adults bounced up then down off waterbars and did it only once. Heed those warning signs! Fortunately apart from a broken wrist here and there and some helmets that did their job, everyone is on the mend.

Stories abound of goodness on the track – assistance to fellow riders. Riders helping injured riders despite losing a podium place to do so. I'm still amazed by the rider who carried a spare bottom bracket! But another rider used it out on the track!



Oh what a feeling!

You queue for the portaloos at dawn before the race starts for the 'muesli morning rush'. You wander, well satisfied, back to your tent. Then, reaching into your pocket for the keys to your Toyota, they ain't there no more. You're sure you had them when you went into the toilet. Back you go, join the queue, waiting for one particular portaloos to free up. In you go, down you go – arm encased in a garbage liner, hand holding a piece of wire. Stirring stuff, you lock onto something firm and up it comes. A key moment in one rider's life!

Riding you up The Wall

Some 70 Full Fling, 100Mile and Flinging Threesome riders rode up the infamous Wall in Wingello SF. We'll draw one of you for a prize from Pink Floyd.....



Mr & Mrs Average.....

In the spirit of rewarding participation which is the lifeblood of this event, we have a special prize for the Male and Female rider who completed the Full Fling in closest to the average time for their sex. Each rider receives a set of awesome Ay Up V lights worth \$600 each.

The average times were:



– Average Men's Full Fling Time 6:59:53

– Average Women's Full Fling Time 7:19:01

Congratulations* go to Mrs Average – Donna Smith in 7:19:10 and Mr Average – James Hunter in 6:59:48.

For interest, the 2008 Men's Average was 6:59:58 and the Women's Average was 7:23:51. Only 5 seconds in the mens but the women have speeded up by nearly 5 minutes!

For interest the Average Men's Half Fling Time was 3:53:02 and the Average Women's Half Fling time was 4:23:06

*Note: These are interim Mr and Mrs Average. Should there be any major changes in the results then this could possibly change.

Forgotten Something? - Pre Ordered T-Shirts, Jerseys and Maps

A few people failed to pick up the Fling of Beauty cycle jersey and/or T-shirts they had ordered on their entry. Given it would cost us a few hundreds dollars to mail all these out and you forgot not us, we're asking those of you who want these items to send us a pre paid 500g parcel post to Wild Horizons, PO Box 218, Bundanoon, NSW 2578

We also have a small amount of Lost Property, so if you are missing something please get in touch! And a wedding ring was lost at the Fling so please, if you found one, let us know so we can save another marriage!

Flinging Memories.....



Photos are now up and available for purchase on www.cycle-photos.com so check out how you looked on the course!

Taking Orders for the Highland Fling Jersey



The Fling jersey totally sold out early on Saturday. Due to extra demand we are placing an additional order of this extremely stylish jersey produced by Hot Designs. If you would like one then please contact Chris on operations@wildhorizons.com.au or

02 4883 6509 with your credit card details and size. Note the jerseys are small for size so suggest you go up one size. Men's S-XXL, Women's 10-16.

Cost is \$100 incl Postage.

Thanks again to all of you for being part of the 2009 Highland Fling. Stick 13-14 November in your diaries and iPods for the 2010 Highland Fling.

If you've a Fling account or story you'd like to share then send it to info@wildhorizons.com.au. We'll put the good ones up on the website!

Look forward to seeing many of you at the inaugural Activate8@Lake Crackenback on 23-24 January. Should be an awesome couple of days of riding, relaxing and other testing and fun bikey stuff. Bring the family to the Snowies!

Enjoy the ride. Enjoy the summer.

Cheers

Huw Kingston



ENTRIES NOW OPEN!!!!

ACTIVATE8
@LAKECRACKENBACK



2 Days

8 Tests

Awesome Location

23-24 January 2010

- Singletrack racing and a whole lot more at the stunning Lake Crackenback Resort in the shadow of Australia's highest mountains.
- An 8 part event that will test the full range of mountain biking skills (plus a few others!).
- Make it a Holiday! - With Australia Day on Tuesday 26, take one day off on Monday 25 and you get to enjoy a 4 day break in the Snowy Mountains!

www.wildhorizons.com.au

