

SHIMANO MTB Grand Prix Series decided in 8 hr and 4 hour

Four races, 574 teams and more than 1,200 endurance racers throughout the events – Rocky Trail's popular 4 and 8 hour racing series has grown again this year. With naming rights and major sponsor SHIMANO Australia already confirmed for the 2012 season, the MTB events organiser took riders to some of the most loved endurance racing trails in NSW and ACT.



The series kicked off in March with the first ever race at Sydney's newest MTB trail – at The Australian Botanic Garden, Mt Annan, where Rocky Trail will host their JetBlack 24 Hour Sydney race in December to end the 2011 racing year on another high note. With a sold out venue at Mt Annan, the series then headed north to Awaba MTB Park near Gosford in July with another record attendance and a massive solo field. The third round was hosted at the exclusive Dargle Farm property in August and the final round summoned enthusiastic endurance racers to Canberra and it's MTB mecca, Stromlo Forest Park.

As co-host for the final round, Rocky Trail had invited "The Voice of Cycling" in Australia, Mike Tomalaris, who was excited about the "up and coming Australian cycling and mountain biking talents represented among the racers and the professional and Euro-style race atmosphere by Rocky Trail".



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Locals dominate the male solo field in Canberra

After being nominated to ride solo in the Shimano MTB Grand Prix 8 hour race in Canberra after planning to ride in a team, Mark Tupalski surprised himself with a win last weekend at Mt Stromlo. The 20 year old Canberra bike mechanic from Onya Bike Belconnen & Civic blitzed the field with an impressive 11 laps in 7 hours 3.28 min to take the win in the fourth and final round of the 8 hour endurance series.

"I was wanting to do it in a team originally," explained Tupalski, "but my boss entered me in solo. I didn't know how it would go."

It went well for Tupalski with a strong start however he said he was mindful of going too hard too early in the race. However after making good lap times Ed McDonald got a bit too close for comfort.

"Ed rides a single speed so I knew if I got to the top of the hill I would beat him," said Tupalski.

The talented Canberra rider, Ed McDonald came second while third place went to Andrew Lloyd from Barnsley.

With a massive solo men's field, Marty Strozik from Woodrising (NSW) placed 25th but claimed the overall SHIMANO MTB GP series with 877 points. Second in the series was last year's series winner Scott Mulqueeny from Berowra Heights on 837 points and third went to EnduroPulse racer Michael Crummy with 764.



GP8 hour Elite Women's title secured for Newcastle

It was a double celebration for Sarah Neumann from Newcastle with a win in the final 8 hr round plus an overall win in the series. After 7 hours 3.54 minutes Neumann competed nine laps.

"I wanted to end it(the series) properly by winning this one as well," said Neumann.

Her lead was challenged until the fifth lap. With only a few hundred metres separating a fast advancing Courtney Shinn.

"I had to drop her (Shinn) on the descent," said Neumann. "I had to ride like a mad woman because I didn't know how far she was behind me."

Second place went to Courtney Shinn from Castlemaine in Victoria and Belinda Porter from Port Macquarie claimed third. Neumann claimed the overall Shimano 8 hour series with 750 points.



GP4 hours claimed by locals Andrew Blair and Heather Logie

National marathon silver medallist, Andrew Blair from Queanbeyan, won the four hour Shimano MTB Grand Prix. Blair rode seven laps in just 4 hours 15 minutes while Troy Hatchman completed 6 laps in 4 hours 20 minutes. Hatchman had done enough to take out the series with 440 points.

Third place in this final round went to Nicholas Bailly after riding 6 laps in 4 hours 25 minutes.

Two local riders claimed the first two places in the elite women's four hour event with Heather Logie taking the win and Eliza Eldridge Bassett in second position. Logie clocked up 5 laps in 3 hours and 50 minutes while Eldridge Bassett completed 5 laps in 4 hours 11 mins.

Emily May (Surry Hills) also managed third place by riding 5 laps in just 4 hours 12 mins and she took out the overall women's series win.

JetBlack NSW/ACT Bike Shop Trophy decided

Racers at the SHIMANO MTB GP series had been able to nominate a bike shop to claim their series points in the additional ranking to determine the "fastest bike shop". The JetBlack Bike Shop Trophy went to **GSC Gordon Street Cyclery in Port Macquarie** with 6668 points while The Bike Shop Mortdale finished second with 6540 points. Third place went to Bike Minded from the Blue Mountains on 2793 points.



"The JetBlack Bike Shop Trophy created a real buzz in our store", said Lloyd Newell from Gordon Street Cyclery. "I received a lot of phone calls this week and customers kept coming in and asking about the final result of the ranking. We had Belinda Porter and also Jason English riding for our shop throughout the SHIMANO MTB GP series and with 12 riders racing for us at Stromlo we're stoked that we won the trophy!"



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ROCKY TRAIL
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Overall Shimano MTB Grand Prix 4 Hr Series

Elite Men

1. 440 pts Troy Hatchman (NSW) 2. 402 pts Thomas Lau (NSW) 3. 400 pts Nicholas Hoyer (NSW)

Elite Women

1. 481 pts Emily May (NSW) 2. 447 pts Wendy Mortimer (NSW) 3. 321 pts Lucie Hybnerova (NSW)

Overall Shimano MTB Grand Prix 8 Hr Series

Elite Men:

1. 877 pts Marty Stozik (NSW) 2. 837 pts Scott Mulqueeny (NSW) 3. 764 pts Michael Crummy (NSW)

Elite Women:

1. 750 pts Sarah Neumann (NSW) 2. 725 pts Belinda Porter (NSW)



For more information and detailed results, visit www.rockytrailentertainment.com.

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