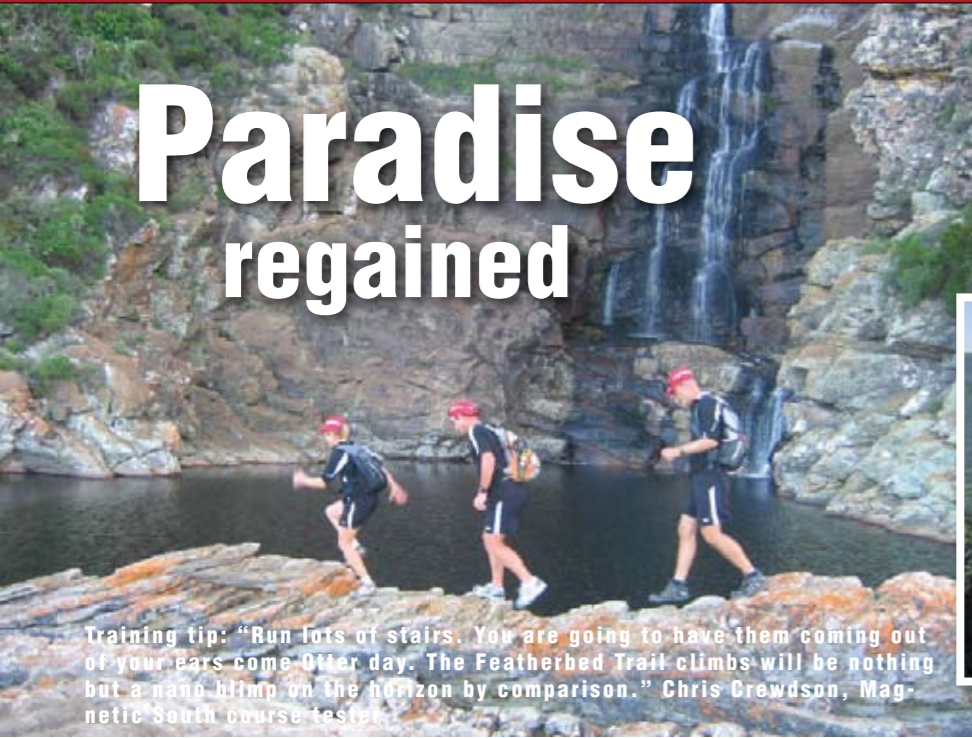


## Paradise regained



Training tip: "Run lots of stairs. You are going to have them coming out of your ears come Otter day. The Featherbed Trail climbs will be nothing but a nano blimp on the horizon by comparison." Chris Crewdson, Magnetic South course tester.

SO MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN about the natural splendour of the Garden Route, and soon there will be even more to write about. The 2009 Southern Storm Duathlon will soon add its pedigree to the list of reasons to visit this spectacular part of the world.

This remarkable debut event allows competitors the unique privilege of traversing the newly proclaimed Garden Route National Park from its eastern boundary on the Storms River to finish on its western edge alongside the Touw River near Wilderness.

Competitors will find their mental and physical boundaries re-defined on this journey of self-discovery. The mix of terrain, flora and waterscapes is simply spectacular. Those views are going to keep athletes in constant wonder, despite the hard physical challenges they may be experiencing. But natural scenery can only do so much. Those who have not prepared themselves adequately will battle just making it through the first stage, the iconic five-day Otter Hiking Trail. This will be run in one day and is undoubtedly the star attraction in the six-day event. The Otter Trail has been out of bounds to trail runners until now, but has been attracting hikers clad with overflowing backpacks from all over the globe for many years. Some hikers find the going so tough that there is a traditional hanging up of hiking boots on arrival at the

end of the trail in Nature's Valley. The exact route of the five other days of



the Southern Storm will be revealed just before the event, so gung ho entrants won't have route knowledge - or the temptation to trespass on private land crossed by the event. Knysna-based event organisers Magnetic South have identified The Otter to be one of those "must do" experiences during your life. For every trail runner this is one to add to your Bucket List. The trail is a complete mix of technical

boulder-hopping to longed-for flattish terrain which comes into the picture in the last few kilometres along the spectacular cliff tops, before dropping down into the valley. There is a dizzying number of steps to conquer, both up and down and every time you have an energy sapping uphill to contend with



there is a fast and furious downhill waiting to crunch those weary limbs. There are a number of river crossings that depending on the tide and rainfall will awaken you from any dream-like states of mind. Running and mountain biking your way across a National Park is soul food in the purest sense. Traversing the Garden Route National Park in the 2009 Southern Storm Duathlon promises to be a highly personal and memorable experience.



WILL YOU WEATHER THE STORM?

19 - 24 SEPTEMBER

GARDEN ROUTE

# SOUTHERN STORM

- DUATHLON -

presented by



5 TRAIL RIDES

7 TRAIL RUNS

6 DAYS

250KM

INCLUDES  
THE OTTER RUN



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if for nothing else, do it for your soul

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