



MOTHER OF A RACE. T

DAY 1: THE PROLOGUE

The nature of the Otto Trail Run meant that a mass start was out of the question. In order to batch runners for the Otto Trail Run, the event included a short run. Athletes completed the run in their own time. It wasn't until late in the afternoon that one had time to size up the competition!

RACE BREAKDOWN	
DAY 1	Prologue 3.8km trail run
DAY 2	The Otter : 45km trail run
DAY 3	8.5km trail run, 47.2km mtb
DAY 4	6.5 km trail run, 60km mtb
DAY 5	65km mtb, 4.2km trail run
DAY 6	13km trail run, 35km mtb, 5km trail run, 10km mtb, 5km trail run

DAY 2: At 4am the alarm had just gone off in our tent. "Turn light off" a sleepy Abigael complains! All the athletes around us are stirring and we have to get moving. We have about an hour to eat breakfast, pack our compulsory kit into our bags, change Abigael and get onto the Nomad overland trucks that will take us to the start of the inaugural Southern Storm Duathlon, presented by Hi-Tec. Five minutes later, a bewildered 2-year-old Abigael is dressed and tagging along to have breakfast. She sits in the dark, on her camp chair eating her oats porridge like a good little girl. A few fellow competitors look a little concerned that we intend to take Abigael along for the 5 day adventure! At this stage, we are still not completely certain what we are going to do with her while we are racing...

On the start-line I fortunately find a competitors wife, who has her own baby, to babysit for the morning. "My husband runs fast and will be finished before lunch", I assure her, as I tell my daughter that I love her, blow her a kiss. Six hours and 45km later I am greeted by a happy child, already in dad's arms.

Then the reality of having our energetic and mischievous daughter with us on a stage race hits us... My legs are sore, I've got blisters on my feet, I'm thirsty and hungry... and now I'm running (correction, hobbling) after a toddler!

We had arranged to drop Abigael at a day care centre in Knysna,

and then collect her in the afternoon. We knew this was going to be hectic, as it required driving an hour each way, twice a day. This would leave very little time for sorting out bikes, resting and preparing for the next day's racing. As parents who both wanted to race, we realised that this was the sort of sacrifice we would have to make in order to participate. Fortunately, at the first night's prize giving, the Nomad support crew offered to look after Abigael while we competed each day. This made our lives much easier, she tagged along with them, moving from the start to finish each day.

Day 3: A slightly later start to the day meant that Abigael woke up before the alarm clock and started singing loudly, "row, row, row your boat" in our tent. Dad got up and took her to play some distance away from where all the competitors were sleeping. Mum got to sleep in (yay!). After breakfast and during the ride to start of day three, dad was in urgent need of a sleep. We all arrived at Robberg Peninsula for the start of the trail run. First we had to assemble our bikes. Iain was left to assemble both of our bikes, while I got Abigael sorted out. As it turned out, our bikes hadn't travelled well on the plane and both bikes had tyre problems. The Robberg run was spectacular, with technical scrambles across rocks and lots of steps heading up. After a quick transition we were on our bikes. Amazingly the bike mechanics seem to have sorted out our bikes, and the tubeless tyres stayed inflated. What began as a fast and scenic mountain bike leg soon became a long, slow uphill slog to Diepvalle. Iain didn't have a great day, and was still in need of sleep after trying to recover from the previous day's exertions, he was unable to hold off the strong competition on the bike. I had technical problems that resulted in having to break my chain in order to untangle it. So despite both mum and dad not winning their respective stages on day three, we still managed to retain our overall lead in the event. However, positions and times didn't matter to Abigael, we still got our hero's welcome!

Later that day it started raining. Camping with a toddler in the rain, after a long hard day's racing, while trying to sort out bikes and race gear is one experience I do not feel the need to repeat! Despite this, Abigael was happy, and as two year olds do, she found every muddy puddle there was. By the time I handed her over to the Nomad crew the following

RACE EQUIPMENT	
SHOES	Hi Tec
BIKES	GT Team Zaskar
SPORTS DRINK	Enduren
RACE FOOD	Apples, Bananas, Bar-One



real winners eat well...



THE MCCAIN ADVENTURE ADDICTS HAVE BEEN INVITED TO THE PERAK AMANJAYA ECO RACE IN MALAYSIA. IT IS A MULTISPORT STAGE RACE IN THE PROVINCE OF PERAK AND WILL BE STAGED FROM THE 2 - 6 DECEMBER. ADDICTS GRAHAM BIRD, TATUM PRINS, HANNO SMIT AND ANDRE GIE WILL BE RACING IN TEAMS OF TWO, ALONG WITH 18 OTHER TEAMS COMPETING FOR

US\$10,000 PRIZE MONEY. EACH DAY'S RACE COURSE SHOULD LAST APPROXIMATELY 5-8 HOURS. IT IS DESIGNED TO CHALLENGE ALL ADVENTURE RACING ABILITIES. THE EVENT WILL SEE THE PARTICIPATION OF 20 INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL TEAMS. WITH TWO MEMBERS WORKING CLOSELY IN EACH TEAM.

THE ENTIRE COMPETITION REQUIRES EACH TEAM TO COVER A TOTAL OF 212KM WITHIN AN ANTICIPATED TIMING OF 28 HOURS. IT'S EXCITING, TOUGH AND CHALLENGING COMPONENTS WOULD PUT TO TEST THE TEAM MEMBERS' PHYSICAL AND MENTAL STRENGTHS. ENDURANCE, STAMINA, TEAMWORK AND PERSEVERANCE.

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THE SOUTHERN STORM!

morning she had no clean socks and was in her last pair of trousers, smiling from ear to ear.

Day 4: The weather improved, and after an exquisite run through the indigenous forest at Diepvalle, it was onto our bikes. The hills that we had slogged up the day before, became fast descents as we rode back towards the coast. The sun came out and our bodies quickly thawed out. 60km later I arrived at Portland Manor. Iain had finished sometime earlier and managed to secure us an upgrade from the tent for a night, in one of the rooms at the manor. Abigail and the Nomad trucks arrived soon after us and once again we collected our happy, smiley toddler from the care of Hilda. Rather than spending the afternoon discussing the day's race (as athletes tend to do), I did motherly things: Abigail needed a bath! Up until this point, she had briefly showered or washed in the hand basin. Once she was clean (sometimes kids just need a good soak), it was time to get all her muddy trousers and socks (and some of our race kit) off to the laundry! Then it was playtime and we took a walk around the gardens admiring the resident peacocks, much to Abigail's delight.

Day 5: A combination of sunshine, a comfortable bed, Abigail in her own bed and clean clothes, made for a good start to the day! For the first time in the event, we started on our mountain bikes, which is a much more pleasant way to ease tired legs into the day's activities. The bike-gods were against me again, and for the second time in the event my day was plagued by bike problems. This time it was my tyres. The first time I needed to bomb them, two competitors, Alan Martin and Steve Stamp, assisted me. The ride was beautiful and it was all going well, until I needed to inflate my tyre a second time. This time there were no men to help. I tried to use my nifty little bomb, but I think I may have let even more air out of the already deflated tyre. So I carried on cycling. However, I was forced to stop again. While I was trying to figure out how to use the bomb properly, Steve reappeared – thanks Steve! Having Steve stop and help me with my tyre, meant that I was also able to tuck in behind him as we rode into a strong, energy sapping headwind all the way to Buffalo Bay. From here there was a short but sandy circular trail run to the finish. The rest my legs got while drafting behind Steve, meant that I had a strong run. Again, Dad was waiting on the finish line for me, having also won his leg for the day, and together we

went in search of Abigail. She was now well into the groove of setting up and taking down camp! After a shower and change of clothes, it was bike wash time. Abigail, our ever-helpful bike mechanic, was soon wet from head to toe. If you didn't hold onto your washing brush you had to chase an energetic two-year-old around the campsite to get it back!

Day 6: It was hard to believe it, but day 6 arrived in a flash. This was the hardest day of the event, comprising a run, a bike, a run, a bike and then another run. I arrived at the end of the first trail run to see my daughter happily handing out juice and edible goodies to athletes as they finished. She was also helping herself to a few treats! She was so busy being a "super second" that she barely acknowledged my finish! Eventually all the athletes had completed the run and it was time to climb into the overland trucks and head off to the start of the mountain bike leg. I went to find Abigail so that she could sit with us for the journey. She was having none of that – she was travelling with the support crew on another truck!

The rest of the day was awesome. The bike leg was interrupted by a short trail run, before it was back onto the bikes for a cycle into a strong headwind, to our final transition area and one final trail run to the finish. It was a day when everything went well and I felt strong. By the time I was on the final run leg I knew that I had the race in the bag. I didn't know it yet, but Iain had also won! Finally the finish was in sight and a few metres from the finish line, Abigail came charging towards me. I scooped her up into my arms and we crossed the finish line together. It was smiles all round for the Don-Wauchope family! We had completed the Southern Storm Duathlon – the race that has become our family's biggest adventure yet. Hopefully there will be more to come!

Thank you to:

- *Magnetic South, for allowing us to take Abigail along.*
- *The crew at Nomad adventures, especially Hilda, for keeping Abigail happy and safe, while we were off racing.*
- *Shayne, from Hi-Tec, for all the time you kept Abigail entertained while we stopped being parents and became stressed out competitors!*

* A bomb is a small canister filled with CO2 that inflates your tyre in a second, rather than pumping away with a regular pump.

PHOTOGRAPHER JACQUES MARAIS | WWW.JACQUESMARAIS.CO.ZA



Su Don-Wauchope and Abigail, her biggest fan, cross the finish line at the 2009 Southern Storm.

LoveAdventureCouples

One Lucky Couple will win a pair of Hydrophobic his and hers

Lovewater shoes from Hitec.

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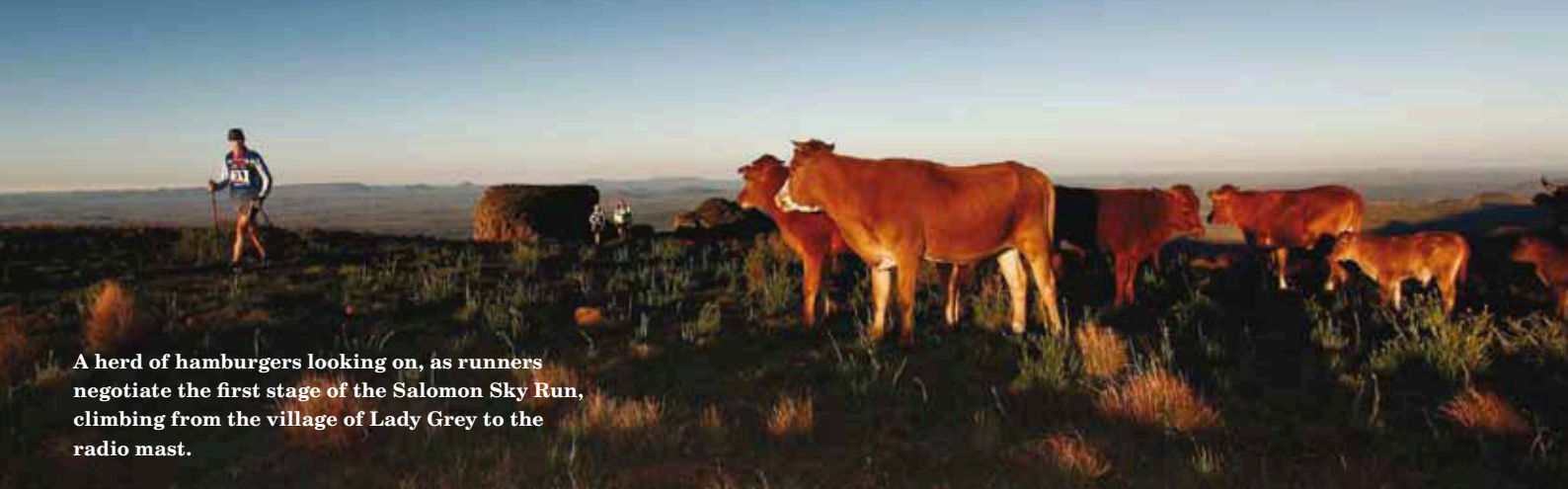


The Cape Skyrun Trail Run

The Cape Sky Run turned out to be an awesome race this year, with Bruce Arnett and Iain Don-Wauchope battling it out over 100km of wilderness trails to set a joint new record of 13hrs42min. The run kicked off in Lady Grey in the northern Eastern Cape Province, and transcribed the Witteberg ranges, a series of buttress peaks shaping the southern-most section of the Drakensberg.

More than 60 runners slugged it out with gravity, from 4am on Saturday 28 November. Most of them ran non-stop from Lady Grey and through the peaks above Barkley East to the finish at Tiffindell Ski Resort. The route followed ridges sky-lining up to more than 3000m above sea level, maintaining an average altitude in excess of 2600m. Athletes who opted to sleep over at Balloch Farm (the 60km mark) finished approximately 34hrs after setting off from the village of Lady Grey.

PHOTOGRAPHER JACQUES MARAIS WWW.JACQUESMARAIS.CO.ZA



A herd of hamburgers looking on, as runners negotiate the first stage of the Salomon Sky Run, climbing from the village of Lady Grey to the radio mast.



Hard core tramping along a section of rough gravel track between Olympus and Snowden Peaks; altitude averaged out at over 2 500m above sea level, with Ben MacDhui the highest point at 3 001m.



Trekking into the bamboo slopes above Wild Fen, with approximately 20km to go to the finish at Tiffindell.