

## Ed McDonald defends MTB Cruise 100 title on longest Stromlo race course

**With five completed loops, Canberra's Ed McDonald won the 100 mile event in seven hours, 13 minutes and 25 seconds. With endurance challenges including 100 miles and 100 km, the MTB Cruise 100 event kicked off Rocky Trail's racing season at Stromlo Forest Park on 25 February 2012.**

Organisers had linked the vast network of Stromlo trails into a challenging 33km race track, the longest loop ever to feature in an endurance race at the iconic world cup venue at Stromlo Forest Park.

Twenty 100 mile-competitors had lined up at 5am to start their race, four hours ahead of all other racers, riding out in the dark and coming back from their first lap as the sun had just risen over Canberra.

"It was really fantastic to have most of my riding done early when the sun wasn't too strong ... it was very enjoyable to see the sun rise from the saddle of a bike," McDonald said.

The 23-year-old has plenty of experience in the endurance racing scene - having raced in seven 24-hour events he came to defend his 100-mile title at the MTB Cruise last year.



"100 miles is a distance where it is not just about pure speed - it is also about endurance and how well you look after yourself during the day and sensible pacing."

The 100 mile podium was dominated by local riders, with **Ed McDonald's** fellow Canberrans, **Andrew Hall** in second and **Brett Bellchambers** in third.

**Liz Smith** from Mt Ousley (NSW) won the 100 mile Elite Women's race and **Hugh Stodart** claimed the Masters category.

National cross country marathon series champion **Dylan Cooper** defended his 2011 MTB Cruise title taking out the 100km event in the Elite Men's category.

The 32-year-old Canberran and Rockstar Racer certainly had an advantage racing on home ground.

"This was my third race and it usually takes that many for me to get back into it. [...] Over the next two months I have a lot on - am trying to hopefully win the first [national series] round and keep it going from there, so it is a good way to kick off the season," Cooper said.

Cooper said he decided to compete in the MTB Cruise 100 event specifically as he was concentrating on the longer endurance formats.



Completing three laps, Cooper finished ahead of **Mark Tupalski** (second) and former solo world champion **Craig Gordon** (third).

Two female riders competed in the 100 km Elite category and **Amy Bardsley-Smith** won ahead of **Lana Moy**. **Wendy Stevenson** and **Tony Rice** won the Masters (40+) age classification and **Garry James** claimed the Super Masters (40+) category.

Almost 300 competitors entered in the day's racing which also included 33km and 66km events.

In the 66km challenge, which saw the biggest field of competitors on the day, **Michelle Ainsworth** from Chisholm (ACT) claimed the top spot on the podium of the Elite Women's category and **Brad Morton** from Kaleen took out the Men's. Elite Master winners were Dwight Woodforth and Tara Sutherland.

Rocky Trail's racing season continues with their all-mountain Rollercoaster race on 18 March at Del Rio Resort in Wisemans Ferry and their 4 and 7-hour endurance racing series kicks off with the SHIMANO MTB Grand Prix on 21 April at Awaba MTB Park.

For detailed results and event information, visit [www.rockytrailentertainment.com](http://www.rockytrailentertainment.com)