

Words: Paul Pics: DRD

Multi Mania

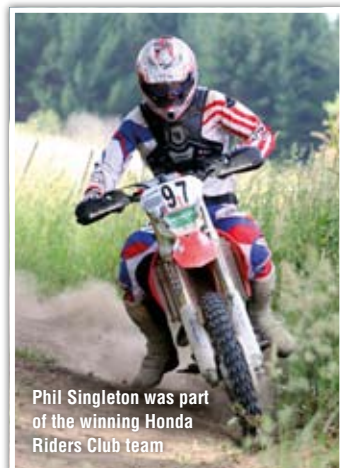
Honda Maramarua 3 Day Enduro

With no other multi-day Enduro available in NZ for competitors to hone their skills at the most challenging and technically demanding of Enduro disciplines, the Honda Maramarua 3 Day Enduro was a 'must do' not only for the country's top off-road talent but also for those riders who just fancied giving one a go...

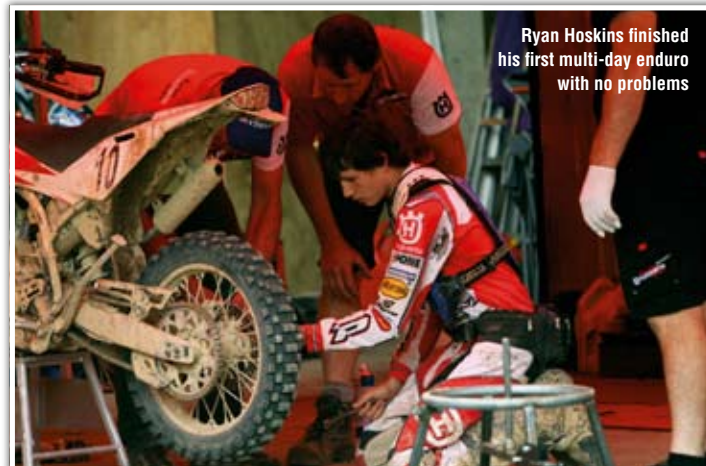


Enduro is one of the most demanding motorcycle disciplines you can face. What with hours in the saddle reeling off the kilometres between special tests, you then have to put your race face on and go hard between the start and finish checkpoints to clock up the best time you can. It's as much mental discipline as it is physical, with the brain often needed to will the body into continuing long after the muscles say they won't. Then there're the service periods, with all the maintenance work needed on the machine to be done only by the rider, after they just finished eight hours of riding..! Oh, and did I mention they only have a limited amount of time to perform the service, which usually means a tyre change, oil change, chain lube, filter replace all within 15 minutes. You try doing that in the comfort of your own garage and I bet you'll struggle to stay within the allotted time.

Greg Power, organiser of the Honda M3DE has been to the Australian 4 Day Enduro on many occasions helping Chris and Karl compete, so knows a thing or two about the style, difficulty and intricacies behind holding a multi-day enduro event. It's a big job, but Greg



Phil Singleton was part of the winning Honda Riders Club team



Ryan Hoskins finished his first multi-day enduro with no problems



Jason Davis used the M3DE to get used to his new Husqvarna team, before heading to Europe to ride in the British Enduro Champs



wants nothing more than to bring the professionalism and challenge of the big international events back home to NZ. With this being his second M3DE, he's succeeded in doing just that, and talking to multi-time national enduro champion Sean Clarke, the M3DE was just as good and demanding as anything he's ridden overseas.

With Chris and Karl fresh from competing in the Mexican ISDE, both guys were bike fit and mentally prepared for the race. Rory Mead came home from the ISDE with an injury sustained prior to the event, and had spent the time between recuperating rather than riding, something the Powers had to their advantage. Also returning from injury was Sam Greenslade, the tall Auckland back in the mix and running a Suzuki RMZ450 MX'er for the 3 Day.

Last year's M3DE winner, Jason Davis, had been in devastating form

of late, turning heads in Australia where he's been competing in the Off Road series as well as being the current NZ Enduro Champion. But having just signed a deal to race the British Enduro Championship for a team in Europe in 2011, Jason wasn't on his usual KTM anymore, instead trying out a Husqvarna TC250 that he knew was going to take a bit of setting up.

The unknown of the event was under a Yamaha pit tent alongside the Power camp, the young 17-year-old Thomas McCormack looking sharp alongside his younger brother Michael and fellow Australian Jaymi Connolly. Fresh from grabbing third spot in the Australian Off Road Championship (AORC) this year, McCormack wasn't too sure about the trees roots that dominate the Maramarua terrain, although the dust must have made him feel a little more at home.

Ready For Action

Right from the off and it was the big guns who were straight into the lead, with Karl Power (Honda CRF250R) leading the event from the start, a lead he was going to maintain throughout the entire event despite a low-speed fall on Day 2 injuring his shoulder. For a frightening few hours, the team was suspecting it to be a broken collarbone, but he did what he needed to keep his lead up and with a good rest on Saturday night, came out fighting on Day 3 to take the overall win in a time of 2hrs:13mins:49secs.

Behind him was fellow Power Racing member and editor of DRD, Chris Power (Honda CRF450R) who chased Karl all weekend but couldn't quite make up the two-minutes deficit. Chris did however finish winner of the E4 class and was 1min:45secs ahead of third place, Sam Greenslade.

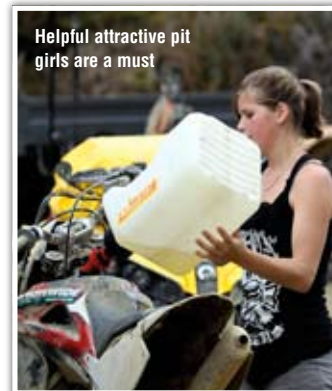
Rory Mead was back from injury although never quite fired on all cylinders on his Yamaha YZF250, while Jason Davis was using the 3 Day to learn all about Husqvarnas before leaving for Europe at the end of the year. Unfortunately, a few set-up niggles meant Jason couldn't quite get past Rory in the overall standings, finishing up 13 seconds shy of Mead in fourth place.

Sean Clarke proved he still has what it takes to be at the pointy end of the NZ enduro scene, finishing ninth overall and taking out the top honours in the Veterans class on his WR250 ahead of KTM-mounted Mark De Lautour.

The Nield brothers of Damon ➤



Kane Stow mid special test



Helpful attractive pit girls are a must



Sam Greenslade changing a tyre on his way to third outright



Jason Duff from Gore gets on the gas in the rider-favourite, DRD special test



Karl lead the field from start to finish taking the E2 class and the outright

A WEEKEND TO REMEMBER

Greg's take on his biggest weekend of the year...

On the face of it, the Honda M3DE was all smiles, slick organisation and accurate scoring. Under the surface, the real work had been going on for months and months.

Resource Consent Traffic Management approval (pubic road crossings) from the Waikato District Council takes some getting. Then we had to get forest closure for three days, which is tricky with all the contractors operating. Over 3,000 arrows were used for the three days, 10,000 staples, over 10km of Honda and Acerbis bunting tape, the 300 road cones were very visible, 100 plus hi viz vests for the volunteers, toilets, showers, food and drink for the staff lunches, of course the Murphy Bus for transport. The registration, payments, technical inspection and sign-on was a major as was getting together Honda MUVs X 2, quads x 8, bikes x 8, the 4WD delivery jeep and of course the gas trailer. The cutting (by hand) of the 22km DRD loop and Special Stage, trimming of trees, bulldozing, grading and erection of bridges throughout the forest started a year back. After the big blow in August, we had to cut out over 70 trees that had fallen on the tracks.

To say it is not an easy task to run a true multi day event is reality. But it is damn well worth it once you see the smiles of achievement by 99% of the riders attending. The heartache of weather watching, mistakes by yours truly miscalculating a distance, the farmer taking his truck straight onto part of the course early on, tape pulled down overnight, a lifestyle farmer complaining about the noise, all the lights blowing in the HQ building, palm pilot computers running out of battery power, overnight track changes and the hundred and one things that keep you on your toes.

THANKS to all the volunteers. The whole 50-plus of them who fronted to do the jobs that no one wanted, worked all day in the hot sun, had no real breaks and made the event happen. It is these people I really want to thank more than anyone.

THANKS also to the sponsors who supported the event. Honda, Dirt Rider Downunder Magazine, Grange Associates, Traffic Management Services, Murphy buses, Matariki Forests, Acerbis, Castrol, Davis Logging, Insaip, Power Weed Control, Counties Honda, Huntly Honda and all those who contributed.

Even though the Honda M3DE is a financial loss, we will be doing it again – because we love it!



and Mitchell both took out wins in their respective classes, with Damon screaming to the front of E1 on his Husqvarna CR125 and Mitchell doing the same on his GasGas EC200 in the E3 class.

Dion Sheely took top honours in the youth class aboard his KT-M250EXC with fellow youth rider and also fellow 250EXC rider Jonathan Hill only 27seconds behind after the enter three days. That's what you call close competition!

Shaun Prescott took his Husa-berg TE300 to the head of the E5 class, although he wasn't looking too clever on Saturday evening, with a tumble on Day 2 causing him to suspect he'd broken some ribs. But getting back to the toughness of these competitors, Shaun carried on and was rewarded with the win.

Natasha Cairns has been prepar- ing hard for the M3DE and all that work paid off with a win in the ladies



class aboard her KTM125EXC ahead of Julie Greenslade.

A special mention has to go to the team from the South Island who had to endure a 20-hour truck journey up from Gore with ten bikes and copi- ous amounts of gear crammed in the back. A few of the harder men took it in turns to drive for two hour stints,



Aussie boy Tom McCormack hard on the gas in the Oakdens test. Tom struggled with the tree roots on day 1 but by the end of the event was posting top 3 test times

TRIP OF A LIFETIME

Not only were the prizes for the winners at the Honda A3DE. Jack Brian from Grange Associates Ltd had kindly put up a prize of \$5000 for one lucky winner to travel to the 2011 Australian 4 Day Enduro (A4DE). To be in with a chance of winning this fantastic prize, you not only had to finish the Honda M3DE but also attend the prize giving ceremony afterwards.

The name pulled out of the hat was South Islander, Ben Turn- bull, who turned 15 during the 3 Day. Speaking to his parents, they were committed to helping Ben get prepared for this fantastic trip.

A photograph of a young man, Ben Turnbull, standing next to a man in a red shirt. Ben is holding a trophy.



POS	NO	NAME	COUNTRY	CLASS	MAKE	MODEL	TIME
1	80	Karl Power	NZ	E2	Honda	CRF250	02:13:49
2	81	Chris Power	NZ	E4	Honda	CRF450	02:16:32
3	913	Sam Greenslade	NZ	E4	Suzuki	RMZ450	02:18:17
4	64	Rory Mead	NZ	E2	Yamaha	YZF250	02:18:24
5	30	Jason Davis	NZ	E2	Husqvarna	TC250	02:18:37
6	93	Thomas McCormack	Australia	E2	Yamaha	YZF250	02:21:02
7	68	Damon Nield	NZ	E1	Husqvarna	CR125	02:23:43
8	22	Reece Burgess	NZ	E4	Husaberg	FE450	02:24:36
9	32	Sean Clarke	NZ	Veterans	Yamaha	WR250	02:26:17
10	86	Mitchell Nield	NZ	E3	GasGas	EC200	02:26:47



the rest of the team flew up to meet the truck and all their provisions. With all these guys and their support crew there to have fun, every single one of them finished the event, a remark- able achievement and a credit to them all. Gerald Turnbull, un-official spokesman of the South Island con- tingent, had to deal with us sticking a video camera in his face every time he got off the bike, while still manag- ing to finish the event 33rd overall. Lyndon Duff was the highest place finisher of the team and finished a creditable 21st overall.

Time To Party

With a slightly earlier finish on Sunday planned to allow everyone to begin their journeys home, the local watering hole of the Red Fox Tavern in Maramarua was chosen as the official location for prize giving as well as for a few well deserved drinks. Not only did Greg manage to arrange it so every rider got a Castrol Oil pack when they signed on, he also had a table full of prizes and trophies, with a special section reserved as spot prizes for the vast numbers of helpers that donate their time for free to get an event like this off the ground, simply for the love of the sport.

The best winner of this group had

to be Steve Lloyd who upset a few of the ladies by being first to grab the fluffy pink elephant that many of them had been eyeing up to take home should their name get pulled out of the hat. We're not quite sure what Steve has planned for his pink elephant, but we're sure they'll be happy together.

With the enduro scene becoming more professional each year, it was great to see the riders in each class wearing their sponsor's gear and remembering to thank the right peo- ple, although most still seemed to be thanking mum and dad, showing that Enduro racing is still a family sport, even for the top boys. **DRD**