

HONDA M3DE

MULTI MAGIC

Words: **Power Adventures** Pics: **DRD**

Even the disappointing number of entrants couldn't keep this great event down, as the 2011 Maramarua 3 Day Enduro turned into the best version yet!

Maramarua, know for its hard packed clay and unforgiving slippery trails when wet, again played host to the M3DE for 2011, and the racing turned out to be the closest battle so far in its three-year history. Of the 34 entries, 10 riders

made the trip up from Southland with three internationals from Australia across to see what NZ has to offer.

This year saw big changes to terrain tests that had proved so popular in 2009 and 2010. The Oakdens test had been extended

to include a fast uphill and a ridge run that proved more difficult than predicted. The infamous 'Spiral' test also had an upgrade, having been lengthened nearly twice as long and merged with the famous Everest super-steep downhill, which was something to behold as the top



Jason Davis had tyre problems



Karl was in control

riders powered down a near vertical drop. And there was once again, of course, everyones' favourite terrain test - DRD.

More trail terrain had been created also thanks to the most part by Ross Davis. Ross gave up his time and bulldozer to clean up tracks and create new passes that connected even more tracks, so riders could experience over 200km of trail per day.

2010 M3DE winner Karl Power, fresh back from a top 20 finish at the Roof of Africa was the man to beat, with 2009 champ Jason Davis keen to get his trophy back after having a less than normal performance on his Husqvarna in 2010. Now back with KTM and on the 350 XC-F Davis was riding quicker than ever. Reece Burgess and Chris Power also put their feet forward in sight of the silverware along with Sam Greenslade, enduro legend Sean Clarke, South Island's own Joel Hennessy and the young up-and-coming Jono Hill and Greg De Lautour. The battle was on!

TIGHT AT TOP

The weather faired well for the first two days of the event before packing in on Sunday morning, bringing with it tricky, slippery conditions out on the trail that proved treacherous for some of the later riders. Some lost time and were found stuck at the bottom of a tricky hill section but were saved

by Kelvin and Larry, taken back to the HQ where time penalties were issued, but no one hour-ed out.

From the outset, Karl Power stamped his authority in the first Oakdens special test over Davis, while Davis got the next two over Power after he went down and bruised his clutch hand. But the end of day one there were literally just seconds in the title fight, both riders putting a healthy gap between themselves and third place Reece Burgess. It continued this way through day two and three, but with Power just getting the upper hand on more of the tests than Davis. The 1:38 minutes win from Power after three days didn't reflect how close the racing was for the overall as Davis was winning tests all weekend. But it was Power who had done enough to secure his second M3DE overall trophy along with the E1 class win. Davis, his first enduro on the 350 said, "I really enjoyed riding the 350 in the enduro. I had some problems with my tyres not working right but thanks to all the helpers out in the forest, I wouldn't like to do that job."

Davis comfortably won the E2 class on his 350 with Reece



CP hurt himself on Day 1



Reece Burgess was the first 450 home

Burgess runner up and Chris Power, who had a slow start after a particularly nasty incident that damaged his hip making it near impossible to use the back brake. He couldn't even lift his bike onto the stand but by day three he was back on the pace but still unable to catch Burgess at the final flag.

The E1 runner up went to an unlikely hero and perhaps the standout rider of the event, Jono Hill. Jono took his KTM 150 to impressive special test times and for a while was knocking on the door of the top three, ending up fifth overall - and he's not even 18 yet! Third was Yamaha rider Chris Foster

The veterans class was all Clarke as he finished the event in sixth overall and over 10 minutes ahead

of second place getter Mark De Lautour. Third saw the Husaberg rider of Mark Newton a further five and a half minutes back.

The youth class saw a healthy entrance of seven riders with Greg De Lautour making his mark, riding a KTM 450 EXC for the first time in competition and winning the class. South Island rider Ben Turnbull narrowly pipped Tom Brian for second, cutting his eye in the process and requiring some St John's attention before the final terrain test. Tom, only one and a half minutes back also had a solid ride.

And in the ladies class, it looked like it was going to be an awesome battle between Julie Greenslade and Phoebe Hill as the two were within seconds of each other in both the

first two terrain tests but that never came to fruition. After two tests, and throwing up in the pits after each trail section, Julie had to pull out, leaving Phoebe to easily take the class win and an impressive 22nd overall.

Special mention must go out to first enduro rider Ryan Armitage. He chose the three-day as his first ever attempt at enduros which is a pretty big effort! Unfortunately Ryan had a crash halfway through day one and suffered a broken arm. He will be back for more in the future though. Another standout was Charlie Richardson. He completed the entire M3DE riding a KTM 85 and finished fifth in the Youth class.

The Teams event kept up the interest of nearly everyone as the permutations were endless and the retirements of some spread the fortune of others. In the end, it was the Honda team of Stephen White, Chris Power and Karl Power who triumphed over the KTM team of Mark De Latour, Jono Hill and Greg De Latour

It is a shame more of the Enduro fraternity didn't bother to get along to the 2011 M3DE, as it showcased a small portion of NZ's best riders who could have done with a little more competition to make things more interesting, as well as more intermediate riders giving multi-day enduros a go. It really is not as hard as it seems, if that is the issue. The times were loose and the tracks were great. And if you missed out you may never get another chance,



Jono Hill took his KTM 150SX to a brilliant fifth



There were two tyre obstacles this year

as this was the last M3DE until further notice. There is rumour of Easter 2013, so keep an ear out.

The major prize of a trip for two to Queentown and a trip sponsored by Grange Associates and Off Road Adventures dirt bike tours went to junior rider Jessie Clarke (yes, son of Multi NZ Champion Sean Clarke), while various riders won cash back entry fees. The Helpers Draw was for those people on checks, in the office and marshalling with various huge soft toys, tyres, promotional clothing and other good stuff won and appreciated.

Big thanks to: Honda, DRD, Leatt, Castrol, Murphy Buses, Davis Logging, Power Weed Control, Professional Traffic Services, Power Adventures, Off Road Adventures and Grange Associates.

Check out www.silverbullet.co.nz for a full list of results including individual special test times.



Greg De Latour beat his dad!

THANKS TO THE SPONSORS

Honda, Castrol, DRD, Murphy Buses, Grange Associates, Davis Logging, Professional Traffic Management, Leatt.