

2009 - One To Remember

Without doubt the 24th Merida Karapoti Classic was one to remember.

Whether it was Cabin Leishman surprising even himself with the biggest win of his career and Karapoti's first win on a 29'er...

Or Aussie Adrian Jackson watching a 10min lead disappear with the air in his tyre...

Or Fiona Macdermid missing the women's record by 19secs but putting up perhaps the best female ride in Karapoti history...

Or Alden Etheridge and Sue Cuthbertson becoming the first 70 year old man and 60 year old woman to complete Karapoti...

Or nine year old Eden Cruise becoming the youngest ever finisher of the 50k Classic...

Or the Kennett brothers giving their triple tandem a Karapoti baptism...

Or the rest of you 1300-odd mud monkeys who took on the toughest, wettest, slipperiest, muddiest Karapoti in nine years...

... Everyone has a story to tell after this year's epic Karapoti.

From a personal perspective our highlight was the sight of all you mud-caked loons sitting in sun, revelling in your various states of filth, telling lies to each other about the race that got away. I hope someone got a

photo of it, because for me it was a snapshot of what Karapoti is all about!

Staying with personal perspectives, we're constantly amazed at how many people want to be part of Karapoti. Some are riders having a year off, some are mountain bike rookies keen to see what Karapoti is all about, some are friends or family of entrants, some are community groups fund raising for further community activities, and some are simply individuals who like lending a hand and mixing with other positive people. All are amazing.

The other amazing thing, of course, is the thought of Karapoti turning 25 in 2010.

It's incredible to think that more than 300 finishers this year weren't even born when Paul Kennett dreamed up an off road bicycle race around the Akatarawa Range. But on March 6, 2010 the Merida Karapoti Classic will indeed tick over the quarter century.

Because this event is the longest running mountain bike event in the Southern Hemisphere, if Karapoti is turning 25 that means that New Zealand mountain biking is also turning 25. With this in mind we're looking to celebrate the 25th Merida Karapoti Classic with a "New Zealand Mountain Bike Week". And odds are it'll be another one to remember.

C U there !



Dirty & done. But happy.
