

2008 - Aussie Uni-Cycle Experience



Australian uni-cycle junkie Sean Bennett shares his 2008 Karapoti debut.

I thought this was a story worth telling, so here goes. At Karapoti this year Eyal Aharoni and I brought up the rear to great acclaim. However there was a reason; Eyal thought he entered the 20k, but somehow signed up for the 50k; and both of us were riding uni-cycles.

Prior to Saturday Eyal had never ridden more than 20 km on his unicycle in one session. His focus is more on highly technical downhill runs. E.G: The Rock Garden, except he doesn't usually ride so far to find them.

On scanning the entry list I realised that Eyal had erroneously entered the 50k Classic. Driving to the start Kiwi uni-cycle legend Ken Looi and myself convinced him that it was worth going the full distance. After all, Karapoti's juiciest terrain is in the Classic 50k!

Apparently our argument made sense because he agreed to give it a shot. Unfortunately he only had food for the short race, so I said I'd hang back and help him get to the end. He also ran out of water, so we ended up sharing sips from my camelbak. It was a long day!

Going up Dopers Eyal seriously considered throwing in the towel. It is fair to say that anyone thinking of doubling (and a bit) their longest previous ride, let alone on a uni-cycle, would be well advised to do it somewhere else apart from "NZ's Premier Mountain Bike Race".

But Eyal, he hung in there, even finishing with a burst of enthusiasm. This was a case where the finishing time is irrelevant but reaching the finish line is everything. For me it was all worthwhile just to see Eyal's awesome one-wheeled skills on the Rock Garden... But looks like I'll have to come back next year for a go at finishing closer to Ken.
