

It has been a busy month for Xcite teams. First off was the Wildfire Raid at Lake Wyaralong at the end of June. That was followed up last weekend with the Queensland Rogaine Association 24 hour race west of Tiaro.

### Wildfire Raid

Wildfire is a 6 hour multi-sport rogaine, consisting of kayaking in Lake Wyaralong, with mountain biking and running/trekking through the Mt Joyce trails. We had two teams racing, with Fiona and I in one team (Xcite AR), and Tony Mayer and Jason (*Believe in a Cause*) McCartie racing as Team Xcite JT.

After getting the maps and instructions, we found that the two teams would be heading off in opposite directions, with us off to the kayaking and the lads onto the bikes. Kayaking in the dam was a great experience, the weather was perfect and there was no wind. Our plan was to grab all the kayak checkpoints (CPs), then as many run and mtb as we could after that (without venturing to the extreme high points of the course). We finished the 14km kayak in just over two hours, thinking we had swept the course. But bugger me, when we were off on the next mtb leg, we saw a lone CP in a small inlet and realised we missed one of the kayak CPs. It was in a part of the map that I hadn't taken much notice of (rookie error) but only worth 10 points.



We rode out to the trek transition, picking up a couple of easy CPs on the way, then we set off on the trek leg. This was through some reasonably hilly terrain, however, the navigation was not too tricky, and we were able to hit most of our CPs straightaway. Then back on the bike for some nice singletrack to pick up a few more CPs, then a leisurely ride back to the finish. We should have ridden a bit harder as we were beaten into third place in our category (Mixed Vets) by 2 minutes (same points as the second placed team). Tony and Jason staged their race by completing all the mtb leg, and selecting gettable CPs on the kayak and trek, finishing in 4<sup>th</sup> place in Mens Vets.



*Tony & Jason - Which way do we go?*

Thanks to Adam and the crew. Great place for a multisport race.

## **24 Hour Rogaine**

The QRA 24 hour race was held about 15km west of Tiaro, at the Sandy Creek Centre. Driving in to the hash house rego area, the terrain looked scrubby and dusty. And that was how the course panned out, only in some areas it was scrubbier.

The map was handed out and after looking at it for an hour, we were still a bit undecided which was to go. Eventually, we decided on a conservative distance, heading south-west to do a loop of about 5 hours, then north-west till late evening, then circling back towards the hash house, in case we felt need for a rest, then head out to the north-east. We expected to cover about 60km, maybe up to 80km if things went well. Things didn't go so well.



*Looking the goods before the race. Didn't look so good after.*

Although we hit our CPs regularly, the terrain and vegetation caused footspeed to be sloth-like. By nightfall, we were about 2 hours behind schedule, but only missed one CP. By the time we got to the base of the hill at CP83, it was plenty dark. Traversing up the hill from the east, we went through such a heavy jungle that I was expecting Tarzan and Jane to pop out from the scrub. Somehow, we found the CP after about 1.5 hours since the last CP, and then I let out a loud satisfied whoop which may have been heard back at the HH.

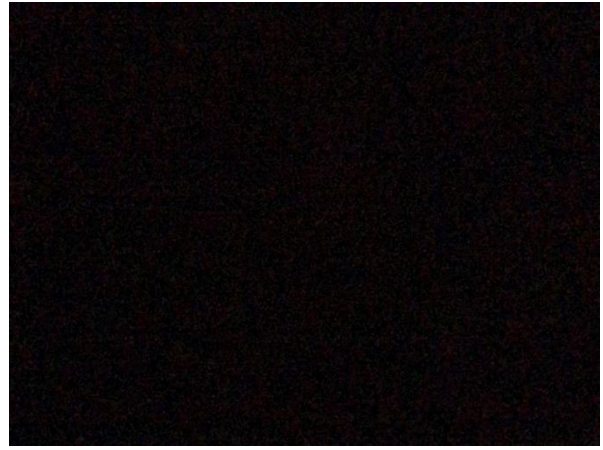
On we went to the water stop at CP12. As it was dark, we thought we would try and pick up a few CPs and then head back to the HH if we weren't finding any. Funnily enough, this was the best bit of night navving we have done, proceeding to pick up 3 CPs within an hour. After CP46, it was about 11.30PM and the lure of the HH was sweet. We pondered hanging out for a bit longer to see how we could go, but made the decision to come back for a feed and quick nap before heading out again at first light (or after brekky, whatever came second). In hindsight, we probably should have stayed out all night as the CPs in the morning route seemed much easier and the going was quicker than the day before.

During the night, when we were near CP58, I had a bloody buzzing insect pop into my ear. What the attraction was, I can't begin to imagine. Anyway, I tried hoiking it out with my finger, but our team's chief medical officer (that's Fiona) told me to stand still and pointed a light into my ear. What a neat trick that turned out to be, as the insect bolted out of my ear, and I bolted away from where it was.

It was also around this time we decided to take a selfie at CP56. Because of the headlights, I couldn't get a good photo so we turned them off. Neither of us had been in such a dark place before, the blackness was unbelievable. No wonder we bring about 6 lights with us. Don't want to get stuck out in these places in the dark (no full moon).



*With lights*



*No lights*

We finished off collecting a couple of rogue CPs that weren't planned, and even managed to run a bit at the end to stretch the legs. In all, we travelled about 65km in 19hours, scored 1110 points, (about half of the winners total), and came placed mid-field. We were happy with the navigation, although route choice could have been a bit better to cut out some excessive trekking between CPs. We finished around the pack with some teams who have beaten us before, but behind a couple of similar standard teams who performed better on the day.

The safety car was an interesting sideshow for us. We first saw them early in the afternoon, and all was good. Later in the night when we crossed paths, they looked a little worse for wear and we thought they were some random hillbilly pig shooters, which gave us a momentary cause for concern (Deliverance crossed my mind). We really appreciate having the safety car out on course.

Thanks to the Kromes's and all the volunteers who made this event happen.