

## **The 12 hour winners report ...**

As soon as we spotted the map I thought the course would be cleared in about 9 hours (by runners) as just about all the controls were close to roads. I didn't express that thought to Pete but did do so to a couple of people in the loo que. Having had chicken pox over the last few weeks I was keen not to push it, and Pete was just as keen to keep a lid on exertion levels. In fact, after much procrastination we eventually changed our entry from the 6 hour event to the 12 hour and decided to be out there for about 10 hours and come back to the hash house for a glass of red.

After about an hour of planning we had what we thought was a pretty typical route but with a few 'creative' differences. These were attacking 70 from the spur south of 47 to avoid the so called cliffs, and to approach 80 from the creek below by coming off the spur that begins about 1/2 a km to the NW of 72. We also decided to use the fire trail from 50 to 44 rather than the track and a small bush-bash.

Unfortunately due to carelessness we took about 35 minutes to find our first control (24) but were lucky enough to see a nice waterfall to the NW of 24 as we staggered back up the correct creek after taking the wrong one down. Phil Whittens team looked like they had almost done something similar so I didn't feel so bad. A little bit later we thoroughly enjoyed seeing a few teams get rather stuck in almost impenetrable scrub as they came off the spur on their way down to 44. No hard feelings - been there done that many times! By now I think it started to rain pretty heavily and our competitive spirit plus the need to keep warm seemed to result in us jogging along at about 7-8km per hour on the trails. We also had some nice home made cookies (sorry - secret recipe), that helped us along, although Pete had to have a little vomit as he wasn't feeling so good. Pete also had some ITB problems that required a bit of on course Physio. On one of the trails I waved a motor bike rider to pass through and I think he thought I was giving him a rude gesture as he gave me a hard time on the way through.

I was pretty excited about using the spur to 70 but a few unmarked cliffs slowed us down as I tried to pretend it was still a clever option! I still think we picked up a bit of time on some other teams though, after having a very slow start to the rogaine. We picked up all the easterly controls pretty quickly as we were jogging along quite nicely without really pushing it. The next exciting moment came about when we took a 'gamble' to get 80 as described above. Luckily for us the spur was lovely and pretty open. The creek SE of 80 was magic. There was a fantastic palm grove alongside the creek for about 200m, all of which was easily negotiated. We then took the spur directly NE of 80 back up to the trail and then onto 36 and T+D. Pete was still feeling sick so while I polished off 2 strawberry jam rolls and some green tea, I think he only managed a cuppa. We both seemed to have an unspoken agreement not to go near the fire! After T+D we were feeling pretty confident as not many teams had come through. We raced in a westerly direction but eventually had some issues finding 55. 25 was fine for us but others (who took a bearing from the road junction) seemed to have a problem with it - we attacked 25 from the open area, a good idea from Pete.

By now we were hoping to finish in about 8.5 hours but ended up having some trouble with 40 as the bearing I took from the southern loop trail seemed to take us too far west of 40. We picked up the pace by walking hard in the creek trying not to worry about the leeches we were picking up along the way (why do they always have to be itchy at 3 a.m. in the days following??). When the Coopers told us we were the first home with a cleared course we were delighted not that we are competitive or anything!

Hope everybody had some fun out there!

**Martin Lefmann**