

# THE HUB

WHERE TO RIDE, WHAT TO RIDE,  
HOW TO RIDE AND HOW TO FIX IT

108 PLACES THAT ROCK • 110 NEW PRODUCTS • 113 FITNESS  
120 HOW TO: • 122 TECH LETTERS • 124 YOUR LETTERS



words Darren Eckford photography Rockwheelers MTB Club

## PLACES THAT ROCK DOUGLAS MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK, TOWNSVILLE, QUEENSLAND THERE'S GOLD IN THEM HILLS!

To most, Townsville is known for its sunny weather and beautiful beaches. Now thanks to the local mountain bike club, The Rockwheelers, that's about to change. There's a huge variety of trails at Douglas Mountain Bike Park: the originals are all hand-built, rocky singletracks but recently the club has employed the services of a trail building contractor, and with the appearance of the incredible machine built trail, the secret is well and truly out.

Located on the foothills of Mt. Stuart, which forms the backdrop for the city, the trails are just literally minutes from suburbia. There are 11 individual trails all up, all of which are designed to be rideable both ways. The whole network can be linked together, with all the trails ultimately climbing to the Top Summit. The climb up will test skills and fitness of even the best riders, and affords you some magnificent views over the city, while the trip down will have you grinning like a lunatic long after

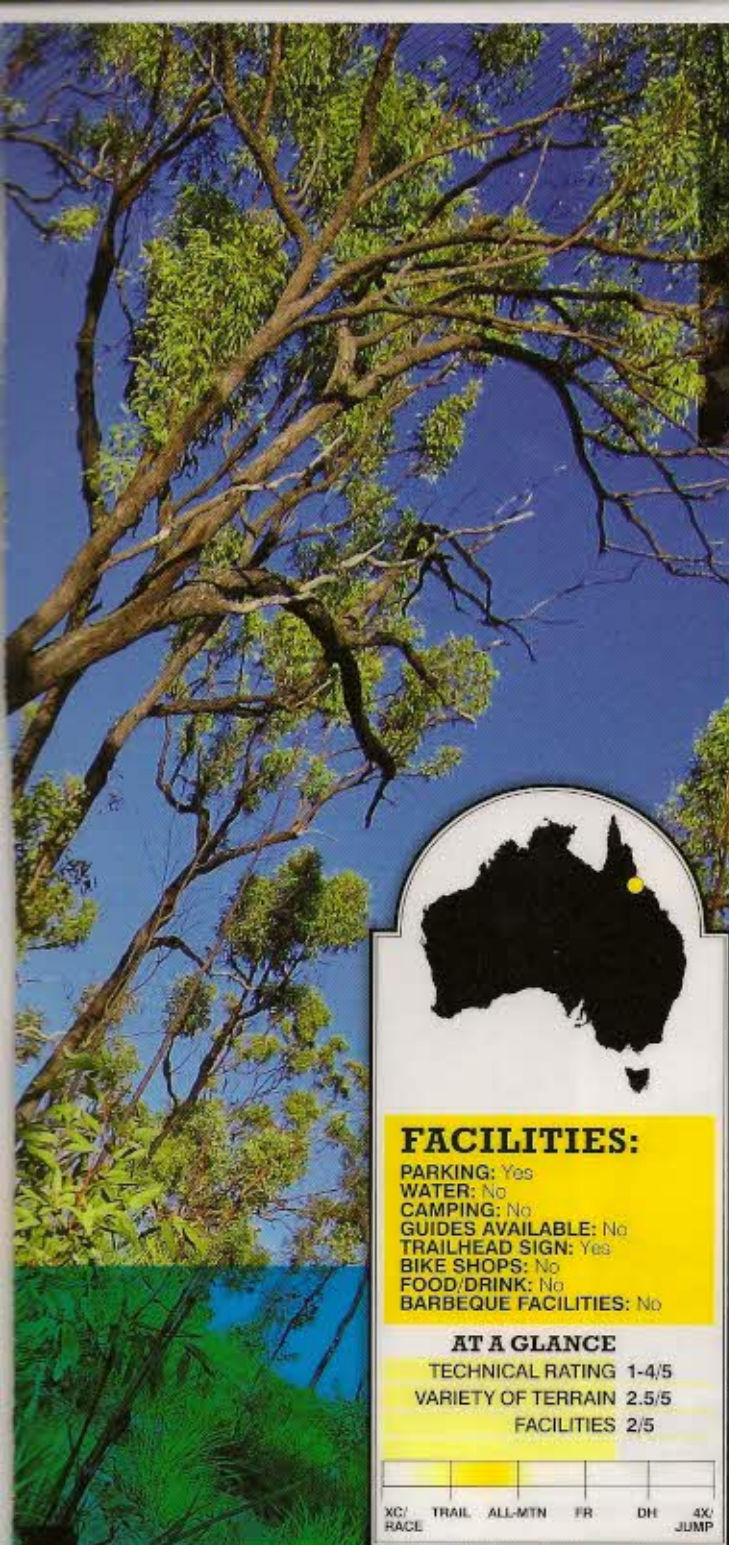
your first post ride coldie.

The trails range from fun, non-technical and wide beginner's trails, to extremely challenging technical trails with rock gardens, climbing switchbacks, and a couple of bridges for good measure. Log roll overs and technical step sections are also common. Experienced riders will enjoy all of the trails, but will be tested by Redtail Black, Keelback, Wedgetail, and Spiderbait, with the latter boasting some of the sweetest machine built trail ever seen in these

parts. Learners, or more sedate riders, will be more comfortable on Scrub python, Beefwood, and the newly completed machine built beginner's trail, a track so new, it is yet to be named. While it was designed for learners, the wide, smooth bench, and incredible flow have seen it become extremely popular with all level of riders.

### INFO:

The trails at the Douglas Mountain Bike Park are centrally located and

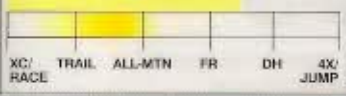


### FACILITIES:

- PARKING:** Yes
- WATER:** No
- CAMPING:** No
- GUIDES AVAILABLE:** No
- TRAILHEAD SIGN:** Yes
- BIKE SHOPS:** No
- FOOD/DRINK:** No
- BARBEQUE FACILITIES:** No

### AT A GLANCE

- TECHNICAL RATING** 1-4/5
- VARIETY OF TERRAIN** 2.5/5
- FACILITIES** 2/5



easily accessible from all points of the city. Head for the roundabout at the main entrance of James Cook University on Angus Smith Drive. With the university gate house in front of you, and access to Townsville Hospital on your left, turn right and continue along Angus Smith Drive. At this point, you only need to continue straight for around three kilometres to reach the main trailhead. Along the way you will climb a slight hill, before crossing another roundabout. The road will get very rough before arriving at Freshwater Drive on your right. There is a small carpark here, and directly across the road is an entrance into bushland with a Rockwheelers trail sign.

### TECHNICAL RATING:

Most trails are rocky and quite technical. Some are narrow, with steep drops, so care is advised. Learners are also catered for with smooth, wide bench trails, but their choices are more limited.

### YOU'LL NEED:

The trails can be ridden most of the year, with only the wet period between December to February best avoided. Due to its close proximity to town, shops are literally only minutes away. Riders will need to stop and load up on water and trail snacks, as there is nothing available once on the hill, and believe me, you will want lots of both! The trails are rocky, so

carry a couple of spare tubes. Many an unsuspecting rider has found out the hard way, that low tyre pressures and Douglas are like a mountain biker in skin tight lycra; they just don't go together.

Because of the rocks, crashing can have a few consequences, so consider bringing along a first aid kit.

### DISTANCES:

There are 11 individual trails, and each is only a few kilometres long. However, due to the design of the trail network, it is not uncommon to come down from the hill with over 20kms showing on your speedo. Due to the tropical climate, it can get very hot in the middle of the day. For this reason, Redtail is best climbed in the morning, and Wobbecong best climbed in the afternoon to avoid the sun.

### LOCAL KNOWLEDGE:

Although the trails are easy to follow, finding them is easier with some local guidance. Put a post on [www.rockwheelers.com.au](http://www.rockwheelers.com.au) and the friendly locals will be lining up to show off their trails. Townsville also boasts an incredible downhill track, with a six minute run, and the easiest shuttle you'll find. There are plenty of bike shops within a 10km radius of Douglas; Off 'n' On Bikes (07 4728 1073), Top Brand Cycles (07 4725 5083), Anaconda (07 4725 3133), and BNG Cycles (07 4724 0468). **AMB**

