



PUMPED. . . David Acree off and racing on the first lap of the BNG Sports Dam Dark 2010 mountain bike event Photos: TROY RODGERS

Night riders carve up the hills for annual 12-hour race

MORE than 70 thrillseekers spent their Saturday night racing bikes up and down hills at Ross River Dam all in the name of fun.

The Rockwheelers mountain biking club held a 12-hour race from 6.30pm over an 8km course that saw riders tackle a 150m climb in the dark.

Greg Langson took out the solo event in 19 laps, while the Hill Dwellers, comprising Peter Gibson and Jason Vaughan, teamed up to win the group event in 21 laps.

President Rob Saunders said all 71 riders showed grit and determination to tackle the challenging course, with the competitors ranging in age from 15 to late 60s.

Mr Saunders said riding for so long in pitch black conditions presented some major obstacles.

"It is very challenging because lighting is everything and you can't go as fast as you can during the day

because of that, but also these endurance events are just as big a battle mentally as they are physically," he said.

"Your body just wants to go to sleep and on top of that you're climbing up hills."

The club president said although the riders pushed their bodies to the limits, they also had some fun.

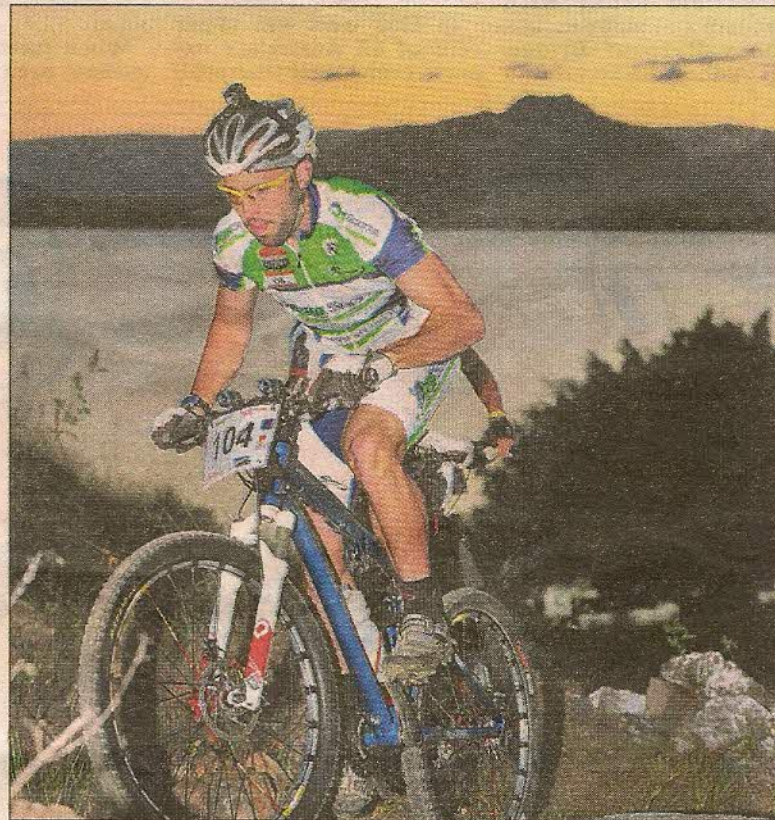
He said there were bonus laps on offer for anyone who did a nude lap and some took up the offer about 3am.

"That would have been much to the delight of everyone who was still awake at that time of the morning," he laughed.

Mr Saunders said anti-chafing cream was a vital commodity on the course as the riders kept pedalling away.

"You wouldn't want to forget that, I tell you," he said.

— NATHAN PAULL



Sam Stedman heads up a hill at the Ross River Dam event