Duck season, Rabbit season, Ski season…….Bike season!

**3 hour enduro kick starts MTB racing for Mansfield club members**.

Sunday the 9th of October and it was ‘open season’ for the MMBCC Mountain Bikers, who held a 3 hour enduro event at the Rifle Butts MTB reserve. Originally scheduled for August, however, due to heavy rains during that month caused the organising committee to re-stage the event.

It was the clubs first chance to see who had managed to stay bike-fit over the winter months, and allowed many members good reason to dust off the cob-webs from their bikes in preparation for the clubs summer dirt crits series.

The junior members keenly contested the first event, a half hour ‘enduro’ with each team member paired with another riding alternate laps. Nervous eyes cast skyward during this event as a few showers passed across the Rifle Butts MTB reserve, however, they soon passed and the rest of the afternoon provided perfect riding conditions. Team “ MacMunn”, Bella and Lani blitzed the field, completing a total of 3 laps of the junior course. All riders in the junior teams’ event were rewarded with a pass to the Mansfield cinemas, and also enjoyed a few treats from the Allen’s mixed assortments bag at the end of each lap.

A little after 1:30pm the open event commenced with a sprint start along Rifle Butts road before racers headed into the park. 10 teams of two, paired on the previous Autumn seasons results, were about to see who could complete the most laps of the challenging course over the next three hours. Riders alternated laps, hot laps were completed in under 12 minutes, and after an hour riders were spread all over the course.

A unique twist to the event, allowed pairs to play a ‘marble’ round, allowing for a rider to ride two consecutive laps and playing a strategic part in gaining an advantage over other teams. Marbles were played early by some teams, trying to gain an advantage from the start, while others held onto their marbles, choosing to play them later in the day. At no point did any team lose their marbles.

By the end of the three hours, the victors had completed 15 laps and shown a clear set of heels to their opposition. The victorious pairing of Mick Durham and Jason Parker finished two laps clear of second place getters Shannon Rademaker and Katie Moore with the pairing of Foley Lachal and Ewan Macaskill in third.

Post event and all riders enjoyed a BBQ and a few refreshing beverages, all proceeds from the event and profits from the BBQ going to Relay for Life. The event organisers then proceeded to hand out a bunch of great door prizes, provided by event sponsors; Southern Exposure MT, All Terrain Cycles, Mansfield Armchair Cinema, Dare To Be Bare, Mt Buller & Mt Stirling Alpine Resort Management Board, Buller Ski Lifts, Alpine Butchery and Hoffman’s Holistic Produce.

The club now begins a Summer series of short-track mountain bike races, commencing Monday the 17th of October at the Rifle Butts reserve. Kids meet at 5:15pm for a 5:30pm start, entry is $2 and the Adult races begin at 6pm with riders required to register by 5:45pm, and entry is $4. All races require competitors to hold a current MTBA licence. For more info check out the MMBCC website, [www.mmbcc.org.au](http://www.mmbcc.org.au) or give All Terrain Cycles a call on 57752724.

Article by **Ben Annear**

3 photos attached please credit **John Blake.**

1. Tom MacMunn leads the sprint start into the Rifle Butts Reserve MTB park.
2. Ewan Macaskill, banks it through a sea of green during the 3 hour enduro.
3. One half of the winning team, Mick Durham, pedals onwards to victory