

King's Lynn MTB Club



Dusk til Dawn 2014

2014 has seen King's Lynn MTB Club go from strength to strength, in our first year we have seen our membership grow, the diversity of characters is immense. The ability and determination of the vast majority of these people was certainly put to the test, with their first experience of this now infamous race which did not disappoint. The conditions started with rain during the race preparation, then mud, cold, fog, frost and the most challenging for all, the sleep deprivation.

For the race veterans amongst them it was business as usual. Three teams of four entered the team male category, a mixture of experience and even a bit of wisdom; watching the opposition, checking their lap times, who is riding best in the your team, (especially towards the final hours) would hold on to the lead or even chase down the riders in front.

Alex Carpenter, Sean Rayment, John Carpenter and Russell Rout were the best placed of our four man teams, finishing in a superb 2nd place in the category. Their race was full on over the whole 12 hours. First place was several minutes ahead, but the battle that was taking place behind for 2nd and 3rd was drawing them ever closer, at the end the lead was less than 3 minutes. With the race for 2nd and 3rd so close, tactics came into play with riders being sent out to match the opposition, it was neck and neck on the final lap, Sean Rayment still learning his race craft, was very controlled, letting the opposition lead out on the last 9 mile lap. The testing final mile with two long

climbs and the notorious decent “the nut cracker” was exhausting for both riders, but shoulder to shoulder on the final climb, Sean took the perfect position for that final sprint, taking the inside line on the final corner went for it, with just 100m to go thus claiming 2nd place by just 3 seconds, a fantastic performance from all the team.



With two other KLMTB teams in this category we witnessed Dan Collins come round in 4th place on the first paced lap which is where the officials lead out the riders at the start of the race, all the categories are in the mix - elite, sponsored, club and just those guys who love to race, setting out on the 1 ½ mile loop. The pace was furious as the quad peeled off and the race was on, riders passing back under the start gantry at over 30mph, setting out on the first of many 9 mile laps.

With over 200 riders starting the race and some confusion with the taping out on the course for the first lap, Dan came through in a superb 9th place, setting his team up with a good start.

As things settled down all the competitors took their lap turns (except of course the solo riders!). Our next team consisting of Sam Smithee, Joe Smithee, James Murphy and Wayne Timmins, were locked in a battle ironically with their club mates for 4th and 5th place, the other team comprised of Steve Munden, Dan Collins, Neil Allen and Stephen Hayes. As the night progressed these two teams eventually finished in 4th and 5th respectfully, another great result for them all.

In the three man, taking part in their first D2D was Steve Twell, Paul Quantrill and Richard "Scratch" Hallett, who finished a credible 16th. Our other team in this category was Mike Cubitt, Jonny Sayer and Elliot Lawrance (Fakenham Gas Center) 13th. The three man is always more testing as each rider has less time to recover between laps, you need to stay awake while you are waiting to go again, charge your lights, eat and drink, all adding to the challenge as your body clock is wondering what is going on!

Not to be outdone by the male competitors, competing in the Ladies team event were Emily Quantrill, Anita Rose and Lorraine Collins who took on the challenge of this race. Riding in the forest through the night with just your bike and lights would be enough for most to say no thanks, but after completing four laps each in very credible times they were on the podium to receive 1st prize and the satisfaction of being able to say they had completed the 2014 Dusk till Dawn.



In the pairs category, again both riding for the first time in this event, were Lee Nowak and James Vaughan. The two man is perhaps one of the most difficult of the challenges, where tactics come into play as some pairs go for two laps each and then changing back to one as the night progresses, depending on what the other teams are doing around you. Finishing in 6th place after completing 7 gruelling laps each was another great result.

In the solo event, 12 hours on your own through the night, Dave Penny and Jason Hunter were the only two club members brave enough to enter this category. To just keeping going, grinding the miles out, ensuring you eat and drink constantly keeping those energy levels up. This was the largest category, with eighty five entrants. Jason overcoming some technical difficulties through the night, still finished in 53rd place. Dave Penny having rode the event several times now, finished in 5th place, another outstanding performance of both body and mind to complete this challenge. Well done both of you!

Many other club members competed in various teams: Rob Smithers, (Exheat Industrial), Kevin Beales (Old Enough to Know Better), Adrian Murray, Richard Cook (Laidback Allstars), Matt Buckler, Richard Pepper, Sam Pepper (The Blackbears), Jimmy Hupton (Iceni Velo Norwich/Duff Morgan/Street Life Cycles).

After many years of taking part in this event, we have witnessed some appalling weather conditions. Trying to prepare yourself using the back of a car or van was just another challenge to many, so we have for the last couple of years hired a Marque, splitting the expense amongst many is not so bad and the benefit's far outweigh the cost. Lights, heaters, carpets, coffee and cake with a safe area for the bikes, somewhere to prepare yourself, plus being together with all your team mates and friends just adds to the experience. This year the buzz in the marque was immense, with all the new members going about their preparations, it was fantastic to see. It was great to see many friends and non-competing club members' arriving during the evening to show their support.

On the Sunday morning at 5am we were visited by our club Chairman, Andy Lane bearing gifts (cake!) and showing his support for our members, before planning his own ride that morning with our friends from Sandringham and West Norfolk Cyclists. Many thanks Andy.