



2011 Alpine Challenge – Official Results and Race Report

Paul Ashton - Event Director.

Under a full moon 32 dedicated runners and walkers set off into the gloom at 04.30 in the morning to test themselves in a feat of determination, endurance and courage on the 5th running of the Alpine Challenge.

Set in Australia's spectacular Alpine National Park this run pits runner's bodies and minds against 6 climbs totalling over 7,000m of ascent and descent, 4 river crossings, poisonous snakes and fickle weather which can go from 25C to below freezing overnight. Supported by their crews these warriors charged into the night setting a cracking pace up Spione Kopje and then Mt Bogong. Matt Cooper and Phillip Whitten set new records in covering ground all the way to Harrietville before Phil succumbed to a cold and had to slow down, leaving Matt to navigate a grossly over grown and treacherous descent of the dastardly Diamantina Spur and then up to Pole 333 where he met his support crew who had been on a 5 hour night adventure to find him!!! Matt then powered down past the Fainters to victory in 27.23.

After the horror weather of previous weeks and dire warnings from the RD to participants, everyone fronted up prepared for the worst of weather and instead encountered a mini heat wave with 2 runners having to be treated for dehydration and others battling the heat on the descent down the Fainter Fire Trail. Ankle sprains and blisters seemed the most common injuries with Stephen Meehan enduring massive blistering but soldiering on to the finish through gritted teeth.

The Tassie Devils – the 2 Karen's from Tasmania pushed through doing a negative split on the second half of the run, surprising everyone with their strong finish in 42.43 to claim victory in the Womens 100 mile event.

Glen Robinson who had been entered in the men's 60km but upgraded to 100km the night before the start, blitzed the field in 16.53, followed by a very excited Cassandra Schmidt who led the women i , in a time of 17.52.

In the Teams – Team Small Steps – Leigh, Cass, and Kirstie, all back for their second time took 4 hours off their previous years PB through strategic running, - keeping shoes on at river crossings and coordinating other essential stops!! Team Keep Fighting, kept on fighting – losing one member at Mt Bogong summit and 2 more at Warby 2 before calling in their support crew at Langfords Gap to help keep up momentum.

Unfortunately Team M & K were unable to meet the cut off time at Warby 2 and had to be pulled from the event after completing 56km – a great effort.

All up 11 starters, (34%) failed to finish this demanding course due to a range of conditions, listening to the radio at one stage, as withdrawals kept mounting I wondered if anyone would finish at all!

A great effort by all and special thanks to those who did pull out for knowing when to do that - sometimes it's the toughest decision you have to make.

A special thanks to the 35 odd (very odd) volunteers who manned checkpoints across the course, the fantastic radio operators, course markers, sweeps, transport personnel and medics who provided unstinting support and without whom this event would not have been possible.

A great event and thanks to everyone for bringing in fun, excitement and a sense of Camaraderie

Dates for the 2012 Alpine Challenge are March 16 – 19. With the briefing taking place on Friday 16th



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100 Miles - Men

Matt Cooper	27.23
Phillip Whitten	33.14
Kevin Heaton	33.50
Cosmo Satori	39.05
Simon Plum	39.34
Stephen Meehan	41.11
Adam Stokes	Withdrew - Harrietville
Jesse Phillips	Withdrew - Harrietville

100 Miles – Women

Karen Pedley	43.42
Karen Cole	43.42
Tamyka Bell	Withdrew – Duane Spur – sprained ankle
Peggy MacQueen	Withdrew – Cope Hut
Melanie Parker	Withdrew - Warby Corner 2 – fractured rib

100km - Men

Glen Robinson	16.53
Cameron Gilles	18.50
David Bennett	24.03
Peter Bignell	Withdrew – Tawonga Huts - Hallucinating

100km –Women

Cassandra Schmidt	17.52
Kath Copeland	23.17

100 Km Endurance Teams

Team Small Steps	26.23
Team Keep Fighting	32.50 (unofficial time – dropped 3 team members during the course but recruited support member – never say die boys)

Team M & K's Adventure Withdrawn Warby Corner 2 – Failed to meet cut off

60km – Men

Todd Jenkinson	12.15
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60km – Women

Pam Knight	24.45
Maria Thomson	24.45

Statistics	Started 32
	Completed 21
	DNF 11 – 34%