

I RULE 12 HOUR URBAN DEBACLE, 2007 - Race Report - "Team biGGGfish and a Disabled Hardtale"



The AROC Sports Team has come up with yet another way of cramming fun into adventure racing with the first 12 Hour Urban Debacle race. The event was a point score (as in a rogaïne), with various valued checkpoints (CPs) around the Canberra precincts, depending on the activity or location of the CP. There were heaps of mountain bike tracks, lots of great rogaïne locations in the bushlands, kayaking on Lake Burley Griffin plus plenty of fun urban challenges & adventures. We were given the majority of the maps and instructions when registering at the Debacle Restaurant on the Friday night and then spent several hours' fine-tuning our race plan deciding which areas we could get to within the 12 hours allowed.

The senior members of Team Bigfish, Garry Sundin and Team Hardtale, Greg Bacon joined up with Greg Hollands from Canberra to form a formidable Over 50' team (we say formidable because we were the only one!). At least we had a good chance of coming away with a prize from the event as our combined ages of 163 yrs gave us a good start in the "oldest" team draw.



Our basic game plan was to head north to Mulligans Flat via Mt Ainslie, back to the City for Pizza, off for a few kayak checkpoints which would take us to Red Hill then return to HQ. We worked out times/hour markers for the course and hoped that we had not tried to take on too much, time would tell.



Race day was great, cool but great weather for an adventure race. From the start at 8.00am we had to complete a crossword puzzle before we could get our control card. We finished this quickly and were off with the lead teams to the War Memorial to find clues to get us to our first CP. Luckily local knowledge came to the fore, as Greg H knew where all the locations were for the clues and CP.

From the Memorial it was then off on the bikes along walking trails to TA 1 near Mt Ainslie/ Mt Majura. We elected to do the rogaïne of approx 5k first and jogged off into the distance. We set a good pace and found all the CP's quickly. On our way back I checked the map again and realized that I had it folded and had missed CP96. After a quick discussion we decided to give it a miss and push onto the MTB rogaïne, which we only planned to do if we were ahead of schedule. We decided to pick up a few of the closest CP's on the bike, it was a bit of a rabbits warren through the pines with bike single tracks everywhere and we got bogged down for a while finding CP 85 and 54. We headed back to the TA1 still around an hour ahead of plan and with a few extra checkpoints, which made up for the one missed on foot.

On our way north we spent some time looking for CP 61, which had been stolen. We should have known better and pushed on but not before we wasted time searching a couple of creeks with other teams before heading off. We then made steady progress north to Mulligans Flat and picked up CP's 60 & 103 on the way. We arrived at the TA with a couple of other teams then quickly headed off on a rogaïne of approx 7.5k. Gazza took a heavy fall into a creek bed along the way, but not too much damage done. This was a change as Gazza normally crashes on the MTB!



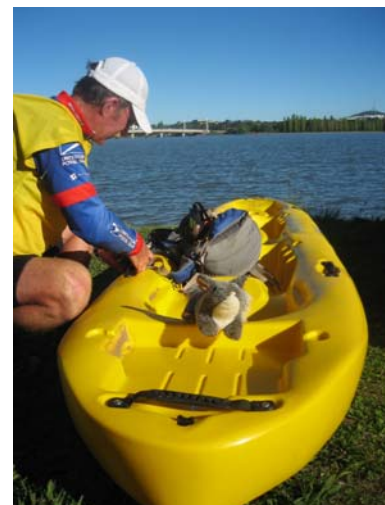
We had a good rogain and walked/jogged to pick up six of the seven CPs in around an hour. We were still a little ahead of schedule, and it was now back across a paddock and into the town urban areas via sealed roads.

We headed to Mitchell to pick up CP 90 at Kid city. While we were there we picked up some of our bonus items including a bolt, washer and nut at a bike shop, and some laminex at a kitchen shop. Across to O'Connor for CP 50 at the pub and while we were there we picked up our ingredients from the IGA for the "Iron Gut" challenge. On our way to the Debacle restaurant we poked our heads over someones back fence and asked for a clothes peg, which was one of the bonus items we needed. We arrived at CP200 (Debacle) around 3.00pm for our pizza stop and mandatory rest of 20 minutes - the easiest CP of the day but the also the most valuable. After this, it was then into the city plaza shops area to get our Team photos developed (another one of the required bonus items). We forgot however, to pick up CP 22 at Sizzle Bento while we were nearby! We also thought about doing the "Scrabble" challenge CP, but decide our brains might take to long to work out the words, so gave it a miss.



It was then back to the start area at Race HQ for the "Iron Gut" challenge at CP 80, restock with food and water then off again to complete the final leg of the race. For the Iron Gut, we were not to sure that we selected wisely !? Into a blender we placed our ingredients consisting of milk, sugar, lemon and a tomato (yes its sounds gross) and then had to drink our concoction. Yuk! It actually looked great blended but tasted like s....t! Stomachs now churning, we had to leave our bikes at the start area, then it was a run down to the Lake Burley Griffin to take on the kayak challenge. After donning the PFD's and getting a good paddling rhythm going on the Lake, Gazza suddenly wondered where our map for the Red Hill rogain was. Greg B said that all was well as we get

the maps at TA3 after we kayak. During our time paddling around the lake picking up CP's 92, 82 and 93 on the "islands" our discussions continued about the fact that we had stuffed up by not getting the Red Hill rogain maps at Race HQ before we left. Gazza then called Tom to check on the what options we had to get a map, he advised us that he may be able to get to TA3 and drop one off. What to do? We could have completed the kayak leg and picked up all the CP's on the water but Greg B had been cramping most of the time in the kayak and needed to walk. We arrived at TA3 just as the girls from Team Control Freaks were heading back. We asked if we could borrow their map, which they happily agreed to, thanks to the girls, they are so nice! We later gave them a small present each after the race, which we hoped they liked. At this point we were still around 45 min ahead of our planned time for starting the Red Hill rogain section, so we headed off at a solid power-walking pace and picked up CP 30 and 31 on the way. On arriving at the start of the Red Hill rogain section near the foot of the hills, which was about an 8 km, we decided to sit down for a well-earned break. Get some food and drink into us to help see us through to the finish, then it was off into them there hills. Once again the CP's were fairly easy to find and we picked up the last two CP's just on dark. It was then a steady 2 k jog downhill to the kayaks .



We arrived at the kayaks with around an hour left to complete the return paddle leg and the short trip from the lake back to the finish line at Race HQ. We plenty of time up our sleeve we decided to take it easy and walk home after the kayaks carrying our paddles with us.

We arrived at the finish line with 20 minutes to spare, but it was not yet over. After receiving our finish time we then had to go to the official's tent and check in all the bonus items collected during the day. So it was out with the clothes peg, laminex, nut/bolt/washer, team photo, easter egg & Starbuck's cup to confirm our 300 points bonus. A grand total points score of 2510! We were pleased that we kept to our race plan with only a few small hiccups along the way. We came in 5th in the Male division and 15th overall - not too bad for a bunch of "old" guys. We had a great time during the race and enjoyed all the aspects of the course and the format. Well done to Tom & Alina and the AROC team. As usual, there were plenty of prizes going around and everyone really enjoyed themselves. It will be interesting to read other team reports on how the teams tackled the course.

Thanks once again to all the AROC team for a Great Race and to all the Volunteers for manning the TA's and challenges. Well done to Bob who won the BIGFISH "Favourite Volunteer" award.

Finally, we had a special guest, Basil as our 4th team member, join us in the race. Basil received special permission to come along with our team. Look out for the story of " Basil's BIG Adventure", coming soon to the AROC website.

Written for the team by Greg Bacon



**"Team biGGGfish with a Disabled Hardtale"
Greg B, Gazza, Basil & Greg H**