

# Anita Paling – Flock Hill MTB

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It was really warm out there. As soon as we got out of the car you could feel the heat of the sun on the back of your neck. No way you could forget to apply sun block. Having said that, others did. And what I noticed was the number of women with sleeveless tops. Is this a new MTB fashion I've overlooked?

We were told the course wasn't the new one they'd planned. The new one had a couple of very nasty descents which they felt were too dangerous. So onto plan C (I guess).

This one was going to be just shy of 30k's or a little over 30k's if you did the extra loop.

This is the extra loop:



The picture on the left is where you come down, Deo rode it. He said it was technical going up because it was rocky and you were going so slow. And the downhill was fast and scary because on the right of you it just drops away.

Yeah – no thanks!

There had already been one girl who'd taken a tumble down the first long steep descent. She'd missed the corner at the bottom. Not sure how long it had happened before we got there. Already there were about 3 other women and a man who'd stopped just before we did. He was a paramedic.

Anyway, I had the panadol, ibuprofen and plasters. Spot the person that usually needs them.

However, yesterday I didn't come off my bike at all. Deo had. Right at the beginning at the first real stream. And Mark had a small "off" on another really steep descent. That one was not on a track at all, it was right through the paddock/hill. I remember looking ahead at some of the larger rocks and thinking I would surely come a cropper. But I managed to handle the bike well enough to get through unscathed.

The event was 28k – without the extra loop above.

It seemed that we'd hit a certain point not long into starting where we had a head wind. And I swear it didn't matter what direction we turned, we had a head wind.

Along the last section heading back to the woolshed it was flat, but exposed. The wind was really strong through here. I had to go to my granny gear. Never thought I'd need that on the flat.

While I wasn't "racing" as such, I did don my HRM. Just the 2nd time in the last 5 weeks. My average HR was 157bpm, and my max was 189!

Nice, the "flat" exposed bit that had us in our granny gear was uphill – not that it looked it. But it does make me feel a



bit better about having to be in the granny.

Lyndall was 2nd woman. She'd taken a wrong turn earlier in the race (the punishment for being in the lead) and by the time she and another guy realised and back tracked, they'd lost their positions.

A couple of times I did take a moment to enjoy my surroundings. It was very beautiful.

I didn't have a problem with the ride except I walked a couple of sections. One I could have carried on riding but I decided that it was meant to be a casual affair and so rather than taking off too far ahead of Mark, I'd stop, take a few snaps and then walk with him the rest of that hill. The 2nd time, I was happy to walk, until my calves protested, and I realised my HR was not much less than riding (on the flat).

Would I do it again. Yep. It was a nice outing. And if I can manage it, then ANYONE can.

I was glad for Helena's MTB lesson last Sunday, I reckon that mentally it helped me on some of the sections I'd have been anxious about. I thought I handed those sections much better.