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ADVENTURE

ADDICTS

[Home](#) | [News](#) | [Team Profile](#) | [Race Schedule](#) | [Results](#) | [Merrell](#) | [Sponsors](#) | [Gear Reviews](#) | [Race Reports](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Links](#)

News

21 December 2010 - Hagmorkei 21km Trail run - Morgans Bay - This past week on Sunday, "Tiny" Don Simms did the Hagmorkei trail run and WON. He had this brief report

"This morning at 8am I started my first Hagmorkei, Ive only heard good this about this event so I had to come give it a shot. It really was the perfect morning , no wind and about 25 degrees.

The race started on the beach below the Haga haga hotel and we headed out towards Marshstrand from there it was a quick beach/rocky section to Black Rock. At this point I was part of a break away group of about 5 , the tough stuff was still to come. We now found ourselves on the Strandlooper hiking trail that took us up and over the cliffs towards Double Mouth. After crossing the river we were at the base of the dreaded cement strips taking us over the hill to Morgans Bay , I was feeling good here so I made my break and was able make a big enough gap to hold onto till the end of the race.

Once I passed through Morgans Bay we had to run a loop that took us to Kei Mouth via Whispering Waves then through the golf course and back to Morgans Bay and the finish.

This event has been happening for a number of years now and takes place twice a year , in winter and summer , it usually takes place around the holidays. For the cyclists there is also mtb ride of 25 km and 40 km , both largely made up of single track.

This is an event all outdoor enthusiasts should have on there to do list. So get OUTSIDE and be part of our outdoor movement."

15 December 2010 - Merrell Adventure Addicts in "Modern Athlete" Magazine - The Addicts feature in a comprehensive article in the latest edition of the [Modern Athlete Magazine](#). The Magazine is available at all big running clubs, big sports shops, Sportsman's warehouses and selected Totalsports outlets. Checkout there website www.modernathlete.co.za for a downloadable subscription for R20.00. See the [full article on the Merrell Adventure Addicts here](#).

MODERN
athlete

14 December 2010 - First Ascent Mountain Run 12km, Sunday 12 Dec - Merrell Adventure Addict's Tatum Prins: *"I woke up on Sunday morning with the initial thought of sweeping the course with my hubby but as the morning progressed I could feel the racing urge. I did just that. The initial climb was hectic, 500m height gained in about 1km. What a terrible warm up! Katja Saggot - a well known runner in the Cape was just ahead of me and not letting up. She went out hard and i knew if i stuck with her i wouldn't last. I carried on up and by the time i reached the top she was nowhere in sight. More of a concern at that moment was Robyn Ferrar just on my tail. I managed to keep Robs at bay but after about 8km's i was surprised to see Katja just ahead. The trail was technical at this stage and i was managing to gain nicely. I passed her on the next climb and just got stronger and stronger. The final 1 km descent was the uphill we started on so i did what i could to keep my lead. I am not going to lie though and say that was easy. It was far from easy. The course was tough and technical and 100% off road which made it a "real" trail run. The scenery awesome with many views of our stunning peninsula. Thanks to Ugene and his team at Quantum Adventures and Katja and Robs for a good race. Until the next one... happy holidays and safe travels to all of you ? Over and out, Hobs."*

14 December 2010 - Merrell Adventure Addicts in Go Multi Magazine - Checkout the latest issue of the Go Multi. The is a feature on the Merrell Eden Duo which features the Addicts. Some juicy pictures of "Tiny Don Simms" in the magazine.

14 November 2010 - Tatum WIN's Salomon Skyrun - Merrell Adventure Addicts' Tatum Prins, one of the country's top woman ultra runners, won the ladies section of the Salomon Skyrun yesterday. Team mate Donovan Sims finished a tied fifth overall with Tatum after the pair raced for over 20 hours together to complete the 100km course.

A record field of 178 intrepid souls set off from the quaint Victorian town of Lady Grey to conquer the 100km self-supported, unmarked mountain run along the meandering ridgelines of the Southern Drakensberg. The Skyrun sees racers "competing against a mountain, the great outdoors and one's self... to restore basic survival instincts and ultimately rediscover the heart of true living". It is the "spiritual pursuit" that separates the Skyrun from other similar events. Trail runners rave about the vastness of this run. Indeed there are few races in the world that follow an





unmarked wilderness route for almost three quarters of its length. It has to be mountain running in its purest.

Tatum had this to say after the race: "There is a reason people call the Salomon Skyrun "the big daddy of trail runs".....It has to be South Africa's toughest and most "real" trail runs we have and if that's not enough one of the most beautiful. For the first time in a long time I went into a race having no expectations and no pressure. I was just going to stand at the start line and see what happened.

The race went much better than expected and once we got started my mind set changed and I wanted to give it my all. There is no question that this was one of the hardest trail runs I have ever done, and one that was so breath takingly scenic.

But...the harder and tougher a race is the more you get out of it.....This race was a great way to end my 2010 racing season!"

12 November 2010 - Rogaines in Adventure racing - Over the past few years there has been an increasing amount of Rogaine type format Adventure Races staged around the world. Most notably the Adventure Racing World Champs in Portugal in 2009. Here in South Africa, the Swazi Extreme has also run this format for the past few years. There is always a huge debate surrounding the traditional Adventure Racing format going from point A to point B with the fastest team winning vs the Rogaine type format where teams decide which Checkpoints to collect and the team with the most CP's collected wins. Checkout an interesting article about "The Case against Rogaines in Adventure Racing" [here](#) and then go vote on the "Poll: Rogaines in Adventuring Racing?" that has been set up by www.checkpointtracker.com

12 November 2010 - Salomon Skyrun - Merrell Adventure Addicts' Tatum Prins and Donovan Sims head to the 100km Skyrun in the Eastern Cape this weekend. The race starts in the town of Lady Grey and finishes 100km and approximately 2500m of climbing just near Tiffendal high in the mountains. [Good](#) Luck. Reports to follow next week.

5 November 2010 - Merrell Eden Duo Video & Photo preview - Checkout the "Merrell SA" page on Facebook for a preview of the TV production that will air on Supersport in the next few weeks. Also see some photo's from the Official race photographer.

3 November 2010 - Merrell Eden Duo Reports & Photo's - Merrell Adventure Addicts team of Tatum Prins and Donovan Sims check in after the Eden Duo this past weekend.



Tatum Prins had this to say after the event: "For me the Merrell Eden Duo is one of those "not to miss" races. It's close to home, it's set in an awesome area and I get to spend some quality time with all my racing mates. The race itself has 2 options. The 150km which is perfect for the novice racer as well as those who just want to do the course as fast as possible. Then there is the 200km race for those who need to be more navigationally challenged. So all in all "there's something for everyone"

This year Don Sims (Tiny) and myself decided to pair up but after a 2 week rest our bodies went into a state of shock and chasing John Collins and Hanlie Booyens down proved to be hard work. On the whole we had a great race. I struggled on the run legs with some seriously "eina" hammy's but with Tiny's help I managed to get to the downhill where they stretched out a bit and started behaving normally. :-) Huge thanks to Tiny Sims - I will race with you any day! You are an awesome team mate.

Hanno "Smelly" Smit your seconding skills are one of a kind :-) thank you for looking after us and force feeding us! Then lastly a massive thanks to Merrell and Jan for such a wonderful event with a great atmosphere! Over and out. X Hobs

Donovan Sims had this to say after the event: "The Eden is a race that's been around for 10 years now and it's a race that I'm sure will go on to see a good few more. It's the kind of race that challenges both the experienced and novice athlete alike. Now it has the backing of a brand such as Merrell, the sky is the limit.

The race started Saturday morning 5am and had Merrell Adventure Addicts, Tatum "Hobbit" Prins and myself, off to a really good start as we exited the first kloofing leg in 3rd position. A section that blows your mind every time you do it. The next bike leg was great, first a bit of compulsory single track and then onto a huge climb up Montague Pass. We ended the cycle on a beautiful wine farm where our SUPER SECOND was eagerly waiting for us. A quick transition, with Hobbit around there is only quick transitions, and we were into my favorite section of the race, the Outeniqua Hiking Trail. We made a good nav decision and had us in 2nd



place at the next transition. Back on the bikes and with some good team work we had that leg done in no time at all. The paddle to the Sedgefield Caravan site was another good leg for us and managed to close the gap a little more. Then came the dreaded 20 km beach run , which didn't turn out to bad, the tide was low and we ran at a constant pace to the last leg a short paddle. We jumped into the canoe and made short work of the paddle to the end. We finished in second position overall.

Hobbit, I want to thank you for a great race. It's always fun racing with you, looking forward to many



more such races. Hanno "Smelly" Smit, you legend, your seconding skills are almost as good as your racing skills, thanks for everything. To our title sponsor, Merrell, and the sponsor of the event, a HUGE thank you for all that you did for us this past week end and for all that you put into the amazing event.

For those of you that have been thinking about the event and never done it, this truly not one to be missed. See you next year OUTSIDE at the Merrell Eden Duo!

Checkout photo's from the MERRELL EDEN DUO here.

2 Nov 2010 - MERRELL EDEN DUO - This past weekend saw over 150 people competing at the Eden Duo in the Wilderness area of the Western Cape. The 150km race involved seven legs of kloofing, Mtb, trekking and paddling. The Merrell Adventure Addicts of Tatum Prins and Donovan Sims competed in the Mixed pairs category and after a tough, fast race they finished a brilliant second. Reports to follow shortly.

17 Oct 2010 - MERRELL Adventure Addicts ARWC

Report - From Sunday the 3rd October to Friday 8th October, The Merrell Adventure Addicts competed in the Adventure Racing World Championships that were held in conjunction with the Bimbache Extreme Adventure Race in the province of Castilla y Leon, in Spain. The Merrell Adventure Addicts were one of 61 teams from over 26 countries around the world. After 720km the Merrell Adventure Addicts finished in 14th position. Various photo's from Carrick 'Pyro' Armer



Graham "Tweet" Bird's report: As usual the week after competing in a major expedition adventure race is spend recovering, eating, sleeping, unpacking, cleaning and most of all REFLECTING.

We returned to South Africa late on Sunday (10th October) afternoon after finishing at lunchtime on Friday. A quick trip home by any standards. This did not leave a lot of time to share experiences and thoughts with the other teams that competed in the race. I did get the sense that all were generally happy with the race and organisation. Emma Roca's Team Buff Coolmax raced a brilliant race from the front to win ahead of Mike Kloser's highly experienced, Team Black water (Nike).

The 722km race was broken down into 152km of trekking/running; 438km of mountain biking; 108km of paddling & 24km of skating. There were 22 sections with a total vertical ascension of 21,500m. The race essentially went from the town of Avila to Salamanca via the Mountain Bike legs with us stopping off to do loops of trekking and paddling along the way. Though this type of route is not always liked it is practical and allows minimal gear transfer for the organisers (i.e. bikes) and also more importantly makes the short course options for the slower teams a lot easier to manage. The race was unsupported with the organisers transporting our gear from transition to transition. We saw our food box 6 times throughout the course, meaning on average we carried food for approximately 10-15 hours at a time. The race was characterized by a lot of fast legs with many transitions with the average predicted time per leg at around 4 hours and the longest predicted to take the leaders 14 hours. So not a traditional expedition race in the true sense of expedition racing where there are long legs that take many many hours, possibly days.

There has been some debate on the South African AR forum this past week about the format of the race and the suitability of this type of course for a World Championships. I can understand this debate due to the quality of the live coverage. Don't let the coverage influence your opinion of the route. From my point of view as a racer and navigator, the race route was great and challenging. The fact that there were loops and not a traditional A to B route was not an issue. We still had to complete 720km and it still felt like a journey. We worked off approximately 42 A4 maps and I actually did not know exactly where and what direction we were going in overall other than the piece of the route we could see on the current map. The navigation on the MTB legs was very technical with the small farm and mountain roads hard to see on the maps. Also some of the small farm roads were very overgrown which made route choices difficult in some parts. The trekking navigation was also tricky especially at night. The organisers had a very simple ruling in place regarding short course and this was made clear to all the teams in the route book and at the briefing. If you were more than 24 hours behind the leaders you would not be able to do a loop and would have to continue on the MTB legs. Some of the slower teams also chose to skip loops in order to beat the finishing cut off of Friday evening. So with teams having missed loops being mixed in with the other teams it did make it difficult to follow exactly what position you were in. However, for the teams still on the full course it was easy to see where you were lying and how far behind. So trick is to stay on the full course!

We as the Merrell Adventure Addicts did not have one of our best races. It was one of those races where things always seemed to go the wrong way. We had a lot of bike mechanical issues, more than we have had in a race before. Suppose this is to be expected after having three International races where things have seemed to always go the right way. For the first few days we were continually racing a few hours off the top five which is where we were comfortable being. We knew how we had planned to race but just seemed to battle to pull it off. Each time we tried to get going and execute the plan something would happen that would break the rhythm. We also made a very basic and fundamental mistake on the Wednesday afternoon. We had just started a 23km trekking leg that had some tricky navigation without paths. We were tired, tired in that we were moving slower than we should move, but not that tired that sleep was an absolute necessity. We stopped to sleep for two hours with only three hours of daylight left. The navigation on the trek at night proved way more technical than we thought. We just missed seeing a CP looking down one ridge and ended up searching for a few hours for it. Something that probably would not have happened had we pushed on in the daylight and not slept. The vegetation on the trek was also tough and it was difficult to pick out the ideal and fast route at night. Halfway through this trek we realized our mistake and that we were going to fall 24 hours behind the leaders and hence not be allowed to do the following loop. This changed our mind set and disappointed us. I also made a huge mistake by not collecting a CP as we headed into the transition area. This meant a 3.5km trek back out to the CP and then back again!! Cost us two hours. (Well at least this time we got the opportunity to go and clip it unlike previous race). For the remainder of the race we chased to get back into the field having left after the hike a few hours behind all the other teams. We actually finally got into our rhythm and raced like we should have from the start. Go figure!! Unfortunately there were no boats available for us when we arrived for the final 78km paddle into the town of Salamanca, so we ended up cycling to the finish.

The race also turned out to be colder than we thought. We got caught out really badly on the first night when the rain came down. We had chosen to go with our lighter jackets and ended up freezing on the bike ride. We ended up in a Café for 40 mins trying to unfreeze only to have to get back out into the cold once we had warmed up! Needless to say we packed the heavier jackets in at the next transition. The days were hot and the nights, especially in the high mountains were cold.

Upon reflection, I felt that we had failed to take advantage of all the experience we have gained in the past few races and made basic errors that we should not have been making. However we again left this race realizing that we can race with the top teams but just need to concentrate to make it happen and maintain the consistency and drive.

My team mates were great and despite the disappointing result, we actually had an awesome time on the race. One of the best races I have ever had dynamically. To Hobbit, Tiny, Smelly - thanks for a great time! Next time!

And finally to all our sponsors, particularly our new title sponsor MERRELL, for all your continued support and belief. And one final thank you to all the supporters out there who followed our progress on the race and sent through messages.



Tatum "Hobbit" Prins report: So here we are again, reflecting on another race, another adventure but this time, "The Spanish Adventure."

Our time in Spain started off relaxed and full of laughs. The team couldn't have been closer and more together in terms of friendship and understanding. We all clicked well and were looking anxious and excited to start. We were a strong foursome and ready to sink our teeth into 720km's of adventure racing.

As usual the race started with a bang and all the teams went legging it around the old town collecting cp's, this is not our forte but hey it was just the start of the race and we had 5 days to do our thing. We soon hopped onto the bike and within minutes my wheels started falling off. I felt like I was sucking through a straw, had no power in my legs and quite frankly if I had ridden off the side of the mountain it would have been a relief. I struggled so much in the first 12 hours; my body just wouldn't do what it was supposed to do. The boys were incredible. They towed and pulled and encouraged and really got me through what was my worst race start in my history of racing. I can tell you right now that if I was doing that alone I would have sat on the side of the track and stayed there. To be the weakest in a team is like putting a ton of bricks on your shoulders. You feel so panicked and responsible. For the loss of time and positions. It has to be one of the hardest and most humbling experiences in racing.

Next up was the orienteering section which again is not our favorite. Tweet did a great job and soon we were off on yet another bike leg but this one was horrendous. The rain started and it got bitterly cold. We were unprepared for this cold weather, packing light and unaware of what the temperatures would drop too. At some point in the night we had to take refuge in a town for coffee and food. We were stressed and bitterly cold. Not a good situation to be in. Freezing cold, wet, and no extra warm gear. All we could hear were our teeth chattering. BRRRRR - brought back memories from ARWC in Scotland 2007. "Please God don't let this race be like that one." It was so hard to get back on our bike that night, yes you are racing but the thought of going out into pouring freezing rain isn't something you want to do, but off we set and by the early hours of the morning the rain subsided and we hit the paddle/trek leg.

It's always great to get onto a new leg, somehow it feels like a new start and anything that was "bad" in the leg before becomes a distant memory and you just move onto the next one. The paddle was straight forward except for the fact that when we got to a certain point one person had to stay behind with the boat and the other 3 team mates had to head out to search for the cp's. Well, in most cases this would be awesome. You would get to rest, have a snooze, eat and recover while your team mates worked hard at finding the cp's. This was not the case! I stayed behind and had an horrendous time. Immediately my core temperature dropped and the shakes started. I jumped up and down a bit. I felt like such a fool. There I was standing in the middle of nowhere, in the dark, freezing with nothing but my own crazy thoughts. Eventually I thought "stuff this" and climbed into a plastic bag. One that only Hobbits could fit into. Here I lay in the bag shivering waiting for the boys to return. The only thing that kept me going was my happy place...hot Jacuzzi, friends and champagne. Boy did that keep me going... just 4 more days! What a hoot!

Next up another bike leg of which I can't really remember. At some point in the race it all blurs into one. This must have been it! All that stands out in all these bike legs



is the fact that we climbed and climbed and climbed. It seemed relentless. There was just one hill after the next and one small quant town after the next with narrow cobbled streets and old people. Everyone in Spain seemed old. That or my eyesight was really playing tricks on me. Very likely!

From here on in I can't remember details, sleep monsters started to take over and things got blurry or you just can't seem to put them all together. It wasn't long after this that things starting to go pear shaped for us. It started with my drop out breaking and the replacement been rusted, then we came across Nathan from Orion who had fallen off his bike and was lying unconscious below us. I have never experienced this in a race before. I suppose one can say that we are really fortunate that this is not a common occurrence. At the time all I could think about was if he was going to be ok. Team Cyanosis and ourselves called for help and soon a helicopter arrived with the paramedics. I have to say that they were quick, professional and this great knowledge to take away but it was also then that it dawned on me just how fragile we are and the kind of situations we put ourselves in. I silently prayed grateful that my boys were safe and it wasn't one of us. I know it's selfish but I was so relieved they were all standing in front of me in one piece.

This was a weird time for us in the race, maybe just for me but suddenly the race wasn't the top priority anymore. In your tired state it is easy for your mind to shift focus and for a couple of hours mine did. Anyway, we carried on with our bike leg and soon after, Smelly's bike cables snapped. It just didn't seem to end. At the time it just felt like one thing after the other. We had to ride into the nearest town, get some Spanish man to show us where the bike shop was and get it sorted. Again the momentum of our race was being lost. It just didn't seem to get going. It felt like all we were doing was crisis management.

All these mishaps set us back a good few hours which in a race like this costs you many positions. It is just too competitive for so many things to go wrong...

We carried on; our spirits still high despite the mishaps. The next thing to not go in our favour was in one part a poor decision made by us to sleep and the other a navigational error. All in all this cost us many hours. Hours which at this stage took us out of the race. It was also on this trekking leg that Smelly's leg was taking strain. With the huge effort he put in with no cables on his bike, he had twisted his one knee and it was killing him on the descents. My heart broke for him. In a situation like that there is not much we can do but encourage. The walking still had to come from him and he was suffering in a big way. He dug so deep.

After this trek leg, we realized our fate as it were. There was nothing we could do to get our race back and I think we all silently accepted this.

However a good friend once said to me, "It's not all about the number!" A lesson well learnt. One I learnt and lived by when I first started racing and one now that I found myself doing again. If your goal is unattainable you just have to make the most of the reality and get on and ENJOY! Well that is exactly what we did! To tell the truth when there was that odd time when you couldn't see the little dot moving on the tracking page...well this was when we were begging for food at a bar in a tiny little Spanish town. They thought we were mad and only when Tweet pulled the "I'm unwell" move with big glossy eyes did they buckle and bring out some horrendous looking pork! We literally lapped up these revolting pieces of meat, soaked the bread in the fatty sauce, licked our lips and headed out with a full tummy and smiles all round. It's amazing what the basics can do for your morale!

So this is how our race went, we rode and we rode (Tour de Spain) and finally got to the paddle leg. The second last stage and a long one at that. 78km but we like paddling! Well that was what we thought until we woke up after an hour and a half snooze only to be told there were no boats for us. At this stage we had 1 option, back to the tent and start paddling when boats arrive. So off we went to our 2 man (but slept 4) Black Diamond tent. Now before I carry on let me describe what it is like sleeping in a tent with 3 guys who have sweated, burped, farted, worn the same smelly clothes for 5 days and now you have to lie so close to them you practically want to gag on the smell (of course I smelt of roses). Its awesome! Its times like that, that make me giggle and love the complete rawness of racing.

So to end our Spanish adventure we finally got told to do the last 85km's on the bike (again) and head to the finish. Yes, it was a pretty lame way to finish and an error of the organization but off we set only too happy in the knowledge that in a couple of hours we were going to eat ourselves silly and have a glorious shower. We did exactly that!

To be honest I didn't enjoy this race. I was expecting a lot from it as last year's Bimbache was amazing, if not my favorite race. It is hard to chew on the fact that the race just didn't go as well as we wanted but you take out of it what you can and you keep moving forward.

This sport is so incredible. It has this way of humbling you. You end up having this love hate relationship with it. One minute you are crying and ready to call it quits and the next you are laughing hysterically and loving every second. All this changes in a matter of seconds. Quite simply, it's a beautiful kind of crazy! Your highs and lows are amazing, so much so you can't understand them. In fact I can't even try. All I know is that AR sucks you in and keeps you there. It bares your soul. At times it rips it apart and just lays it open for all to see. It teaches you the importance of living life. It puts life into perspective. It teaches you to never give up, to keep looking forward. It pushes your limits. Emotional, physically and spiritually. It shows you the importance of having 3 friends as team mates because without them in AR you are nothing. They are your world for those 5 days. It's you, them and the elements. Life becomes simple again.

Thank you to "my ever special boys" - what we have is something not many people have the privilege of. Thank you for looking after me. For making me laugh so many times, for giving me the hugs when I needed them, for feeding me when I didn't want to eat, for towing me when I just wanted to throw myself off the track. Thank you for our incredible Spanish Adventure. Maybe it wasn't our best race but we finished together, closer than ever before and that's all that counts.

Most importantly I want to thank my husband Lofty - time and time again I leave him to go gallivanting around the country doing what I love and time and time again he supports me and understands my need to do it. Thank you for understanding and giving me the freedom to live my ongoing dream. You really are one of a kind.

Then lastly thank you to all our sponsors for giving us the opportunity to do what we love...

Donovan "Tiny" Sims report: My Spanish Adventure started with a phone call from captain Tweet offering me a spot in the team. So I need to start this off with thanks to the team for the opportunity. Thanks Guys!

The morning of the start of the race I remember Cappy saying, "WE ARE GOING TO START FAST, BUT NOT STUPID FAST." Well I don't know if that was what happened as the first couple of hours were a bit of a blur.

After a quick orienteering leg around this amazing Historical town, Avila, we were onto our bikes for a 75km cycle. This cycle went well with a bit of good team tactics coming through (e.g. reciting some inspirational passages from a book none of us bought.)

Next was an orienteering section with the first 12km been done as a team, then the team split into two pairs and each pair





covered another 6km each. Again things were good.

Then back onto the bikes, not long into the ride we were hit by the rain and wind and really, really cold conditions. All this forced us into a small pub for hot coffee and muffins (absolutely saved us).

Then back into another orienteering section which again split the team, this time into boats and trekking. I must admit I was a bit nervous about the water navigation in the dark as Smelly and I started off in the kayaks first. Again all went well, team dynamics were good.

Then back into the bikes, this is where things started to get out of control. Firstly we broke a drop out and the spare we had was needing attention of its own. Then a little up the road we stumbled into Cyanosis and Orion where Nathan was lying motionless, we stayed with them for over an hour until EMS arrived. Back on the bikes but not for long, Smelly's gear cable snapped leaving him with only one gear, with him pushing with one gear obviously slowed things down, but worst of all it resulted in him sustaining a knee injury that he carried for the rest of the race.

Things started getting a little hazy from here on in with yet another problem, at the start of the last paddle leg, we arrived there at about 01h30am only to find there were no boats for us. We had to wait till 08h30 am for instructions from the race director to proceed to the finish line on bikes.

Before I start with thanks to the sponsors I need to thank my team mates again and mention one or two things about them.

Hanno "Smelly" Smit IS as HARD as people say he is for him to have stuck it out and finish the race with the injury he had as it was 'no walk in the park'. The hiking legs were treacherous and cycle to the finish, an 85km beast, had him cycling with only one leg. Thanks for digging so deep for us.

Tatum "The Hobbit" Prins, small in stature, but that's about where it stops. Yes, she does carry the boys packs, yes she does tow then up mountains when they can't anymore. Hobs, you are certainly not compulsory equipment, but more like the glue that holds the team together. Thanks for everything!

Graham "Tweet" Bird (aka Captain). Huge thanks for putting us all together and keeping us moving in the right direction. It was great to see how nothing is too much for you when it comes to taking care of YOUR team, before, during and after the race. Thanks Cappy.

A HUGE thank you to MERRELL for being our title sponsor, from the amazing kit we raced in, from our clothing to our shoes. I don't think I could find anything I didn't enjoy about using the kit. Besides looking great it's tough enough to take on arguably one of the toughest sports in the world.

Hanno "Smelly" Smit's report: The Bimbache Extrem was raced in the Province of Castilla and Leon, just west of Madrid, starting in the fortified old city of Avila, characterized by historical architecture and an almost mildewy ambiance of age.

The start leg was an urban orienteering exercise and succeeded in popularizing the event with the local inhabitants and visitors to the town. The race then sped off on MTB towards the southern mountain ranges, where cold and rainy weather awaited us for a total of 22 legs, which covered a distance of around 700km of dry glacier mountains, lush forests and dry savannah veld to the finishing line in the city of Salamanca, west of Avila.

Team Merrell Adventure Addicts, consisting of Captain Graham Bird, Tatum Prins, our new member, Don Sims and myself arrived in Spain in good health and high spirits and with a firm belief of finishing in the top 5 rankings, but a series of relative small mishaps, systematically following up on each other, eventually took the impetus out of our team and although we kept on racing, hard at times, it simply was not possible to race with the same intensity as it is when one races in the front bunch.

Like all adventure races, this was a very special race and a unique experience with facets that stood out, such as the extremely cold and windy nights, the inline skating legs taking you up on slopes of 12% and seen as easy legs to most Europeans, The Espanol factor: communicating with the locals and understanding the written language, the continuous passing through quaint little towns with history abound and the deafening silence of the glacier mountains with their mountain goats to protect any secrets and the extremely old age of the architecture en route.

[CHECKOUT MORE AWESOME RACE IMAGES HERE.](#) Download a PDF of the race report [here.](#)





13 Oct 2010 - ar.co.za - The Merrell Adventure Addicts received extensive coverage on www.ar.co.za during the ARWC. Check out the news items on www.ar.co.za

13 Oct 2010 - SAFM Interview - Merrell Adventure Addict Graham Bird chatted on SAFM about the teams experiences at the ARWC in Spain. [Listen to the interview here.](#)

12 Oct 2010 - ARWC - After a few days of Bimbache Extrem reflection and well deserved rest

the Merrell Adventure Addicts are surfacing again after there 5 day excursion at the ARWC in Spain. The Race did not go as well as the Addicts hoped and they eventually finished in 14th position. [See photo's from the race here.](#) Race report to follow shortly.

2 Oct 2010 - Live coverage of ARWC - It is still abit unclear has to what live coverage there will be of the ARWC. Each team will be carrying a Spot GPS unit for tracking so it is assumed there will be coverage. Check out www.raidbimbache.com for coverage. www.sleepmonsters.com will also have extensive coverage of the race.

2 Oct 2010 - News from ARWC in Spain - Tatum Prins checks in: "Ola from Spain! The last couple of days have been pretty relaxed with plenty of time to shop and sort out our kit. Already the team has had a great time together, plenty of laughs, jokes and taking in the Spanish culture. Most mornings have been spent running or riding around the town and packing and drinking coffee in the afternoon. We have even managed to sip on a G & T or two! I know you wouldn't think we were about to embark on an adventure of a life time. BUT... we are ready!

In just a couple of hours we all walk into town for the opening ceremony. As you can imagine this is all we have been waiting for. It is at this point you actually feel like it is about to start. We get to see the competition and the well known faces in Adventure Racing. This is when it becomes a reality.

We will have race briefing and finally get the Maps!! From then on, its game on! Wish us luck, energy and massive amounts of speed.:-) BRING IT ON!!! LET'S GET OUTSIDE!

We will catch up with all of you in about 5 days. Until then....adios! Over out - Hobs and the boys."

2 Oct 2010 - ARWC Photo's - See photo's from the Merrell Adventure Addicts preparations for ARWC [here.](#)

2 Oct 2010 - ARWC Course Outline - The Addicts received the course outline this morning. 720km, 21571m ascent spread over 22 legs. Approximately 438km of MTB, 163km of trekking, 99km of paddling and 22km of inline skating. [See photo of route outline here.](#) Bring it on! LET'S GET OUTSIDE!

30 September 2010 - ARWC Preparations - The Merrell Adventure Addicts spent the day preparing for the Champs. The morning was spent sorting through all the gear and ensuring all the compulsory gear was in order. It was then off to the supermarket to get the necessary food to get the team through the 4-5 days of racing. After an afternoon siesta it was onto the bikes for a ride to one of the small local towns on the outskirts of Avila. [See some photo's from the days activities here.](#)

29 September 2010 - Final team list for ARWC - The final team list for the weekends Adventure Racing World champs has been released. There are 28 countries represented in the 67 teams, in the most competitive and biggest Adventure Racing World series race this year boasting three previous World Champion teams. Merrell Adventure Addicts will be lining up along side the worlds best wearing the number 13 bibs! Full team list below:

ADVENTURE **AR** RACING
[www.AR.co.za](http://www.ar.co.za)
 It's not just about sport. It's about passion.





Number	Team	Country	Captain
1	Team Adidas Terrex UK	UK / New Zealand	Nick Gracie
2	Team Blackwater USA	USA / New Zealand	Mike Kloser
3	Orion Adventure	New Zealand	Brent Edwards
4	Team Explore Sweden	Sweden	Mikael Lindnord
5	Buff Thermocool	Spain / France	Emma Roca
6	Silva/Gerber Adventure	Sweden	Björn Rydvall
7	Quechua.com	France / Canada	Rudy Gouy
8	Salomon Santiveri Outdoor Team	Spain	Miguel Ángel Torres
10	Thule Adventure Team	Sweden / Finland	Martin Flinta
11	Guats Adventure	Canada	Bob Miller
12	Equipo Ecuador	Ecuador	Santiago Miño
13	Merrell Adventure Addicts	South Africa	Graham Bird
14	Team Outdry - Chiru Endurance Bike - Claire!	France	Jacky Boisset
15	Cyanosis	South Africa	Nicholas Mulder
16	AlpinePro/Nutrend/Merida CZ AR team	Czech Republic	Tomas Vanek
17	Lima Salomon	Slovenia	Tilen Potocnik
18	Bosi	Colombia/Argentina/Spain	Jorge Diego Llano
19	Expenature.fr - Raid La Pineda Platja	France	Viale Romuald
20	ARCosta Rica - No Artificial Ingredients	Spain	Tomás Peñaranda
21	Team Tours Actif Argentina	Argentina	Hernan Stupnikowski
23	Team Raidlight/Vertical	France	Denis Merlin
24	Saferbo Seti	Colombia	Ricardo Velez
25	El Barco de Ávila	Spain	Jose Ramón Yáñez
26	Issy Aventure - Withspirit.fr	France	Patrick Lamarre
27	B.A.B.A. Orientation Belgique	Belgium	Pierre Collin
28	Sport Nature Ville-la-Grand	France	Nicolas Seguin
29	Mountain Loghome ISC	Estonia	Andres Minn
30	ScandinavianOutdoorStore.com	Finland	Riitta Siltanen
31	Team CDC - SSE Equipements	France / Colombia	Adrien Seguret
32	Turismodepriego.com	Spain	Jose Manuel Gómez
34	Team Skandia Reelight	Denmark	Bjorn Axelsen
35	Tchantshès Paradise	Belgium / Luxembourg	Laurent Lemaire
36	Kompar Xstream	Czech Republic	Martin Sebanek
37	Raid74	France	Stephane Agnoli
38	Sweco Karlstad Multisport	Sweden	Magnus Albinsson

40	Omjakon	Finland	Heikki Hihnala
41	Team Garmin Adventure	Finland	Juha Lehtonen
42	Team Falke Sportswear	Netherlands	Fokko Hoeksma
43	Koko Germany	Germany	Neil McQueen
44	www.nonstop.cat	Spain / Finland	Albert Icart
45	Raid Nature 46	France	Laurent Lestarquit
46	Yaencontre.com - Haglöfs	Spain	Iván Artigas
47	Equipo Idaca-Ind Venezuela	Venezuela	Pedro Rodeiro
48	Montanya Competicio	Spain	Eduardo Corbalán
50	OpavaNet/Tilak/Merida	Czech Republic	Marek Navratil
52	Subaru Canada	Canada / Australia	Jim Mandelli
53	Columbia-Megasport Awauto	Spain	Urtzi Iglesias
54	Irish AR	Ireland	Chris Caulfield
56	Raid La Pineda Platja - Wind Xtrem	Spain	Joan Carbonell
57	Cosa Nostra Salomon	Brazil	Marco Aurelio Alcantara
58	Buff	Spain / Chile	Chemari Bustillo
60	Karen's Aventura Briko	Colombia	Carlos Eduardo Castillo
61	Team DareDevils Adventure Racing	Denmark	Henrik Leth Jørgensen
62	Riumar Oxigen	Spain	Xavi Rodríguez
63	OS-Direct	Ukraine / Russia	Konstantyn Marchenko
64	Sin Barreras	Spain	Carlos del Moral
65	Le Mont Dore XTTRaid 63	France	Gilles Metge
67	Untamed New England	Canada / UK	Pete Cameron

28 September 2010 - Adventure Racing World Championships - Bimbache Xtreme - The Merrell Adventure Addicts of Graham Bird, Tatum Prins, Hanno Smit and Donovan Simms depart for Spain today to compete in the 2010 ARWC. So info about the race from the organisers:



The 2010 edition will be the eighth one of this race of adventure, internationally recognized as one of the hardest and most important of the world. It will take place between September 30 and October 9. The Bimbache Xtrem Castilla y León 2010 will be THE ADVENTURE RACE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP.

In this occasion the provinces chosen to carry out this adventure, in which there will take part 60 mixed teams of 4 members each coming from approximately thirty countries, will be those of Salamanca and Avila, since in both previous editions the race took place through Segovia, Soria, Valladolid, Burgos, León and Palencia. The teams that participate will be able to observe the wonders and contrasts that these inland provinces will provide; mountainous areas, plains, rivers and reservoirs compose their geography. The start will be under the attentive look of the medieval wall of Avila surrounding this historical city, and the finish line will be placed in the center of Salamanca, with its beautiful and centenary buildings. In addition these provinces are crossed by the two most important historical ways of Spain. The first one it is the Way of Santiago, which crosses the north of Castilla y León, and is no doubt the western route of peregrination most important and well known through the world, since this route has been crossed during centuries by millions of persons of five continents. The second one, the Route of the Silver, one of the most singular Roman infrastructures of the Peninsula, which was created to join the important cities of Emerita Augusta (Mérida) with Asturica Augusta (Astorga). Route of step and exchange of cultures and habits that would be used by the first pilgrims coming from the south of Spain in their way to Santiago. Lucky a great part of its tracing has remained to the present day.

The Race will see mixed teams of four racing nonstop over a 700km course that is expected to take the lead teams approximately 85 to 90 hours to complete. The race is unsupported and the teams will need to carry all the necessary gear and food with them on the various legs of the race, refilling at the various transition zones. The teams will navigate with compass and map (no GPS allowed) collect numerous checkpoints along the way in their attempt to be the first team across the line.

October normally has soft temperatures, but it is possible that the winter comes early. If this happens you can have some cold and rain, and teams should expect the unexpected. For this reason we recommend you to be ready for any weather.

The race is very dynamic with many activity changes. There are a total of 24 sections and more than 90 checkpoints to check the physical strength, orienteering capability and strategic skills of the best teams in the world.

SECTIONS AND PERCENTAGES IN TIME

- TREKKING + ORIENTEERING: 8 Sections, 40%.
- MOUNTAIN BIKING: 7 Sections, 35 %.
- KAYAK: 3 Sections, 20%.



- SKATES: 3 Sections, 3%.
- ROPES: 3 Sections, 2%.
- COMPULSORY STOP: 4 Hours.

DISCIPLINES DETAILS

ROPE WORK - There will be an amazing rope challenge section with ascents, descents and zip-lines.

INLINE SKATING - Route will be 10% flat and 90% will be up, so sticks will be obligatory. This section can be completed walking in case anyone cannot skate or doesn't want to. However, they must carry their skates and use the same paths as the skaters.

ORIENTEERING - The orienteering will be critical. Moreover, this year there will have very skilled sections using maps in scale 1:15.000.

TREKKING - A very stunning section, with ascents up to 2000 meters.

MOUNTAIN BIKE - Teams will mountain bike along paths and tracks at the most, 95 % ride able.

KAYAK - Kayak sections are along rivers and lakes. Teams should be prepared for long traverses, so we recommend you to be fit for this discipline. As you already know, extraordinary one and two-seater kayaks will be used.

27 September 2010 - SAFM interview - Merrell Adventure Addicts Graham Bird was interviewed on SAFM's sports show on Saturday 25th August. [Hear the interview here.](#)

22 September 2010 - Further. Faster. Comfortably.....MERRELL Adventure Addicts..... LET'S GET OUTSIDE - After successfully debuting in the sport of Adventure Racing in March 2004, the Adventure Addicts quickly established themselves as one of the premier adventure racing teams in South Africa, competing in numerous Adventure Racing World Series Races all over the globe. The team is made up of a core group of "Outdoor" enthusiasts who all competed at a top level and bring a vast amount of experience and expertise to the Adventure Addicts. Though the Adventure Addicts primary focus is Adventure Racing, they do however compete at a top level in various other adventure sports, such as Mountain Biking, Canoeing, Trail Running and Multisport events.

Over the past five years McCain Foods has been the title sponsor of the "McCain Adventure Addicts". Under this name they have achieved phenomenal success and achieved great coverage and exposure for McCain Foods. Having raced under the McCain banner since 2007, the Adventure Addicts have built up a significant following.

The Adventure Addicts are pleased to announce signing with leading performance footwear and apparel company, MERRELL as the title sponsor and will now be known as the "MERRELL Adventure Addicts". Why MERRELL? "We're all about the outside; the outdoor journey of discovery and freedom. To grow as individuals by thinking outside, living outside, performing outside, and quite plainly, getting outside, is what our mantra is." David Palmer, Managing Director of Merrell SA. "Merrell understands that living comfortably is the most important factor in keeping you out there longer, and going further.....with speed. Merrell is inspired by an era of people who believe that less is more, and engineering comfortable, versatile footwear lets them have healthy outdoor experiences in their everyday lives. Hike your own path, to the beat of your own drum, no matter what the weather. Merrell supports the Adventure Addicts every step of their journey, no matter the terrain."

The MERRELL Adventure Addicts will be lead and managed by former National Canoeing Captain, Graham Bird. "We would like to welcome MERRELL on board and look forward to developing a successful and beneficial relationship. The core MERRELL thinking of encouraging everyone to get outside, from beginner to seasoned pro, is the motto the Adventure Addicts live by. We would also just like to take this opportunity to thank McCain for all their support and encouragement over the past five years. We have enjoyed an awesome relationship with them."

The MERRELL Adventure Addicts will focus on a few major events throughout the year, these being the Adventure Racing World Championships 2010 (Oct 2010), MERRELL Eden Duo, Wartrail, 500km Expedition Africa AR, Freedom Challenge. The "Addicts" will also compete in numerous other "adventure sport" events throughout the year as part of their build up to these major events.

22 September 2010 -
A little about
MERRELL - Merrell
Thinking - "At Merrell,
we believe that active





MERRELL®

people inspire performance products. It's a belief that defines our business, strengthens our brand and reaffirms our commitment to delivering exceptional footwear and apparel. Most of all, it provides us with a better understanding of what you expect from a quality outdoor product. Merrell also believes in encouraging everyone to get

outside, from beginner to seasoned pro. And once you're out there, we provide the performance and style to keep you going. Further. Faster. Comfortably. After all, you're the heart and soul of our brand and the inspiration behind our products. It's what we think every Merrell customer deserves."

History of Merrell - "What began in the Green Mountains in Vermont, now roams the world. For more than 26 years, Merrell has been providing outdoor enthusiasts with quality performance footwear. As the needs of the outdoor enthusiasts have changed, so too has Merrell's approach to addressing those needs. Over time, the concepts of "outdoor" has broadened to include all types of activities and environments - both natural and urban. Merrell is driven to keep pace with this evolution of "The New Outdoor," and continues to evolve. It's been written that what's important is not the destination, but the journey. So join us as we take you through The Merrell Journey - from all-leather hiking boots to plastic telemarking boots to the moc that created the Aftersport category. The next 26 years? Like every outdoor enthusiast, we will continue to Get Outside."

INSIDE IS OUT AND
OUTSIDE IS IN.

In a world where inside lives threaten to consume our natural inclinations, where too often booting up has nothing to do with hiking, and surfing happens at a desk,

WE ARE THE OUTSIDERS.

We believe that outside inspiration makes the world a better place.

We listen to our outside voice—it reminds us to seek beauty, be healthier, connect with others, and find alternative routes.

We embrace sock tans, helmet hair, and the occasional bruised ego.

We crave the opportunity to breathe deeply, to think clearly, to run rivers, to bag peaks, to laugh and jump and play—and we do it all regardless of the weather,

enabled by gear that is as durable and comfortable on the mountainside as it is on the sidewalk.

WE ARE THE OUTSIDERS.

And we believe that outside is for everyone, everywhere.

LET'S GET OUTSIDE™

10 September 2010 - Breede River Training weekend - This past weekend saw the Adventure Addicts descend on the picturesque Overberg district for some training and team building in preparation for their participation at the 2010 AR World Champ, held in Spain later this month. It was to be the first official group training session with newbie Do

novan Simms and was planned to coincide with the annual Breede River Canoe Marathon.

The team arrived at the Felix Unite "Round the Bend" camp, which was to be their base, late on Thursday night. Training was kickstarted early on the Friday morning with a solid bike ride along the rolling dirt roads towards Infanta followed by a gruelling run through the plantation covered mountains behind the historic town of Swellendam, and then came the fun and games as the team took to the steep tarred hills of the town itself on their Rollerblades!

Saturday morning dawned bright as they travelled to the start of day 1 of the Breede Canoe Marathon at McGregor Bridge just outside Robertson. With both teams starting in A-batch, it was going to be interesting to see which of the boats made it to the finish line at Bonnievale first. The in-team competition between Hanno and Don, and Tatum and Tweet was high and paddles flew like rotor blades as the gun went. The river was medium with no swims for either of the crews as they finished within the top 40. The afternoons bike ride saw them once again taking to the fast rolling dirt roads surrounding the camp, with the day rounded off with some well deserved socialising, giving the guys and gal a chance to get to know each other all a bit better and enjoy the entertainment on offer!

Sunday morning, day 2 of the Breede started in Bonnievale and finished just outside Swellendam. After yet another successful day out, everyone headed back to their various homes to take on the new week of work and training, and nursing their broken bodies back to health!

9 September 2010 - MERRELL
Eden Duo - The Adventure Addicts have confirmed that they will be competing in the upcoming **MERRELL Eden Duo** to be held in Wilderness on the 30th October.



Race Director, Jan Heenop had this to say: "RACING THE EDEN - We hosted the Merrell Eden Duo event the past years in the heart of EDEN territory, between George and Knysna. The format is for pairs of any combination to come and race. We had wonderful experiences with the best adventure racers to take part over the years and we've give developing teams opportunities as well as for juniors to take part.

You can come and race in a triathlon over 150k's or in an adventure race over 200k's in pairs. The adventure race will discover new territory in 2010 with navigation being part of the endurance component of the event. If you are a mountain biker, or a runner or a paddler the option is to build up a relay team of 4 members. They will also be racing in pairs but you can relay through the terrain, giving legs or arms a rest till the next discipline. Why would you do it...because you can!

So this is the EDEN! The event boasts with absolute great natural beauty, amazing views and great comrade. The event is there purely to enjoy the outdoors and a healthy lifestyle with a friend."

Checkout the Race website [here](#) and go an enter!

9 September 2010 - Do-It-Now - The Addicts feature on the cover of the latest edition of Do It Now magazine. The Magazine also features a comprehensive article on the teams exploits at the Australian XPD and has some stunning photo's from the race. You can view the magazine online at www.doitnow.co.za Go check it out.

23 August 2010 - Hi-Tec Puffer - This past weekend saw Addicts Tatum "Hobbit" Prins and Graham Bird compete in the 80km Hi-Tec Puffer. This race starts at Cape Point and winds it's way through the numerous mountain tracks and paths to the Waterfront. It is a tough race and this past weekends high winds and cold weather made the going even tougher. Tatum Prins had a storming race and finishing in 8h37 in a brilliant six overall and second woman, while Graham Bird had a horrific race finishing way off the pace in 11h56. The busy racing schedule over the past few weekends that included the 40km Outinequa traverse trail run and the 230km Trans Baviaans MTB race had Graham feeling tired right from the start. [Check out the Google Earth track of the Puffer route here](#) (as download from Polar RS800CX).

Tatum reports on the Hi-Tec Puffer:

Puffer - The Mother of all Mothers

After finishing Australia XPD AR in June I set my sights and goals on Puffer... "The Puffer is a no-frills, not-for-wimps 80km ultra for runners who run for the fun of it. There is NO prize money, NO big media coverage, NO fame." I so badly wanted this race. It is a long, hard run which was perfect for me...but not necessarily so perfect on the day..

Brrrrr! We woke up to howling winds and rain spattering the window. "Oh no... why today?" We all piled into the car and headed to Cape Point, nervous banter and chatter all round. We couldn't figure out why we were doing this to ourselves. It just wasn't making any sense at all! We arrived, no rain, just wind. I had to give myself a stern talking to. It went something like this: "Oh for heaven's sake pull yourself towards yourself you weak ***** *****!" That was that! We got off the bus at Cape Point, the gun went off and we scurried off to run 24kms on tar. This I might add goes against every grain in my body.

Doof, doof, doof, doof, that was all I heard for that first 24km as we stomped our way through the reserve, up Red Hill and finally joined the track leading into the mountains. Thankfully I was running in a bunch and managed to sneak behind them, conserving all the energy I could. (thanks Brett!)

Somewhere along the tar I got the split that Caroline was 13min ahead. Holy smokes was all I could think and I couldn't help but wonder how she was going to maintain that. "I'll get her in the mountain I thought..." I ran the next section to Black Hill strong, getting a lead on the bunch I was with as we hit the single track. At this stage I had met up with a good friend Dom Strano who came out to join me for a couple km's. It was so good to have a smiling face meet me on the track.



Once we hit Black Hill it was just Angelo and myself. I was very upset when he stopped for a pee in the Woodcutters trail. I so badly wanted some company up Die Ou Wa pad - it was not going to be pleasant in the headwind.. alone. Somewhere up Die Ou Wa Pad I met the cheerful trio of Jacque Marais, Karyn and Shane from Hi tec. They offered huge cheers of encouragement. I managed to splutter a couple of windswept words and ran on. I couldn't afford to stop for even 1 second. Caroline was still hitting that pace hard. I had only managed to pull 4 minutes on her and I hadn't even give a thought to what the race was doing behind me. I just knew I had to go hard and I and couldn't let up, not even for a second.

By the time I got to Constantia Nek I had hit a low. From Silver mine dam, and up and over Vlakkenberg was sluggish for me. I should have got someone to run with me there. I was frustrated and getting anxious that I couldn't pull any time. Once I arrived at the Nek I heard we were been taken around the mountain. My spirits crashed. I needed this mountain section. Running around would be difficult for me. Luckily at this point another great mate Costa Dimopolous joined me all the way to the Waterfront. He was like the shining sun with his positive energy, quirky chirps and his usual full of sh't self. What a treat to have him run with me.

We ran this section well, every now and again I felt a twinge of cramp in my calves. It would come like a little lightning bolt and my whole leg would kick out straight.

EAT, DRINK, EAT some more. I think I ate everything I had, drank 2 electrolytes and put my head down. If I wasn't going to win I had to finish this race knowing I had tried my frigging best. When I didn't want to run anymore that is just what I thought. "As long as you know you have given it your all.." Running the trail from the turnstile to Tafelberg road was crazy. The wind was so strong at times, it didn't make any sense to run. It just blew us backwards. We hit the tar road and again the twinges began. My head and body just don't do tar. It's as simple as that. Once we reached the contour on Platteklip I started feeling ok again, the trail was fun and I knew it was home time soon.

Just Signal Hill left and what a mare! Just the thought of more tar was enough to make me stop dead in my tracks. This time Cos said it me. "Tats- is this everything you got? You got to finish knowing you did everything you could." AAAARGHGGH!!! I kept running, my body was tired, the ligaments in my feet were hurting like a I don't know what. Finally we got the check point and what a relief knowing it was downhill from there. I didn't even notice the last bit of tar, all I could think about was crossing that line. Home sweet home. It felt so good to cross that line. 2nd place and 6th overall.

Even with the disappointment that I didn't get what I wanted I absolutely gave it my best shot which is worth just as much. If I had got to the end and still had some in the tank I would have been horribly disappointed. Massive congratulations to Caroline!! She had a goal this year, a specific focus and she ran like a bat out of hell. What a superb race she had and so incredibly well deserved. ?

A huge THANK YOU to all the people who made that day for me... Serena, Martin and your team - thank you for all the effort you put into making this special event happen. Dom and Cos who were so awesome to come and run with me. Such gems! Such inspiration! Thank you to my support/ cheering squad, namely my husband Lofts and the pups, Mom, Duds, Clay and Linds (the family) as they cheered and shouted at me when I went storming past. I didn't even offer them a hi, sometimes just a nod in their general direction. What they put up with. ? Thank you guys.

Then to my fantastic sponsor, Salomon - the shoe that gets me across every trail and every mountain I set foot on. You are the best!

Over and out for now....next up 600km AR World Champs end of Sept! Watch this space..

Hobs"

17 August 2010 - Addicts successfully complete the Trans Baviaans MTB race - As part of the preparations for the upcoming ARWC, the addicts headed out to Willowmore in the Eastern Cape to compete in the Trans Baviaan's MTB Race. "Starting in Willowmore the route winds through beautiful mountain ranges into the magnificent Baviaanskloof, the Trans Baviaans is not only the longest single stage MTB team event in the world, but also one of South Africa's premier mountain biking events." After cycling through the spectacular Baviaanskloof, stopping off at well stocked watering tables and checkpoints, the race finishes at Jefferies Bay, 230km later. Adventure Addicts; Graham "Tweet" Bird, Hanno Smit and Donovan Simms completed the race in a time of 10h22 finishing in 17th position overall.

[Checkout the race profile \(as download from Polar RS800CX\) here.](#)

Donovan wrote this brief report: "I have often thought about doing the Trans Baviaans but shuddered at the mere thought of the 230kms of undulating terrain and how I might not be able to sit for a week. Then "Tweet" called and it was game on. Saturday morning saw Tweet, Hanno and myself set off on one of the best mountain bike rides I have done. The start was way too fast and had Hanno and I out of our comfort zones early, but things settled down after about 30kms. Other than a blow out on my back wheel which cost us about 20 minutes, the ride was pretty smooth sailing. A fast transition at Bergplaas saw us make up much wasted time. As it got dark we started some of the looong climbs I had heard so much about, these were made a bit easier by not being able to see just how long they really were. Finally after 10 hours and 21 minutes we crossed the finish line after a job well done. I would like say a special thanks to Kathy, our second, she was an absolute star."

Kathy van Dyk, the support driver for the addicts wrote this report: "Long lonely hours by yourself in the back up vehicle, following a string of other drivers, with the music blaring to keep yourself awake and then getting to checkpoints and meeting up with the other weary, but excited back up drivers anxiously awaiting the arrival of their teams.

Life as a back up driver is very different to that of a participant actually riding the race. You have your responsibilities and you cannot let your team down. You have to make sure you are prepared for their arrival and also to make sure you know your directions to the next check point as well. If you





do not arrive and check yourself in on time, your team will get a time penalty.

I started off by busing it up to Willowmore, on Friday 13th August, with a team from Port Elizabeth. Lots of laughing, but no stories out of this bus, as what happens on tour, stays on tour :)

We arrived just before sunset on Friday and boy, are the Karoo sunsets spectacular. There was a jet stream across the sky, just as I remember it from last year. The year may change, but the schedules and dates stay the same. There were plenty of familiar faces at registration and while I was waiting for my team from Knysna to arrive, I went and found all my friends who were staying in the nearby boarding school and said hello.

Once my Team Adventure Addicts had arrived and we had our introductions, I checked in as their driver and got my booklet of instructions and a map. I read it over and over again incase I missed something.

My new team was amazing. A group of adventure racers who did not appear in the least bit phased that they were to take on a 230km race the next day. They casually packed their check point crates deliberating on how much time to stop at each and calculating the distances between each check point. The main debate was where they thought they should leave their lights. I remember spending hours trying to decide on what to pack into what box as there is always plenty to eat at most check points and boy, were our crates full compared to these guys. I guess they are used to going 100% unassisted for distances and times way longer than they were anticipating for the next day. They were still casually discussing getting "home" by Sat evening. When I rode last year, I knew I would be no where near home by the same day :)

Thanks to a team member's wife, we had a hearty supper. It was an amazing lazagne and 5 of us managed to polish off a really big dish. We stayed in a Willowmore family's home, complete with cat, dog and kids. It is amazing how the entire town comes together and completely welcomes all these crazy mountain bikers once a year. The weather was remarkably good, but non the less, still a freezing winters evening for us who normally reside at the coast.

We sat down to a hearty Karoo breakfast prepared by our hostess the next morning and the men casually prepped themselves for the "ride" doing a few last minute bike checks and by 9.45am we were on our way.

I drove my support vehicle down to the start and watched the hundreds of cyclists taking off into the dusty distance. Fellow driver James and I sat down to a coffee (caffeine yes please) before heading off back towards Uniondale, Joubertinia and finally Hankey, Patensie and Hadleigh. I stopped at Padlang's Cafe for a 3pm lunch with my other driver friends Ian and Conrad before going to Check Point 5 (Hadleigh Pakhuis) and clocking myself in at 3.46pm. We had to be there an hour before our teams arrived and my team had given me good estimations of their arrival times.

My guys arrived at just before 6pm, so it wasn't quite dark and this is the first time I had seen them since take off that morning. They were mostly looking rather strong considering the speed they had evidently been riding at. They had encountered one mechanical en route. A side-wall slash which they had to stop twice for and which cost them 15 minutes. I heard later they had only stopped for 7 minutes at the top of Bergplaas (CP4). Time enough I am sure only to put on their lights and a very quick bite to eat.

CP 5 transition was just as fast. I had hardly wiped out my eyes, given them warmer clothes, fresh snacks and a packet of baby potatoes and juice and I was back in the van now heading for CP7 which was 43.5 kms away at Zuurbron Farm. I knew they were fast and I had to check in way ahead of them. So, without breaking the speed limits and trying to read the map which was now rather dog-eared, by torch light, I managed to make my way in the dark to CP7.

It is always amazing to hear a familiar voice from out of the darkness. I was offered a cuppa coffee by Mug a Transbaviaans Training Camp partner while we watched some of the top teams coming in and while I was awaiting my teams arrival.

Good estimation of their arrival times was in my favour. They only filled up their water bottles at this stop. I quickly ran to get my check out sticker, jumped back in the van and when I was ready to drive off, only then were they allowed to go. On my arrival I had already reset my trip meter so in the haste to get out I would not forget and had re-studied the map and trip distances to J-Bay, Kabeljous, which was the finish line.

I arrived within my 20 minutes required time and cheered them over the finish line at just after 8pm. Spur burgers were free to all riders and drivers and I collected my team's burgers and gave them cokes and we all sat down and tucked into what was possibly the best burger I have eaten in years :) Spirits were high and yes, they had arrived at the finish line in the same day.

After dropping them at their B&B for some well deserved rest a hot shower and a comfortable bed, I then went back to the finish line to wait for my previous year's team mates, fellow Fat Tracks members and friends. I was there till just after 12pm and there were still weary cyclists coming across the finish line, but all with one thing in common, a smile on their faces.

I know it's an amazing achievement for anyone and to be on the support side of things gave me a completely different perspective. I thoroughly enjoyed my job as back up driver and support but I will hopefully be back on the bike and well trained by this time next year so I too can take on the challenge of 230kms, through the Baviaansklouf within the specified 24 hours and maybe also arriving home on the same day."

16 August 2010 - Donovan Simms joins the Adventure Addicts for the ARWC 2010 - Experienced East London Adventure Racer Donovan Simms will be joining the Adventure

Donovan Simms

Addicts for the ARWC at the end of September 2010. Donovan has been AR since 2003 and was a raced in numerous races all over South Africa as well as two international races at XPD Portugal in 2007 and XPD Australia in 2008.



Donovan raced with the Adventure Fanatics at Swazi 2009 and brings a great mix of strengths to the team.
15 August 2010 - Tatum on Go Multi Cover - The Addicts "Hobbit", Tatum



Prins features on the cover of the latest edition of [Go Multi Magazine](#). The Magazine also features an article on the Hobbit. Go check it out.

1 August 2010 - Adventure Addicts prepare for World Adventure Racing Championships

The Adventure Addicts are in the final eight weeks of preparation for the World AR Championships that will be taking place in Spain at the [Bimbache Extrem](#) from the 30th Sept to 8th Oct 2010. The team has a number of events lined up as training events before heading into the final few weeks of "speedwork". Events planned include the Houtbay trail run in July, the Outeniqua Traverse Trail Run, Trans Baviaan's MTB race and the Puffer Trail run - all in August. Reports from these races to follow.

Bimbache Extrem

28 July 2010 - Winning team at XPD misses a Checkpoint - so it has now been almost three months since the Adventure Addicts successfully completed the XPD in Australia. The race was a 700km and was one of the toughest events the individuals in the team had competed in. The race took the team just over six and a half days to complete through the harsh terrain that northern Queensland offered. It has take a number of months to get over the physical, mental and emotional stress the team members went through.

XPD



As it turned out there was a final leg of the race that the team have spent the past few months battling through. The Adventure Addicts completed the race late night Tuesday 25th May finishing in second place, four and a half hours behind Team Blackheart from Australia. Final prize giving took place on the evening of Friday, 28th May.



About an hour before prize giving we heard a rumour that Blackheart had missed a checkpoint. Upon hearing this, Team Captain Graham Bird approached AR World Series director, Geoff Hunt to enquire about this. Geoff knew nothing about this but proceeded to find out from the XPD race director Craig Boycroft. Geoff reported back to us about 20 mins before prize giving that it was indeed true that Blackheart had missed a checkpoint and had been given a 1 hour penalty. As can be expected we were horrified and went to chat to the race director, who seemed more concerned with starting prize giving on time that sorting out the issue of the leading team missing a CP. Prize giving proceed and we subsequently submitted an appeal to the penalty handed down to Team Blackheart. In our minds, clipping the compulsory checkpoints in an adventure race are a fundamentally requirement of AR and missing a CP would result in becoming unranked. We have spent the past few months in correspondence with the Race Director, the AR World Series and fellow adventure racers. It seems the decision has not been a popular one. The race organiser has justified the "lightness" of the penalty by claiming adherence to the XPD race rules, but fails to identify the "Race Penalties Committee" that imposed the penalty as required by the XPD rules. So ultimately it seems the team that was awarded the victory at XPD missed a CP. It has been a long and hard road for the Addicts to come to terms with, considering they received an effective 60 hour penalty at the Bull of Africa 2008 for failing to clip a CP.

31 May 2010 - McCain goes extreme at XPD - SA's Team McCain Adventure Addicts recorded their best international result ever in Australia, where they took part in the XPD Cairns 2010 expedition race. This no-holds-barred, multi-disciplinary event - a key race in the Adventure Racing World Champs - saw the SA foursome race non-stop for six and a half days over 700km to claim second place.

XPD



This time, they seemed to have bitten off more than they could chew ... The four McCain campaigners may be old hands when it comes to adventure racing, but trekking, running, kayaking, snorkeling, biking and rafting through croc territory for six days or more might be pushing the limits, even for them.

Let's say that the 'Adventure Addicts' were able to avoid the 'salties' (local parlance for the salt-water crocs, which max out at up to a 1000kg), they would still run the full gamut of other Australian nasties. The fact is, they were facing up to the XPD Cairns 2010, a 700km expedition race, constituting a gruelling course through one of the wildest regions on the world's most dangerous island...

'Stinging trees', which the teams ran foul of on Day Two within the Misty Mountains rain-forest near Ravenshoe, were a case in point. Contact with the toxic trees caused extreme pain and distress, and treatment by the race medics reduced several hard core adventure racing heroes to tears. Skin areas exposed to insidious thorns are treated with a solution of hydrochloric acid in order to break down silicon tubes broken off in the skin. Following this, the area is waxed repeatedly in an effort to remove remaining capsules, thus adding even more pain to the 'cure'.

Despite the gauntlet of vicious vegetation, extreme white-water and the gnarly topography of the Cairns region, McCain hit the straps right from the word go. The daunting event, which started with a snorkeling and orienteering leg at midday on May 19th commenced at pace, but McCain realised they had to go hard and stick with the front runners, or lose out on the biggest race of their lives.



And so McCain did just that, which is the only way to go when you're running with the big dogs of AR. From the start gun, they snorkeled, trekked and coasteered Dunk Island, then banged straight into a 100km mountain biking stage before rafting the white-water thrill-ride that is the Tully River gorge. A massive monster of a trek followed on Day Two (as did their encounters with the 'stinging trees') and yet they persevered.

Together with the leading bunch, including world-beaters such as Teams Blackheart, Orion and Merrell, they toiled tirelessly, and steamed into mid-camp after more than 70 hours of non-stop racing. With the exception of an enforced sleep at the start of the race, they had not rested and, as expected, the dreaded Sleep Monster pounced during their ensuing paddling leg along the spectacular Walsh River.

Not wanting to lose sight of Orion, Merrell and Blackheart, the Adventure Addicts pushed mind, body and soul to the limit as they trekked towards Mount Mulligan. But, after nearly 34 hours of bush-whacking, their minds and bodies could do no more and, in the words of their Team Captain Graham Bird, "we collapsed like dead bodies in the transition area to pass out for a solid three-hour sleep".

Strangely enough, this much-needed rest rejuvenated McCain, and despite being more than 12hrs behind the leaders (and four hours behind 3rd placed Merrell), their new-found energy allowed them to kick up a gear. Within less than a day they had overhauled Merrell and cut the overall lead down to a mere six hours. Unbeknownst to them, Team Orion had to withdraw from the race after over-cooking the last two legs, and the SA foursome were now lying in second place!

So far, they had managed to survive (or avoid) poisonous plants, marine 'stingers' such as the box jellyfish (rated the most lethal sea creature on the planet), tarantula spiders as big as side plates, the odd crocodile and a selection of seriously venomous snakes. According to Bird, their most dangerous encounter came within the last few kilometres of the race as they were navigating their way through the streets of the city of Cairns.

"Tatum was walking along the sidewalk and, after six and a half days with less than eight hours' sleep, we were all out on our feet. What looked like a stick turned out to be a 1.5m extremely pissed-off snake, but at least this meant we crossed the finish line fully awake"! The XPD took its toll, however, and both Bird and Iain-Don Wauchope had to spend the night in hospital to undergo treatment for dehydration and serious infection on leg wounds encountered during the night hikes.

Thousands of fans around the country followed the progress of McCain Adventure Addicts through live satellite tracking, and there must have been collective cheers and tears as they finally reached the end of their epic expedition. In a telephonic interview with the team, they all echoed the words of their Team Captain: "This was without a doubt the toughest task we have ever faced in our lives".

"We aimed for a Top 10 finish", says Team Captain Graham Bird, "and therefore placing second against the top Adventure Racing teams in the world is ultimately satisfying". Bird hails from Knysna in the Western Cape, as does work-horse Hano Smit. Tatum Prins, also known as 'Hobbit', from Cape Town, and AR Newbie Iain-Don Wauchope made up the rest of the foursome. The team members excel in a range of disciplines as varied as paddling, mountain biking, trail running and navigation, and the extreme climate, topography and conditions in north-eastern Australia suited their style of racing down to the ground.

XPD



29 April 2010 - ADDICTS HEAD TO AUSTRALIA - After a quiet second half of 2009, after their brilliant fourth place finish at the AR World Series Race in Spain at the Bimbache Xtreme in May 2009, they once again find themselves taking to the sky as they travel to North Eastern Australia with the Tropical city Cairns as their ultimate destination.



The Australian XPD Adventure Race, a 700km expedition style event which takes place from the 17th to 28th May and is set to be the World Champs in 2011. The Addicts are up against 50 teams of four competitors from around the globe, as they trek, mountain bike and kayak for five to ten days in this world renowned expedition. These adventurers will race day and night over a 800km course pushing themselves to the ultimate limits of human endurance. The 5th Edition of XPD will be held in Cairns and promises to take teams through the most beautiful terrain that Queensland has to offer.



"This race couldn't come at a better time as "actual racing" is the best preparation we can do for the AR World Champs that will be held in Spain later this year", says Tatum "Hobbit" Prins.

Extract of Course Details - "The course is generally linear and it will be "as much an expedition as a race". Teams

are provided a course booklet and maps 24hrs before the start. The course booklet contains the location of each of the race checkpoints. To complete the course teams must navigate through all the checkpoints and arrive at the finish line at Race HQ. The course will be challenging for first time expedition racers and experienced teams alike.

It is expected that the winning team will complete the course in 4-5 days. All other teams will be permitted up to 10 days to complete the course. Organisers have removed mid race cut-offs and allow the full 10 days for teams to complete the expedition. This format is particularly attractive for teams attempting their first expedition length adventure race. If you finish early then you are encourage d to remain at Race HQ and enjoy some of the local activities or just kick back and relax.

Organisers plan to take competitors through the Great Barrier Reef and nearby islands, the rich and diverse rainforests of the wet tropics, over waterfalls and

cascades that feed crystal clear rivers, across lakes of the tablelands and through eucalypt woodlands of the Eastern savannah country. Organisers even plan to incorporate some of the iconic legs undertaken in the Eco-Challenge of 97."

4 April 2010 - AN ACTION PACKED YEAR AS THE MCCAIN ADVENTURE ADDICTS GEAR UP FOR WORLD CHAMPS - After a rather slow start to 2010, the Addicts have been working hard at increasing their speed as they gear up for the exciting line up of races on both the national and international AR calendars. December holidays saw the addicts drifting lazily down the Orange River, exploring the forests of the garden route and of course paddling the open seas in search of that elusive "big one."

With the arrival of January and what is to be an action packed 2010, the team has started to get more streamlined - and by this I mean not only around the middle - with the de



cision to race only one team, consisting of Graham "Tweet" Bird, Tatum "Hobbit" Prins, Andre "Gie-man" Gie and Hanno "Smelly" Smit.

WARTRAIL 19th - 21st March 2010 - On the racing front, first up for the Addicts was the Wartrail. Set in the picturesque North Eastern Cape, this 3 day event tested the mind, body and soul as competitors took on the 65km trail run through the Southern Witteberg, 135km cycle along the Tele River and Lesotho border to the banks of the mighty Orange River and finally paddling its brown swirling waters to Aliwal North, some 60km downstream. This event, organized by Bloemfontein based Adrian Saffy, was every bit as challenging, enjoyable and brilliantly organized as years past. Well done to the Addicts as they came out tops with Andre "Gie-man" Gie taking top honours in the men's race and Tatum "Hobbit" Prins in the ladies race.



AUSTRALIA XPD 17th- 28th May 2010 / 700km - The Addicts will soon be taking to the sky as they travel to North Eastern Australia with the Tropical city Cairns as their ultimate destination. The race, a 700km expedition style event which takes place in the second half of May, promises to take teams through the most beautiful terrain that Queensland has to offer. This race is the perfect event to get the Addicts sharp for the 500km Adventure Racing World Champs that will be staged in Spain later this year...their ultimate goal.

KNYSNA FESTIVAL - July 2010 - The World Cup will certainly be a good excuse for some recovery time after XPD, with feet up and a plate of McCain oven baked chips close at hand, the addicts will have all they need to ensure that come July and the Knysna Oyster Festival, they are ready to perform at full throttle. There is certainly no shortage of fun to be had at this annual sports festival. The first weekend kicks off with a 80km mountain bike race followed by the not so soft 13km featherbed trail run, the Xterra at the Pezula field of dreams, the ever popular forest marathon and just when the upper body starts to feel left out, the waterfront rush will certainly get the blood going and if you're looking for something a little less heart stopping, there is even a canoe race with which to end off the weeks festivities - oh, and did I mention the fabulous social engagements? The events are endless and the Addicts will be there! Come and join in the fun ?



OPTIONS ARE ENDLESS... August 2010 - August is set to be one of the busiest months on the calendar. There is something for all the Addicts to enjoy. Addicts Graham "Tweet" Bird and Tatum "Hobbit" Prins are going to take tackle the 80km Puffer running event while Hanno "Smelly" Smit will bike the Transbaviaans - 235km to be completed in 24hrs. That's not all, the addicts will also enjoy a bit of white water and sprint race action at the Palmiet River Festival. So with all this to choose from, the Addicts are going to be very busy indeed!



ADVENTURE RACING WORLD CHAMPS / 500km BIMBACHE EXTREME - October 2010

The Addicts' big goal for the year! This year the AR World Championships will be held in Spain at the Bimbache Xtreme. The event is to be held in the drier inland regions of the country starting in Avila and finishing in Salamanca. It will be the main focus for the Addicts this year as last year they had a very commendable top 5 finish in the Bimbache, despite a last minute change to the team line up. The Addicts will have to navigate over 500km's while they paddle, mountain bike, trek, in line skate and much much more. The lineup will include all the top teams from around the world as they race their guts out to see who will be the 2010 World Champion.

EDEN DUO - October 2010 - October brings along the annual Merrel Eden Duo organized by Jan Heenop. This is a great race for novices and old salts alike with easy navigation and a single day multi stage format, taking competitors through some of the most beautiful terrain the Garden Route has to offer. Last year saw a great tussle amongst the McCain members, this year promises to be no different!

The year will be rounded off with the Sabrina Love Ocean Challenge in Plett. This two day event in aid of charity has something for everyone, swimming events, a paddle, beach run, mtb and kids duathlon. With so many different events to choose from, the Addicts will certainly be kept out of mischief for at least some of the time...and I didn't even begin to mention all the mountain bike, trail running and paddling races the Addicts will do for training...phew...the life of an Adventure Addict.

Let the fun begin!