

Tussock Buster: a huge success!

Over 1750 bikes busted their way through the tussock which thrives over the New Zealand Army training grounds at the second annual running of Tussock Buster hosted by the team at Off Limits. With near perfect weather on both days, the skies were clear for all to venture into the fabulous terrain which is the back drop to the 63,000 hectare Waiouru Army Training Area.

Base camp was situated on the Waiouru rugby fields and started to fill up on the Friday evening with riders getting in early to make the most of the weekend and suss out the ins and outs of the trails so they had the edge when their mates arrived the next day.



With 195km of trails available, there was a trail to suit everyone from a first time beginner to even the top racers in the country. The 85km track 'Dam buster,' was awesome for a whole day family ride and it wasn't rare to see a dad helping this son or daughter up a hill and, in some cases, the other way round. For those who wanted a quick blat, then there was the Tussock trail (32km) or Marsden's post (23km) where fantastic, high speed and flowing tracks made everyone's day. The tussock would just wiz by and if you weren't careful, you would miss the astonishing views of Mt Ruapehu. The trail which was most talked about

though was Sniper alley; a track which wound 1200 feet down and proved to be the most technical of all the trails. I was told by one person "I came round the corner and thought no way, we are not going up there, but actually it wasn't too bad. Easier than I thought it would be".

All in all, I found it a fantastic weekend. Everyone went to the rugby club to see some footage of the day's riding on Saturday night, get a feed and a drink and stories from the day could be heard where ever you went. "Oh I smashed my radiator right off there" and "Did u see that Dam -it's amazing" or even "Mate, I smoked past you down that straight".

After a bit of a late night on Saturday, the tracks where a little clearer for Sunday, helping to keep the dust down and making for a very enjoyable day for those who still had the energy to brave the trails.

For only its second year running, Tussock Buster was a great success and I feel it can be compared to other great trail rides like Desert Storm or Alpine Express. So, to all those who went along, I hope to see you back next year and for all those who missed out, go put Tussock Buster in your calendar now! It will be the same weekend next year: 27-28 March 2010.

Sam Greenslade
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