



MTN South African BMX Championships - Round 1 - Giba Gorge, Durban

Two riders, Bayanda Ganyaza and Xolise Ndzaba, from the Velokhaya BMX development club in Khayelitscha, Cape Town, caught the early morning flight to Durban to join their new team, Team Jeep BMX, for the first round of the MTN SA BMX Championships which were held at the Giba Gorge BMX Track just outside Durban.

Day 1 consisted of getting their new bikes built up and getting them to the track to take in the atmosphere of a full international track and start gate. After getting used to their bikes they started getting into the flow of the track. They were introduced to the rest of the team and welcomed into our family of riders.

On day 2 of their trip, we rested up in the morning, then headed down to Giba for another training session. They were given 1 hour on the track before getting into some serious gates start practice. The UCI Pro Gate system was in use and it took a little getting used to, but after some coaching, they started getting the hang of it and were putting in a few good laps. They stayed the evening to what one of the biggest pro shoot out events ever in SA, with a purse of over R18,000 up for grabs. There was some awesome racing and the elite riders were pulling out all the stops to take the top prize home, the R8,000.00 first place cheque. Bayanda and Xolise were treated to some top class racing.

Friday afternoon, Day 3, was official practice. The riders were given 2 x 20min practice sessions, and with 300 riders it was tough to get in enough practice. 4pm and the track was closed to all riders.

Saturday morning saw an early start so that we could get down to the track in time to do proper warm ups and prepare for the day. Both riders lapped up the atmosphere with gazebos filling every open space of ground possible.

{image DSC_9980 - gazebos}

As the first race of the day got underway, the blood started pumping and our 2 visitors were ready to take on the challenge. Both Bayanda and Xolise went out onto the track and showed the talent they have by winning their motos.

With that they managed to bring home wins in all their motos and progressed through to the finals. Both riders knew that they had to work hard in the finals as this is the race everyone wants to win. A gold medal each in leg 1.

{_mg_4006 - bayanda}

Webster Race Management, 7 Brent Road, Pinetown Tel: 031 7083227 Fax: 086 5450005 Email: sydneybmx@gmail.com





Leg 2 in the afternoon was going to be tough, with the Durban sun blazing down raising the temperature to well over 30°. Once again the 2 Velokhaya riders showed their stuff and came home with convincing victories, earning themselves each another gold medal

{_mg_4270 - xolise}

An early nights rest and early start again for the final leg on Sunday morning. With 2 gold medals a piece they were ready to bring home the triple for the week end. Xolise's first race didn't quite go as planned and a few mistakes saw him have to settle for a second. All was not lost and he fought his way back into the winning position for the remainder of the motos. In the finals, both riders didn't put a pedal wrong and came home with comfortable victories, getting them that triple gold for the week end. With this, they both automatically qualify to Expert status and have also reached the qualification criteria to enter the world championships.

Other images {_mg_3793 - bayanda; 3802 - xolise; 4160 - bayanda; 4216 - xolise}

Jeep team mates {_mg_3554 - axel; 3951 - jami; 3918 - sharlene; 4011 - Liam; 4096 - Nzuzo; 4097 - Donovan (team Captain)}

All the riders were treated to a evening out at one of our sponsors restaurants, John Dory's and we celebrated the week end. Medal tally was as follows:

Axel; 11 Expert - 3 x silver

Bayanda; 12 Novice - 3 x gold

Jami; 13 & under girls Expert - 1 x silver & 1 x bronze

Liam; 13 Expert - 2 x gold

Xolise; 15 Novice - 3 x gold

Nic; 16 Expert - Out injured (broken collar bone)

Swen; 40-45 Cruiser Expert - Out injured (broken Ankle)

Sharlene; 45+ Cruiser Expert - 3 x silver

Nzuzo; Elite - semi finals 3x

Donovan; Elite - 2x semi finals and 8th in final on Sunday

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