

# ADVENTURE ADDICTS

## McCain goes extreme at XPD

### KICKER:

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.

### COPY:

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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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”.

#### **Team McCain Adventure Addicts:**

“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.

#### **McCain Foods Limited:**

A generous sponsorship deal with **McCain Foods Limited**, an international leader in the frozen food industry, has turned the XPD Australia dream into a reality for the **Adventure Addicts**. As a trendsetter in frozen vegetables and potato chips, **McCain** is synonymous with a healthy lifestyle. **McCain Real Oven-bake Chips** are a great carbohydrate source, are 95% fat free, has 0% cholesterol, and are endorsed by the Heart Foundation. Their extensive product range targets people who strive for an active and well-balanced lifestyle.

#### **Other Sponsors:**

**McCain Adventure Addicts** boasts apparel manufacturer **CAPESTORM** as another of their official sponsors. **CAPESTORM**, winner of the Proudly South African Award, rivals global technical wear when it comes to durability and quality, and the team can absolutely trust their clothing to keep them warm, dry or cool, depending on conditions they face. Other sponsors include PVM Nutritional Science, Giant Bicycles, Island Tribe Sunscreen, Squirt Bicycle Lube and Black Diamond head torches.

#### **XPD Events:**

‘As much an expedition as a race’ – this is what participants must expect on the multi-day XPD Events. They form part of the **AR World Series**, a global circuit of premium AR events representing a dozen countries over a one-year period. This year, the ARWS will culminate in the World Series Final – The Bimbache Extrem – to be held in the north of Spain in October. Casio Pro-trek is the official watch sponsor of the ARWS.

For more information on **McCain Adventure Addicts**, their sponsors and upcoming races, check out the following web sites -:

Team Information - [www.advaddicts.co.za](http://www.advaddicts.co.za)  
Apparel Sponsor - [www.capestorm.co.za](http://www.capestorm.co.za)  
World Series - [www.arworldseries.com](http://www.arworldseries.com)

Main Sponsor - [www.mccain.com](http://www.mccain.com)  
XPD Australia - [www.geocentricoutdoors.com.au](http://www.geocentricoutdoors.com.au)