

MTB World Cup XC #8 & DH #6 - CDM Canberra, Australia, August 29-31, 2008

August 30: Elite men 4X, Graves finishes season on a high

By Paul Verkuylen in Mount Stromlo, Canberra, Australia – www.cyclingnews.com



Yeti's Jared Graves, recently returned from the Beijing Olympic Games, took the title ahead of his team-mate Sam Willoughby

Photo: Mark Gunter

It seemed almost inevitable that an Australian would win the men's four cross final coming into the event, but few would have guessed that the final would be an all Australian affair. .

"It's the best to come to races like this and get the home crowd support," Graves explained.

This was Graves' last race for the season after a hectic build up to the Olympics, to come away with a win was bonus. "It's good for the head to go home and know that I finished the season strong."

Intermittent rain made it tough, but not surprisingly it didn't seem to slow them down. With the huge home crowd cheering on the Australian riders it was tough for the international riders to advance to the final. "Having it at night when everyone has had a few beers under their belts, that's what I love about mountain biking, everyone

is so relaxed, it's just like a big party," Graves said.

With four Australians making the final, and Caroline Buchannan taking her first World Cup in the women's event, the crowd was pumped as they lined up for the final run down the course. Graves was the only rider in the final who had actually experienced a World Cup before. The others, regulars at Australian events had never raced an international four cross before. "But they are all top level BMXer's and have raced internationally before," Graves explained. "If we get more of these guys racing four cross we [Australia] would be the dominant country in the world.

Graves' tactics were simple going into the race. "I tried not to snap to quick out of the gate because it was wet. Luke Madill slipped so that strategy paid off. I got out in front and tried to ride smart and clean."

Showing just how much class he has, even a mechanical was not able to hinder his winning ride.

"I actually lost my rear brake at the top. It is pulling right to the bar. Trying to slow down for the corners with just the front brake was a bit sketchy."



Sam Willoughby
Photo: Mark Gunter

Coming home for second, to the delight of Graves, was his 17 year-old Yeti team-mate. Both riders advanced through the heats and the semis in the same draw. Each time going one-two with Graves proving to be the better rider in each.

According to Graves, Willoughby has a bright future ahead of him. "We went one-two all night. He is like the little brother that I never had. He is the junior BMX world champion; it is not unreasonable to label him the Sam Hill of BMX."

Results

- 1 Jared Graves (Aus) Yeti Fox Shox Factory Race Team
- 2 Sam Willoughby (Aus)
- 3 Luke Madill (Aus)
- 4 Thomas Hubert (Aus)
- 5 Leigh Darrell (Aus)
- 6 Johannes Fischbach (Ger) Team Ghost International
- 7 Guido Tschugg (Ger)
- 8 Kamil Tatarkovic (Cze) Suzuki-RB
- 9 Filip Polc (Svk) Kenda Tomac
- 10 Dan Atherton (GBr) Animal Commencal
- 11 Terrence Scarr (Aus)
- 12 Tim Dunn (Aus)
- 13 Cedric Gracia (Fra) Commencal - Furious - Oakley Team
- 14 Sascha Meyenborg (Ger)
- 15 Thomas Twentyman (Aus)
- 16 Cody Eichhorn (Aus)