

MTB World Cup XC #8 & DH #6 - CDM

Canberra, Australia, August 29-31, 2008

August 31: Elite men downhill,

Minnaar and Rennie take one two for Santa Cruz Syndicate

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

South Africa's Greg Minnaar stole the victory from his Santa Cruz Syndicate team-mate and local Australian favourite Nathan Rennie, as he blast down the course as the last remaining rider to take the victory by over four seconds. Gee Atherton round out the podium in third just over a second behind Rennie.

Minnaar victory was well met by the local crowd, even if they were all jeering on Rennie as he sat in the hot seat waiting for his two team-mates, who had qualified second fastest and fastest in the semi final.

"The Springboks beat the Aussies last night and today we did it again," Minnaar said while accepting a local beer from the crowd. "Sorry to rub it in but it does feel great!"

"I made some mistakes in the semi final and I knew that without those mistakes a cleaner run would be a lot faster. I came to two stops in the semi. I knew with out those I would be a lot quicker."

Like the women, the men also praised the top section of the course, but found the lower section with the thick paste mud tough going.

"This mud is so thick. Just to get through was hard," Minnaar explained. "I was dreading it at the start; I knew how hard it was going to be."



South Africa's Greg Minnaar took victory from Santa Cruz Syndicate team-mate Nathan Rennie
Photo: Mark Gunter



Nathan Rennie (Aus): "This is my best result this season"
Photo: Mark Gunter

Rennie was happy with his second place, even if he did come oh so close to winning on home soil. "This is my best result this season, with a second. It was hard to push through the mud; it almost feels like a win," Rennie said. "A good solid result, I am happy."

Rennie qualified third fastest, with just his Santa Cruz Syndicate team-mates Minnaar and Steve Peat going faster. In the final it was Gee Atherton in the hot seat in a time of 2.47.00 as Rennie made his way down the wet circuit. Using the noise of the home crowd, he shaved 98-hundredths of a second off Atherton's time to move into the hot seat.

Steve Peat was the next to ride and as he sped towards the finish Rennie sat anxiously watching the seconds tick by. With 100 metres remaining on his run, Peat had all but sewn up the fastest time, when a gust of wind blew him off line coming over the second to last jump. Losing his balance, his rear wheel slid out while his foot slipped of the pedal. The mistake cost him dearly. A possible win and definite second place, with only Minnaar left to ride, evaporated as he quickly tried to salvage his ride.

"I am pretty pissed off to be honest," Peat declared. "I had a decent run. I was tired at the end there, but I knew that I could do the jump. I cruised into it and jumped it but a big gust of wind blew me side ways and I landed with my foot off and slide out a little on the landing."

Rennie was now feeling more and more confident, as the crowd erupted in support. But it was not meant to be as Minnaar showed the class that has taken him to so many World Cup wins in the past, slicing a further four seconds off Rennie's time to take his second win of the season.



"I didn't know any times; I was just riding a smooth line up top," Minnaar said. "I saved my gas for the bottom and went as hard as I could when I got there."

Although he was quick to rub in South Africa's win over Australia just last night in the Rugby, Minnaar had nothing but praise for his Australian team-mate. "He has had an up and down season but today he has shown what he is really made of. He rode an awesome race."

Sam Hill (Aus)
Photo ♦: Mark Gunter

Interestingly, it was the second win of the season for the winner of both the women's and men's race. Minnaar and Moseley took the Fort Williams round in Great Britain and both won by four seconds. Minnaar however sees no similarities between the two rounds and believes that it was little more than a coincidence. That may well be, but all eyes will be on the winner of the Fort Williams round next year as all the riders prepare for the World Championships to be held on this course.

Results

- 1 Greg Minnaar (RSA) Santa Cruz Syndicate
- 2 Nathan Rennie (Aus) Santa Cruz Syndicate
- 3 Gee Atherton (GBr) Animal Commencal
- 4 Fabien Barel (Fra) Subaru Mountain Bike Pro Team
- 5 Chris Kovarik (Aus) Chain Reaction Cycles/Intense
- 6 Andrew Neethling (RSA) GT Bicycles / Mongoose Bicycles
- 7 Steve Peat (GBr) Santa Cruz Syndicate
- 8 Jared Rando (Aus) Giant Mountain Bike Team
- 9 Bryn Atkinson (Aus) GT Bicycles / Mongoose Bicycles
- 10 Samuel Blenkinsop (NZl) Yeti Fox Shox Factory Race Team
- 11 Samuel Hill (Aus) Monster Energy / Iron Horse
- 12 Marc Beaumont (GBr) Team Bike Radar
- 13 Filip Polc (Svk) Kenda Tomac
- 14 Dan Atherton (GBr) Animal Commencal
- 15 Justin Leov (NZl) Yeti Fox Shox Factory Race Team
- 16 Cedric Gracia (Fra) Commencal - Furious - Oakley Team
- 17 Pasqual Canals Flix (Spa) Massi
- 18 Neil Donoghue (GBr) Team Bike Radar
- 19 Cameron Cole (NZl) Team Maxxis
- 20 Amiel Cavalier (Aus) Giant Mountain Bike Team
- 21 Brendan Fairclough (GBr) Monster Energy / Iron Horse
- 22 Luke Strobels (USA) Team Maxxis
- 23 Matthew Simmonds (GBr) Chain Reaction Cycles/Intense
- 24 Fabien Pedemanaud (Fra) Team Pyrenees Morewood
- 25 Wyn Masters (NZl)
- 26 Benjamin Cory (Aus)
- 27 Matthew Scoles (NZl)
- 28 Tim Eaton (Aus)
- 29 Andrew Mills (Aus)
- 30 Kieran Bennett (NZl)
- 31 Daniel Sims (NZl)
- 32 Mitchell Delfs (Aus) Kenda Tomac
- 33 Ruairidh Cunningham (GBr) Chain Reaction Cycles/Intense
- 34 Dan Stanbridge (GBr) Mojo Orange
- 35 Will Rischbieth (Aus)
- 36 Brook MacDonald (NZl)
- 37 Hayden McGregor (NZl)
- 38 Ricky Boyer (Aus)
- 39 Brad Kelly (Aus)
- 40 Aari Barrett (NZl)
- 41 Alan Beggin (Ita)
- 42 Marco Milivinti (Ita)

43 Ben Cathro (GBr) Mojo Orange
44 Darcy Murrell (Aus)
45 Tom Patton (Aus)
46 Craig Yates (Aus)
47 Richard Lee (Aus)
48 Matthew Vincent (Aus)
49 Alex Swann (Aus)
50 Richard Leacock (NZl)
51 Edward Masters (NZl)
52 Dylan Prohm (Aus)
53 Cody Eichhorn (Aus)
54 Tamryn Murrell (Aus) Tomac Factory Racing
55 Nathan Sharratt (NZl)
56 Brendan Wood (Aus)
57 Joseph Allen (NZl)
58 James Rennie (NZl)
59 Isaac Heppell (Aus)
60 Daniel Meilink (NZl)
61 Thomas Power (Irl)
62 Campbell Robertson (NZl)
63 Alexi Felipe Garcia Aros (Chi)
64 Joshua Button (Aus)
65 Shaun O'Connor (Aus) Santa Cruz Syndicate