



THE MIDLANDS

MTB STAGE RACE

June 29-July 1, 2018 Howick/Karkloof



KZN Midlands Stage Race Media Release

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Huge lead for Hill and Henry after Midlands Day Two

The TIB Insurance Silverback pairing of Andrew Hill and Henry Liebenberg extended their lead to a virtually unbeatable 22 minutes after winning the second day of the Midlands MTB Stage Race around Howick on Saturday.

For the second day in a row the duo were in a class of their own and cruised to a 10-minute win, with Jordan Wisdom repeating his first day result and ending second overall and so also extend his lead in the solo category.

The husband and wife pairing of Martin and Jeannie Dreyer were also able to increase their advantage in the mixed category when they finished just ahead of the second solo rider and first of the two-day competitors, Sanele Tshabalala. Natalie Bergstrom was the first solo woman and ended up just ahead of the second mixed team of Hayley Smith and Dale Allan.

The two-day riders joined the event for the two weekend stages, but despite not having raced on Friday, none of them were able to make any impression on the leaders of the three-day categories with Hill and Liebenberg able to ride away from all the opposition for the second day in a row.

"Today was quite a tough day in terms of the route with lots of big, long climbs," said race leader Andrew Hill after finishing. "But the climbs always came with the reward of a nice piece of single track so you never minded the effort because there was a good reward afterwards.

"The opening stage was more of a marathon type day, while today (Saturday) was more of a mountain biking type of stage and then I think tomorrow is going to be a bit of a play day as we head into the Karkloof Forests.

"We had no problems at all today and rode consistently hard all day and were able to build a nice lead which gives us a bit of a cushion in case something goes wrong on the final day."

Only a major disaster looks likely to be able to rob the race leaders of a cleansweep of wins and a big overall victory. Sunday's third and final day is a relatively short 50km stage loaded with single track in the iconic Karkloof Forests.

Results: Day 2

Teams:

- 1 Andrew Hill / Henry Liebenberg 2:34:57
- 2 Martin Dreyer / Jeannie Dreyer (1st mixed) 2:55:12
- 3 Harley Smith / Dale Allan (2nd mixed) 3:17:19
- 4 Norvyn Pitout / Byron Ekerold 3:21:44

Solo Men:

- 1 Jordan Wisdom 2:44.42
- 2 Sanele Tshabalala 2:55:19
- 3 Jeremy Thompson 3:06:36

Solo Women:

- 1 Natalie Bergstrom 3:14:14
- 2 Caroline Francis 4:10:39

Overall after Day 2**Teams:**

- 1 Andrew Hill / Henry Liebenberg 4:33:17
- 2 Martin Dreyer / Jeannie Dreyer (1st mixed) 5:07:40
- 3 Norvyn Pitout / Byron Ekerold 5:41:38
- 4 Harley Smith / Dale Allan (2nd mixed) 5:48:36

Solo Men:

- 1 Jordan Wisdom 4:55:48
- 2 Matthew Myburgh 5:53:25
- 3 Angus Spence 6:39:43

Solo Women:

- 1 Natalie Bergstrom 5:37:57
- 2 Caroline Francis 6:58:02

For more information visit www.themidlandsmtb.co.za

ENDS

| <i>Photo</i> | <i>Caption</i> | <i>Photographer</i> | <i>Click to download high-res pics</i> |
|---|---|---|--|
|  | The Midlands MTB Stage Race Logo | No photo credit required | Download Here |
|  | The start arch is reflected in race leader Andrew Hill's sunglasses before the start of The Midlands MTB Stage Race. | Photo: Paul Henman/ Paul Henman Photography | Download Here |
|  | Harley Smith (left) and Dale Allan are lying second in the mixed category after Stage 2 of The Midlands MTB Stage Race. | Photo: Paul Henman/ Paul Henman Photography | Download Here |
|  | Husband and wife team of Martin (left) and Jeannie Dreyer, who are leading the mixed category, are watched by zebra during The Midlands MTB Stage Race. | Photo: Paul Henman/ Paul Henman Photography | Download Here |
|  | Unidentified riders enjoy the superb trails of The Midlands MTB Stage Race. | Photo: Paul Henman/ Paul Henman Photography | Download Here |

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