**FIRE & BRIMSTONE AS YOUNG DOMINATES JOLIVET**

*Enduro legend Wade Young takes a National Cross Country win*

It was a case of veni, vidi, vici as South African international hard enduro legend Wade Young and his factory Sherco came, saw, and conquered the second round of the Trademore South African Cross Country Championship at Jolivet in KwaZulu Natal on Saturday. Not even a runaway bush fire halting the race, could prevent Young from taking a minute and 36 second victory over the best of the Cross Country regulars Bradley Cox on a KTM, and Honda rider Michael Pentecost.

Another enduro wildcard Travis Teasdale was fourth for Husqvarna ahead of 350cc OR2 winning teammate Davin Cocker, and perhaps the story of the day, OR3 winner, local lad Haydn Cole on a Honda. Seniors’ winner Kerim Fitz-Gerald was sixth for KTM, from another enduro interloper, William Slater, teammate and second OR2 man home Scott Heygate, and High School winner Luke Walker in a fine tenth on his KTM.

There was drama when a bush fire en route caused the race to be stopped at the end of the first of five planned laps. The fire was brought under control and albeit reduced to four laps, the re-started. Darkness was approaching as the race finished. with its revised format leading to a sensational finish in the Masters class. When the two halves of the race were merged, Pieter Holl and his Kawasaki emerge victorious by half a second over Greg Nairn’s KTM.

Enduro wildcard Wade Young ultimately dominated overall and OR1 on his factory Sherco. He left second placed Bradley Cox to take the spiritual Cross Country OR1 class win aboard his Brother Leader Tread KTM, ahead of Michael Pentecost’s third placed Franchise Co Tork Craft Honda. Three more wildcards, Travis Teasdale’s Husqvarna, William Slater on a KTM and Brett Swanepoel on his Sherco, who was slowed on the final lap after fighting up front, followed in OR1, ahead of Cross Country regular Gareth Cole on his Franchise Co Tork Craft Honda, and Ian Rall’s similar machine.

Davin Cocker took a second comfortable 350cc OR2 win in two races on his factory Husqvarna, over seven minutes clear of Scott Heygate’s Brother Leader Tread KTM. Kyle Eggar and Charl van Eeden’s similar bikes followed, with Teak Harrower fifth in OR2 on his GasGas, ahead of KTM trio, Juan Niebuhr, lady rider Leah Heygate and Luke McClelland.

A delighted Jolivet home hero Haydn Cole took advantage of his local knowledge to ride his Franchise Co Tork Craft Honda to a dominant maiden National 250cc OR3 victory. Dylan Jones was over five minutes adrift on his KTM at the head of a fraught five-bike struggle for second. He beat Husqvarna pair Cobus Bester and enduro wildcard Heinrich Aust, Erik Merry and Ryan Pelser’s Husqvarna. KTM trio Matthew Wilson, Myles Crookes and Ross Ramseyer, and Callan Broskie on a Husqvarna closed off the quarter-litre top ten.

Kerim Fitz-Gerald made no mistakes on his way to another top ten as he took a second dominant Seniors win on the trot on his Red Bull KTM. 2022 champion Kenny Gilbert was second for Pepson Plastics Scottish Cables Motul Kawasaki, ahead of the returning Louwrens Mahoney’s Franchise Co Tork Craft Honda. Marco Cocci’s Yamaha and Wynand Delport riding another Honda were next home.

It was far closer in Masters. Pieter Holl’s Kawasaki beat Greg Nairn’s KTM by three hundredths of a second after three and a half hours of hard riding! KTM duo Stuart Gregory and Suter Eskil Brad Clarke on a Husqvarna, Brian Bontekoning’s Pepson Plastics Kawasaki and Mielies Le Roux followed.

Tenth overall, Luke Walker rode his KTM to an emphatic 15 minute High School 125cc win over Thomas Scales’ similar machine. Blake Young was third on a Sherco, from KTM rider Brandon Clarke, Daniel Peckham’s Sherco and Nathan Westerdale’s KTM in sixth. Derek Karam’s Yamaha, Michael Struik and Rory Donaldson’s KTMs, and Husqvarna lad Johandre Vermaak closed off the class top ten.

Junior action saw Murray Smith take National 85 cc honours on his Husqvarna from KTM lad Bruno Niebuhr, Jean-Baird Maritz’ Kawasaki, Franco Fourie’s KTM and Nicol Smit on a Husqvarna. GJ Coetzee on a Husqvarna took 65 cc victory from Zach Wichmann’s KTM, Matthew Meyer on a GasGas, Wilco du Polly’s Yamaha and KTM kids Cambeul du Preez and Joshua Fotheringham.

The Trademore South African Cross Country Motorcycle Championship now takes a break until a completely different challenge at the midwinter semidesert Vryburg double header on 16 and 17 June.