

## The KAC 2009 - 12 August 2009

A cracker of a day and a cracker of a race. For the past few years a joke that was a bit too close to the truth had been circulating - that the KAC Race day had taken on the mantle of the former Paddy Pallin Classic race, that it would define the worst weather for the season. Even the day before, those in the know were disputing the rosy forecast, insisting that as tomorrow was KAC day, it would all turn ugly. Selective memory invoked the ferocious winds of last year, short courses due to lack of snow, blizzards and driving rain of other recent years. Of course, mostly, competitors have ignored these minor distractions, thumbed their collective nose at Huey, and headed for the party at the Pass anyway. This year I had no doubt they would be focussed on the Cook's Lot fine wines donated by our own Duncan Cook as prizes.

When 13 August broke sunny, cold and fairly still in the Snowys, many of us had to check the calendar; it couldn't be Wednesday! Nevertheless, a jury meeting was still required, to confirm conditions were suitable for the trip to the Pass. One of the shorter meetings. The only safety tip - make sure you've got the sunnies. With NPWS's Steve Bickerstaff cutting a fresh track just in front of the Classic start at 10.45am, the usual suspects pulled away early, with Dave Hislop, Matthew Murtagh and Siobhan Jones chasing Camille Melvey up the road. The lead changed toward the Gap, Matthew pulling to the front, but Camille soon reasserted herself, and only Dave able to stay on her skis as she crossed the line first in 37:47 min, with Dave at 37:48 min, winners of the Otto Pinkas Trophy.

The freestylers got under way at 11.00 am, with Callum Watson and Anthony Evans opening a small break over Cameron Morton by the Gap. From Spencer's however, it was all over, as Anthony moved away to a clear gap, crossing the line in 26:41 min. and a 40sec gap to the National Junior team member. Anthony had clearly fine-tuned himself beautifully for the big event by winning the National 15km Championship the previous Sunday.

Overall, 241 entries were received, and 217 started and finished, all under two hours, including a couple of first timers on skinny skis - well, this was the year to try it. At Charlotte Pass, the hardest decision was whether to hold the prize giving inside or out, not something we have had to be concerned with recently. The snow-bar set up in front of the Chalet enabled finishers to cheer on those still coming in, with a big cheer for Susan Salter arriving as sweeper. Fifteen minutes later, the inimitable Gus Hearl got the prize giving underway, a huge task with over 200 prize categories, led by Cook's Lot wine for first in each age group/gender/style. Amongst the smiling faces were Camille Melvey, winner of the Geoff Nott Trophy; Sue Waller, recipient of the Carl Bongers Trophy; and Michael Shipton who won a weekend's pampering at Solar Springs Health Retreat at Bundanoon. Full results are available at [www.kac.org.au](http://www.kac.org.au) on the cross-country page.

Whilst the weather goes a long way to making the race run well, it wouldn't even start if not for the efforts of the Committee, KAC office staff, and many volunteers who gave up large parts of their holiday to assist in this club event. To all of you, thank you - our Technical Delegate, Carl Melvey, pronounced this one of the best races he has seen. Our appreciation also goes to NPWS, the Perisher Volunteer Ski Patrol, to the two Peters - Ward and Cunningham, and to Carl. Not forgetting the whole of the Charlotte Pass Village staff who did a great job in helping the race run smoothly, and looking after the racers with food and drink, and organising transport where requested. Next year will be the club centenary, and THE KAC will include a wooden ski category and fancy dress competition, so unscrew those old skis from the wall and dust off the grandparents' tweeds. We'll see you next year on August 12.