



4 Jours De La Creuse 13th – 16th July 2023

Trial Report

My first trip to France to compete in the 4 day trail enduro didn't get off to the best of starts!! I went for my usual mountain bike ride early Tuesday morning and 10 minutes into the ride, found my self dumped on the floor after catching a hidden tractor rut in long grass at approximately 18 miles an hour! Skin missing from elbow and right knee but worse was the bent left thumb which promptly started to swell and reduce in movement which made the rest of the ride a bit uncomfortable!!

Ice packs and plenty of pain killers helped a bit but the loading of van with bikes and other family paraphernalia ready for the hideous 2.30am start on Wednesday morning did nothing to boost my confidence!



Wednesday at 3pm we finally arrived at our destination in Creuse and signed on for the event and entered the Yellow intermediate class and opted for the 1 lap rather than 2 laps as I wanted to ease myself into this event and have some family time rather than being out for 9 hours a day on the bike.

Thursday morning arrived and the weather looked nice and warm and sunny and I made my way to the start point where lots of French speaking officials tried their best to explain what I needed to do and what route to follow, which from any onlookers must have looked like an owner giving instructions to a dog who has that blank look on their face!!

Thankfully a very kind gentleman took pity on me and translated the gist of what I need to do and then pointed to the start gate where I received my time card and which section loop to start and follow! I then bumped into Paul and Katie Nash and Andrew Eley who said I could join their group and follow them which helped as I am sure it could all have gone a bit Pete Tong left to my own devices!



First day went well considering my thumb was still pretty sore and the 15 sections had lots of challenges, especially as I had not really done much rock riding. 5 hours of riding done, and 35 miles covered and some pretty awesome single track trails at a reasonable pace had put a smile on my face and eager for more action on Friday. Results wise I was placed 22nd out of 42 in my class for the first day!



Rounded the evening off with a Chinese buffet in town with a few beers and a catch up with the family.

Friday morning it all started at 10.00am and the weather was going to be hot and sunny, climbing up to 31 degrees by the afternoon, this called for a very thin shirt and plenty of juice in my backpack to get me through the day. The organizers had obviously lured me into a false sense of security on the first day as the second day had really gone up a

notch in terms of obstacles and severity!! Wow it's a real eye opener when your presented with a rock wall that's almost as tall as you are and virtually no run up or pre jump rock/log to assist, and the outcome for someone who's talent level just ran out was a clear 5 on the score card and the first of 3 that day, along with a lot of 3's where I literally paddled through sections. That said I did manage some fantastic rides and some zeros to keep my hopes alive and to give me more confidence to tackle the next day!



Day 2 I dropped to 28th overall but enjoyed a great BBQ and some more beers to round off the evening!

Saturday morning I woke early to the sound of heavy rain falling on the cottage roof and a misty view from the window, my first thought was shit, those rocks are going to be deadly and hopefully no more injuries today!!

I was pleasantly surprised that the first few sections actually rode pretty well and the grip on the rocks was way better than I had anticipated, but by the afternoon with so many riders going through each section the soil and mud had now made its way onto the rocks and made grip less than adequate!! Roll on more 3's and paddling! OH and one section (4) that my heart rate must have reached 160bpm just from the fear of potentially ending up in the river if it all went terribly wrong!



Good news it did stop raining and some sections dried a little to give more grip and confidence, but the downside was longer waiting times at the sections especially if the top riders were in front! It did give me the opportunity to watch and learn (or just stand there in awe with mouth wide open, thinking how the hell did they just do that) from some seriously talented riders such as Toby Martin and Emma Bristow show how it should be done. Results wise I finished the day off with some 30 odd marks dropped and overall in 29th place in my class.

I headed back to the cottage to do some bike maintenance, air filter and oil change and check over some loose bolts due to the constant vibration from the long fast trail sections before heading off into town for a fresh pizza and more beers to numb the pain from the thumb which I had managed to jab into the back of the van seat whilst trying to take my long socks off and slipped!! Man, the air was blue

for a few seconds!! Hopefully most of the locals in the vicinity didn't understand my choice of words!



Sunday the weather returned to normal, and the sun was shining again but not as hot as the Friday. I think the sections had been made a little easier and similar to the first day's levels so it all started well and half way round I had only dropped 11 marks, the afternoon un-be known to me had a little sting in the tail still to inflict on me, partly due to me thinking I can do this and all I need is a little speed to clear this awkward obstacle!! I can't remember the last time I was ejected so fast out the front door, head in between 2 rocks and the bike upside down on top of me, thankfully no more injuries, just my pride seriously dented!

After 4 days of riding, some 140 miles travelled, 60 sections completed I rounded out the event in 24th place overall and most importantly had taken away with me some fantastic memories and a sense of achievement and a

passion to return to the venue next year to better my results and my riding ability!



A big shout out and thank you to my lovely wife and kids for coming on this adventure and for the continued support they give! Thank you also to Paul and Katie and Andrew for the help and support over the 4 days and well done to Andrew on a superb ride and finishing 2nd overall (missed out wining by just one point which was definitely down to that single 5 you had).

All that was left was the long drive of 580 miles back to home with the kids asking if we are nearly there just 2 hours into the drive 😊





CUM7 FINAL			TR3P									
Pla	Total	Nom-Prénom	Num	Catégorie	0	1	2	3	5	Pén-TZ		
1	27	CHAGNES Ludovic	273	T3P	ANC	42	11	5	2	60		
2	28	ELEY Andrew	215	T3P		45	7	5	2	1	60	
3	43	MATYJA Bruno	286	T3P		38	12	3	5	2	60	
4	46	AGRET Thierry	200	T3P		38	10	4	6	2	60	
5	47	VEYRET Jean-Paul	207	T3P		36	12	5	5	2	60	
6	49	MELET Denis	205	T3P		38	9	5	5	3	60	
7	52	DUDEFANT Malcolm	252	T3P		31	13	9	7		60	
8	55	SERASSET Eric	274	T3P		35	11	4	7	3	60	
9	57	EDOUIN Christophe	211	T3P		34	12	5	5	4	60	
10	58	VERNOZY Bernard	203	T3P		33	13	4	7	3	1	60
11	58	VERIN Benoit	251	T3P		32	15	6	2	5		60
12	66	LANDRY Christophe	245	T3P		32	8	10	7	3	2	60
13	73	DUVAL Serge	254	T3P		24	18	5	10	3		60
14	74	BOYER Loïc	243	T3P		23	16	9	10	2		60
15	75	LUSCOMBE Robin	270	T3P	ANC	26	9	13	10	2		60
16	78	LAUVIGNE Cédric	200	T3P		25	12	9	11	3		60
17	79	DA SILVA Sébastien	247	T3P		22	21	5	6	6		60
18	81	NASH Paul	214	T3P		23	14	6	15	2		60
19	83	ASHWORTH Stephen	285	T3P		24	14	5	13	4		60
20	86	LETALET Loïc	212	T3P		25	9	11	10	5		60

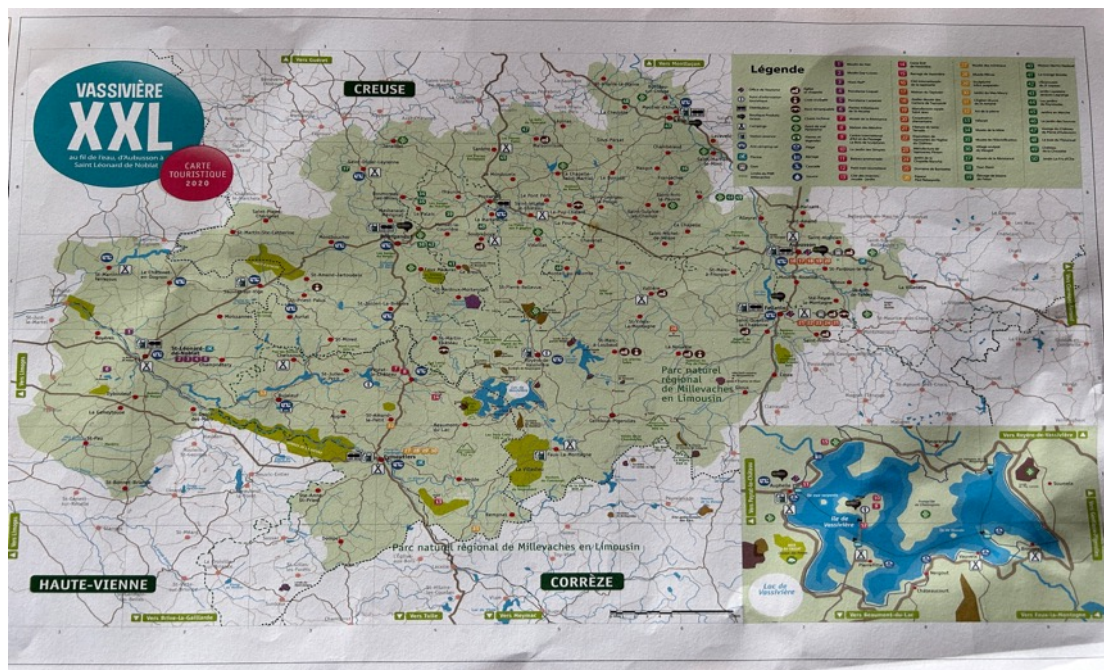
Le classement évolue en temps réel en fonction de l'entrée des données

Prochaine page dans 12 secondes

CUM7 FINAL			TR3P									
Pla	Total	Nom-Prénom	Num	Catégorie	0	1	2	3	5	Pén-TZ		
21	87	JEAN Didier	289	T3P		23	10	12	11	4		60
22	93	BASTIN Laurent	201	T3P		25	8	6	16	5		60
23	101	JEAN Florian	290	T3P		19	11	12	12	6		60
24	108	OWEN Paul	258	T3P		17	10	9	20	4		60
25	109	GUDET Bernard	233	T3P		16	11	9	20	4		60
26	110	MIGLIOZZI Olivier	200	T3P		20	9	4	21	6		60
27	113	PAULY Pascal	202	T3P		23	6	8	12	11		60
28	116	MALAURENT Thierry	272	T3P		24	5	4	16	11		60
29	120	BAEUMI Daniela	244	T3P	FEM	14	13	8	17	8		60
30	123	GOSSE François	203	T3P		15	8	6	26	5		60
31	126	GOUT Xavier	248	T3P		17	10	3	20	10		60
32	126	MAUTIER Tony	279	T3P		15	9	9	18	9		60
33	133	DUPONT Gilles	271	T3P		14	11	7	16	12		60
34	137	GONTIE Rémi	242	T3P		10	7	9	29	5		60
35	148	ESTRAYER Denis	207	T3P		9	6	9	28	8		60
36	160	NASH Katie	216	T3P	FEM	9	4	11	23	13		60
37	163	ROUSSANGE Matéi	250	T3P	JUN	7	6	8	27	12		60
38	182	CLAYTON Andy	277	T3P		7	6	5	22	20		60
39	80	FRINGAND Marc	280	T3P		15	7	8	9	6		45
40	82	VERCKER DE VREUSCHME	204	T3P	ELE	7	5	1	5	12		30

Le classement évolue en temps réel en fonction de l'entrée des données

Prochaine page dans 13 secondes



Regards

Paul Owen