



Nissan Trailseeker #6 Cullinan



The finale of the Nissan Trailseeker MTB series took place in Cullinan, Gauteng on Saturday 9 November. Nico Bell decided to help Wessel after being sick for almost 2 weeks. It was Wessel's first time racing this particular route, but he had guidance from Nico who had won the race in previous years. The race featured a 70km route with winding single and dual tracks that are not normally accessible, as well as some river riding on the verge of a massive waterfall and a cave.

Nico kept the pace high in the beginning of the race on the dirt roads until some of the other riders decided to move to the front of the group. Wessel was battling it out with Pieter Du Toit from Pyga Eurosteel up the rocky climbs in an attempt to shake him off. One section of the race went through a narrow rock face and Wessel caught his handlebar against a rock, slicing his finger open and allowing Pieter some time to get a gap.

Nico helped Wessel chase back on the flat sections, which gave the opportunity to jump across and rejoin Pieter at the front. Nico mostly rode with Shaun-Nick, staying close to Wessel and Pieter so that Pieter could see Nico chasing from behind, which would make him want to work hard and ride upfront, giving Wessel a chance to sit on his wheel. Nico had a puncture on one of the downhill sections, but managed to plug his tyre quickly and catch up to the rest of the riders upfront and immediately launched an attack as soon as he rejoined the group, but Pieter was able to hang on and everyone followed his move.



Nico kept the pace high in an attempt to exhaust the other riders. At about 50km into the race, Wessel upped the pace and Shaun-Nick started to drop off the group. Wessel rode away up a steep, rocky climb and Pieter could not match his pace, leaving Wessel with a big enough gap to win the race about a minute and a half ahead of Pieter.

On the last corner Nico's tyre was still a bit flat so he chose to take the corner on the tar as the race had finished in previous years, but Shaun-Nick caught up and cut the corner on the dirt, giving him an advantage towards the finish. Nico took 4th just behind Shaun-Nick. "Nico really helped me and I think we rode well together. My legs were not amazing but they got better towards the end. It was good to take the last Trailseeker win for the year."- Wessel Botha.

"It's always great to win the last MTB race for the year for NAD"-Nico Bell.



94.7 Ride Joburg MTB Race



After injuring his hand in the previous day's race and getting some stitches, Wessel Botha wasn't sure if he would take part in the 947 Mountain Bike Race on Sunday 10 November. Wessel had won the race for the past two years and was keen to give it another shot this year.

Despite some pain in his hand, Wessel was able to grip his handlebar and decided to compete in the race. The race took place in Steyn City this year and was a 55km route on newly built trails that have been created for long-term use by residents, which now provides riders with fun bridges and hand cut single track.

The pace was fast from the start as Wessel and Pieter Du Toit worked hard to drop some of the other competitors. Wessel and Pieter spent the rest of the race alone, with Wessel pacing upfront. At about 10kms in, Wessel got a puncture which he had to stop and plug and he had to chase back to get back to Pieter. Pieter did not seem too keen on helping Wessel pace and the lack of climbs in the route made it difficult for Wessel to make a move and get away. The finish line was quite confusing as the race did not end where Wessel had previously observed as there were separate finish lines for some of the different race categories. Wessel didn't take the best line approaching the finish and he was held up by some fun riders on the track, but finished 2nd to Pieter. "It wasn't a bad result. I would have liked to take the win, but that's how it goes." -Wessel Botha. Nico and Wessel will be racing the 94.7 Road Cycling Challenge next weekend and Matt and Nico will be joining forces with Team Active Bodies for Coronation DC the following weekend.

