

SA MTB

Marais takes overall Series victory, RMB's Change a Life impresses at final XCO Cup

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The third round of the 2017 KZNMTB Provincial Cup Series XCO was hosted at the world-renowned Cascades MTB Park in Pietermaritzburg in conjunction with KwaZulu-Natal Sport and Recreation on Saturday 3 June. Stuart Marais claimed the A Batch and overall series victory and the team of the day was without a doubt the RMB Change a Life Academy, with two top ten positions in A Batch, and five riders in the top ten of Batch B, including a victory.



The Batch A Podium at the KZNMTB Provincial Cup Series XCO on Saturday 3 June. Photo: Supplied

After Marais, Henry Liebenberg and Sthembiso Masango (who is part of the SA National team that will be going to compete in the UCI MTB Marathon Championships in Germany this year) claimed second and third place in the batch respectively. Marais said: "Provincials are always a lot of fun. For me it was beneficial because we have a national cup here in two weeks so its good to get some racing done at this course before hand. It's always just so good to race at home."

When chatting about the rest of the 2017 season, Marais said that his major focus would be on the last national cup as well as the SA National MTB Championships. It will be after these events that the team to be selected for the UCI MTB XCO World Championships will be decided. "It all hangs with that decision and I hope I crack the nod," he added.



The Batch B Podium at the KZNMTB Provincial Cup Series XCO on Saturday 3 June. Photo: Supplied

Batch B was won by Change a Life's Siphon Kupiso, and teammate Ndimiso Dontso came across second, with Gareth Cook in third. The fastest female in B Batch was Tiffany Keep, despite having a nasty crash in the final rock garden section on the course.

Kupiso said: "The race today was so much fun, and I really enjoyed the single tracks and rock gardens. I've been off the cross-country racing scene for a bit and this is my first time coming back. It was a great track.

"I've been doing a lot of marathon racing, in particular the Absa Cape Epic, and then I decided to come and do this. I had such a great time out here today and am looking forward to KZN Champs."

Batch C saw Maritzburg College's Johandre Marx claiming the first spot on the top of the podium, followed by Jordan Bold, and Kusaselihle Ngidi.

The first woman over the line in Batch C was Beani Thies. She said: "I entered the race on Wednesday with full-blown flu. I actually didn't think I would race today. But who can say no to the awesome cross-country tracks at Cascades."



Sabine Thies placed first woman and fifth overall in Batch C at the KZNMTB Provincial Cup Series XCO on Saturday 3 June.

Photo: Supplied

This got to the start line and gave it her all, hoping for at least a top ten position. When she crossed the line in fifth place overall, she had surprised herself. "Nick Floros (course designer) always gives a surprise here and there and that is what I like. I just love riding at Cascades because I love a technical track," she concluded.

Summary of results from the third round of the 2017 KZNMTB Provincial Cup Series XCO

Batch A

1. Stuart Marais 1:10.03
2. Henry Liebenberg 1:12.42
3. Sthembiso Masango 1:14.54
4. Komborero Bere 1:16.34
5. Brennan Anderson 1:17.31
6. Dean Wortmann 1:18.35
7. Mboneni Ngqobo 1:18.49
8. Sean Merredew 1:19.20
9. Travis Stedman 1:19.38
10. Carl Calverley 1:20.27

Batch B

1. Siphon Kupiso 1:22.03
2. Ndomiso Dontso 1:22.49
3. Gareth Cook 1:23.44
4. Scelo Mhlongo 1:25.34
5. Angus Mcleod 1:25.53
6. Mazwe Smimango 1:26.13
7. Bongumusa Zikhali 1:27.04
8. Duane Stander 1:29.45
9. Mitchel Potgieter 1:30.03
10. Richard Wyngaard 1:30.57

Batch C

1. Johandre Marx 1:08.07
2. Jordan Bold 1:08.23
3. Kusaselihle Ngidi 1:11.46
4. Jonathan Watts 1:15.52
5. Sabine Thies 1:16.12
6. Daniel Van der Watt 1:19.33
7. Chloe Bateson 1:19.50
8. Sean Westerdyk 1:20.18
9. Brodan Symons 1:20.21
10. Brian Martens 1:21.50

Source: KZN MTB.

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