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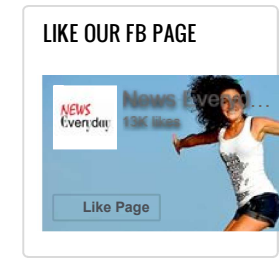
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# The old & new triumph at the 2018 Dusi

Submitted by Rolina Vorster on Sat, 02/17/2018 - 16:51



Marathon crowns at Blue Lagoon on Saturday.

**Photo:** The third and final stage of the 2018 FNB Dusi Canoe Marathon on Saturday dished up plenty of excitement. **Credit:** Anthony Grote/Gameplan Media

A spectacular three days of paddling culminated in two dramatic final stage races unfolding with pre-race favourites Andy Birkett and Hank McGregor and sisters Cana and Jordan Peek claiming the respective men's and women's FNB Dusi Canoe

The outcome of the final day's racing was far from certain with the men's race a tussle between four boats grouped together at the start. The four continued to jostle for position until McGregor and Birkett as well as Sbonelo Khwela and Siseko Ntondini managed to open up a slight gap before the Burma Road portage take out.

The iconic portage, which has made and broken many paddlers race's in the past, proved to be a decisive part of the 2018 showdown with the leading two boats pushing the pace, leaving the chasing crews of Ant Stott and Banetsa Nkhoesa and Carl Folscher and Adrian Boros feeling the pitch at the put in for the final stretch to the coast.

In what proved to be a decisive mistake, Euro Steel/ADreach's Khwela and Ntondini unfastened their splash covers going into Mango Rapid, thinking that a new compulsory portage was coming up, and took on large quantities of water. This handed the advantage to Euro Steel's Birkett and McGregor with flat water between them and the finish.

The pre-race favourites then took full advantage of the mistake and upped the cadence to power to an eight title for Birkett and a third for McGregor.

"I'm just so relieved that we managed to pull this one off," McGregor said, with his son Thorston lofted on his shoulders. "That was the goal and we achieved it.

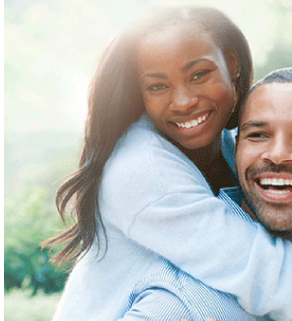
"When you know that it is in the bag it gets really hard because the adrenalin rush wears off, but then you get pumped up when you hear the crowd and I am really stoked to get here and pull this off with a close mate and a fantastic partner.

"To do it in front of my family and my boy and to see my dad, my mom and my wife along the way - I'm really stoked."

After the drama unfolded at the front of the race, Khwela and Ntondini found themselves in a three-way sprint for the final two spots on the podium, alongside Carl Folscher and his Hungarian marathon ace partner Adrian Boros and Stott and Nkhoesa.

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**Photo:** Despite being put under serious pressure throughout the race, Andy Birkett and Hank McGregor claimed the overall and final stage of the 2018 FNB Dusi Canoe Marathon on Saturday. **Credit:** Anthony Grote/Gameplan Media

In the final sprint for the line it was the Folscher/Boros duo that took the second place honours with Khwela and Ntondini taking bronze and denying Stott and Nkhoesa a podium place.

The ladies title became a formality once the Peek sisters got to the take out of the demanding Burma Road portage. They have run well throughout the race and they put more time on the chasers when they started the flat slog to the coast en route to a debut Dusi title for the pair.

"I haven't quite registered that we have won the Dusi!" Cana Peek said at the finish. "My sister turned to me earlier and said that we had won the Dusi but I didn't really know what she was saying!

"Considering all of the sacrifices that we have made and having our families so invested in the whole process makes the victory that much sweeter.

"It's an unreal feeling to be a Dusi champion!"

Older sister Jordan took the reins throughout their three day journey and despite a swim at Ernie Pearce on day one, drove the pair with aplomb to the East Coast.

"I really enjoyed today's conditions because I like picking my way down a river and trying to find sneaks here and there. It also suited us because we are light so it was a lot of fun," Jordan said.

In dramatic fashion, Bridgitte Hartley's ghosts of 2017 came back to haunt her, this time on the top of Burma Road as she took immense strain leaving her Varsity College partner Christie Mackenzie to carry the boat to the put in on the other side of the portage.

After such a telling blow Jenna Ward and Vanda Kiszli might have thought second place was a formality, however Mackenzie and Hartley put in a tremendous surge to put themselves back into contention and then overhauled Ward and Kiszli in an end sprint to take second.

The Under 23 crown was taken home by the Change a Life pair of Mthobisi Cele and Mpilo Zondi, they finished just two seconds ahead of fellow Change a Life crew of Nqobile Makhanya and Siyanda Gwamanda.

It was a perfect three for the Change a Life team when Mvelo Ngidi and Thabani Msiya took home the bronze medal in the Under 23 category.

The Junior Boys title was a one boat show with Maritzburg College's David Evans and Hamish Mackenzie cruising to the junior title while Dominic Leslie and Sam Speed taking second while Andile Mtolo and Kelly Tarr finishing in third.

In the Junior Girls title challenge, it followed the junior boys template with Caitlin Mackenzie and Amy Peckett dominating proceedings throughout. They finished ahead of their Epworth team mates Tracey Oellermann and Cara Waud in second and Casey Robertson and Anna Hauff finishing third.

One of the stand-out achievements of the 2018 FNB Dusi Canoe Marathon was the achievement of the ever-green Lyle Wheeler. The veteran of the Dusi became the first person to complete 47 Dusi Canoe Marathon's when he and partner Mark van Heerden finished on Saturday.

Wheeler has taken the record off the Dusi King Graeme Pope-Ellis as the person with more Dusi finishes than any other.



**Photo:** In a quality day's paddling the Peek siblings Jordan and Cana took home the ladies title on the third and final stage of Canoe Marathon on Saturday. **Credit:** Anthony Grote/Gameplan Media

#### SUMMARY OF RESULTS - FNB Dusi Canoe Marathon

##### Overall

- 1.Andy Birkett/Hank McGregor 2:26:15.17 8:12:22.30
- 2.Carl Folscher/Adrian Boros (HUN) 2:27:18.35 8:13:26.70
- 3.Sbonelo Khwela/Siseko Ntondini 2:27:18.91 8:13:29.38
- 4.Ant Stott/Banetse Nkhoesa 2:27:31.28 8:13:40.48
- 5.Jacques Theron/Thulani Mbanjwa 2:36:14.89 8:35:56.81
- 6.Loveday Zondi/Thando Ngamalana 2:36:15.20 8:35:58.23
- 7.Mthobisi Cele/Mpilo Zondi (U23) 2:32:24.85 8:41:30.92
- 8.Nqobile Makhanya/Siyanda Gwamanda (U23) 2:32:25.15 8:41:32.15
- 9.Richard Cele/Nhlanhla Cele 2:36:26.08 8:43:51.59
- 10.Mmele Cele/Maswenkosi Mtolo 2:32:48.21 8:44:34.24
- 11.Mvelo Ngidi/Thabani Msiya (U23) 2:39:35.92 8:48:43.97
- 12.Hamish Mackenzie/David Evans (U18) 2:37:20.88 8:49:53.33
- 13.Zonele Nzuzza/Piers Cruickshanks 2:46:38.98 8:58:23.70
- 14.Stewart Little/Khumbulani Nzimande (U23) 2:37:34.19 9:00:10.86
- 15.Jason Graham/Lucas Mthalane 2:40:09.23 9:01:02.13
- 16.Kwanda Mhlope/Sipho Canham 2:39:06.20 9:01:06.59
- 17.Shaun Griffin/Dirk van den Berg 2:46:06.25 9:08:41.77
- 18.Murray Haw/Craig Carter-Brown 2:48:26.48 9:11:03.65
- 19.Thomas Ngidi/Mzamo Zondi 2:47:43.83 9:16:32.72
- 20.Raymond Radebe/Mlandeni Radebe 2:50:47.77 9:19:35.33

##### Women

- 1.Cana Peek/Jordan Peek (U23) 2:56:55.32 9:45:23.58
- 2.Christie Mackenzie/Bridgitte Hartley 3:00:17.83 9:53:45.45
- 3.Jenna Ward/Vanda Kiszli (HUN) 2:55:06.64 9:53:48.09
- 4.Amy Peckett/Caitlin Mackenzie (U18) 3:19:15.64 10:33:06.49
- 5.Kyeta Purchase/Kerry Segal 3:13:16.49 10:36:22.77
- 6.Cara Waud/Tracey Oellermann (U18) 3:17:15.12 10:49:12.17
- 7.Kate Birkett/Nicky Ervine 3:45:04.57 12:10:46.48
- 8.Melissa van Rooyen/Lorna Oliver 3:46:59.60 12:25:22.36
- 9.Holly Spencer/Daniela Afonso 3:55:02.40 12:46:59.38
- 10.Casey Robertson/Anna Hauff (U18) 4:04:30.50 13:09:42.44

##### Under 23 Men

- 1.Mthobisi Cele/Mpilo Zondi (U23) 2:32:24.85 8:41:30.92
- 2.Nqobile Makhanya/Siyanda Gwamanda 2:32:25.15 8:41:32.15
- 3.Mvelo Ngidi/Thabani Msiya 2:39:35.92 8:48:43.97
- 4.Stewart Little/Khumbulani Nzimande 2:37:34.19 9:00:10.86
- 5.Jabulani Gwamanda/Nkosikhona Mabaso 2:45:41.68 9:21:18.70



Under 23 Women

- 1.Cana Peek/Jordan Peek (U23) 2:56:55.32 9:45:23.58

Under 18 Boys

- 1.Hamish Mackenzie/David Evans 2:37:20.88 8:49:53.33
- 2.Dominic Leslie/Sam Speed 2:53:45.95 9:35:32.53
- 3.Andile Mtolo/Kelly Tarr 2:58:20.27 9:44:48.86

Under 18 Girls

- 1.Amy Peckett/Caitlin Mackenzie 3:19:15.64 10:33:06.49
- 2.Cara Waud/Tracey Oellermann 3:17:15.12 10:49:12.17
- 3.Casey Robertson/Anna Hauff 4:04:30.50 13:09:42.44

Under 16 Boys

- 1.Ross Leslie/Sam Butcher 3:00:13.17 10:09:54.13

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