



## Silva DuO Series Race #1, 2010 Ballarat – Tuesday 26 January

### EVENT REPORT

**A**DVENTURE Racing's first foray into the Ballarat area with the Ballarat Silva Duo on Australia Day was judged an outstanding success by competitors and officials alike, with close to 80 entering the event.

The wide open space for the event centre situated within the Ballarat suburbs proved to be an excellent base with spectators able to track runners and riders as they approached controls in various corners of the area.

The run/ride/run concept kept the competitors on their toes right from the outset with runners heading to all 4 points of the compass on the first scatter leg as they tried to calculate what would be the fastest route in and around Black Hill and the Yarrowee Trail. The course-setters, Blake Gordon and Mark Valentine knew that it didn't matter too much because either way there was a climb to get back to the transition area.

After this 3.5 km run for the Short course and 5km for the Long course runners swapped to the Bike leg and headed north into the Nerrina Forest for a 13km leg for the Short and an 18km leg for the Long course.

Matthew Schepsi, Luke Haines and Rob

Preston on the Long Course for Open Men looked set for a titanic battle as they exited the transition with just 7 seconds separating them. While on the short course for Open Men Sam Valentine had opened up a handy break. Sam was utilizing extensive local knowledge having been a student at Black Hill and living close to the western end of the Yarrowee Trail.

As the riders began to emerge from the north following the mountain bike stage it was apparent that Rob Preston from Gippsland had made a decisive break and he led all-comers into the final shorter run leg into the hills in Ballarat North. He was not headed and scorched over the finishing line in just over 99 mins. To record a 4 minute win over Haines on the Long Course.

Phil Giddings had a good bike leg in the Senior Men's Long Course and a steady last run saw him claim the spoils.

On the Short Course Valentine made a few errors on the bike leg and narrowly trailed fellow Eureka member Stephen Balharrie onto the final run, but quickly made up ground and went on to win by over 5 mins. While in the Open Women's category Louise Hall got stronger as the event unfolded and won by over 15mins.

Also on the Short Course for Senior Men, Andrew Campbell, down from Cairns, showed superior bike riding skills to haul himself into a winning position over Peter Hill, and in the Senior Women's category, Tanya Beacham won all 3 legs to record a convincing half hour win.

In an after race interview Rob Preston indicated that he "found the bike tracks very fast in the dry conditions and took full advantage of some long down hill options".

Series organiser, Dion Keech from Melbourne Forest Racers, summed up the feelings of many when he said, "this event had a bit of everything, short sharp tracks, pine forests, shady areas along the Yarrowee, little pockets of urban bush and some street running to test tired muscles as well". He thanked Eureka Orienteers for kicking off the 2010 series with a well conceived event and urged all to get their entries in for the next two events in the Silva DuO series at Gembrook in February and the You Yangs in March.

*A full set of results and event photos can be seen at [www.silvaduo.com](http://www.silvaduo.com)*



Rob Preston on his way to victory in the Silva DuO adventure race at Ballarat.



Tom Lothian negotiating the bike leg.

#### Category Winners

##### Long Course

Open Men – Rob Preston  
Open Women – Di Mittag  
Senior Men – Phil Giddings  
Team – Craig Robinson and Carley Young

##### Short Course

Open Men – Sam Valentine  
Open Women – Louise Hall  
Senior Men – Andrew Campbell  
Senior Women – Tanya Beacham  
Team – Nicki Colls and Catherine Matthews