

Wilhelm wins Ford 1-Day Challenge

Kramer Ausenco's Lachlan Wilhelm is the inaugural winner of the Ford 1-Day Challenge 180km ride around Savai'i in Samoa last weekend.

Wilhelm from Brisbane, Australia, a Structural/Civil Engineer with Kramer Ausenco Samoa, is the champion of the second event of the inaugural Savai'i Games this year.

His time of six hours and fifteen minutes, in a race which was 50kms more than his longest ride, was admirable.

"After I passed the 130km mark, I was outside familiar territory in terms of what I knew my body could sustain, so I was mostly ecstatic to cross the line and walk away knowing that 180km isn't out of the realm of possibility."

"I really enjoyed the last 20km of the race as the weather and roads became more favourable, giving me a second wind to attack in the last 5km," Wilhelm said.

The race started at 5am in Manase and headed west to Asau, Aopo Village, then the steep Papa, Sataua 5km climb where Wilhelm and eventual second placer Wally Collins were inseparable at the front.

Then the long 8km descent from Falealupo to Neiafu to Falelima, and Salelologa, some of it under a heavy tropical downpour. Wilhelm crossed the finish line two minutes ahead of Collins.

Two weeks ago Lachlan was not registered for the ride, but since relocating to Apia from Brisbane, he and partner Madeleine have been entering in a few of the local events to meet new people.

"The Samoans' are amazing athletes, and inherently competitive, so it didn't take them long to lure me in to entering the race, and jumping on the last Friday ferry to Savai'i", Wilhelm said.

Samoa Events which is headed by Seti Afoa, run events all year round which have successfully promoted Samoa as an adventure hotspot for triathletes and the likes all over the world. If time permits, Wilhelm will be looking to race some, if not all, of the 5 Day Tour of Samoa in September.

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