



Media release

Whitehouse and Mcllroy smash records to win Le Race

Daniel Whitehouse has broken the Le Race course record to claim back-to-back titles, while Kate Mcllroy won the cycling classic on her third attempt by smashing the women's record by a staggering nine minutes.

Whitehouse won the 100km race from Christchurch to Akaroa in 2018 after just having an appendix removed and again had to do it the hard way today after puncturing near the halfway point, as well as losing his cycling computer early in the race.

"I had no idea what was going on and had to do it old school," laughed Whitehouse whose new record time of two hours 35minutes and 28 seconds is even more remarkable considering an enforced slow start through the city due to limited police resources.

"On top of that the replacement wheel was a bit narrower so my front break wasn't working very well, and I had to hold off the speed a bit downhill," said Whitehouse who found himself chasing a leading foursome of Jake Marryatt, Scott Thomas, Paul Odlin and Kees Duyvensteyn.

The 24-year-old climber managed to claw the leaders back one by one charging up the famous Hilltop, where only Marryatt managed to stay clear to take the King of the Mountain prize.

The young Christchurch rider, however, was soon caught by Whitehouse and young Andrew Bidwell from Blenheim who was the only rider to match the defending champion uphill.

On the final stretch, Whitehouse waited for one last steep climb to accelerate and lose his two young competitors to arrive well clear of Bidwell and previous record holder Michael Vink in third place.

In the women's race, the frustrations of losing last year's race on the finish line was the perfect motivation for Kate Mcllroy to finally win Le Race in the third attempt.

"I didn't just want to win the race, but destroy the record," said the former Olympic triathlete who clearly has not lost any of her competitive juices, winning in 2.49.10.

Mcllroy said she was not going to get caught again and was grateful to find a strong group to stay with going up to the Hilltop. "Last year, I had to do a lot of racing by myself, so it made a big difference to be able to stay with a group."

The 37-year-old said that she "was done with Le Race" after ticking the cycling classic off her bucket list. "But never say never," said Mcllroy who finished more than two minutes ahead of Henrietta Christie and 13 minutes ahead of Julia Grant in third.

Both race winners picked up the \$500 winners check as well as the \$500 dollar bonus from Harcourts for beating the course record, and were followed by a field of around 700 riders of all ages and abilities, including blind tandem rider Blair McConnell and riders on vintage bikes.

The 53km Le Petite Race to Little River was won by Chris Ross and Sammie Walker in the women's race.

Results, men:

1. Daniel Whitehouse 2hr35min28sec
2. Andew Bidwell 2:37:21
3. Michael Vink 2:37.29
4. Jason Christie 2:39:03
5. Jake Marryatt 2:39:29
6. Campbell Pithie 2:39:53
7. Kees Duyvensteyn 2:40:21
8. Richard Lawson 2:42:02
9. Paul Odlin 2:42:03
10. Jamie Dennis 2:42:41

Results, women:

1. Kate Mcllroy 2:49:13
2. Henrietta Christie 2:57:31
3. Julia Grant 3:02:54
4. Annamarie Lipp 3:06:29

5. Georgia Christie 3:06:32
6. Jojo Bauer 3:06:54
7. Andrea Hewitt 3:11:01
8. Sara Harnett 3:14:50
9. Sue Marshall 3:15:34
10. Ally Wollaston 3:17:17

Caption 1: Daniel Whitehouse wins Le Race in record time.



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