

Team Rubicon - Adventure Racing Blog

Team Rubicon members are: Mark Roberts, Dean Grasselli, Rajan Thananayagam, Kolya Miller, Joe Friend, Tim Barrett, Emma Lefroy, Carey and David Barlow. We've set our sights on a number of Expedition Adventure Races over the next few years. In 2013 we aim to compete in the 48 hr GeoQuest and then XPD in Outback Australia, an 8 to 10 day race. In 2014 the options are enticing: The Wenger Patagonia Race or Godzone in New Zealand.

[David](#)

[Carey](#)

[Robbo](#)

[Dean](#)

[Rajan](#)

[Kolya](#)

[Joe](#)

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9 days of Adventure in the Flinders Ranges - Sept 2013

Thursday, June 20, 2013

Ahhhh GeoQuest - why we love you!



Taking a wombat out at high speed on my MTB - followed a week later by being rear ended at high speed while in my car was not the ideal Geo preparation! Participation in this years GeoQuest was on and off and then finally on - filled with the maximum dose of Ibuprofen I finally put the Geo vest on! With a fractured shoulder, twisted pelvis and two displaced ribs - sense prevailed and I opted out of the paddle legs - we were to start unranked. I would join Tim, Dean and Rajan on the first trek leg and continue on with them for the rest of the race.

The Team in Action

2014 Team Goal



For Regular Team Updates

Team Rubicon



Launching :Leg One - Crowdy Head to Diamond Head

The first leg was an ocean paddle north from Crowdy Head lighthouse. The sea looked benign but IT IS Geo and that rapidly changed. A tailwind and a following sea meant that the 16 km trip up the coast turned into an exciting and difficult paddle for the boys! Tim our ocean paddler became seasick. Raj and Dean kept their boat upright while many around them were upside down - a number of rescues took place by the marine safety boats.



Landing At Diamond Head



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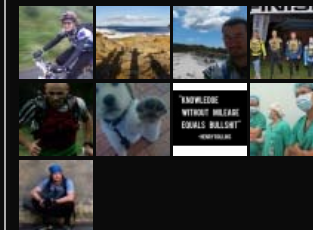
Team Rubicon

Taking a wombat out at high speed on my MTB – followed a week later by being rear ended at high speed while in my car was not the ideal Geo preparation! The story of GeoQuest 2013....

14 hours ago

[Team Rubicon – Adventure Racing Blog: Ahhhh GeoQuest](#)

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 - ▼ June (1)
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The boys came ashore, Tim was looking pale and rather forlorn and promptly threw his guts up! This was not a good start to our Geo campaign. After a good ralph - Tim was feeling better enough to start trekking - no running for a while but at least we were moving.



Trek Leg Two - Diamond Head

Leg two - was a coastal trek with a 500 m swim - we carried pfd's and fins to help us across the waterway. By the time we reached the swim - Tim was almost back on his game. A tough effort! There's nothing quite like cold water, wind and a cross sea to make the swim a little challenging.



Sorta happy - about to swim...

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Deano enjoying a little backstroke.

A mangrove bog was next, then a couple of Kms later we began the steep ascent of North Brother. From here it was all downhill into Laurieton and the TA. Leg 3 was another kayak paddle, 13km on an inland waterway - so the old fella got to have a little nanna nap while the boys paddled into the setting sun. We'd been hustling all day to get onto the paddle with enough time to find the 3 checkpoints before dark. Tim navigated the team well and the last checkpoint was tagged just as the lights went out. Cold and wet Tim, Raj and Dean came into the TA 45 minutes after dark - a good effort.

Carey and Robbo were on the job when it came to supporting the team - hot food and coffee got us all sorted for the night ahead. Leg 4 was a trek leg with 8 rogain points to be found before the next TA. This was going to be a difficult night nav leg. Robbo's parting words to the navigator - "switch on and stay switched on!"

Many teams came to grief on this leg. We nailed every checkpoint - walking directly onto every CP. It was a brilliant team effort. No mistakes and accurate navigating! The highlights - deep ravines, awesome creek beds, rock slabs to climb, giant trees, a starry night and lots of body eating scrub! It's good karma to help other teams out - so in the dark we shared some of the checkpoint lead-ins with our mates. We arrived at the TA -

1 am Sunday. A hot coffee and a change into bike gear quickly saw us onto the road. There is always one CP in Geo that is a nemesis to teams - and this leg had it. Fortunately we minimised our downtime here to about 30 minutes but many teams lost more than an hour finding CP12!

The rest of the night disappeared in a gloom of mist, pushing bikes up hill, riding cold down the other side and nodding off while riding. First light brought a reprieve - and serotonin kicked in when the sun finally hit us! After numerous bog holes, steep climbs and descents we rode into the Forest Camp TA. It was 9.45am - that was a long slow bike leg! We were about 3 hours behind our timeline. It was time to get cracking. Well, as cracking as you can get at hour 26!



Beautiful and difficult terrain - Leg 6!

Leg 6 - was going to be another difficult trekking leg. Just 3 checkpoints to get - but they were in deep ravines. The start looked good - the map indicated a walking track. It wasn't long before the track disappeared and we were scrub and rock bashing up a very deep and rugged river gorge. Hard yards! The only reward - a beautiful gorge to offset the drudge. The first CP was at the top of a very steep climb - a leg snapper. From here - a compass bearing took us out onto a fire trail. A long slog up into the sun meant that the nods were upon us! Left right left right for an hour and we were at our next lead in point. A deep, heavily forested ravine and CP 19 was tagged and then it was about face - steeply up again to the trail.



CP 20 - deep in a dark ravine and it's only 3pm!

The last CP on this leg was in an even deeper ravine followed by vines, thorns, spiky things, lantana, rotting logs, steep mud and at times the ubiquitous impenetrable Geo jungle! Covered in bits of the forest we emerged onto a fire trail for an 8 km road slog into Comboyne and the TA.



Shuffling into the Comboyne TA

We were racing the light again - this time we needed to get onto the final bike leg before dark - so we sucked it in and moved our tired and dead legs into a Clifly Young shuffle. As a team we trotted into the TA. It was motivating to see Carey and Robbo - once again they fed us, got us sorted and mounted on our bikes, just as the lights went out for the second night.



Off into the night. Last Bike Leg

This was going to be a long tough leg with a rogain half way through. The good news - all we had to do was to safely complete the night and we would be at the final paddle leg at dawn!

We were promised a downhill run on this leg - well - that was the case for about 10km - then it became what I would describe as miserable. Push the bikes up 200m in altitude, ride down 200m and push up the other side to the same height - repeat this about a dozen times and it soon became an exercise in persistence, suffering and hanging on.

By 9.30 pm - my brain had turned to mush - after 37 hours, the fog of exhaustion and no sleep turned me into a zombie.



Seen better days!

It was time for caffeine - two No Doz, 40 minutes later and in a somewhat drugged state I was starting to function again. The boys, Tim, Dean and Rajan were lost in their own private worlds of suffering - it had taken a day and a half BUT this is when the Real Race began - it was now entirely in our heads. At this stage it is easy to crack and give in. Eventually, every Adventure Racer will face the dilemma - stop or go on. It is this choice and what we do next that defines us.

At 11.45 pm we rolled into the rogain. Many bodies surrounded a big fire - all in various states of exhaustion - many dead asleep where they lay. Their remaining teammates were out somewhere on the rogain. Tough team work saw many teams send two people out while two stayed by the fire to regain some capability for the final push. Here we caught up to our friends the Radders. It was great to share war stories by the fire!

At this rogain we had to tag 4 CPs across about 6 square kms of terrain. Normally a simple exercise BUT after 40 hours of constant movement - ANYTHING but simple! We decided to split our resources - Tim and Rajan would collect two closer ones while Dean and I would go for the CPs further a field. Foggy brains, cold air, steep mud, heavily forested creek beds, dead legs and a starry night saw 3 hours disappear! We shared the love with Peter Fitzgerald and Dave Hunt from Fully Rad by helping them find a checkpoint that had eluded them for a long time.

By 3am we were on our bikes for the ride into the final TA. After 30 minutes - I couldn't string two words together - things were VERY rapidly unravelling - time for more No Doz - if I was the praying kind - I would have prayed for them to work and get me home! By 4 am - I could talk again and ride with a wobble. CP's disappeared in a fog of exhaustion - the boys were in their own world of hurt, again!



Team Rubicon
45 hours into the 2013 GeoQuest.
Heading for home....
Tim, David, Rajan and Dean

A Rob Marlow special - 4.58 am Day 3

A tricky bit of navigation was nicely solved by Tim - and the final "hard" checkpoint was nailed. It was down hill into the TA. In a sharp pace line we rode strongly into the TA.

It was an absolute pleasure to see Carey and Robbo - they too had gone hard - for 48 hrs they delivered perfection in support! And it was great to see Dean's friend Noa helping at the final TA. WE had survived the night and as dawn broke our spirits soared - one more leg and it would be over!! After all of the suffering from the previous 40 hours - there was no way I wouldn't paddle the final stretch home to the finish line with the team. High fives all round and we were very quickly onto the water.

Mist was rising off the water as we paddled silently along a beautiful waterway. The sun rose and our cold and exhausted bodies warmed - time for us to reflect on an awesome journey! 13kms and 1 hr 45 minutes later we beached the boats.



Mission done!

A shuffle over the finish line and we had completed GeoQuest 2013. 48 hours and 46 minutes of pleasure, pain and reward!

Reactions:



Posted by [David Barlow](#) at 1:50 PM



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