



Altus de Wet **(Team Brother Broadlink KTM)**

ALTUS DE WET – 8th AT 2011 ROOF OF AFRICA EXTREME ENDURO

The 2011 Roof of Africa race that was held from 24 to 26 November in the Mountain Kingdom of Lesotho, will go down in the history books of this 44-year old event as one with the tightest competition in years. The Brother Broadlink KTM rider, Altus de Wet, finished eighth at this tough event after more than 450km over terrain and mountain passes where even goats and baboons fear to travel.

Normally the traditional Round the Houses in the streets of Maseru that kicks off the three-day event, is quite stressful for De Wet as your Roof of Africa onslaught can end here before it has even started. This year, however, he admitted to have enjoyed the 3km route and finished 5th fastest after an uneventful race.

The following 50km racing section outside Maseru in the Thaba Bosiu area determined the starting order and times for Friday's race and it became clear what an important role navigation would play at this year's event. Altus lost some time getting lost and claimed the 12th place on Friday's starting grid with the front riders all grouped quite closely together.

They tackled the 200km race on a chilly Friday morning at 06h00 and quickly formed little groups who raced together. Although the racing routes itself were not as difficult as last year, the competitors pushed each other hard this year and there was no time to rest. Up and down pass after pass and Altus stuck to the Brother Broadlink KTM riders, Darryl Curtis and Riaan van Niekerk.

The fan on his KTM250 stopped working from time to time due to a blown fuse and he had to wait for the bike to cool off – then it was catching up again. (This was repaired for Saturday and working perfectly on Saturday again.) Looking back the 26-year old rider from Montagu, who has just been awarded his Protea Colours, will remember the last 100m of Spider Man Pass to be the most difficult of a race where mental fitness played as big a role as physical fitness.



De Wet admitted that he was physically fit enough, but catching up to his season-long rival, Marc Torlage, just to see him opening a gap after choosing a different line up Free Fall Pass, resulted him in having to play catch-up all over again. He finished the day in 8th place, 31 minutes behind the leaders, but knew there was still another 200km that waited for them the next day.

After another early 6h00 start on Saturday morning, Altus gradually worked his way up through the field, but at the dreaded Mankaluba Pass he found that he ran out of drinking liquid and at the end of this gruelling pass, he was dehydrated. It was then difficult to concentrate and he got lost a few times and only after the service point did he manage to get his strength back. It was then all the way to the finish to claim his 8th place overall – and beating the German, Andreas Lettenbichler, who finished ninth.

What was special about the 2011 Roof of Africa?

Altus: “Definitely the finish and the support of the crowds at so many of the points. That keeps you going! The organisers go out of their way to make the Roof of Africa more and more spectator-friendly and this is good for the sponsors.”

Looking back, what would you like to change about your race this year?

Altus: “I have made some small mistakes that cost me dearly and will work even harder for it not to happen again. I will also work to better my navigation as it sounds like in future, we will only be using GPS with even less route markings.”

Are you happy with your 2011 result?

Altus: “It is great to compete against so many of the world’s best riders including Graham Jarvis, Chris Birch, Andreas Lettenbichler and the Hemingway brothers from the UK and this make the competition even tougher. One has to work then even harder to get a good result. I am happy with a top 10 position, but would’ve liked to finish higher up.”

Who would you like to thank?

Altus: “It is impossible to do this without sponsors and I would like to sincerely thank all my sponsors that supported me throughout the 2011 racing season in the national off-road and enduro championships as well as the other races and the Roof of Africa. And thank you KTM SA – the KTM250 was the perfect bike for the 2011 Roof of Africa.”

End

Contact Altus de Wet Tel: +27 76 810 7485
E-mail: altusdewet@hotmail.com

