

## 2003 - Year Of The Truck

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A funny thing happened on the way to Karapoti this year... Such is the extent of this event we normally hire a van or truck to transport the myriad of tents, banners, course equipment, race packs, prizes and other sundry crap. Ordinarily we do this on a Saturday, thus giving us a day to set up for Sunday. Come race day 95% of the work is done and we simply send you guys and girls off into the Akatarawas. Of course, nothing is ever quite as simple as it seems.

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A race with as much tradition as Karapoti is not complete without the odd cock up or 10. Often these issues take place behind the scenes and the race rolls on without anyone realising the race director growing greyer by the minute.

In 2002 it was a power cut at Karapoti Park. A couple of years before that one of the brothers Kennett - who shall remain nameless (13th place in 2003) - filled up a diesel van with petrol. And 2003 was the year our truck broke down.

That's right; just 12 hours before race day, while you guys and girls were carbo-loading and power napping, or whatever it is that endurance athletes do the night before a big race, we were trying to find another truck. Rather than getting the race ready to roll during Saturday, we hit the hay at 1:00am Sunday morning happy just to have made it to Karapoti Park. Then we were up again at 5:00am to put together the race to which you have become accustomed. And guess what? Nobody noticed!

For all the panicking, lack of sleep and last minute mayhem Karapoti went ahead just as it always has. And frankly, it opened our eyes to the simple fact that the elements make Karapoti New Zealand's favourite mountain bike race remain unchanged since day one. Sure we put on a good show, and sure we have

a great list of sponsors. But more than anything this race revolves around something beyond our control - a great course and keen competitors!

It might seem obvious, but sometimes in life we need to be reminded of simple facts such as these. Our reminder came on Sunday morning when despite the trials and tribulations of the previous 24 hours, 1000 of you stood waiting to ride this race again.

In two years Karapoti celebrates its 20th anniversary. Year after year you all keep coming back for a taste of this terrific course. In a world increasingly guided by fads and fashions, your ongoing passion for this uncompromising yet achievable challenge is the core of Karapoti's continued success...Thanks, and see you again next year!



Some of our motley crew