

S.C.A.R. Crosses Finish Line First And Unscathed At Mountain Rage/Lake Mead



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Sedona, Ariz. — Not wanting to miss out on a good night's sleep, S.C.A.R. blazed through a challenging course that began just before daybreak May 15, to cross the finish line first later that night during the Mountain Rage Series adventure race at Lake Mead, Nevada.

Completing the course — which featured an unforgiving mountain bike leg — in less than 17 hours, S.C.A.R.'s pairing of David Kelly and Dan Barger also won the event's open two-person category.

Venture Four came in less than three hours later, capturing first place in the mixed four-person division and taking the lead in Four Winds' 1999 race series. Earlier this spring, the team won their division, as well as first place overall at Mountain Rage/Lake Roosevelt.

Lake Mead provided the backdrop for Four Winds' second Mountain Rage Series race of 1999. The lake itself welcomed teams early Saturday morning for the event's first venue — a 24-mile paddling/portage leg, highlighted by 1000-foot walls of rock that rose straight up from the water. After leaving their boats and paddles behind at Boathouse Cove, competitors then hoofed it on foot for a 12-mile hike/run/climb to the otherworldly looking Redstone, where they dodged rattlesnakes on the way up to a 200-foot rappel. Comfort levels were left at the sixth passport checkpoint as they stepped off the rock and made their descent to level ground.

Following a quick meal/snack and a change of gear and apparel, racers mounted their bikes and faced the next challenge — a 50-mile ride through high desert sand and loose rocks. The terrain was grueling as the profile of the land continuously changed. S.C.A.R.'s Kelly aptly described the landscape as "a geologist's wet dream." Many racers succumbed to the arduous bike leg due to fatigue, overexertion or mechanical difficulties. Teams battled the elements and each other throughout the night and into Sunday's pre-dawn hours until finally rolling into the transition area; some deciding to extend their rest before continuing on at dawn, while others pushed on in the darkness.

Miles of sand dunes greeted competitors for the race's final leg, where three separate true orienteering checkpoints awaited — difficult enough to locate in daylight, nevertheless, several teams persisted and groped their way throughout the night, seeking them out. At the end of the 12-mile trek the finish line beckoned, where racers' smiles of satisfaction and exhaustion were greeted by cheers and applause from their support crews and Four Winds staff and volunteers. And, where the phrase "desert rage" was coined.

Finishing third overall and first in the open four-person category was Orion, with Quality Candy placing second in the mixed four-person category. Anozira placed second in the open two-person division, while Intrepid took third in the mixed four-person division. Houston was the only mixed two-person team to cross the finish line, but due to mechanical problems with Emily Johnston's bike, they finished unranked. Fate stepped in at the end however, when during the post-race festivities, Johnston won a custom KHS mountain bike in a raffle.

Summer 1999 will see the third annual Four Winds USA Supreme Adventure Race in the beautiful and magnificent Rocky Mountains of Western Wyoming Aug. 14-21. A 350-plus mile challenging course awaits competitors for seven to eight days of trekking, horseback riding, mountain biking, white and flat water paddling, rappelling, ascending and navigating. For more information, call (800) 775-7671; fax, 888-884-7671; e-mail, info@4windsadventure.com; or mail, 2675 West Highway 89A, Suite 451, Sedona, AZ, USA, 86336.