

SPORT

Jarad and Karla's excellent adventure

Pictures
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LOCAL adventure racer Jarad Kohlar headed former triathlon champion Guy Andrews' advice to "Beat the Kiwi" in yesterday's gut-busting Anaconda Adventure Race at Lorne.

Kohlar, from Ferrers Gully, usurped dual world adventure racing champion and Olympic skier Richard Usher in the 55km off-road event for the best win of his career.

The 26-year-old, who finished second in this year's Southern Traverse race in New Zealand, received encouragement from a racing Andrews during yesterday's 11.2km coastal and trail run.

"I passed Guy on the run and he said to me, 'Beat the Kiwi - my legs are gone'," Kohlar said. "I knew he (Andrews) was out of the event."

Competitors were put through their paces, starting with a 1.6km ocean swim, 800m beach run, 11.2km trail run, 10km ocean paddle, 26.7km mountain bike ride and 2.5km beach run.

With Olympic triathlete Simon Thompson, Kohlar ground in the ocean paddle, Kohlar and Usher were left to battle it out in the beach triathlon.

Usher carried a two-minute lead in the paddle but Kohlar pipped him up, chasing him down in the challenging mountain bike course through the Curvies Ranges.



KATIE PEART

"When I got in front I was thinking, 'Can I do this? Is this happening?'," a humble Kohlar admitted. "But I just held onto my self-belief. I knew I'd done the training and the effort."

"To beat someone of Richard's calibre is so rewarding... he is such a phenomenal athlete and I'm just a school teacher."

Usher repaid the compliment, saying Kohlar was "too quick" on the day.

Kohlar won in a time of 5hr 54min 46sec, from Usher (6:58:26) and Andrews (4:01:46).

The experienced New Zealander had a mountain bike ride, falling off early in the race and then taking a wrong turn at the 4km mark.

"He (Kohlar) was pulling away anyway," Usher said. "I'm not making any excuses."

Kohlar's next goal is to try to cross Bass Strait to Tasmania in less than 35 hours.

Seven-times Australian triathlonist Karla Gilbert has experienced all sorts of pain in her career, but nothing compared to yesterday's race.

Gilbert, who retired from professional triathlon racing three years ago, felt every centimetre of the final 2.5km beach run despite crossing the line in first place in 4:09.18.

"I've been finished for a couple of minutes, but oh my God, the memory of that last run leg... that was the hardest thing I've ever done," Gilbert said.

The gutsy Queensland had a slender 30-second lead over Christie Sym going into the final run. "I didn't need that pressure," Gilbert laughed. "I was hurting enough as it was."

Gilbert, who defeated Sym by just over a minute and third-placed Kim Beckinsale by more than seven minutes, began training for the event in August, after entering the Anaconda Adventure Race on the Gold Coast to get into shape for her wedding.

"I was getting married and I wanted to look fit for that so that's why I did the Gold Coast race," she explained. "After the wedding, I said to my husband, 'Let's do the one at Lorne', so here I am."

"We'll have to wait and see if I do another one," she added.



Lorne order: Jarad Kohlar (left) and Kara Gilbert (right) set the pace in yesterday's Anaconda Adventure Race at Lorne, where the hot conditions and rough terrain tested favourite Guy Andrew (above), Brett Anderson (above left) and Richard Usher (below left). Hundreds of other entrants (below right) were just happy to go along with the crowd.

