

Adrian Garvey leads the way at the ABSA Cape Epic

Issued by [Mscsports](#)

5 Apr 2011

Former Springbok prop Adrian Garvey cruised through the 707km, 13000m climb at the 2011 ABSA Cape Epic and having been "terrified" at the start line he admitted to thoroughly enjoying (almost) every minute. Rated as the toughest mountain bike stage race in the southern hemisphere, the eight-day event is not to be taken lightly.



"Having played my last game in October 1999 I have longed for that competitiveness which has become me. After retiring, I was bored with gym work, so kept in shape by swimming and cycling but I am competitive by nature and there's nothing I love more than a challenge. And let me confirm: this event is far harder than any rugby match I have ever participated in."

Garvey started training for the event last year when Toyota approached him to ride in their team with fellow Sharks teammate, Jeremy Thompson, who later pulled out.

"We had great success with Shaun Bartlett and Jeremy completing the event last year. We know that Adrian is made from something tough and we had no hesitation in putting the challenge before him. Having been a world-class Springbok, Adrian is a man who is focused, prepared and knows when to step it up a gear - he is everything that we at Toyota strive to maintain," comments Toyota's Mary Willemse, Senior Manager: Promotions and Sponsorships.

The 42-year-old Zimbabwean has admitted to becoming quite addicted to the sport of cycling. "I wanted to run the Comrades, but my left knee is so weak after years of rugby pounding, that it wasn't possible. That leaves me with swimming and cycling. I started cycling last year and increased the intensity in January this year with ten hours training a week, then February I put myself into fifth gear, cycling fifteen hours a week. March was back down to ten, maintaining my fitness but allowing sufficient rest before event day on 27 March. Looking back, I think that doing only three mountain bike rides before this event was what you would call 'under-preparation'!



"I came here with the objective of beating fellow former Springboks Marius Hurter and Joel Stransky. Marius dropped out after a few stages, so I won that battle. As for Joel, he has done incredibly well and is a powerhouse - I have new respect for him as he has beaten me home by 30 minutes to an hour each stage. Whilst I believe that I was fitter than him in our rugby days, he certainly has one up on me now."

The relieved tight head prop sips his beer and concludes, "Whilst I thoroughly enjoyed the gruelling challenge, I am going to endorse my sponsors and live by the theory that Toyota vehicles were created so that we wouldn't have to conquer every mountain top via foot or bike. I'm cycling the Sani-to-Sea with Justin Swart, but until then, I'm done!"

In its fourth year as official vehicle supplier to the ABSA Cape Epic, Toyota's vehicles again showed its prowess by leading the 1 000-odd participants through some of the toughest terrain the Western Cape has to offer.

Adrian Garvey and partner Brian Osborne completed the 2011 ABSA Cape Epic in a total event time of 50 hours and 52 minutes, placing them 374th overall and 216th in the Mens category.

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