

RETURN to the TUNNEL 2022



Results 200222

Off-putting weather but use the weather forecast and factor in a little bit of optimism. Rain had stopped by 8:30am ☺

The first 4 legs of the 12km course were about route choice through (or over) the tunnel and the plantation roads there. Then a northern section making full use of the MTB tracks between Station Drive (the old railway) and the park entrance. It was almost identical to 2019, apart from using “honesty ribbons” instead of clippers. So riders didn’t need to stop to punch, but on the other hand there was a bit of water here and there. And the tracks in the pine maze (Station Link) were quite hard to see after the odd cyclone recently. So its pleasing to report the old winning time was beaten by 3 minutes.

Fastest and only one under an hour was Jake McLellan on 58:43 (last time Magnus Bengtsson 61:30). Jake had a great battle with his dad Andrew, the younger rider getting past by spotting the more direct bridge in the lower picnic area. Neither rode the course last time. As in 2019 Nicola Mitchell was fastest woman on 74:40. That was a couple of minutes faster, perhaps the “ride-past” helped to achieve it but a great time given the slippery track conditions.

New this time was a 500m zigzag course among the 100+ eucalypts in the upper picnic area, with 12 controls, you guessed it, behind a tree. Jake McLellan creamed that too in 2:40, with the rest between 3 and 4 minutes. Speed was not necessarily the key.

Three red-level high school juniors did a foot-o training session afterwards. This used the 2021 Waitangi Shorts course in reverse. The pines are deliciously challenging at the moment with plenty of good travel but still quite low visibility.

Michael Wood course planner. 14 entries 10 participants.

Names	Main Course	Eucalypt zigzag
Jake McLellan	58:43	2:40
Peter Mitchell	60:29	3:07
Andrew McLellan	60:40	
Nicola Mitchell	74:40	3:49
Mike Fee	76:17	3:55
Jenny Visser	82:00	
Jim Sutherland	84:46	3:52
Jo McKenzie	98:20	
Morag McLellan	112:35	
Howard Symmes	128:50	
Kelly Field	DNS	
Donna Burling	DNS	
Erin Moyle	DNS	
Bill Clarke	DNS	