

# My first MTB race – a new challenge



## The 2018 Otway Odyssey 30km race

### **Q) So you're trying a new sport – how long have you been mountain biking?**

Funnily enough I am just on the train to pick up my first ever mountain bike! So I am a total newbie to this sport :). I have ridden about 4 trails before deciding to give the sport a more serious crack. So I can safely say that I started to ride regularly about a month ago.



### **Q) What sort of riding do you mostly do?**

All my rides so far have centered around Hurst Rd (between Jan Juc and Anglesea) as I can ride there from home. It is also about a 20km return trip so perfect training distance for the Odyssey. The trails have a different feel to the couple of trails I have ridden at Forrest so I figure it's good training for me.

### **Q) What do you love about the sport?**

At the moment I am really enjoying learning the basic skills of MTB-ing. I don't mind a good uphill slog and am enjoying the combination of the mental challenge and physical technicality if working my way down the hills! I participated in the skills course with Jess Douglas a few weeks ago and went from walking around tiny logs to now happily (and joyfully) taking on far more challenging drops. Working through my fear and learning how to ride with control has meant I am riding faster and with more confidence. This has meant I don't feel out of control and don't feel like I'm going to fall off. It was such a huge confidence booster for me as a rider but also just as a person.

### **Q) What attracted you to enter the Otway Odyssey?**

I entered initially as a way of setting a challenge to myself to learn something new. I also wanted to show my kids that anyone (even their mum) can do anything with a bit of practice and determination. I believe in the power of positive role models. Entering the odyssey was a way of setting an achievable goal for myself; I'm already planning to do the 50km next year!

### **Q) What are you looking forward to about it?**

I'm looking forward to that wonderful internal feeling of "oh my god I can't believe I just did that" when I finish the event. I am looking at it as a total personal challenge as opposed to a race or competition. I just want to finish it and have my partner and kids be proud of me for doing my best.

### **Q) Will this be your first event?**

Yep this is my first event, I'm not sure if I will go in many events but this one has been a great way to get me on a bike and keep me fit and active.

***Q) Anything else you'd like to say about MTB in general?***

The only thing I want to add would be to say that one of my biggest fears about MTB-ing has always been that I would fall and hurt myself. I have had a few sporting injuries and after having kids I have been far more protective of hurting myself and so didn't want to try MTB for that reason. However, I actually feel like I'm at lower risk of hurting myself now, particularly since doing Jess's skills course. My core strength is way better, I'm feeling strong and most importantly I have the skills to navigate with control down a hill. I would strongly advocate for anyone thinking of taking up MTB to do a skills course. It has just made so much difference to my confidence and safety while riding.

***Lissie Doyle, Jan Juc, Victoria***

