



What an experience the 2015 Shahzada 400 was this year! Our 67 starters had to contend with torrential rain, lightning and hail storms together with heat and high humidity. At one stage my boots were so heavy with water after the descent track at McKechnies became a raging river, that I could barely lift my feet to walk! However, Rahn soldiered on in his usual laid back way all through the week, we dealt with some minor skin problems, leeches, a leg scrape on The Steps and ultimately achieved our hard earned fourth (4 out of 4 attempts) buckle together.

I originally intended to only do one Shahzada ride but it has somehow become a passion (or obsession) - we must all be insane given the challenges that are faced, but the euphoria of a successful completion is worth it. The hardest part is seeing fellow riders leave the ride at various stages through the week. This year I had really enjoyed Rob Vlaanderen's company together with his gutsy and honest horse, Castlebar Djara, for the entire week - only to see him vet out at the end and join the dreaded 'Friday Club'. So

heartbreaking to go out at the end of an extremely tough 400k and sad to see four others go at the same time.

The extreme challenge of this ride is reflected in the number of successful completions (26).

What can't be described in words is the magnificence of the country we are permitted to ride through, you need to see it to understand.

I remember thinking on Prestons that I was getting 'too old for this', but when Kym gave us the thumbs up and big hug at our final run out all those negative thoughts just seemed to disappear! So, I guess I will be part of the wonderful Shahzada family again in 2016! Come and join us and enjoy 'the ride of your life'! 😊