



# IRENE NEWS

**13 April 2020**

**No 15 - 2020**



## **THE BEN 10 ECO CHALLENGE**

Johan van Vuuren was very privileged to do this very special challenge before the lockdown. Here is his story:

I came upon this challenge, after my brother and I talked about things we still would like to do – yes, those bucket list things.

### ***What is the Ben 10 Eco Challenge all about?***

This is not a race, but rather an adventure in the Eastern Cape Highlands. An opportunity to live life. The challenge is open and free to drive, ride, cycle, run or walk the following 10 passes within 7 days, in any order. Cyclists, walkers and runners are permitted to move between the passes per vehicle.

You need to download the passes / course coordinates. Every pass has its own start, summit and finishing point. Some of the passes, the summit and finish point are the same.

1. *Ben MacDhui Pass (3001m) – Highest Pass in South Africa*
2. *Carlisleshoekspruit Pass (2563m)*
3. *Volunteershoek Pass (2581m)*
4. *Naudes Nek Pass (2590m)*
5. *Lundin's Nek Pass (2170m)*
6. *Joubert's Pass (2234m)*
7. *Bastervoet Pass (2240m)*
8. *TTT (Tiffindell – Tenahead Traverse) (2720m)*
9. *Otto du Plessis Pass (2115m)*
10. *Barkly Pass (2018m)*

### ***My journey:***

September 2019, I made up my mind to do the challenge and then the planning started. First, I needed a second and a support vehicle. I phoned my brother in East London and asked him to support me, and then I asked "My Gryskop" (Blanche) to second me. We fixed the date, 6 – 9 March 2020.

As the planning proceeded a few 4x4 drivers from East London joined the challenge as did another runner, from Germany who joined in the craziness.

**Friday – 6 March 2020:** We left for Lady Grey, after we slept over in Bloemfontein and arrived at 10H40. The first pass was Joubert's Pass (11,96 km). It was very hot with open blue skies. Then it was Otto du Plessis Pass (10 km) and the last one for day one, was Barkly Pass (12,25 km), the only paved road pass. We finished Barkly Pass at 20h10, that night. From there we drove to Elliot , where we stayed at a guest house.



*The start of The Ben 10 Eco Challenge at Lady Grey*

**Saturday – 7 March 2020:** We started with Bastervoet Pass (22,75 km). It was a 2-hour drive from Elliot. The toughest pass for a 4x4 and the least access. First we had to build the road for the 4x4's. Time was running out and I realized that it was not possible to do the passes as I planned to do. I was disappointed, but while running, I reminded myself that I'm here to enjoy the adventure. Life is an adventure and not a race.



*Building the road for the 4x4's*



*Bastervoet Pass*

After Bastervoet Pass we went to Steepside, a Guest Farm 20 km from Rhodes, were we stayed for the next two nights.

Carlisleshoek Pass (14,47 km) – For those of you that did the Rhodes Trail Run, it's the concrete section on your way to Rhodes after the waterpoint where you can enjoy the "oyster potjie".  
Carlisleshoek Pass starts outside Rhodes, first you hit the dirt road to the left all the way up the concrete section to the top.

On the Saturday, I only did half the passes as planned. The logistics proved to be a nightmare, the gravel roads were in a mess after weeks of rain. Sometimes, it took us 2 – 3 hours just to travel between the passes.

**Sunday – 8 March 2020:** All the way back to Rhodes to start with Naudes Nek Pass (33,36 km). It's a 19 km run to the summit and then still 14 km all the way down to the finish. The plan was that the seconding team will drop us, go back to the guest farm and then they will catch us somewhere on the pass. The up run was hard and we were lucky it was not that hot, but going down was extremely hot (38°C). I only carried about 2,5 L of water with me. After we reached the summit there was no sign of our seconding team. I ran out of water twice. I don't believe in the words "by chance", but every time I ran out of water a waterfall appeared next to the road. Our seconding team caught us just before we finished the pass.



*With every summit you need to take a picture to send to the forum*

Then we went for the highest pass, Ben MacDhui Pass (4,92 km), in South Africa. The only pass on The Ben 10 Eco Challenge, where you need permission from Tiffendell Ski Resort to start your ascent.



*With my Irene socks*



*The group that joined The Ben 10 Eco Challenge*

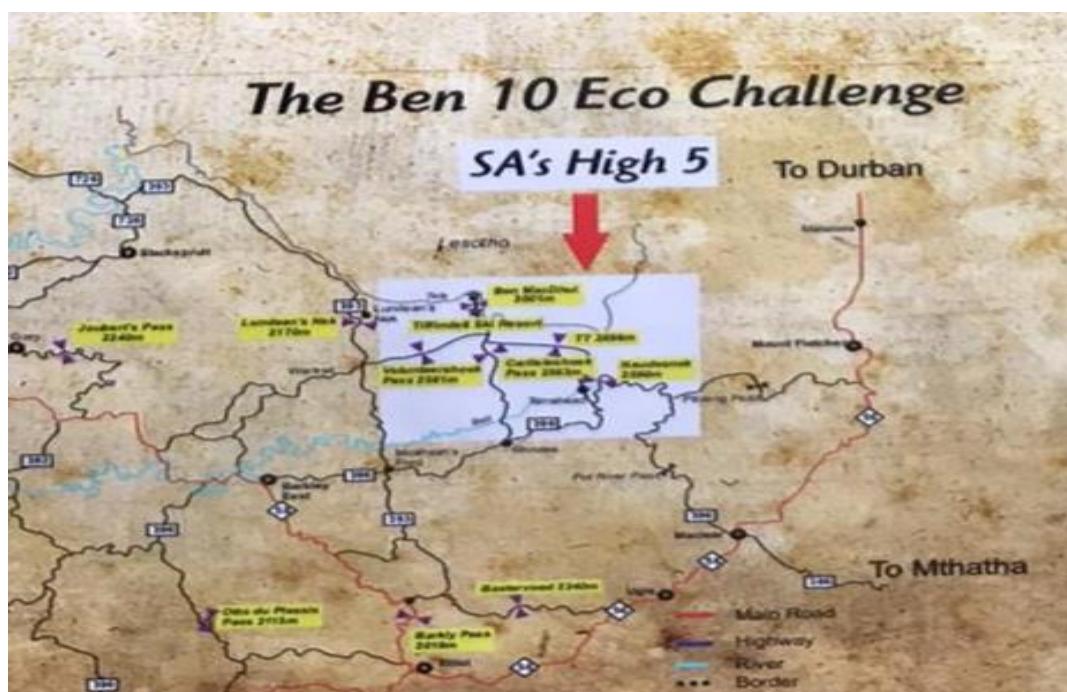
Again, we re-organized the planning and we decided to do Volunteershoek Pass (9,12 km). The seconding vehicle had to take us down the pass to start at the foot of the pass. Time was not on our side and I knew that this will be a night run. With our head-lamps on and the thunder rumbling in the distance, we finished the pass.

**Monday – 9 March 2020:** This was the last day and the spare day for if something unforeseen happened. There were still two passes to summit and then back to Bloemfontein. We left the guest house and went all the way up to Tiffendell Ski Resort, to start with TTT (25,83 km). TTT starts just before Tiffendell Ski Resort and finishes at the highest Lodge in South Africa, Tenahead Mountain Lodge. Lots off cattle gates to open and close. Then we went back to the guest house, loaded all our luggage and left for the last pass of The Ben 10.

From TTT it was a three- and half-hour drive to Lundins Nek Pass (14,59 km). Suddenly, the weather changed. For a few minutes, I thought that we were going to run in the rain. Lundins Pass starts just pass War trail, the finish of Skyrun.

The down runs were hard on the quads. After travel between the passes it was hard to start to run again. The late nights and getting up early every morning was tough on my body. But at the end – WOW!! We have a beautiful country, with nice places to see and many more bucket lists to tick off.

So, don't wait for something to happen, make it happen. Don't let something stop your dream. Life is short. Just go out and do it – just live your life.



*After the good rain the past summer, everything was green and all the waterfalls and waterstreams were flowing*



## **BLANKET PROJECT**

Thank you to those members who have already contributed towards this worthy project. Please support it and make your contribution, any amount is welcome.

## **FROM THE WALKERS CAPTAIN**

Die Lockdown gee ons geleentheid om gesprek met onsself te hou oor waarheen ons oppad is met ons sport.

Gister sou dag 2 van die GNMA Kampioenskap gewees het en einde van die maand sou die SAMA Kampioenskap plaasgevind het. Die jaar sou Irene weereens aan die voorpunt gewees het op die baan met 'n hele paar nuwe stappers wat op die podium kon staan.

Nou ja, ons almal weet dat dit nie meer kan plaasvind nie, of ten minste nie nou al nie. Dit gee ons (lees Danie) geleentheid om fiks te word, die boeppensie af te skud en ten minste goeie basis myle op, of in, die tekkies te kry. Dit alles voor ons weer volstoom kan voorberei vir die Irene Ope 10 Km Stap GP, AGN Stap GPs en ASA Interprovinsiale Kampioenskap wat beplan word. Intussen is daar nog die Dawn-to-Dusk waar km op die tekkies verseker belangrik is.

Al die bogenoemde het my laat besluit om hierdie tyd positief te gebruik om te werk aan my fiksheid, beide fisies en psigies. Ek het altyd getwyfel of ek kompeterend aan wedlope verder as 10 km kan deelneem.... met dit as agtergrond het ek aan myself die uitdaging gestel om te kyk hoe vér ek in die 21 dae kan stap. Nou het die tydperk verleng na 35 dae... en ons is nog nie seker wat daarna gaan gebeur nie.

Waar staan ek nou met my uitdaging?

Ek woon in 'n kompleks en mag nie buite my wooneenheid en erf oefen nie. Die maksimum opgemete eenrigting roete wat ek kon inpas is 35 m wat 'n rondte van 70m lewer. Dit behels 2 stop-en-omdraai punte en 6 skerp draaie. Tot met die skrywe hiervan het ek reeds meer as 4000 rondtes gestap (kyk gerus na my STRAVA profiel as jy my nie glo nie). Dit omgerekken in km is meer as 280 km in 16 dae.

Wat het ek geleer (WEER GELEER!)?

1. Die ding is 'n kop ding. Hou die gedagtes besig en kom in 'n roetine eerder as om in die negatiewe van verveling te verval. Negatiewe gedagtes kan 'n vorteks word wat jou al vinniger insuig in die negatiewe.
2. Wedloopstap is net soveel in die psigiese as die fisiese dimensie. Ek raak baie gou verveeld met iets en moet my brein besig hou. Daarom het ek my roete doelbewus uitgelê met cones en wegspringplek, "lap-counters", judges en waterstasie om my gedagtes besig te hou. 'n Tipiese rondte is iets soos: Druk rondteteller op horlosie, gooi wasgoedpennetjie in emmer, dtsp stadiger vir skerp draai na regs (om moontlike enkel en knie beserings te voorkom), versnel deur arms te gebruik, stadiger vir skerp draai na regs....stop en draai om, links draai, regs draai, tel pennetjie op (oogkontak met rondteteller) versnel, skerp draai na regs, versnel, draai om en versnel, regsdraai en maak rondte klaar deur pennetjie in emmer te laat val

(glimlag vir die hoofskeidsregter) en rondteteller op horlosie te druk. Deurlopend fokus ek op die korrekte stap styl en tegniek.

Hou die brein besig en konsentreer!

3. Wees versigtig op so 'n kort roete, veral as daar stop-omdraai en skerp draaie is. Stap eerder baie stadiger en verseker dat jy beseringsvry deur die lock-up kom. (Ons kan hierna weer op spoed fokus). Hoewel dit aanvanklik kan voel of alles pynloos is, kan herhaalde skerp draaie en stop-begin bewegings stress plaas op spiere en ligamente wat nie daaraan gewoond is en op die langer duur tot beserings kan lei. Wees versigting om nie onnodig sywaartse druk op die heupe, knieë en enkels te plaas nie.

4. As jy 'n klippie in die skoen het, stop onmiddellik en maak dit reg. Dit is nie net op wedloopstap van toepassing nie maar ook 'n lewensles. Ek het by geleentheid gevoel dat my tekkies nou skielik nie meer so lekker pas nie en met 'n blaas op my haak geëindig. By 'n volgende geleentheid het ek met 3 blou toonnaels geëindig (verkeerde kouse). Elke keer het ek myself oortuig dat dit maar net my verbeelding was en maar net moes deurdruk en soos deur Pres Brand gestel "alles sal regkom".

5. Hoe om blase te beredder en aan te gaan. Ons het OPSITE POST-OP chirurgiese pleisters in die huis gehad na 'n vorige operasie (sien foto). Dit is groot genoeg om die te blaas te bedek, voel rubberagtig, is sag en klou baie goed sonder om rond te skuif. Ek het dit op die blaas geplak voor elke sessie en begin van dag 4 kon ek sonder beskerming stap.



6. Ons het ondersteuningsstelsels nodig. Dankie aan al die stappers wat my bemoedig, raad gee en kritiseer. Sonder julle kan ek nie in my sport groei en ontwikkel nie.

6. GPS is heeltemal onakkuraat. Ek het my roete fisies uitgemeet en bevestig dat 'n rondte presies 70 m is en dat 50 rondtes dus gelyk is aan 3,5 km. My Polar horlosie GPS kan dit glad nie akkuraat plaas nie en registreer kort met tot die helfte. In sommige gevalle het ek, volgens die STRAVA prentjies, oorkant die straat in die buurvrou se erf gestap! Ek beplan om volgende week so 'n artikel te skryf en vir Wynand aan te bied vir publikasie.

Ek is nog maar 'n beginner in wedloopstap en leer nog elke dag dankie vir almal wat saamstap op die lock-up (of down) pad. Pas julle mooi op, wees veilig en misbruik elke wettige geleentheid om te stap!

Vrede vir almal.

Danie L



## PERSONALIA

Congratulations to the following members who celebrate their birthdays during the week:

Suzanne	Stander	13 Apr
Anja	Vlok	13 Apr
Johan	Saayman	14 Apr
Ann	Eckard	15 Apr
Elze	Le Roux	15 Apr
Sidwell	Mabuya	16 Apr
Tseko	Nell	16 Apr
Victor	Phetoe	16 Apr
Jaydene	Hills	19 Apr



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## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

**Well done is better than well said.**



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### REGISTERED QUANTITY SURVEYORS • GEREGSTREERDE BOUREKENAARS

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**PHOTO CORNER (TIME TRIAL IN HONOUR OF JAN VAN WYK)**

# *Rest in Peace Jan*

**WE ARE RUNNING A  
TIME TRIAL IN  
HONOUR OF JAN  
TONIGHT**

**7 APRIL 2020  
START TIME 17:30  
8KM OR 50MINUTES**

**(TREADMILL, OR  
GARDEN RUN,  
RESPECT SOCIAL  
DISTANCING AND  
LOCKDOWN RULES)**



**IRENE**

**WEAR IRENE KIT AND TAKE A SELFIE  
POST SELFIE PIC ON JOYFUL LOUISE IN HONOUR OF JAN**



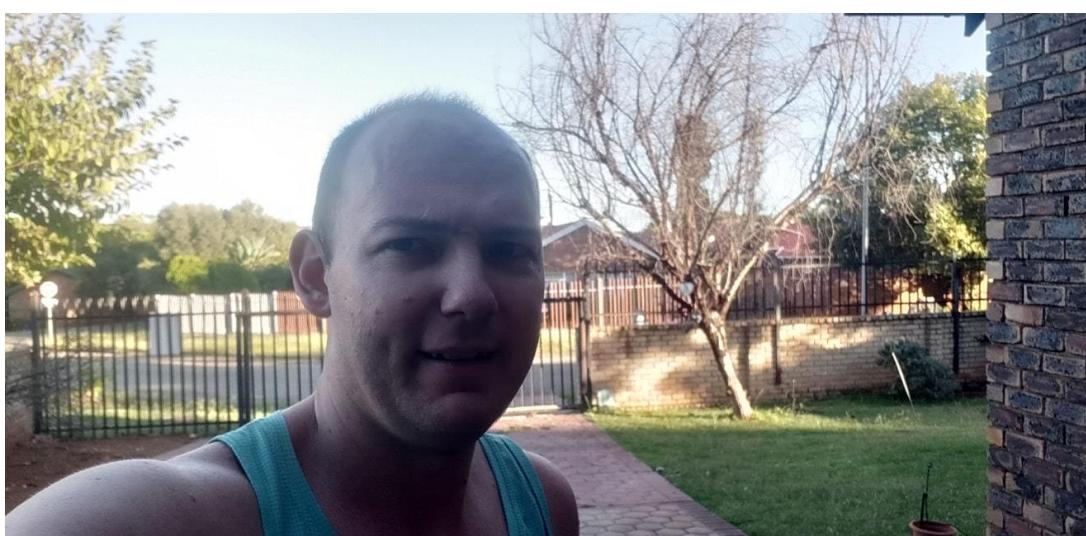
Mark Adams



Lindie Pretorius



Rosemary Brink



Jaco van Rooyen



Henk Basson



Pieter Reynecke



Heleen de Bruin



Suzelle Engels and JP Labuschagne



Joy Dekker



Rob and Belinda Hudson

**STRAVA**



Run  
**8.0 km**

Pace  
**5:58 /km**

Time  
**48m 13s**

Glen and Jessica Simmonds



Nadene and Louis Visser



Giel Cillié



07/04/2020 06:44 PM

Danie Labuschagne



Keith Reynolds

Two of the last photos taken of Jan at the time trials recently

