

# ADVENTURER & AID WORKER RICKY MUNDAY COMPLETES INAUGURAL HAITI ASCENT MOUNTAIN BIKE STAGE RACE TO PROMOTE HAITI AS ADVENTURE TOURISM DESTINATION

Submitted by: Ricky Munday

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MOUNTAIN BIKED 60 MILES IN 2 DAYS ALONGSIDE MOUNTAIN BIKING LEGENDS AND 13 HAITIAN RIDERS, INCLUDING 10,000 FT OF ASCENT, OVER THE MOUNTAINS FROM PORT-AU-PRINCE TO THE SOUTH COAST BEACHES OF JACM

PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI, FEBRUARY 8TH 2013 – Scottish Adventurer & Aid Worker Ricky Munday (<http://www.rickymunday.com>), 36, today announced that he completed the inaugural Haiti Ascent Mountain Bike Stage race (<http://www.mtbayiti.org>), which took place over 2 days on 1st & 2nd February 2013. 26 bold riders started the event and 23 finished the course. The field included legends such as Hans “No Way” Rey (Mountain Bike Hall of Fame, Marla Streb (former downhill World Champion), Sonya Looney (Pro US Mountain Biker), Jenny Fletcher (Pro US Triathlete), Brian Cowie (3 x Canadian Paralympic triathlete). Also in the field were 12 members of the Leogane Cycling Club in Haiti, who were given sponsored bikes and race jerseys by the organisers to allow them to participate.

In completing this unique event, the riders raced an insanely challenging course through some of the most rugged and awe-inspiring terrain in the Western Hemisphere, in a country that also ranks as the poorest in the Western hemisphere. The event was organised with the ultimate goal of developing mountain biking in Haiti through local, microenterprise Haitian businesses. The course statistics are mind-boggling: 2 days, 60 miles of riding, 10,000ft of Elevation Gain and 11,600ft of elevation loss. The elevation gain on Day 1 alone was around 8,000ft with elevation loss of 3,700ft, which is the equivalent of biking up Ben Nevis, biking back down and then biking almost all the way back up! Munday, who completed the course in 20th position in a time of 12h:12m:23s (<http://mtbayiti.org/results-2013/>), explained more:

“Personally, it was a fantastic opportunity for me to see another side of Haiti and regain some perspective on why I choose to work in humanitarian aid. It was a humbling experience to ride with legends like Hans and Marla, and see current pros like Sonya Looney in action. However, it was more humbling to see the local Haitian riders, many of whom had never ridden a mountain bike before, commit fully to the experience despite obviously lacking basic equipment. I know from experience that Haiti is a very difficult place to make things happen, so I was very impressed that the logistics went so smoothly.”

MTB Ayiti, which was won overall by US Pro mountain biker Sonya Looney in a time of 6h:41m:49s, is part of a series of planned Haiti Adventure Races, which includes an ultra-marathon this coming weekend. These events will help establish Haiti as a world-class destination for adventure travelers. Developing the fledgling tourism sector has become a key priority for the Government of Haiti, 3 years after the devastating earthquake that killed over 300,000 people. Munday has been on mission in Haiti with the Red Cross since July 2012, which limited his training opportunities, but he has an exceptional adventure pedigree; in December 2012 he climbed Pico de Orizaba (5,363m) in Mexico, North America’s 3rd highest peak, as part of his long-term Triple 7 Summits project. Munday explains:

“Normally, I climb mountains on foot, rather than ride up them on a bike, and I suffered badly (<http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=10151495969024974>) from both technical issues with my bike, and with

my lack of bike fitness. I will never forget the agonising cramps in my quadriceps on the ascent to the section known as 'Soul Collector" on Day 1. For 5 full minutes I could not bend my legs, but holding them straight was agony!"

Munday has worked in humanitarian aid since 2008, in Kenya, Sudan, Bangladesh & Pakistan. In 2004, he completed the 'toughest footrace' on earth, the Marathon des Sables, running 220km in 6 days through the Sahara desert in temperatures up to 48 C. He is currently planning the South America 3 Peaks expedition to Chile & Argentina in December 2013. During his Triple 7 Summits (<http://www.rickymunday.com/expeditions.html?tab=8#TabbedPanels1>) project he is attempting to climb the 3 highest peaks on every continent, a feat that has never been completed. Munday is supported by BDL Hotels, Gibson Pensions & Investments, Montane, Nite Watches, Tiso, Aquapac & Lyon Equipment. For further information, photographs or to request an interview with Ricky Munday, please contact:

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The MTB Ayiti website is [www.mtbayiti.org](http://www.mtbayiti.org)