

Endurance Athletes from all over South Africa will participate in the Quarter century Challenge to do FIVE daring events IN ONE YEAR!



Midmar, Dusi,

“Millennium Big 5 Challenge 2025”



Cape Town Cycle Tour, Comrades, Mt. Kilimanjaro

The Dusi Canoe Marathon

There may be easier ways of getting from Pietermaritzburg to Durban, but none can be more adventure filled and challenging than participating in the three-day Dusi Canoe Marathon. For those who have registered for the Millennium Big 5 Challenge 2025, make a note to yourself to read this section of the book at least three times!

An ordinary game ranger in 1951, Ian Player, was the only person to complete the trip along the Dusi and since then around 13 000 “paddlers” have fearlessly braved the rapids, white waters and cumbersome portages along the Umsindusi and Umgeni Rivers that lie between Camp’s Drift and Blue Lagoon in Durban. With the odd unscheduled and undignified swim that canoeists sometimes experience, some cynics have lightheartedly dubbed the Dusi as the “world’s toughest triathlon”!

The Dusi has also become a showcase for what is possible when a sport goes about development in the right way, focusing on a holistic approach to developing talent from disadvantaged backgrounds. Nowadays, black paddlers pack the top echelons of the results. Three times since 2008 they have been crowned Dusi champions; Thulani Mbanjawa won that year with Martin Dreyer, while Sbonela Khwela was victorious in 2014 with Andy Birkett, and Khumbulani Nzimande won with Birkett in 2020.”

Lyle Wheeler displaced Rory Arbuthnot as the paddler with the most Dusi finishes. In 2021 he reached the figure of 50. He said this of the Dusi in a Foreword to the Steve Camp and Brad Morgan “Adventures on an African River” referred to above :

“I return annually because of my relationships with my fellow Dusi paddlers and the wider canoeing community. I come back for ... camaraderie. I also acknowledge the importance of the seconders, without whom the Dusi would not exist. I am deeply grateful to them.

The Dusi is an adventure and a precious opportunity to experience some of the most beautiful wilds of South Africa. Paddling and portaging the river, flanked by towering hills, with people cheering us on is a humbling experience, and tripping the river before the race, at one with nature, is a huge draw.

The Dusi is without a doubt a challenge. With all the elements against you. It’s not a given you’re going to reach Durban; the intense heat in the valleys, the river conditions, the possibility of injury or wrapping your boat.....