

World Mountain Bike Orienteering Championships 2015

This year's WMTBOC took place in the Liberec Region of Northern Czech Republic from Sunday 16th August to Saturday 22nd. 273 competitors from 29 different countries took part in the various events spread over the week. Mick Farrell (CNO/IMBRC) represented Ireland in the M21 Sprint, Middle and Long Distance Events.



Ještěd, Liberec

The week started out with a Model event on the Sunday, this was used as a training event for both competitors and event organisers alike and was a good intro to the high standard the events would be organised to during the week. Monday was a training day, though very few people completed the middle distance length course as the actual Middle Distance Event was taking place the following day.

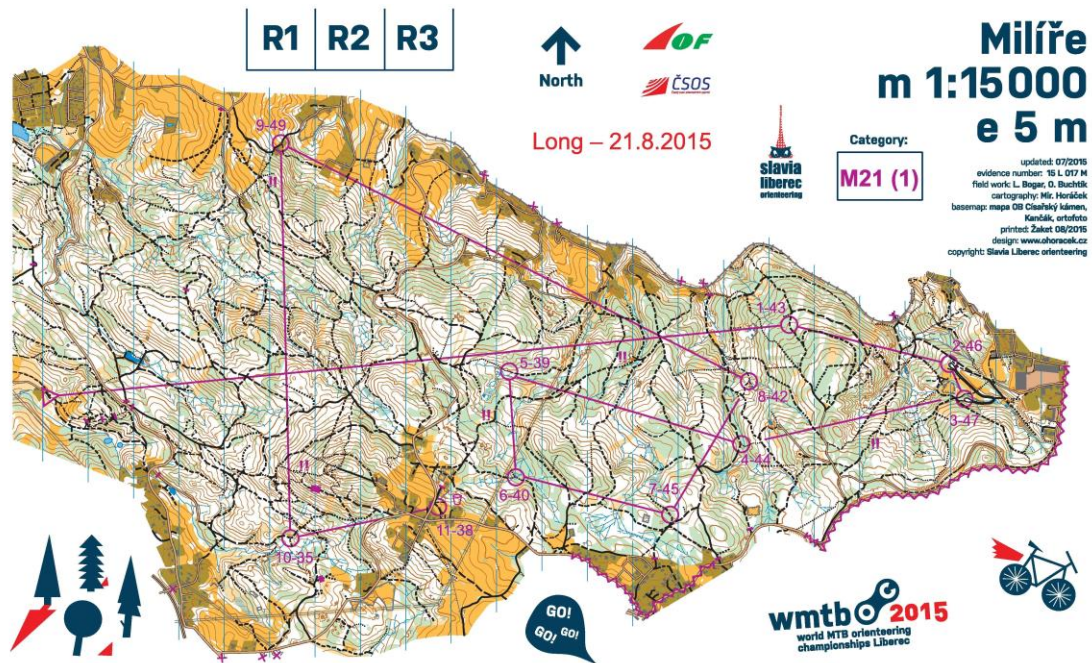
M21 Middle Distance was 11.4km in length with an optimal route of 17.8km, 590m height gain and 27 controls. In MTBO competitors are expected to stay on the roads, paths and tracks, if the competitor wishes to leave the track they must carry the bike, but the course planning in the middle distance event meant that it would be faster to ride the tracks. Estimated winning time for M21 was 57mins, winner was Anton Foliforov (RUS) 58:16, 2nd place was Luca Dallavalle of Italy, Luca was actually 28 seconds ahead at last control but punctured so had to run his bike in to come 2nd by just 5 seconds. Mick Farrell 91:52 for 89th out of 93 finishers (102 started).

M21 Sprint Distance took place on the Wednesday in the town of Turnov. The course was a mixture of wooded area with lots of tracks, some park land areas and some urban riding, they actually closed off the town centre to vehicular traffic leaving for some exciting racing on closed roads. The camera crews were out en-masse to film the sprint for Czech TV as its very spectator friendly. M21 Sprint Distance event was 5.5km, optimal route of 8.2km with 120m height gain and 20 controls. Estimated winning time of 24mins, 1st place was Luca Dallavalle with 20:58, everyone was happy for him after previous days near miss. 2nd was Czech rider Vojtech Stransky with 21:02. Mick Farrell 30:40 for 91st out of 97 finishers.



Sprint Distance – Mick Farrell

M21 Long Distance course was 22km, optimal route of 32.2km with 960m height gain, 17 controls and estimated winning time of 108mins. Map scale of 1:15000 still meant the need for a map exchange during event to aid in legible reading of map while riding. The terrain was a tough mix of gravelled forest road, some tarmac, but a huge amount of double and single track. This was destined to be a tough day, 64 riders had qualified for the 'A' final either through competing in world cup events or being nominated by their national association. Anton Foliforov (RUS) was the victor on the day in a time 102:11, a phenomenal achievement winning both middle and long distance. Mick Farrell didn't finish, his lack of preparedness for what the week of events would actually entail had him coming close on time limit forcing a retirement.



Map 1 from Long Distance

Relay event took place on the Friday, very exciting M21 event, at end of 2nd leg Finland had the lead, Czech 2nd (+00:03), Russia 3rd (+00:49) and Austria 4th (+00:51), but that was all to change leaving it Austria 1st, Russia 2nd (+00:08) and Finland 3rd (+00:11). Unfortunately having only one team member Ireland couldn't field a team, maybe next year in Portugal?

WMTBOC 2015 was also final round of 2015 World Cup giving Emily Benham (GB) her 2nd overall World Cup win in a row.

Event Page, maps and results: <http://www.wmtboc2015.cz/>

Czech TV Coverage: <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/porady/10110938667-cyklistika/215471291280001-ms-mtbo-2015-cesko/>

Mick Farrell
Team Ireland
WMTBOC 2015