



Dream CATCHER

He once had to run away from a charging rhino in Swaziland, fell through the ice in Greenland and it seems riders want to hit him. This hasn't stopped amiable joker Jacques Marais from clicking away.



Jacques hamming it up for the photographer at the Bike for Beasts MTB Challenge in Mapungubwe, Limpopo Province

WAS OVER THE CORPORATE GAME.

I wanted out. Hey, you only live once so you might as well chase your dream."

This is what accomplished 47-year-old photographer Jacques Marais did in 1991. After a stint at Anglo American in the North West he packed his bags and headed to Cape Town to chase his photography dream. It took him a full ten years and lots of hard work to get his first cover in 2001 and he has visited some of the most incredible places on earth. *"The great thing about photography is that it's all about split-second decision making, it becomes instinctual,"* says Marais.

A keen mountain biker, Marais has established himself as one of the country's top multisport photographers. Capturing what it represents and the true essence of this outdoor pursuit. *"The girls in multisport are hot and I really like the people that take part in the sport."*

So if multisporters don't scare him, what does? *"Freestyle motor-cross riders. Those guys are a couple beers short of a six-pack and there is a big chance of being taken out on the mound. I think their routine scores extra points if they wing the shooter."*

So instead of driving a desk, Marais is doing what he loves; capturing great moments and having fun at the same time. With a slight risk of being hit in the face.

Moments

1985 Sporting a decorative mullet, JM sets off to study Electronic Engineering at Wits in his Escort One-Six-Double-O Sport. Zefness personified.

2001 Shoots his first cover image; a picture of an ancient Renault bombing down an avenue of Baobabs in Madagascar gracing the cover of an *Out There* magazine issue.

2002 Daughter Beth is born, followed three years later by a naughty-as-hell brother, Robert. "The two of them have brought me more adventure, joy and happiness than I ever could have imagined."

2004 His first book is published, a coffee-table guide to Adventure Racing appropriately titled *Adventure Racing*. Over the years, six more books follow; the latest being *Africa's Greatest Adventures*.

2007 Selected as one of 50 world-wide finalists in the *Red Bull ILLUME Photography Competition*. Gets to live it up in Aspen, Colorado as part of the prize.

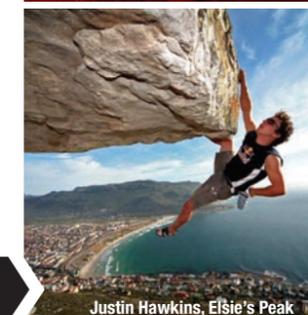
2010 Scores Gold and Silver Nominations in the Sony PROFOTO Awards.

JM's TOP DESTINATIONS

- **Greenland** Completely out of the comfort zone for a Boertjie from the southern hemisphere.
- **Madagascar** Eerie, unexpected, dramatic, like something out of a Tim Burton movie.
- **Baviaans River Valley** I was born here in Frontier Country, and grew up on the family farm. Aloes and ysterklip have done it for me ever since.
- **Utah** Being in Moab made me feel like a kid in a candy store again. Slickrock, Poison Spider, White Rim and a hundred other MTB trails, just waiting to be explored.
- **South Peninsula** I live in a place where the backline break is *kief*, the fynbos trails are steep, and where caracal roam the singletrack. The wine is damn good too!



TECH BITS



Justin Hawkins, Elsie's Peak

Dungeons Reef, Hout Bay

MARAIS GOES WITH THE lightweight lens options which he can run and ride with. "The **70-200mm F4** is definitely Canon's most underrated lens. It's pin-sharp."

HIS ARMOURY INCLUDES THREE bodies and six lenses, ranging from a **14mm fish-eye to 400mm telephoto zoom lens**. Does he keep any 35mm equipment for sentimental reasons? "Nope, digital is where I'm at, no hankering back to the good old days."