



## **Team Swift Race Report #6**

### **Fourth Annual Solano Bicycle Classic**

March 27-30, 2003

#### **Notes from Laura:**

Team Swift's Elite Juniors entered the Pro, 1, 2 stage race in Fairfield, CA. as an opportunity to get in a stage race for training and a great learning experience with the top Professional cyclists in the United States. The race is located here in the Bay which, although was a great challenge in which to participate, kept the event basically local and so we had lot's of parents around to help with host housing and in the feed zones. To enter a team you need to have 8 riders. Team Swift offered three of the extra spots to riders on the local Santa Rosa Team NorCal Velo. The riders from NorCal are strong local riders and I liked the idea of bringing the group together. The Three guest riders are Glenn, Eric and Bryan. Steven Cozza finished the entire stage race and has written the majority of the race report. Nathan, Duke and Brady had some unfortunate luck on the first day's road race. Nathan has a report on his day. Alan Eriksson came down with a cold and was unable to complete the events. Each person came away with some valuable lessons learned which they can apply to really racing smart and hard in the future which still made the stage race worthwhile. The final day there was also a separate criterium for the racers not in the stage race. Nathan Miller had a great move to be in the winning break of the Pro,1,2 field and finished 5<sup>th</sup> place. Lastly there is a race report from the stage race the same weekend from Rich Weir who attended the Pilarcitos Stage Race. Busy weekend for Team Swift!

#### **Team Swift Roster for Solano:**

Steve Cozza  
Brady Harter  
Nathan Miller  
Duke Schimmer  
Alan Eriksson  
Glenn Fant  
Eric Wright  
Bryan Wright

Coach: Laura Charameda  
Host Housing: Doug and Shelly Miller (Nathan's Parents)  
Feed Zone: Scott and Jeanette Cozza (Steven's Parents)

Also traveling with Team Swift was our guest:

Larssyn Staley, Jr 17-18 yr old National women's Champion, who rides for Hottubes. Larssyn, still a junior, raced in the Pro women's field. She's from Portland, OR. and will be staying this next week in Santa Rosa with one of Team Swift's riders, Lia Winfield.

Solano Report from Steven Cozza:

Steven Cozza finished the entire race and was very excited to not only finished, but also to have been out there aggressively racing. After the event Steven says, "Guess what Laura I finished 43 overall. I moved up 36 places since the first day. That is cool. Thanks for such a good race to bring us to." We found one race photo on the internet. See Steven racing in the Team Swift jersey at [Click here: www.cyclingnews.com news and analysis](http://www.cyclingnews.com)

### **Solano Bicycle Classic Stages 1 & 2 by Steven Cozza:**

Man am I tired tonight. Mostly because I have been racing my butt off with pros like Chris Horner, Jonathan Vaughters and a lot of other strong pros. The first Stage was on Thursday and it was an 87 mile road race with three pretty good size climbs and a finishing one of close to 4 miles. I knew from the start of this race that it would be very important to stay near the front of the field. This strategy later paid off when the vacuum like cross winds hit us near the town of Winters. I was in about the top 20 when we turned the corner into the ragging cross winds. I looked back and people were just being torn off the back of the main field like rag dolls. If I had not made the first two echeloning groups I would not have been in the front peloton for the rest of the race. Fortunately I did make it following good wheels of a top local Santa Rosa rider Sterling Magnell, Danny Pate and Vaughters. I knew that as long as these guys were around me that I must have been in good position. When we had come to one of the first big climbs known as the Dam climb a group of about 15 broke away. I knew that this was not so big of a threat because none of the top riders were in the break. This group went up the road and had even up to 5:00 minutes on us at one point but the chase began with Ofoto/Lombardi on the front and we had those 15 back in the group in know time at all. It was all back together when about 6 miles from the last climb home I got a rear wheel flat. I got the wheel change and chased for about 3 to 4 miles by myself and caught back on. I was feeling really good and ready for the last climb. We began to climb and I got another flat this time front wheel. I was so damn disappointed but luckily Sterling Magnell offered to give me his wheel and I took it. I was so stoked that a Pro like Sterling would even consider giving a little junior rider like me a wheel but he knew I had good legs and wanted me to get back in the race. I put on the new wheel and hammered all the way up the climb passing a lot of people. The end result I had only lost 6:03 minutes and ended up in 77. I was pretty disappointed that I got the two flats because I knew I could have finished in the top 30 but I am glad I was feeling strong. This race was extremely fun and I learned a lot about positioning and how important it is in the cross wind.

Today was the second stage and it was a 7.7 mile race with 4 miles of it a climb of 15 to 22%. Man was it a steep sucker. My goal for today was just to get to the climb in good position and then see what I could do from there. I was able to start the climb in about 35th position out of 160 racers. I felt comfortable right where I was and rode the climb with a few riders the whole way. I think I ended up in 40th but I won't know for sure until the results are posted. All in all this was a screaming climb and I just want to give thanks for all the support from the fans. They cheered loud helping me move faster up the climb. The 3rd Stage tomorrow is a 90 minute Crit in downtown Fairfield. Talk to you soon and thanks for reading.

**Stage 1:** 79 place, 3:53:13 I completed the 87 mile stage, 06:02 down over leaders

**Stage 2:** 44 place, 0:37:42 completed the hill climb, 04:15 down over the first place finisher

**My overall GC after Stage 2:** 58 place, 4:30:55 total time racing, 10:42 down on the leaders of the race Chris Horner.

I am pretty happy because I was in 79 place after stage 1 and now I am in 58 place overall after stage 2. That means I moved up 21 places.

Stage 3:

Today was stage 3 and I was going into it feeling a little soar from the previous two stages. Stage 3 was a 90 minute criterium on a really fast but smooth course. I knew from the gun it would be super fast so I made sure I got a really start. The race started off really fast and it was strung out from block to block. My goal for today was to stay in the front making sure I was ready for the right move. The whole race I was spun out in my 14 (the largest gear on a junior cog set) and I felt I had a great workout for the junior races to come like Sea Otter. About 1hr into the race I got a front wheel puncture going into the first turn and almost went down but kept it right side up and rolled into the pit. I was able to get back into the race smoothly and started to work my way back up to the front when I notice that a break of about 12 had left the field and had 12 seconds on us. I tried bridging up with some other riders but failed to do so and decided to rest up for the finishing sprint. With one lap to go I moved myself in the top 15 and finished in the top 15 of the group I was in. I was so spun out that I could not even stand in the sprint. It was crazy and really fun. The 12 that where up the road stayed ahead by 12 seconds or so. I am ready for the last day stage 4 which is a Circuit race of around 85 miles.

Stage 4:

Last Stage of the Solano Bicycle Classic Stage 4:

Today was by far the hardest and fastest day of the whole stage race. Stage 4 consisted of 82 miles on a circuit that we did 13 laps on. We completed the 82 miles in less than 3 hours and man it was fast. The first part of the race I was not feeling so great but I knew my legs just needed to warm up. On the 3rd lap into the race I got stuck behind a big crash and had to chase

with team Jelly Belly for about a lap before catching back onto the main peleton. With 6 laps to go I worked my way up to the front of the race and started paying attention to any breaks that might be good to go with. A breakaway left up the road and had up to a minute on us. With 3 laps to go I was trying to get a water bottle feed so I moved to the front of the field. I notice that I had opened up a little gap over everyone so I decided to go for the bridge up to the minute group of 12 up the road. I was able to gain as much as 50 seconds over the main peleton and stayed away for 2 laps but was not able to catch the breakaway group. With just under 5 miles to go the breakaway group was caught and team Saturn began its lead out and it was so fast. I was spinning my legs off just trying to stay in top 15. I was fortunate to have my strong teammate Eric to bring me to the front to get better positioning. By the time the sprint came around I drifted back and finished in mid pack. I felt really strong throughout this whole stage race and am definitely feeling confident for Sea Otter. I feel that I am progressing into form at the right speed. My timing on when to be in shape and when not to has been on key so far and my next big peak will be Sea Otter.

**Stage 1** 03/27, 87 mile RR, Steven placed 79. He was in the top 20 near the end of the race when he experienced two flats.

**Stage 2** 03/28, 7.7 mile Hill climb, Placed 44th out of 158 remaining riders after the first day of cuts from over 300 riders.

**Stage 3** 03/29. Crit. 90 min Steven placed 36th out of 152. Got a flat but was able to get back in the race with a free lap.

**Stage 4** 03/30, Circuit Race 83 miles, placed 30th out of 107 who finished.

**Overall Place:** 43 out of 220 competitors who began the race and out of 107 who finished.

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### **Nathan Miller:**

Solano was a continuation of bad luck and poor effort on my part. First, there was the incident at McLane (missed start) and then I missed the time cut at here. What happened was that the group split in the crosswind section and the women's field was started somewhere in between the several groups of men. Our group wasn't allowed to pass the women and were stuck doing an unbelievably slow pace for the longest time. Then, twenty miles before the finish I got a flat. I asked the car behind me if there were wheels and he said that there was a car. I stopped, put my hand in the air, and got ready to change it and the whole caravan just drove past! I saw that there was a staple in my tire and that the leak had stopped, so I left it in and hoped that it would hold to the finish. It did, but I didn't have much air to ride on. In the end, we killed ourselves in the chase and just got cut by a few minutes anyway. That's all I ever want to think about this race again.

Obviously, my confidence was not running extremely high after the past couple of races and I needed something to boost it back up before the all important Sea Otter. So, I did the Pro 1,2 criterium at Solano that was not part of the stage race. I didn't care who was in the race, I was

out there to win it. I was so unbelievably mad about the past days events that I was set on racing until I fell over. There were only about fifty starters, but there were quite a few names in the race. Early on, I got in every break that looked like it might be a threat and just sat in. I would pretend that I was too tired or just that I didn't think it would work. What did I care, if it wasn't going to stick I wasn't working. (I had learned that pulling in the crosswinds on Stage 1) I got one prime by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a lap solo effort. Finally, I saw the break start to form up the road that I knew would stick. There were six laps to go, and the riders up the road included Webcor Alto-Velo, Rocknasium, Specialized, and Roberto Gaggioli. Two riders were trying to bridge the gap. One was from McGuire and the other was Dave Fuentes from Sierra Nevada. I thought, Roberto and Dave, this break is gone! I jumped on Fuentes' wheel and sat on. He sprinted around the other rider as he blew up and I couldn't go quite as quick. I was left to chase for almost a lap by myself. Just as I thought I wasn't going to make it, one rider pulled off and the next rider didn't pull through. I was only twenty feet off the back at that point and it gave me just enough of a chance to get on. I tried to sit in and rest for a little bit, but Fuentes kept trying to shoot me off the back because I wasn't working. He almost got me off the first time, because I wasn't sure exactly what he was trying to do. The next couple of times I didn't even sit on his wheel for a second as he drifted back, trying to take me with him. Finally, about the third or fourth time he tried it I told him, "Look, I am going as hard as I can go, and I can't spin any faster because I have junior gears. There is no way I can beat you on a 300 meter tailwind section with a 52-14 so leave me alone! He left me to sit there after that and began to concentrate on the real race and not the junior who was doing 120 rpms and just trying to hang on. Good plan, because Roberto jumped the field with about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a lap to go. I just looked over and knew that he was gone. Everyone else tried to chase and I jumped on. There was nothing I could do in the 35mph sprint other than spin like crazy. I ended up in fifth and I was extremely happy with the way that the race went. It felt good to know that I was going to be ready for Sea Otter after all.

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### **Eric Wright:**

My name is Eric Wright and I am twenty seven years old. When I am not training or racing my bike I am a high school teacher in Santa Rosa. I began racing when I was ten years old. Recently, after a seven year hiatus from the sport I have begun racing again and was very excited to join the very brave and committed junior racers of Team Swift as we tackled the National Racing Calendar event, The Solano Bicycle Classic. It was truly inspiring to interact with the team director, Laura Charameda, as well as the very talented junior racers; it is rare to find a junior team run with so much professionalism and dedication.

Some of my favorite moments from the race were holding the wheel of Jonathan Vaughters on the final climb of the final lap on the final stage of the race and also in helping Steven Cozza to the front of the race at the back of the Team Saturn lead-out train in the final kilometers of the closing circuit race (I forgot he only had junior gears).

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PRO

**MEN INDIVIDUAL GENERAL CLASSIFICATION FINAL**

PLACE	G.C. TIME	@ TIME	#	NAME	SPONSOR	
1	8:39:14	@ 00:00	22	Horner, Chris	Saturn Cycling Team	
2	8:40:51	@ 01:37	10	Vaughters, Jonathan	Prime Alliance	
3	8:42:37	@ 03:23	36	Brooks, Ben (AUS)	Jelly Belly / Carlsbad CA	
4	8:43:31	@ 04:17	144	Larsen, Steve	Webcor Cycling Team	5
8:43:35	@ 04:21	27	Wohlberg, Eric	Saturn Cycling Team		
6	8:43:38	@ 04:24	41	Bajadali, Andy	Ofoto-Lombardis	7
8:43:38	@ 04:24	154	Sausser, Christophe	Great Britain		
8	8:43:51	@ 04:37	153	Killeen, Liam	Great Britain	
9	8:44:07	@ 04:53	13	Creed, Michael	Prime Alliance	
10	8:44:08	@ 04:54	15	Pate, Danny	Prime Alliance	

**PRO MEN TEAM GC FINAL**

PLACE	TEAM	G.C.	@ TIME	TEAM
1		26:07:08	@ 0:00:00	Saturn Cycling Team
2		26:08:16	@ 0:01:08	Prime Alliance
3		26:13:01	@ 0:05:53	Great Britain
4		26:13:21	@ 0:06:13	OFOTO-Lombardi Sports
5		26:14:33	@ 0:07:25	Webcor Cycling Team
6		26:15:06	@ 0:07:58	7UP / Maxxis
7		26:15:15	@ 0:08:07	Navigators Cycling Team
8		26:17:00	@ 0:09:52	Sierra Nevada Cycling Team
9		26:19:35	@ 0:12:27	Jelly Belly/Carlsbad Clothing
10		26:20:10	@ 0:13:02	Health Net Cycling Team
11		26:33:39	@ 0:26:31	GS Lombardi-Foundry
12		26:35:14	@ 0:28:06	Santa Cruz Spokesman
13		26:37:16	@ 0:30:08	Healthy Choice-Guru's
14		26:59:53	@ 0:52:45	Rocknasium
15		27:25:38	@ 1:18:30	Team Swift

**Pilarcitos Stage Race**

March 29 & 30

Pilarcitos Stage Race was the same weekend just south of San Francisco. Rich Weir, Team Swift 15-16 year old racing with the Senior Men Cat 3, attended the event and sent in the race report. He finished 7<sup>th</sup> overall in the Stage Race with a 7<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> placing in each stage.

**Rich Weir:**

I could tell when I got up that it was going to be a beautiful day. The sun was out and it was probably 80 Degrees in the little town by the beach. I was eager to start the first stage of the 2003 Pilarcitos Category 3 Stage Race. It was a 17 mile hill TT. I was confident that I would not need aero bars. I soon found out that the name of the TT should have been a "hilly" TT. I definitely should have bought some clip-on aero bars. I felt good though. I placed 7th for that stage. I then had a ten mile ride back to the car. It was awesome riding along the beach on such a nice day. After waiting for 3 hours for the next stage to begin I was anxious to get going. It turned out to be a 7 mile relatively flat TT. I felt terrible going out and was sure I had blown my chances of a top ten overall. I ended up getting 12th. I was then in 9th overall. The next morning brought the same great weather. The course was weird. It had a few sketchy spots. The finish was up hill and there was a turn 100m before the line. I knew that the person first out of the corner would win. The race started and I went hard right away to discourage anyone who thought they might be moving up in front of me today. I then hit a nasty bump and was nearly thrown off my bike. I recovered easily and regained my spot. About a lap later I realized that my rear tire was flat. I made my way to the pit and had no problems moving back up into the front. There I stayed chasing down breaks and taking a few pulls. Then with a few laps to go, a group of three got away. I waited until Adam chased and jumped on his wheel. When we caught them on the last lap just before the final turn, I found myself boxed in on the outside. I couldn't move at all. We came into the last corner and sure enough the first one out of the corner won. I ended up placing 5th. I had terrible stomach cramps through the last half of the race so; I had to take care of that. I soon found out that I had moved from ninth to seventh. I think I could have done better in the criterium. I just need more experience to learn where I need to be at for the sprint and how to make sure I get there. Overall I think I had a good weekend; certainly better than the last couple weekends. I am now looking forward to Sea Otter and I hope to do well there.