



Team Swift Race Report #7
Sea Otter Classic in Monterey, California
April 11 -13, 2003

Team Swift Results:

1 st Place	Rich Weir	15-16 year old boys	Road Race
3 rd Place	Lia Winfield	17-18 year old girls	Road Race
6 nd Place	Steven Cozza	17-18 year old boys	Road Race
8 th Place	Anton Nicola	15-16 year old boys	Road Race
11 th Place	Alan Eriksson	17-18 year old boys	Road Race

1 st Place	Rich Weir	15-16 year old boys	Circuit Race
2 nd Place	Steven Cozza	17-18 year old boys	Circuit Race
2 nd Place	Lia Winfield	17-18 year old girls	Circuit Race
8 th Place	Ethan Weiss	15-16 year old boys	Circuit Race
9 th Place	Alan Eriksson	17-18 year old boys	Circuit Race

Coach Laura:

The Sea Otter Classic has become an entire Team Swift rider and family event. This year we had 10 riders and 18 parents in attendance. It was great seeing all the different age categories of Team Swift riders as well as having each of their parents there for support and cheering. I was proud of each rider for many different reasons and I think you'll enjoy hearing about their races. Seeing 13 year old Ethan racing with the 15-16 year olds, Lia out there racing the girls category, Rich has race savvy and a great sprint, Steve stayed so focused and used his strength to chase down Jessie, Nathan dealt with two crashes, Alan was in the main field helping Steve and finishing well too despite a last kilometer crash, Bob and Anton raced so hard, Duke and Brady always help support the team too. I really want to also thank each one of the parents that provide so much support. Holding wheels, passing waterbottles, and just being there with their kids. We had a wonderful time also visiting our sponsors who had booths at the venue. Many of them came out to specifically watch the Team Swift racers. They were as excited as the parents and I to see the riders race so aggressively.

Team Swift Riders at Sea Otter

17-18 Year Old Boys

Steven Cozza
Nathan Miller
Brady Harter
Duke Schimmer
Alan Eriksson

17-18 Year Old Girls

Lia Winfield

15-16 Year Old Boys

Rich Weir
Anton Nicola
Bob Harris
Ethan Weiss (who is only 13!)

Rider Reports:

Rich Weir:

April 11, 2003

I awoke at 5:15am to the beeping sound my watch made. I was out of bed quickly, remembering what day it was. It had been 384 days since the last time I had attempted this race. The last time I was sick. It was my first race but I was determined. I remember vividly watching the pack slip away on the first climb. I remember trying in vain to catch the main field that seemed to be going twice as fast as I. I remember. So, I spent the next 384 days training, not to do well, but to win. I was ready and after a good breakfast I changed and hopped onto my bike. I begin my warm-up. It was a warm day and I was ready for the 32 mile road race. I talked to Laura about strategy and with that I was at the start line. Today we were starting with the 17-18 field. Since I am in the 15-16 age group this seemed strange but it did not deter me from my objective. Every major team of note was there. I was excited to see how well I would do against them. We started. We went down the cork screw and up to the hill that I remember. Except this time I was right near the front. And I stayed near the front the whole race knowing that eventually the field would get exploded. That it did. Sooner than I had thought though. Many dropped their chain on the first steep climb. After that a few attacks went off. None of them stuck. On the last half of the last lap I found Adam's wheel. Adam rides for SGW and is a great rider and a great friend of mine. I stuck to it. When we hit the last climb I just stayed at the front with Adam. After we reached the top and re-entered the circuit I found that there was only 7 or 8 guys left in the lead of the 17-18 year old group and I was one of them! Adam was behind me briefly before the hairpin turn. He started to move up a little so I followed him. When I started to sprint to come around I found that there was not enough room and ended up riding in the dirt for about 30 feet or so. Realizing that the barriers were approaching fast I got out and started to come around

Adam. We crossed the line and I was in front of Adam. It did not hit me till some many minutes later as to what had happened. I had won the 15-16 race! Better yet I had gotten fourth in the 17-18 race! I was extremely shocked. I had come to win and I did.

For a podium photo see:

<http://nt1.adventuresports.com/event/y2k3soc/results/SOCdisplayresults2.asp?year=&event=6&class=41&Subclass=0>

*You can also see the full results listed at this home site.

After a long afternoon and night I awoke again. I looked outside only to see wet ground and dark clouds. Despite the otherwise gloomy conditions I was in good spirits. After hanging around the expo for a while we discovered that our race had been postponed to 4pm instead of 2pm. The race was the Circuit Race on the famous Laguna Seca race track. We would race for 50 min on the 2.5 hilly course which included the cork screw. The rain would surly be upon us by then. We all knew it would. And so it did. I was not about to lose this race though. I needed to put all thoughts of doubt that I could win down. Adam and I saw that we were going to be racing in our own category today separate from the older group. I was slightly disappointed because I wanted to race against the 17-18 boys again. We decided to try to drop the rest of the field as fast as possible for safety reasons with all the rain. Adam set a hard pace right away as planned. All but one of the field was quickly shelled. We worked together dropping the remaining rider a few laps later. The rain kept coming down harder and by working well together Adam and I kept catching many of the older riders who started in front of us. After a tense climb I mistakenly lead down the cork screw. Now there was no way I could get Adam to lead out the sprint. The last turn was really tense. I elevated my breathing to prepare for the sprint. When he did not attack I decided to go. I went as hard as I could. I found another gear to shift into with about 50m to go but did not find Adam coming around me. I knew I had it then. That was the coolest feeling yet. Racing over the line with a most cruel rain pounding upon my whole body and my competitor at my back. Finally, after the long year I had done it. With the misfortune of the early season at my back I had won not one but two big races. I just want to thank Laura, who did a great job of coaching me. All the sponsors for all their help and support. The Briko representatives, Ben and Matt, were awesome. They got totally into the race and were very supportive of the Team. Team Swift is also great. It was awesome how we have such a big Junior Team. They really helped a lot throughout the weekend. The parents showed up in numbers as well. Always throwing in a few words of encouragement and helping out whenever they could. My family, friends and girlfriend Katie for their support and endless hours of effort and encouragement. My mom and dad

rented a motor home for the weekend. It was really nice to come back to someplace dry and to have it so close to all the races. I would also like to thank Adam Switters. He is a great rider and really fun to ride with and against. Without him to chase and to strive to be as good as or better, I would not have won.

Steven Cozza

Sea Otter this year was bigger and better then ever before because of the road race being a part of

the World qualifier point series. On Friday was the road race and it was short. The course had rolling hills and was only 34 miles long. I knew that since it was a short race that it would be fast from the gun. Throughout the race our team attacked and covered attacks but nothing stuck because everyone was really fresh because of such a short race. After making a few hard attacks up the climb I began to realize that it was going to come down to a field sprint. I tried getting in good position for the sprint but got on the wrong wheel and started my sprint in six and finished in six. I left this race feeling a little bummed out that it did not play out the way I had wished it did but I learned a lot from it and was already planning on what I was going to do in the next day's circuit race.

The Circuit race is always a fun hard course. It is a 50 minute circuit on Laguna Seca raceway. I started this race feeling very happy because my girlfriend came down to Monterey to watch me. The first lap of the race was very fast and it started to rain. On one of the many turns a rider from Arizona crashed and I hit his foot and went down as well. I came to a stop from sliding on my but and hurried back onto to my bike to begin my chase back up to the main field. It took me almost a whole lap to catch back on but as soon as I did I attacked because I had noticed that two riders were already up the road one being from Hot Tubes. The rest of the race I was trying to bridge a gap up to the two-man Breakaway in the pouring rain. I later found out that team mate Alan Erickson blocked for me when I was up the road. Thanks Alan:) I ended up catching the now one rider with one lap to go. I new that since the Hot Tube rider had a whole team behind him to win the sprint he would not pull at all the whole lap. I tried to breakaway from him on the last climb but failed to do so. We went around the last few turns and I had noticed that I had a 10 foot gap on him so I hammered towards the finish line but with like 10 feet to the finish my legs cramped up on me and he passed me right at the line. I was pretty sad about placing 2nd when I know I could have won but once again I learned a whole lot of valuable lessons to know for the future races to come. My biggest mistake in this race was working to hard the last lap. I tried to drop him on the last climb when I should have just had confidence knowing that I could have beet him in the sprint if I played my cards right. The whole last lap I should have recovered well and got ready for the sprint because we had a whole 1:30 over the main field. Oh well live and learn. Are team has much bigger fish to fry coming up in the coming weeks.

One last word a younger team Swift rider named Ethan who is **13 years old** was in this race with all the older riders and he did very well riding strong all the way to the finish. Way to race tough Ethan Weiss.

Ethan Weiss:

This past weekend was the Sea Otter Classic and I was really excited to just be there for the sake of seeing all the awesome vendors and supporting the team. At the last minute I just decided to ride the junior circuit race just for the heck of it. When we got to the race course I looked out on the huge area where the event was being held, and the grand prix race car track was barely big enough to hold it all in. To finally find a place which is entirely dedicated to cycling (at least for

a weekend) is so awesome because as cyclists we barely get to know that!

On to the race! I was racing with the 15-16 year old group that day and unfortunately, due to the slowness of the pros, our race was postponed for an extra two hours. Throughout the whole day it was raining off and on, but just light rain, so no worries. But, when it came time to race, the clouds just decided to open up and POUR.

When our race started, I felt pretty good, bundled up in a jacket, vest, knee warmers, and arm warmers. I could have gone without the jacket, but when we got going the wheel spray was horrible. On the first climb, I didn't expect a stellar performance by myself, because I was, of course, riding in the older category. So, the group split and I found myself in the back. The first time down the Corkscrew, I felt comfortable, but because of the wide road surfaces, the corners seemed much less sharp than they actually were. At the bottom, it showed because I came around a corner to find an SGW rider on the ground. Yeah, I got dropped, but I'm happy that I got to race my first Sea Otter and finish the race. My parents had to comment on my face the first time around the loop and how shocked and wet it was. It only shows that it was the wettest day I've ever ridden let alone raced. I guess that Saturday was just a substitution for a dry Paris-Roubaix over in France. Too bad the conditions were good over there. J.

Overall, it was a great race and a fun experience, and if you get a chance to go to Sea Otter, take it!

Lia Winfield:

Sea Otter was a lot of fun. It was my first road and circuit race and I was both excited and nervous. I was surprised at how small a field there was for my category (junior women 17-18). There were only three in the road race and two for the circuit. Not long into both races I was dropped from the leader. Then I made it my goal to keep up with riders around me or to catch someone I saw ahead of me. My main goal for both races was to push myself hard up every hill and not relax just because I was behind. I wanted to be happy with my race and sufficiently tired at the end. I was definitely both those things. The races were hard but fun and left me inspired to train hard and be able to hang on to the pack. I ended up with 3rd place in the road and 2nd for the circuit.

P.S. The cross country race was really awesome too!!!!