



## **Team Swift Race Report #2**

### **Apple Pie & Cherry Pie Criteriums**

February 7 & 8, 2004

The season opening races begin in Santa Rosa with the Apple Pie Criterium. The promoter's main goal was to give riders more practice in their racing skills for the upcoming events. Team Swift coach Laura Charameda volunteered to lead a Skills Clinic before the afternoon events. We reviewed bicycle safety, criterium and cornering issues and then spent the remainder of the time reviewing the course and warming up.

The morning's events included the beginning men's categories and the junior events. Many of the juniors also raced in their senior categories as well. The junior races were split into junior 4/5 and junior 1-3 events. Team Swift would like to welcome all new and returning riders (and parents) to the beginning of the 2004 racing season.

Results and Rider Reports are later in this update. Two commonly asked questions were where riders could get information about obtaining a USCF license and also issues regarding junior gearing restrictions.

## **Licensing Information**

### **USCF Licenses**

Again this year, all racing licenses will be issued by USA Cycling. An annual 2004 USCF racing license is \$50 for adults and \$25 for juniors (10-18). This year the USCF web site is offering on-line purchasing of new licenses or license renewals. You can also use the traditional methods by sending in the License Application via snail mail or use the new on-line licensing. If you want to make sure you get your license fast, do it on-line. Purchasing your license at a race may take 6 to 8 weeks to process.

<http://usacycling.org/news/user/story.php?id=579>

## Buy a License

### Online Membership System

- The best method to ensure quick, accurate registration!
- Instantly print an authorization to ride. No waiting.
- Pay on the spot with your credit card.
- Eliminates the need to mail anything in--saves you money!
- Allows you to also request upgrades, travel vouchers, and corrections.

### Old-Fashioned Method

- Download a form, fill it out, enclose a check and mail in.
- Could take significant time in transit and processing.
- Requires Adobe Acrobat Reader.

## Junior Gearing Information

At all races for 2004 juniors are required to use "junior gearing". This helps keep younger riders from using gears too big that can hurt their joints. Also, it teaches riders to spin and have better form as they move into the senior ranks.

The roll out is 7.93m / 26' and can be found in the online USCF rulebook at the link below;

[http://www.usacycling.org/rulebooks/2004\\_uscf\\_rulebook.pdf](http://www.usacycling.org/rulebooks/2004_uscf_rulebook.pdf)

- Some of you have 9 speed spacing on your rear wheels and some may have the new 10 speed spacing which is available this year. There are no new Shimano junior cassettes yet available in this new 10 speed spacing so you may have to do some front ring reconfiguring.
  - A 45 tooth in front w/ a 12 in back is exactly 7.93 assuming a 26.5 wheel is used.
  - A 53 / 15 combo, (up to a 25 on top), is the only other option to keep the 53 up front- it rolls out to 24' 6"- a little shorter... but would allow for a quick wheel change for a Sr. race if they can pull the bigger gear too-
  - Salsa has tested this out with Shimano and their 45 front ring fits and works 'very good' with the Shimano chain- they do recommend using their small / inner ring as well to aid in front end shifting efficiency.
  - NorCal Bike Sport can answer many of your questions regarding gearing.
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## Rider Race Reports & Results

## Anton Nicola

Cherry Pie Crit.

6th Juniors 17-18

When I got to the race site this morning and hopped out of my truck, I was almost ready to climb back in and go right home. It was bitterly cold. At the end of the race, I really didn't know what hurt more, my frozen fingers, or my hurting legs and lungs. With an early start at 8 o'clock, we were the first to get the race day started. A combined field of 50 racers was a very good turnout for the day. I knew that I was in for some real treatment when I saw the big guys like Adam Switters, Daniel Holloway, Eric Riggs, and Clint Rogers. The worst part of this was that they were that they are all on the same team this year. So the whistle blows, and we're off to 30 minutes of racing ahead of us. Like usual, a fast start. Rounding the first corner and dropping about half the field. By the time we hit the second corner there was already an attack from a teammate from Adam. Luckily there were two other Team Swift riders in my race that could keep up in the front group. They covered a lot of attacks. Team Swift got a little breather when Vanini would cover attacks also. I almost got dropped from the lead group on the last climb. A Vanini racer and I were just maybe 4 bike lengths up in the lead when Adam sends Clint Rogers to put in a very harsh attack on the steepest part of the climb. He rushes past me along with all of the chasers. I couldn't grab on in time, so I was spit off the back of the lead group. I round the U-turn at the top of the short climb, and I just put all I have to catch up with them on the slight downhill. I was starting to fade when I decided to look back, and there was Adam, and Daniel, along with some other guys chasing back up. I knew that Adam, and Daniel were chasing to catch back up to their teammates, because the break didn't work. So I sat up, waited about 2 seconds for them, and then slipped into the draft, and caught back up. That was the only close call I had in that race. So after beating each other up with countless surges, attacks, and attempted break away, we finally get to the last lap. The cow bell rings, and I just so happened to be on Switters wheel, and when he rounded the U-turn at the top he attacked and I just sat on his wheel. He looks back, sees that he's not going anywhere alone, and decides to sit up and wait for his teammates.

This was good. This failed attempt to break away on the last lap set us up for a really good field sprint at the end. I was glad because we just got a really good sprinter for our team, Joseph Iannerelli. I wanted him to win for his category. It also gave my other teammate, Michael Margraf, time to set up for his move. We round the last corner with the pack still together, and Joseph just puts down the hammer and motors up the hill. All I could do was follow. I ended up getting 6th. I feel as though the team worked really well covering

the breaks, and setting up for the sprint. It was a really good race because we had really good competition.

Senior 4  
47th

This race had a lot of racers in it. There were 93 all together. There weren't as many surges, or attacks as the Junior race had. It was just a high steady pace. I feel that I did a really good job staying in the front third of the pack for the whole race. I didn't go for any of the primes because I didn't want to waste my energy. But I did try hard on the primes. Mainly just to stay up near the front. I was afraid that they would try a break away from the sprint. There wasn't one break that stuck in the race. It was together for the whole race. I had little opportunities to catch up to the front when the pack would slow every so often. I made sure I made use of those small opportunities. I didn't have a speedometer on my new bike yet, so I really didn't know how much time was left, so I yell out, "Anybody know how much time we have left?" One of the guys shouts out "Two laps." I was like ohh good, this is good. I can start to set up for it. We pass the start/finish line, and the bell goes off. I said to myself, "Hmm, that's weird, I wonder why they have a prime lap right before the last lap, maybe they are trying to get a break going." So I just sat in about midfield. I really didn't have any desire to sprint for any prime before the last lap. I was wondering why the pace was increasing dramatically. We get to the last corner and everybody starts sprinting. "Hmm, that's weird." But when I started seeing racers slow down after the sprint, I knew that I had made the stupid mistake of not knowing that it was the last lap. I felt so dumb for not noticing. Oh well, that won't happen again. It's just when people come up to you after the race and ask you how you did, and you tell that you didn't know that it was the last lap, they just kind of look at you and just nod their heads. Oh well, it was a good race, workout, and a learning experience.

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### **Mike Margraf:**

1st Apple Pie Jr. 4/5.

3rd Cherry Pie Jr. 17-18



Team Swift rider Mike Margraf, his dad Bill, and coach Laura discussing the Race at Apple Pie.

Hi All!

I have been working really hard these past four months so I was really anxious to see how I would rate up against my competition this year. I also was really looking forward to starting the season out well with Team Swift. Saturday was Apple Pie and since I'm a Cat. 4 (I did not start racing road until June of last year) I had to race in the Jr. 4/5 group. I knew I was the strongest rider so I just had to make sure nothing stupid happened. The first few laps were really easy so I decided to let it rip and see where I stood. (Laura had recommended this before the race began - thanks, Laura) One guy followed so I tried to work with him for a lap or two, but he could not hold the pace so I just went into time trial mode. There were only eleven Juniors that started and they were not too organized, so I knew if I kept pushing I would build a sizeable lead. Before I knew it, I had caught and lapped the field! I motored home to the finish first, still feeling really fresh.

Sunday was a totally different beast. The Junior field was 60 plus riders and all the top juniors were there. I lined up front on the line and off we went. There were attacks right from the beginning. I worked really hard to stay in the top ten or so to make sure I did not get cut out of the lead pack. The course was awesome. It was pretty rough in some areas and had some really great turns and of course it finished on a nice little power climb hill. The race was only 30 min and all the juniors were really anxious. It was non-stop attacking. When we would catch a breakaway there would be a counter attack. This is how the whole race went. Not one time did a break get more than a couple of hundred meters away. The field was not going to give anybody an inch. So since there was no way I was going to breakaway, I started to position myself and plan for the sprint up the hill. Going into the last lap I was in perfect position in sixth or seventh place. Two turns before the finishing hill Adam Switters attacked and got a pretty good gap. I held my position as the pack started to sprint. Right when we came out of the last corner going up the hill I gave it my all. I started in a little bit of a too hard of a gear so it took me a little

longer to get up to speed. Once I got my gears turning good I was flying. Adam Switters had nothing left for the sprint so he faded near the finish line. I was just coming on strong when I crossed the finish line in 3rd. Clint Rodgers won the race (he beat me by a wheel) and he has a really great sprint. So I feel pretty good about my result. I feel as though my fitness is coming along well, but I discovered this weekend that I still have a lot to learn. It is a long year and I look forward to racing with my teammates in these upcoming races.

Thanks for reading, Mike Margraf

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## **Lia Winfield**

5th place

Category 3 & 4 Sr. Women

Apple Pie Criterium

I'm having writers block on this race report. This is about the tenth time I've started. This is it, no more deleting and re-starting.

Apple Pie was my first race of the season and I was both excited and nervous. My nerves quickly disappeared when I got to the Corporate Center and saw my teammates and coaches there. While warming up I felt strong and ready to go. I am glad there was the skill drill before the race, it familiarized everyone with the course and I was able to meet a few of my fellow racers. My goal for the race was to stay near to the front the entire race. I achieved this goal pretty well, sometimes falling back a little too far, but for the majority of the time I was where I wanted to be.

With five laps to go, I began to improve my position. Coming down the last part to the finish, I saw those in front of me begin to sprint and I began to sprint too. I crossed the line in fifth, happy with the entire race and looking forward to the next one.

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## **Joe Iannarelli**

1st Place

Cherry Pie Criterium

Junior 15-16

At the Cherry Pie junior race I won my age group and took third overall. There were attacks the whole race and Vanini helped with covering most of them. The end was good. I shot through a gap and started my sprint from the bottom of the hill and was able to hold it and got nicked at the end by Rogers and some guy from Vanini but they were both in the 17 - 18's. I also raced in the Sr Cat 3 race which was fine until I got boxed in and had no where to go into the final corner. I was pushed back and took 20th while sprinting back up the hill moving up spots as quick as I could, I should have pushed it harder sooner in the second the last straight away

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**Bob Harris:**

I did the men's cat 3/4 event and the second junior race. The 3/4's were really fun to race with because there was a lot less yelling and swearing than usual. I was able to keep up pretty easily, but I'm not quite to the place that I can take primes or go for a high finish in this category. None the less, I was very satisfied with how I did. I felt a lot more comfortable in the pack and had a lot less trouble staying near the front. I had one pretty close call in this race, when going into one of the corners, a bunch of guys tried to dive down the inside. I had a guy to the outside of me so I couldn't swing wide to give them room. It was some pretty intense shouldering and I bent a spoke pretty bad but we all make it through. I could have done without this incident because I had to finish and do the Junior race with a pretty wobbly front wheel that was hitting both brake pads. The Junior race wasn't so much fun; it wasn't until I was on the starting line that I realized just how much that wheel was messed up. It was really stupid of me not to check it out after the first race. Anyway, the race was pretty interesting; Daniel Holloway once again used a combination of his insane tactics and un-human strength to just ride everyone off his wheel. Clint and Joe bridged up to him, leaving me, Aaron, and this other guy in their dust. We were all pretty demoralized, but then it got even worse when that other guy got away from us. We were totally fried, and despite working pretty well together we could catch back up. For the rest of the race we just sort of rode around trying to limit the number of times we got lapped. So basically this race was really bad, Aaron and I weren't even sure why we were still in the race. This did serve one purpose though; we know that we need to train a lot more. Hopefully we'll be better prepared next time.

More Soon,  
Bob Harris

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**Ethan Weiss:**

Apple Pie Junior 4/5  
Cherry Pie Juniors 13-14

Hi everyone,

This was the weekend of my first races; the Apple and Cherry Pie Criteriums; Saturday and Sunday. I had decided to make this weekend hard and be a testing ground for how I was going training-wise. I had a lot of fun racing this weekend, and a little bit of bad luck, but, I know more good luck will come.

**Apple Pie Crit-2/7/04**

I was very excited going into this race, as it was the first of the season, and it was on the "home course" for Team Swift. It was a crisp and clear morning, perfect for the first race of the season, and no warmer than a usual February morning. I decided to ride to the race from my house in Petaluma. It was not a bad idea because it took so long to warm up at that temperature. I got the racecourse in perfect time to sign in and roll out. Soon enough, the race (Juniors 4/5) was

off. The pace wasn't too fast at all, and I felt quite comfortable, staying in the first 3 to 5 positions the whole time. My long transition intervals were helpful to stay with the pace, and the race wasn't too exciting except for my teammate, Mike Margraf, jumped off the front with another rider, who was dropped eventually, and stayed away the whole race to win. On the final lap, in the swooping left hand bend, the group swerved to the right, and out on a whim, I put in an attack, too puny to do much unfortunately, as I was caught on the back stretch. As soon as the sprint started, I knew exactly what I needed to add to the training regimen—sprints. I hate to say it, but my sprint was pathetic. Congratulations to Mike, though, on the win!

### **Cherry Pie Criterium-2/8/04**

Cherry Pie criterium was another race which I was looking forward to, as it would be the first time I would see my main competitors in my age group of 13-14's. We got to Napa at about 7:10 AM and oh damn it was cold; the car thermometer said 35°F, and you could feel it! My toes were numb in about three minutes, and I was out on the course warming up, but, unfortunately, my warm up was not quite enough, as there was only about 10 or 15 minutes to do so before the race started. I had never done the course before, and looking at it I was optimistic! I really liked the hill at the finish, and also the 180° turn-around at the top. I was psyched to get started, and I rolled up to the finish line excited. As soon as the whistle blew, we were off. Now, the bad luck: literally 300m from the start, we were cruising along, when BAM! I had hit something and it wasn't good. I looked down at my tires to see if they were inflated, and they were, but when I looked at my front wheel, I saw it shimmying back and forth by about an inch on each side. I was finally able to pull out of the pack and turn around, only to find one of the spokes on my front Ksyrium bent irreparably. I turned around, and scrambled back to the start finish, but I then realized that I had no second set of wheels in the pit. Some guy, who happened to loan me an extra \$5 yesterday for the entry came up carrying his set of spares, and handed me his! What a coincidence! We checked with the official for the free lap, and I got it, but was put in the farthest back group. I scrambled to chase back on to the main pack, but to no avail, as it was being powered by 17 and 18 year-olds. I rode as hard as I could, mostly solo, but was feeling the effects of riding a total of 3 hours the day before, with racing. It was okay, I tried my best, but was caught with bad luck, but, well, it's only February!

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### **Erich Gebo:**

Apple Pie: When I woke at 7:00 am this morning I did not know really what to expect because after all it was my first race. We got to the race area at 8:40 am. The first thing we did was get me registered, after that while I was getting ready my dad set my bike up on his trainer next to our car. I warmed up for about 25 minutes then we went to the start area and watched the other race for 5-10 minutes then I went across the street and warmed up some more until my race started. I was 4th in the rollout to get my bike checked by the official. When it was my turn I had to get it to the right gear so ended up being 6th in the rollout. When it was my turn again he put the crank arm down and rolled my bike back wards, and says "no go" and I say "what" then he goes "you can't" then I looked at him and said "what does that mean" so he showed me that my gear ratio was to high so I had to block



off the highest gear. So me and my dad went over to the registration booth and asked where I could block it off, and the lady pointed to a toolbox so went over to it and since we had know idea what to do so we started to turn screws and barrel adjusters, then this man came over and helped us out but by the time we were done I was already down by two laps. I was finally in the race but I and my dad had messed up my derailleur so bad that I only had 2 gears left to switch to in the back. And on top of that my right cleat would not clip in straight so I ended up being lapped by the peloton 3 times before the race was over because I could not get the speed to stay with them or catch them. So despite all of the set backs I stayed in the race to finish dead last. Right after the race we went straight to the shop and got a new cassette that matched the standards. In this race I learned a lot of things but the most important thing I learned is that you should always know what the standards are.

Cherry Pie: This morning when I got up I sort of knew what to expect because I competed in the Apple pie crit. We got there a little late so I did not get much of a warm up in. When it was my turn in the rollout I was so worried that I would have a repeat of Sunday. When we started all of the 16-18 year olds took off in a peloton I hung with them for 3/4ths of the first half before I joined the peloton of 13-15 year olds. Halfway through the race I found Ethan and we rode together for a couple of laps then we split up. I passed a lot of riders on the turns because they would hit the breaks and I would not, I also passed some riders on the hill before the finish. I could have done better but I will next time I will do a lot better for sure. I came in fourth but I think it was a very fun and good race.

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## **Aaron Woolsey:**

5th place      Juniors 17-18      Apple Pie Criterium

The Apple pie crit was my first race of the season. I found myself a little unprepared because I have been working out in the gym all winter long and not putting in to many miles. I trained hard all week prior back I wasn't feeling ready to race. On race day I was excited to see how my legs were going to feel. I got in a good warm up for the cat 3/4 race. I started off slow and sore, but my legs started to kick in. I was feeling surprisingly good for that race. I moved my up towards the front and was thinking about making a move when my legs told me they had enough so a few laps from the end I pulled put because my legs were done.

The junior was going to be good. I had Bob Harris and a new teammate Joseph. Are main competition was Daniel Holloway. Early on Daniel sprinted off I tried to catch his wheel but my legs didn't want to sprint, so he and another guy got away. Most Of the time I worked with Bob and when we got dropped we tried to help out Joseph. By the middle of the race my legs were done. I tried to hook on one final time with Joseph for the final few laps and I did for a couple, but I dropped Bob and in the last lap, and Joseph sprinted off to hold his placing in the overall race. I know that I will be training full time on the bike now and racing a lot. For being an early

race in the season I felt pretty good and I am seeing good results in my bike training already. Till next time Aaron W

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## **Nathan Birnbaum:**

### **Results for 2004**

9th Cal Aggie Crit Junior Nathan Birnbaum 1/10/04

7th Apple Pie Crit Junior 4/5 Nathan Birnbaum 2/7/04

### **Race Report for Apple Pie Crit**

Well to say the least, today was quite an interesting experience! We got to the course and it was freezing. In fact, Pete (Harris) had to tell me to stop shivering so hard when he was putting on my number. I warmed up with Alec and went over my plans for the day, which included attacking and possibly winning if I felt up to it. The course is quite simple, as most of you know, and I needed only to ride it once to make it fresh in my mind. I was having problems clipping into my Shimano spd-sl pedals and I was worried that this could've affected how fast I sped off the line. Turns out, my pedals worked fine.

As we came off the line, I found myself in good position (about 4th in the paceline). My legs felt great so when we hit the backside I went after a drifter who was off the front. Mike Margraf came by me, patted my shoulder, and put down the gas. The next thing we knew he was at least 300 meters ahead of us. I made the mistake of trying to catch him, which in reality was only bring our opponents closer to catching him. After about a half a lap I settled into the back part of the pack-I figured that would be a good place to be sheltered from the wind. It was here that I would remain glued for about 3/4 of the race.

Every once and a while the pace would quicken and I would be forced to chase back on. In most cases this took less than 5 pedal strokes. Sometimes my heart pumped the blood through my jugular vein so hard that it actually hurt. My nose was running and I'm quite sure that my face was as red as a rose (a very regular occurrence when I'm working hard.) It was at this point that I thought I should work for Ethan and see if I could lead him out in the sprint. As we saw the five lap to go card I started to move up. It looked to me as if Ethan was having a good day because he was responding to every "attack" with ease. Surprisingly, the pace slowed so much during those final laps that at points I was forced to reach for the breaks.

The one lap to go sign was relief as well as a warning sign that I need to take position near the front. As we hit the backside everyone was waiting for the other one to attack. I figured that this was my shot and I decided to attack. We rounded the final bend and I was in the leader's position (not the best place to be if you think about it twice.) I shot out of my saddle and grinded on the pedals as if there was no tomorrow. The guy from Oregon went past me and so did the guys from Tiene Duro Vanini and guy I nicknamed Mellow Yellow. We crossed the line and I just smiled. I was out of breath but I felt good. THAT WAS QUITE GOOD FOR ONLY THE SECOND RACE OF THE SEASON!!!!

Peace,

## Anton Nicola

Early Bird Crit #3

Senior 4/5

19th overall

Well I finally found out why I write these race reports. It's to explain to everybody why you didn't win. I really wanted to win this morning because I wanted to get upgraded so badly. I want to get out of the 4's and into the 3's. I knew the course, knew what this race ran like, so I was well prepared. I was just going to do what I did last week. Move up the gutter when the pace slowed to catch back up to towards the front. Well, some other people found out that trick. I really didn't have a lot of opportunities to move up when I fell back, but when I did, I took the opportunity. I decided to ride more at the front than I did last week because of the lack of free space on the side of the field. I tried to stay in at least the top 15 to 20 spots. I got into some moves, mainly just to bring the break back. When 3 guys are trying to go for a break halfway through the race just in front of a hungry peloton of 80 riders, it's really not going to succeed. So it was just a good way to get in the front, but not in the wind. There wasn't really a break that went far today. I think the farthest one got away to about 150 feet, then the pack couldn't handle it anymore, and would decide to chase them down. So, what do you do for the 45 minutes before the final lap where everything is wild? You stay near the front. There is so much maneuvering in the field that you constantly have to move up. To do this you must watch for opportunities for someone else to drag you up, or noticing when the pace drops to move up. You also have to watch out for racers who dive into the corner, or racers who cut you off without looking. At the same time you must be ready for attacks, chases, and possible accidents. There is plenty to do before the final lap. Then the final lap is actually where it goes wild. It's a mad dash to the finish line. If you can get to almost the front of the pack before the last lap where everybody basically sprints on the bell lap; you are way ahead of most of the racers.

I did exactly that, got up in the top 8 riders before the last lap. When the bell rang, I was ready for an attack coming from behind. I also had people in front of me who would help chase. I was in a good spot. The pace rose to close to about 30 mph, and on the back side it slowed waaay down. Oops. Big mistake. All of a sudden, instead of having only 20 guys thinking they could win the race, we all of a sudden had 80 guys thinking the same thing. Guys came all around me. I WAS BLOCKED IN. Not good on the last lap. Next time when I notice the pace dropping, I will sprint forward to miss the

"getting blocked in." A mistake is only a mistake if you don't learn from it. So I got swarmed on either side, and I finally got out, but it was too late. I was lucky that I got 19th. However, there wasn't a crash this week. I think everyone was being a bit more careful so that last weeks accident would not be repeated. So I learned one important thing today. Instead of coming home with points from the race, I came home with a lesson that I had learned. So the race wasn't a failure at all.

### **Anton Nicola**

Early Bird Crit #5  
15th Senior 4

As I'm racing down the wide street of the course that I've done twice now, I feel less confident than ever. It's slippery, cold, wet, and miserable. I was tired, and really wasn't comfortable with my new bike. From the moment I stepped out of the warm, comfortable, soft seat of my van, I was miserable, till I got back in it. Racers swerving just a little to avoid the slippery dot stoppers that were freshly covered with the cold rain that had just poured down earlier. Let's not forget the slippery paint on the corners used for stop lines. I found myself starting to slide a little with my rear wheel. This race was about staying upright, and not crashing. I really didn't care what my placing was. I just wanted to not crash. Especially with my new bike. I did manage to finish in the top twenty. This doesn't mean that I didn't race with all I had. The speed was still pretty fast, and I constantly had to keep moving up to the front, to avoid the skittish riders in the middle, or the back. And I still had to sprint to finish in the front third. I'm glad though that I'm out and racing so early in the season. This is actually the first race I've raced in poor weather conditions.

### **Team Swift Alumni Update**

Team Swift is very proud to have placed three of its 2003 graduating Elite Squad riders onto Professional Cycling Teams. Included in our current race reports will be some updates on these riders.

#### **Steven Cozza**

US National U23 Team/Jelly Belly

Steven's report as of 2-10-14:

Well, I am back to Belgium and ready to roll.

I arrived in Belgium on Feb 11th and will be leaving for a training camp in Calpe Spain on Feb 14th with the USA Espoir U-23. The 7 of us riders will be there training until March 7th than returning back up to the team house in Belgium to began the racing season starting off the first

month of March doing one day Classic races. That's about it just wanted to inform you on what I am up to. Thanks for reading and I will definitely write more after each race.

Thanks a lot.. Steven Cozza

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## **Nathan Miller**

McGuire Real Estate

**Jan 18, 2004**

At long last, I feel that I am finally settled down and prepared for the 2004 season which threatens to be my toughest yet. With the loss of several top cycling teams and the division and dispersion of America's top cycling talent to a variety of other smaller division III teams, the Pro 1, 2 field stands to receive a big boost of talent in terms of fitness and tactical ability. That's a daunting thought considering I will no longer be eligible for junior races and must battle it out in this field from here on out.

After graduating from the junior ranks, the process of finding the right team to assist me in this new field was a long, drawn-out, and nerve-racking experience. Endless e-mails, phone calls, and rides were an unneeded distraction from my last semester before graduation from the Santa Rosa Junior College and endless e-mails, phone calls, and meetings with colleges for the coming school year. Finally though, I have settled on a team and a school. I will be competing this year with Team McGuire which is based in San Francisco. Without a doubt you have all seen their green and yellow uniforms at just about every race. I think that they will provide me with the best opportunities during the 2004 season. Duke will also be racing for them too, so that will make the transition a lot easier. After racing together for several years, we have learned each others racing tactics and styles and work together extremely well. It will be great to have somebody there that I can count on during the season as well. As for school, I will be attending Sacramento State University starting in the Fall of 2004 to finish my degree in athletic training.

This last week has been a real turn around week for me. Lately, I had been going through that time when you get sick of the cold, slow winter rides and gym workouts and yearn for the summer's racing to begin. Finally though, it feels like things are beginning to heat up. On Monday, I had the privilege of going to meet Dr. Massimo Testa at the U.C. Davis Medical Group and receive a VO2 max test. He said the results were very good and that I've got a "good engine". Time will tell what I'll be able to accomplish with it. For any cyclist that has never had this test done, I highly recommend it. The information that you receive from it is far more valuable than that of a blood lactate test. Plus, the entire staff there was incredibly smart and helpful. They answered tons of questions and meeting them was an experience all its own. I am extremely grateful for their help. I did a couple of four hour rides this week, one on Tuesday and one on Thursday, using the new training zones that Max had set for me and they were without a doubt the best rides I have done all winter, maybe all my life. The zones are a bit different and tougher than what I had been going by, but they were immediately more comfortable to work with and they simply felt like they worked much better for me. I only wish that I could take that information and do my winter training all over again. I also did my first race today as well. It was just an Early Bird training race, but it was a lot of fun and I felt great. I was strong the whole race and never left the front; except to breakaway of course! An hour and fifteen minutes later, when it was over, I was wishing that I could do it again. Racing is the most fun you can have on this earth and I'm glad that I can once again receive a healthy dose of it each week. I hope to see

more of you out there when the bigger races start next month. Until then, work on getting fit again!

February 13th, 2004

Well, the first real weekend of races has come and gone and we can all now say that the season has officially begun. Team McGuire decided to kick off the season with a training camp in Calistoga. A bunch of the guys from my team were there for a full week, but I could only make it up there for a couple of days because of school. The first ride Duke and I did with our teammates at the camp we got poured on the whole time. What a way to start the camp! After that though, it was a quick (hot) shower and we were on our way to have a team dinner at a Mexican restaurant in Calistoga. I was really impressed with dinner. As we arrived at the restaurant, the first thing we noticed was the new team car. It was completely decked out with racks and a very impressive paint job. When we went inside, there was a huge table already reserved for us. There were custom menus, and posters of last year's races hanging on the walls all around us. We must have had five waiters standing at our table bringing us more food than we could have possibly ever eaten. After dinner, I thought that I would die if I ate anything else until they brought out the chocolate mousse for dessert. I could have eaten twenty more orders of that! It was late though and time to get back to go to sleep and get ready to race the next day.

Apple Pie Criterium was on our home course, so Duke and I were really excited about doing good. We weren't sure exactly how the race would go for us though, because we didn't exactly know the strength of our teammates and they weren't even sure if they were in shape or not. All Duke and I could do was cross our fingers and hope that we worked well with this team. As it turned out, the race went great for us. I think everyone was stronger than they expected to be and we ended up working great together even though we didn't really set up a definite plan about what to do since it was our first race. A lot of breaks went early on, but nothing stuck. We did a good job of covering them though. When the big break went, I knew that it was dangerous, so I sprinted up to it and just rotated through easily. The nine man break stayed away for most of the race, but came back about ten minutes before the end. Getting caught right at the end of the race meant only one thing for me, set up a lead out. With two or three to go, I found Duke and moved him up to the front and we just hovered about five to ten riders back. Aaron found J.D. and moved him up onto Duke's wheel so, although I didn't know it until after the race, I was doing a double lead out. It didn't really take too much pushing and shoving to keep us at the front. Usually mine and Duke's finish is pretty crazy! Nobody could possibly hang on our wheels, because we dive corners, go through the smallest gaps, and fight our way through the field like no other. (sometime I'd love to see a tape of us moving through the field during the last five laps, like from a helicopter or something. it would be nuts!) This time it was a free ride though, and it was pretty easy. Coming into the last two straight-aways we took off and tried to pass the lead out train that the McGuire pro team had going. They were too far to the left and going way way way too slow, which left us the opportunity to pass on the easy side. We never quite made it passed them, because they still had two engines in their train to my one, but we I was able to get Duke and JD right along side them at the final corner. JD ended up getting third, and Duke got fourth, which was pretty good for our first race together. After the race, we went back to the cars and there were sandwiches, chips, and drinks waiting for us. It was great! The whole weekend was like that. I was very impressed by McGuire's professionalism and hospitality. If we needed anything, all we had to do was ask and they were there to help out. By the end of the week Duke and I both said, "Yeah, I'm glad we went with this team!" I definitely think that we are set up to have a great season this year. I can't wait for that

first Pro 1,2 win!!! You can be sure that I'm gunnin' for it at every race with a hill (Pine Flats!!!) See you guys out there.

Nathan

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**Duke Schimmer**

McGuire Real Estate

Duke finished 4<sup>th</sup> in Pro,I,II field at the Apple Pie Criterium in a field sprint after being led out by his teammate Nathan Miller.