

2005 Team Swift Race Report #2

Snelling Road Race

February 26, 2005

Overall Team Performance

Team Swift attended the Snelling Road Race to train for the upcoming national and regional junior calendar events. The beginning of each season has more than just training for a race. You need to remember all the items you need in your race bag, getting your equipment ready and remembering your overnight necessities. We traveled Friday evening after school to the exciting town of Merced. As regulars at Motel 6 we reserved our four rooms. Our Alumni riders often try to stay in the same hotels so they can share their experience with the current Team Swift riders. This is a great resource to the new riders having so many people there to help.

We bring our breakfast with us since the races are so early. This saves time in trying to find a sit down restaurant at 5:30am. The fog was so thick on the way to the race you could hardly recognize the route toward the foothills. Signed-up, numbers on we were off with the start of the gun (not really). The Road Race had some challenging sections with a washed out bridge and then a really rough section with pot holes galore. Cole, Gabe and Alex all raced in the Junior category while Bob and Ethan did their Senior races which were longer in distance. Read the rider reports for race details.



Swift Alumni Members Aaron Woolsey and Reno Garcia helping out Team Swift at the Snelling Road Race. Both Aaron & Reno ride for McGuire Racing Team and have included reports in the alumni section.

Ethan Weiss

Snelling Road Race
Cat 4 / Junior 15-16

This past Saturday was the Snelling Road Race, a fast and rolling race with small power climbs and a 2.5 mile section of rough road at the end of each 12 mile lap. It was my first real road race with the senior category, and today I raced with Cat 4. My training had been going great and I was flying the day of the race. Bob Harris and I warmed up at 7:30 and there was frost forming on our leg warmers, so we decided, with Laura's council, that we might as well wear them for the race, as it was still the early season. The races were postponed 15 minutes so were able to have a little more time to get things ready, and it certainly helped. Being as cold as it was (38-41 degrees as my watch said) everything took a little longer. But, with the pre-race announcements, we were off by 8:25 and ready for the 3.5 mile promenade to the course.

The first lap (of 5, for a total of 64 miles) was painfully slow. The masters passed us by the first two miles, and we were going 15-20 mph. I was just itching to go faster, but I had decided I would do absolutely no work at all until I was ready to make a move towards the end. The next laps were uneventful except for one section. There was a bridge approximately 3/4 of the way through the lap where we had been warned, due to damage, the pack would have to funnel into a section about 10 feet wide. The first lap was fine with only a little chaos, but no problems, but on the second lap, someone decided we needed to be in a narrower configuration, so, as a result, there was a new barrier, forcing us down to a section of about 5 feet wide, allowing only one rider to fit through at a time, as a result. However, the riders were not notified, and, you got it, someone plowed right into it. Unfortunately, I was stuck behind it and was forced to chase for the next 5 minutes up the longest climb on the course. I was able to catch on eventually, but I wouldn't hesitate to say that it cut the field down to approximately 60-70% of its original size. Laps 3 and 4 were also uneventful, as the pace slowly revved up. Once we were on bell lap, we began to really move fast. As the attacks began, I made sure to be in the top 15-20 all the time, and because I was feeling great, I found my way onto the wheel of each one. With about 5 miles to go, I followed one of the attacks, but when we were caught within a minute, I realized it was going to come down to a bunch sprint; my plans for a solo break at approximately 1km to go were dashed, and I waited through another crash right beside me on a climb and one on the rough stretch before the finish. As the last 1.5 miles of the rough stretch unfurled, so did the attacks, however, each was smothered quickly. As we entered the last corner with 350m to go, I was second wheel; at the time I thought I was in perfect position, but in retrospect, and about 100m after the corner, I quickly learned otherwise. I was stuck in the wind as a couple trains of riders whooshed past me. By the finish, I was likely 20th or 25th and I knew that had I been a little farther back, around 5th wheel, I could have been top 5 no problem. Considering how fast I was accelerating in comparison to others on the climbs, I think that top 5, even a win, could have been possible. I will look for a result like that in the future; possibly next weekend at the McLane road race, a similar course, where I will be again racing in category 4.

Soon after the race, we packed up the van, threw the bikes on top, and headed out. Sometimes it takes about an hour for the fatigue to set in after the endorphins die down, and on the way back I was certainly flattened. I slept for about an hour somewhere between Modesto and Pleasanton, and soon enough we were home. It was a great day, despite the middle-of-nowhere, CA, location. Travel is always a great time, especially when you have good form to apply to it. I think it is true that when you really take time to do your best, you can, and so, my goal is a top 5 finish at the McLane road race next weekend; I hope I'll be writing about that next Sunday...Ethan W.

Bob Harris

Snelling Road Race
Cat 3 / Junior 17-18

Snelling was my first road race of the season and my first time racing Cat 3 so I really wasn't expecting very much. Mostly I was just looking forward to traveling with the team and getting back into the swing of things. The race was 65 miles, which is fairly long compared to most of the races I have done. The course was a 12 mile loop with small rollers and a couple bumpy sections. The main obstacle that everyone was talking about was a narrow bridge with no guardrail. In an attempt to make it "safer" the organizers placed barriers on each side at the entrance and exit. This effectively funneled the pack down from about 12 wide to single file over a distance of about 50 meters. To complicate the matter, the longest climb on the course came right after this bridge. It was absolutely essential to enter the bridge in the top 20 to avoid wasting a ton of energy chasing over the climb.

My race went surprisingly well. I didn't expect to keep up past halfway, but I managed to make it 50 miles before being dropped on the penultimate run through the bridge. Through my experience in this race I learned some important lessons about preparing for these longer races. You really need to think about how the weather is on the course, and how it might change during the race. It is also important to keep in mind that when you are racing you want to wear as few articles of clothing as possible. It's a real pain to deal with taking off a jacket or vest during a race. Knee warmers are preferable to full leg warmers because they won't bother you nearly as much if it heats up. Finally, you really need to enter these races with the right mindset. Concentrate on the most challenging portions of the course and think about how you can position yourself or approach them differently to make them easier.

I am really looking forward to our next team trip to McLane. I hear the crit is a really fun race, and I am anxious to see how I can improve from Snelling in the road race. I owe a big thanks to Nathan Miller for setting me up with a new training schedule, and to Laura for taking the team on these awesome trips.

More Soon,

Bob H.

Alex Reimer

Snelling Road Race
Junior 15-16

Snelling was a long drive to get to but I was thankful that I stayed in motel. The rooms were a bit small to fit the bikes and the gear but it was do-able. The race could have been better if it had started later in the day, waking up at 5:15 is not my thing. As I approached the race I thought about what Laura had said about to chase down attackers. When I came to the race I realized I had 2 teammates Gabe and Cole. Laura prep talked us about what to do if someone breaks away. I got ready for the race to slowly which was a mistake because then I wasn't as prepared as I needed to be.

This is the first time on this race and first road race ever. Soon the race started and we were off. The race was very slow in the beginning and the group kept arguing to pass another category until the middle of the first lap, we passed them. In the first lap it seemed as though everyone was trying to learn the track like what I was doing. We approached the bridge which was a very tight gap and everyone had to go slow and single file. It made me mad but I dealt with it. Then at the end of the first lap there was a really bad road that was the most annoying part of the track. The second lap went faster but then someone broke away and the entire group tried to catch him. As we came to the bridge an official split our team in 2 by slowing down in front of half of our group. Then the worst happened someone locked up their brakes and crashed, right when that happened the group that was ahead had taken off and broke away. The entire rest of the race I worked with Gabe and 2 other riders, we succeeded in catching 2 more rider near the end, by then we were starting to catch the group, quite fast I thought. The last sprint my chain got caught and that caused me to be passed by the other riders. We waited for Ethan and Bob finished their race then headed back to the van as a team.

The race was great though some problems and few bad parts of the course I still had a lot of fun. Next year I will know the course better and hopefully the bridge will be all the way open. As Laura said to me that as long as I learned and saw what happened and chased people I was growing as a rider. So even though I didn't finish well I felt I accomplished what Laura had said to do.

Alex

Cole Przybyla-Williams

Snelling Road Race
Junior 15-16

This weekend was the Snelling race in Snelling. I prepared for this race; I feel the best I could. I took a ride the day before to get my muscles ready. The morning of the race, I warmed up for about a half an hour. I felt really great, before the race. I was psyched to get out there.

During the race, I was with the main field for the most of the race. Half-way thru the race the pack and I were riding down a hill to the field zone. When someone attacked, so we were all sprinting down the hill. And when we got

to the feed zone, the kids who wanted drinks were going to fast and had to slow down. When a Davis kid crossed wheels with a rider ahead of him he slammed on his brakes. And I had no time to react and I slammed on my brakes and fell down.

I got back up as fast as I can and found to my dismay my chain had fallen off, so this was more time taking up with me away from the pack. Then I got going and my brakes had gotten tweaked so I had to stop again. By this time I had no time to catch the pack, so I had to call it quits. Overall the race was good except for the fall.

See ya, Cole

Alumni Reports

Steven Cozza

Team: US U23 National Team
Category 1

February 25, 2005

BELGIUM: It's been a while since my last update so I thought I would take a little time to share what's been going on in my life the past few weeks.

With the real races only a few days away I look back at the success of my winter training and preparation for the tough races that lay ahead of me. I would have to say this has definitely been my most successful early season training prep. Besides having some funky knee pain throughout January and a little bit here and there because of IT Band Syndrome I have had no interruptions like I have had in previous years. I also feel as though I can train much harder than ever before being able to do longer hours on the bike without fatiguing as fast as I did in the past. I think part of this is do to maturing more physically and mentally and also being able to focus almost a 100% of my time on my training. This was also the first year where I felt like cycling was what I do like a job rather than a hobby. I would be out on rides in December cruising up highway one along the Tomales shore and would just break out in a smile. I have never felt so much natural satisfaction from something. The beauty of nature that my eyes are able to see from cycling is great. I really enjoyed the highway one ride because you could be riding and all of a sudden a school of seals would be swimming alongside you or huge pacific white pelicans would be swooshing down into the water picking up fish. I really got in touch with nature this winter making my riding that much more enjoyable.

Ever since I started racing bikes I have always been interested in nutrition and knowing what is healthy for you as an athlete and what is not, so this spring I started taking an online nutrition class. This has been a great help in educating myself more on the issues regarding my nutrition and health as an athlete. Not being in school for the past two years I was craving more responsibility and mind stimulation from doing homework which I actually

missed so much oddly enough. I think it was a big shock to my brain to have done 12 years of schooling and then to just stop all of a sudden. That just can't be good for you so I am slowly getting back into it through online classes. This is really my only option since I am on the road traveling so much being in a class is just not possible for me right now.

Our spring team training camp was held from February 1st till the 22nd. It was a three weeks of hard training along with testing, team photos and trying out new equipment. I was burring myself with a lot of long endurance rides mixed up with some intensity causing me to be so tired that all I was able to do was train and rest. Most of the day was spent on the bike getting in 25 to 30 hours of riding a week. Finally our new Specialized bikes had arrived and we got right to it getting them fit and comfortable to ride. We had a day of team photos where a photographer came out from New York to take really professional shots along with some media and magazine groups like Velo News. So far the bike is just great and has done nothing but impressed me in the first race I did on it Valley of the Sun.

Towards the end of training camp three of us including myself left for the stage race Valley of the Sun held in Arizona every year. Since this race is so early in the year we decided to go to it using the race as a training race to get some speed in our legs before jumping over the pond to Belgium. This was a very short and simple stage race having a Time Trial stage, a Road Race stage and a Criterium to finish off the weekend. I wasn't expecting much of me in this race since it is still really early and I did not whatsoever train for it. I am always really nervous to do my first Time Trial of the year not knowing how I will feel during the short hard effort. After the TT I had no clue how I did. Since I hadn't done one since last year I could not tell whether I went fast or slow. I didn't think I went hard enough. It seemed to me that I wasn't able to suffer as much as I have been able to in the past but I wasn't too hard on myself since it was the first one of the year. Later that night I was totally shocked to find out that I was tied for fourth in the TT. I was so surprised and happy at the same time that my form was so good so early in the year without working towards this race. This was a great confidence booster for me right before leaving to Europe. The next day was an 85 mile road race consisting of mostly flat terrain. All day groups would try and break away but seem to never work always being chased down and brought back. With 16 miles to go I attacked on the one bump or hill in the course was caught by three other bridging riders. We worked together the rest of the 16 miles to try and stay away from the chasing peloton until the finish. With 2 miles to go we had about 15 seconds and were going all out. Unfortunately with only 500 meters to the finish line we were caught by the charging field. It was disappointing because I saw how close I was to winning but I was really stoked that I was able to make the effort. I also wasn't so bummed because one of my teammates from the national team John Murphy than riding for Krystal won the stage in the field sprint. With the last stage being a Crit I new I needed to attack and get away in order to improve my 5th place overall on the general classification. The course ended up being a really fast one making it virtually impossible to get away on your own. It look to be coming down to a field sprint and with three laps to go everyone was fighting for position causing a dangerous and fast crash that I was launched into orbit by.

I hit a rider that went down right in front of me and landed right on my head hearing my neck make a snapping sound and then seeing a flash of red before my eyes. I thought this is it I have broken my neck. I amazingly bounced to my feet and finished the last remaining 3 laps with two other riders that went down in the crash. After the race I went over my road rash and could not feel the back of my neck. I decided to go to the race medical tent to get help and they immediately called the ambulance to take me away to the hospital. I really didn't want to go to the hospital trying to get myself out of it but they insisted telling me what could happen if I did not. Six hours later 2 x-rays and a cat scan I was released with nothing but a whipped lashed neck, road rash and bruises. I was so relieved to be okay since three days from this I was leaving for Europe to start the season. What a day that was. On top of my crazy crash teammate Tyler Farrar than riding for Health Net, won the field sprint making the day that much better.

Today February 25, I have just arrived to Belgium to start out the season. The plane flight just seems to be getting faster and faster every time I come here so that was nice. Since I had to wake up at 3am to catch the airport shuttle grrrr. I was able to sleep practically the whole flight arriving here in the morning feeling good and able to train right away. The mechanics went right to work in getting all the teams bikes together so we could spin out our stiff plane legs. Right now for the early spring races of March and April there are 8 of us here. Tyler Farrar, Brad Armstrong, John Murphy, John Devine, Michael Wolf, Matt Crane, Kevin Bouchard and Myself. Even though it's been only the first day we all seem to be super pumped to start racing and all seem to have great condition to tear up the tarmac.

That's about it for now. We get ready to do our first race this Sunday. Until then, take care and thanks for reading.

Steven ☺

Reno Garcia

Team: McGuire
Category Sr. 3
Snelling Road Race

Place: field

I hadn't done this race before this year so I didn't know what to expect from the course. As usual the race started a little late and we spent that time cruising around to stay warm, I was still really cold. As we started the promenade the weather began to improve and eventually the sun became visible. The first of the five laps was uneventful with just some people trying to solo TT the race. From what I remember the fun started on the second or so lap. Me, Max, Evan, Erik, and Irving were near the front keeping tabs on what was happening. I followed a couple of attacks early and nothing really

happened with those but I got nice and warm on the power climbs. I remember a lot of flats early on in the race and pretty much all through out the race and a couple of crashes. Max was one of those flats and Evan was one of the crashes. The most frustrating thing about this race for me was the barricade on the bridge that forced all of the riders to funnel through a 2 person gap then regain speed to go up a small hill, this took a lot out of my legs and messed with my P.E. .Overall the race was fun for me and it was a good experience racing with a new team. We communicated during the race and now we all have a better idea of what the team's strengths are. It's also good to get to know the new peloton and just have fun racing again.

Merced Criterium:

Place: field

I did this race as a junior last year and was excited to race this course again. I like this race because it goes around the back of the courthouse and because it's a chance to preview the McLane crit course. This was my second crit as a cat3 so I was still feeling out the peloton and trying new things. I'm finding that the 3s are a lot smoother in crits than the 4s so I have more confidence in the rider's abilities. After just sitting in and not really participating in the racing I moved to the front and stayed there for a couple of laps, going with attacks and trying to keep the pace high. I was doing this mostly because of a couple close calls while going around the court house. So after staying on the front for a quarter of the race I moved to the back and just sat in for the remainder. I'm disappointed in myself today and I feel like I could have done better if I wasn't so timid around the new riders.

Aaron Woolsey

Team: McGuire
Category Sr. 4

Well this racing I have joined the McGuire racing team, along with Reno and Lia. They really have a great set up and a friendly atmosphere. So far this year I'm still and cat 4 but not for long. I know Reno can't wait till I'm a 3. All ready I'm off to a great start with a 5th place at the Dinuba Crit and a 4th place at the Hanford Crit and a 5th place at the Merced Crit. Who would ever think Aaron would become a Crit rider??

It was great going down to Merced last weekend with Laura, Ethan, Alex, Bob, and Nathan Miller. We had a great time driving down and meeting up with Reno. Next weekend going to be even better. For the races I felt great expect for Snelling I think everyone had to deal with the bridge and numerous crashes that were all around. So On the last lap after the bridge someone crashed in front of me and I had to jump off my bike real quick and get back on. By then the peloton had already gotten away. I chased for about a mile to get back on and then there was another crash. So I wasn't able to be in the front for the finish. All I can say is that Ethan was riding great and had a good race in the 4s with me.

I stayed behind with Reno and Nathan to do the crit the next day, I think we all had better races on Sunday. On Sunday I had one of my fellow cat 4 teammates named Kalani from McGuire to work with. We covered all the attacks and breaks. I was in a five man break for a few laps and we got caught towards the end of the race. so I got back in and sat at the front and waited for the finish and rode in the top 5 till the final sprint. So that's how I finished. I think in this weekend's race in the crit I need to be in the top 3 and go from there for the finish.

see you guys next weekend-Aaron Woolsey