

# All Sport- Team Swift Race Reports

## April 2009

### Race Reports for:

1. Copperopolis Road Race
2. Sea Otter Circuit Race
3. Sea Otter Road Race
4. Chain of the Lakes Cycling Classic
5. Wente Classic Road Race
6. Wente Classic Criterium

### **March Top 5 Results + Pro, I, II Results:**

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Wente Road Race	Juniors 17-18	Sam Bassetti
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Copperopolis Road Race	Juniors 13-14	Griffin Wigert
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Sea Otter Circuit Race	Juniors 17-18	Ryan Eastman
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Sea Otter Road Race	Juniors 17-18	Ryan Eastman
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Wente Road Race	Juniors 17-18	Nate Geoffrion
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Chain of Lakes Road Race	Women Pro, 1-3	Ashlyn Gerber
4 <sup>th</sup> Place	Chain of Lakes Criterium	Women Pro, 1-3	Ashlyn Gerber
5 <sup>th</sup> Place	Wente Classic Criterium	Juniors 17-18	Nick Kinney
5 <sup>th</sup> Place	Sea Otter Road Race	Juniors 15-16	John Piasta

---

## RIDER REPORTS

### **1. Copperopolis Road Race**

#### **Griffin Wigert**

Age 13

3<sup>rd</sup> Place      Copperopolis Road Race      Juniors 13-14

The race started in Milton, which is the smallest town I've ever been in. It's pretty much 3 or 4 farms that all happened to come together on one point on the road with a dining hall and a graveyard. There were only dirt roads to warm up on and there were only a few of those. The course didn't have a lot of potholes, but it had a lot of patches.

There was a climb in the beginning but the rest of the course was rolling or flat. The start was uneventful until we hit the climb. I was at the front and watching the road, but when I did turn around at the top there were only 5 of us:

Stanley, Dylan, Spence, Skyler and me. Later Andrew Biscardi bridged up. At the top of the climb, Scott Nydam and Ben Jacques-Maynes passed us. The next part of the race was pretty flat. Six of us were in a pace line. There were occasional random sprints but not much else happened. In one rolling section towards the end, Stanley made a few attacks which tired everyone out. On the descent before the finish, Stanley and Dylan were at the front racing it out while I was in third position and Skyler was in fourth. I'm not sure where Spence and Andrew were. On the last turn of the downhill, Stanley and Dylan took it wide but I cut to the inside and passed them both.

The finish was on a curvy climb. Everyone regrouped, Andrew attacked and nobody chased him down. I wasn't worried until I saw the 200 meter sign. By then Andrew had it in the bag. Spence sprinted past everybody to take second. I beat Dylan in a sprint and took third.

-Griffin

## **John Piasta**

16 years old

Copperopolis Road Race

Senior Category 3

Coach Eric and I drove down the night before so we would be able to get some sleep before our 90 mile adventure the next day. Race day, we woke up, got some food and were off to a little late start. We ended up taking a wrong road and were pressed for time. We arrived 50 minutes before and raced to get ready.

We got to the start line 3 minutes early and our field had just left. I raced to catch and didn't know where Eric was. The guy at the corner onto the course thought that I was warming up so signaled me the wrong way. I didn't see the field turn and I went straight. My 10second gap turned to 3 minutes. I turned around and all out Time Tried to catch the field. I got the gap to 2 minutes and was passing 3s. I saw the 4s closing in on the flats and the official let us sit in until the 4s caught the 3s which the official expected to happen. I was pretty tired from my early effort and my bottles were working their way out of my cages creating another difficulty. Second time up the hill a Whole Athlete guy went to the front and slimmed the leaders to about 20. I made it over the hill with the leaders and took a shot at the wrong time. I could see the 3s about 1 minute up the road but an attack went as I was trying to eat and the surging from the guy in front of me added up and I got dropped. I did the last lap by myself disappointed not getting to test myself against the 3s. I could only ride out of the saddle due to the rough roads and slowly made my way in with Cody Tapley from Davis.

This race was one to learn the lesson the hard way. Get to the start line at least 5-10 minutes before for a road race. Always make sure you know exactly where the course is and have good directions. I left Copperopolis with a hunger to show the 3s what I really had and couldn't wait to race Wente after Sea Otter.  
-John

## **Ryan Grant**

13 years old

8<sup>th</sup> Place

Copperopolis Road Race

Juniors 13-14

This was my first race for a while and I had also only just recovered from a wrist fracture, so I was pretty nervous. The car ride was pretty long. When my dad and I got there we found Stanley and Griffin. We began to warm up on the trainer, but we finished warming up on the road. I didn't feel like I got a good warm up, but there was nothing I could do about it at that point. The race started out nice and easy, so I felt fine when we reached the climb. We started a reasonably fast pace up the climb and some people immediately fell off. We were a little farther than half way before I got dropped. I stayed around 10 feet of the back for a while. I noticed Matthew Valencia and this girl on Proman were also off the back. They got on my wheel, but the group picked up the pace right after a false finish, so I also increased my pace. They couldn't stay with me, but this kid that was dropped before me caught me. Right before I officially lost the group I noticed Katrina Howard wasn't in the group. A little after I lost them the climb ended and the kid who caught me was named Henry and we started to work together. We could still see the group, but they had some distance on us. We kept working hard and we spotted a kid who was in our race, so we started pushing even harder. We turned the corner into the wind and the kid all of a sudden got way in front of us. At that point we knew we wouldn't catch anyone. We got to the 1 km sign and then we started to watch each other pretty carefully. I knew the finish was on a small hill after a downhill and I planned to attack Henry there. I was in the front on the downhill and then I attacked. It caught him off guard and I got a 5-10 second gap on him. I was able to hold the gap to the finish line, so I got 8th place. Griffin got 3rd and Stanley got 6th, so overall we didn't do so bad.

-Ryan

---

## **2. Sea Otter Circuit Race**

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/28138131@N02/sets/72157617044017567/>

## **Ryan Eastman**

17 years old

3<sup>rd</sup> Place      Sea Otter Classic Circuit Race      Juniors 17-18

The race started out hard from the gun. It was a 50min race and these juniors were not going to waste a second of it. The first time up the climb a rider attacked from the Hammer Team, based in Oregon, and stayed away off the front solo for half of the race. We eventually brought him back as I expected. After the descent and onto the flat section Austin (Hammer) counter attacked and he got off the front. Nobody was chasing and his gap got stretched out to 54 seconds. There were 3 laps to go out of the 8 or so, and I knew if I wanted a chance to win I needed to attack the next time up the climb. We hit the base of the climb and everyone was just looking at each other. Nate was by my side and I wanted the pace hard and fast before I attacked up the steepest part of the climb so I had Nate go on the front and I told him to "light it up" He did just that, the field got strung out single file, and caught a lot of guys off guard. We hit the steep part of the climb and I attacked and got a big gap on the field. As I went up the road the field broke apart and turned into multiple chase groups.

I was solo for a lap chasing Austin and bringing down the gap. Once I was cresting the climb with two laps to go. Tomas jumped out of the chase group and bridged up to me. There was no hesitation between us, we both put our heads down and chased as hard as we could taking equal turns on the front. We were not here to save energy and sprint for second place. We both wanted to give everything to catch him and have a shot at the win. We brought back more than half of the gap, and on the last lap he was in sight on the climb. With 1k to go the gap was too big and we knew that we were not going to be able to catch him, but we kept equal share of the work so the chase group of around 6 guys would not catch us.

Tomas is bigger and more of a sprinter so I knew that I needed to try and get away from him and not leave it to the sprint. With 500 meters Tomas was on the front and I attacked and came around him on the right side. I got a pretty good gap and now I needed to hold it for 400 more meters, a hard task. He was able to slowly be able to make his way back onto my wheel and with 100 meters to go he opened up the sprint and came around me and I got 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

My teammates were awesome in this race, especially Nate going on the front and killing it, setting me up perfectly. "Thanks guys"

-Ryan Eastman

### **Sam Bassetti**

18 years old

9<sup>th</sup> Place

Sea Otter Circuit race

Juniors 17-18

I met Ryan, Nate and Coach Laura and we drove over to the course. We had to park on a big hill far away from the start. We arrived early so we could visit the expo and our sponsors. We also had time to pre ride the circuit race. The course is really nice, very wide and smooth pavement. It has one steep climb right after the finish. Our race was 50 minutes, so about 8 laps. We started out and a guy from Hammer Nutrition went at the very beginning. He got a good gap and no one attacked. We raced around the track; every time up the hill was hard. Eventually we caught the guy out front and another Hammer guy attacked. Soon after, Nate led out Ryan for an attack up the hill. The field was completely strung out and Ryan attacked hard. He immediately got a good gap. A chase group was forming at the top of the hill, but I had been too far back so I couldn't close the gap. I went down the descent with one other guy and after he pulled me a while I tried to bridge solo. I got into a good rhythm and almost caught on. I was absorbed by the field at the beginning of the climb, and by the top I was by myself and trying to bridge again. (Nate was with me up the climb but didn't make it over the top.) I spent the rest of the race trying to bridge, I got really close a few times but in the end I never caught on. I finished in between the first chase group and the main field. I was disappointed because I wasn't able to make the first group and I didn't really get to do much to help Ryan out. I was determined to do better in the road race.

-Sam

### **Blake Pepper-Tunick**

29<sup>th</sup> Place

Sea Otter Classic Circuit Race

Juniors 17-18

I registered for only the Circuit Race because it was going to be my first time at Sea Otter and I really just wanted to get a feel for the event and what it would be like to travel and stay overnight for a race. As things worked out, I drove myself down to Monterey the day before the race and stayed at a friend of my uncle's house in Carmel which is actually very close to Laguna Seca.

One big thing I learned about Sea Otter is to not get ready to race until only an hour or two before the actual start time. I got stuck rolling around my bike, while in my kit as I toured the vendors. Of course, there was no way for me to know about this one ahead of time, but now I do.

As race start finally approached, I got to get out onto the track and preview the race, and I have to say, it was pretty sweet. The one big hill for the first part of the race was pretty killer, but the rest was great. I figured the pros would attack on the hill.

And sure enough, I was right. I got dropped by the 2nd lap on that hill, but luckily I hooked up with my teammate Zach and a Tieni Duro guy and we helped each other out a lot which was great. By the last lap, the Tieni Duro guy started to not really take his turn in our pace line, but it wasn't too bad. As the last stretch came around, I was in the front of the pace line, which was obviously not very good positioning, but Zach attacked a little early (which he told me afterwards) which I think threw the Tieni Duro guy off. I knew where I wanted to start the sprint, but because they took off, so did I, and I finished in between the other two.

Putting the whole race in perspective, I think I did alright, at least considering the amount of training I did beforehand and such.

But even more than from the race, I learned A LOT from the whole experience. It was the furthest I had driven by myself to date, and some things I learned were that you definitely should arrange your accommodations as early as possible (as well as a thank you gift ahead of time), I figured out the best way to inflate my tires with the tubes that don't have the threaded stem, and you definitely should wear sunscreen with the weather like it was (my arms... ouch.), amongst many other things that I learned.

But in the end, was I glad that I went? Absolutely.  
Blake

## **Joey Nygaard**

13<sup>th</sup> Place      Sea Otter Circuit Race      Juniors 15-16

For once the race started at 4:00 pm and my dad and I got to Laguna Seca a nice four hours early, leaving time to figure out the insane registering process, hang out around the booths and then get into the racing state of mind. It was not long before we were on the starting line and waiting to see just how fast this years 15-16 field would push the pace. But when the whistle blew it was not the sprint off the line I was expecting and as we slowly made our way up the easy part of the climb I began to wonder whether the race might not be too hard after

all. But just when the harder part of the hill came, the attacks went flying and I found myself on the back of the pack, not the place I wanted to be entering the corkscrew, and I had to fight hard to regain my place in the middle of the pack.

I hung on for a few more laps until I was officially dropped. Luckily I was not alone; a rider from the AC team was also off the back. We fought hard to catch up but in the end we ended up fighting it out for the sprint, where he got the better of me and I was unable to come around him.

--Joey Nygaard

## **Joey Nygaard**

Sea Otter Circuit Race      Senior Category 4

After the junior circuit race the day before I decided it would be good training to do the Senior Category 4 race. So at 5:00 I made my way to the start line and got lined up with the other 4s. Unlike the Juniors, the Cat. 4's set an extremely fast pace both on the climb and down the descent. Up the climb I could handle the pace, but when it came to the descent I found myself off the back and scrambling for wheels.

I hung on to a variety of different groups, getting ahead on the hill so I would have a head start on the descent and was not blown away. I was starting to feel really good on the hills but with two laps to go I, along with the group I was riding with, got pulled. I had not expected that they would be pulling riders but I was not too down about it. By that time it was around 6 o'clock and getting very windy so my dad and I retired to the car and then to get a good night sleep for the early road race the next day.

--Joey Nygaard

### **3. Sea Otter Road Race**

## **Ryan Eastman**

3<sup>rd</sup> Place      Sea Otter Classic Road Race      Juniors 17-18

Today was very hot out, temperature in the high 80's and low 90's. After the neutral start that got us out the course it was a different story than yesterday's circuit race. There were no early attacks. Just one guy from Hammer on the front setting tempo. The first half of the race not much went down other than a few attacks that were brought back, with much help from my teammates,

Nate and Sam. A couple dangerous moves got off the front but my teammates were there to help me. One guy got off the front and nobody chased and he was getting away. The moto bike told us the gap was 50 seconds and everyone was sitting there. I had Sam and Nate go on the front and chase it down, but not expend too much energy because I knew that I would need them later.

Thanks to my teammates we brought him back. There were two laps to go and up the long climb I told Nate to go to the front as hard as he could to eliminate the other strong guy's teammates, basically isolate them, but have him make sure that he saved enough to stay in the front group. I was feeling really good and I knew that I had the legs to win. He was doing a great job but we still needed to be a bit faster, so about half way up the climb I came around Nate's wheel and pushed the pace up even more. I created a gap and I knew that it was unlikely that I would be able to hold it for the last two laps and then up to the finishing climb to I eased up near the top and let a group of three riders catch me.

Now I would have a greater chance of not getting caught by the rest of the guys with the help of these strong guys. We formed a pace line and worked together, in about ten minutes we were caught by a group of around 10 guys including Sam, unfortunately Nate did not make the split.

Nobody was willing to work so I had Sam go on the front and set the pace, he was doing a great job. After the feed zone it is basically a descent down and head up the finishing climb. I was feeling awesome and I knew that I had really good legs. There is a long false flat section before the final climb that is probably around 2k long. Sam went on the front to keep the bunch moving. I was feeling confident in my sprint so I decided to wait to sprint until going at the start of the climb. It seemed that this was everyone's plan and we road up the climb very slow. I should have gone with 1k to go. But for some reason I waited.

The group was now down to around 8 guys and with 500 meters to go a guy attacked and I was the first on his wheel. So I was second in line and the guy slowed down a bit while a Hammer guy was still coming around with the same speed 4 or 5 guy backs and attacked on the right side with one guy on his wheel. He caught me totally off guard and I now had to jump across and try and get onto their wheel. I was able to get up to their wheel but not come around, I ran out of the road and there was the finish. I got 3<sup>rd</sup> again.

I totally messed up this sprint. I think that I over thought it. If I rode like I usually do I would have gone near the base of the climb or at least with 1k to go which would have been more successful. My teammates rode awesome for me today, they really sacrificed everything for me, I should have repaid them with the win but that is bike racing, and you mess up sometimes. We really rode great as a team and I think that we were definitely the strongest team out there.

"Thanks guys"

-Ryan Eastman

### **Sam Bassetti**

7<sup>th</sup> Place      Sea otter Road Race      Juniors 17-18

Priority #1- win. Our goal was to do everything we could to help Ryan win. The course had a lot of climbing and the field was very strong, so we knew it would be a hard race. It was very hot and it felt great to get moving. At the beginning of the race we went down the finishing hill (we only go up it once at the end). The hill was steep right to the finish with a long false flat leading up to it. We hit the main climb of the course and as expected the pace was hard. The whole group went over together and we continued along the course. Nothing major happened until the next time up the climb. Nate went to the front and drilled it; the whole field was strung out and by the time we were over the field was down to about 15 riders. After that, Ryan told Nate and me to get on the front and drive the group because no one else wanted to work. So Nate and I pulled and covered some moves. Into the climb again and Nate went to the front and pushed the pace hard. Ryan attacked with 3 other guys, by this time the whole field was blowing behind us. I went over the climb with about 5 other guys with a gap to the front group. I was definitely hurting by that point, but I managed to stay with that group as we caught up to Ryan's group (It was basically every man for himself, no one was working together). I made it into the final group, and Ryan had me go to the front and pull. I pulled to the feed zone then rested a bit. Going into the final climb my job was to set tempo on the false flat so no one would attack early. I was feeling pretty crappy by that time but I knew I needed to do it. I pulled to the base of the first steep part of the climb, where I started cramping pretty bad, and then dropped off the back; my job was done so I just chilled up the climb. It was a very hard race and I was glad that I could help Ryan out.

-Sam

### **John Piasta**

5<sup>th</sup> Place      Sea Otter Road Race      Juniors 15-16

I was stoked as soon as I caught sight of my teammate Chris Flanagan at the start. We talked and I knew together this hilly course would be perfect for the two of us to cause some pain. Sure enough first climb this guy from LA went to the front at the hill and was totally drilling it. I made it to the top with 4 others. With 2 Specialized guys I knew this break could stick. Yet, we couldn't get a

paceline going. Andrew Lanier and I were really trying to organize one but as we started to get it going the 4 leaders turned into a pack. I was glad to see Chris rejoin and soon after Joey and Stan-the-man. The pace was fast. It was a much faster start than the circuit. I stayed safe toward the front and out of wind. I only brought back Specialized, as Tim had instructed me the day before. Chris got to the front and started drilling it. We strung out the field. I told him to save it and the pace was soon dangerously slow. The LA guy attacked and we were taking the descent extremely fast. As I was getting ready to chase it, I see none other than Stanley chasing him down with the pack on his wheel. NO WAY!!! I was impressed. He bridged the gap. Allistair hit the hill really hard. Yuma and I were the only one to stay with him. We pacelined and were then caught. Lanier attacked and got away with Yuma. Chris and I hit the front and got the gap down to 10 seconds. I wanted to get the guys to work and not just sit on us. As Lanier saw me pulling the pack he attacked and no one from the chase group responded. I sat up and made the pace slow enough so to force the others to work. They didn't and I was disappointed but was going to try again on the hill. Somehow Allistair got away, I don't remember him going or how it happened. I hit the hill really hard. At the bottom of the climb I heard the gap was 2 minutes and we wouldn't bring it back. I progressively increased my pace on the climb until him I saw I dropped the whole field. I saw Chris was really hurting so I waited for the pack to get on my wheel set a little easier pace, I didn't want him to bonk when I had already found out how hard I needed to go to drop the pack. With this knowledge I talked to Chris. He said he was hurting but I was feeling fine so he helped bring back attacks. The last time up the climb we were still together but Chris was starting to cramp. At the feed zone Chris really started cramping and I knew right then it was up to me to get on the podium.

We hit the final climb and one by one we were dropping people. After seeing 1 k to go I attacked. I was caught and stuck pulling a headwind. The whole athlete guy with us attacked and I went. It was just enough to drop Marcus Smith. I stayed with him and thinking the finish was near attacked. He brought me back and dropped me. I blew up...I tried not to loose time and kept looking back at Marcus and he was closing on me. It had been well over 1 KM. I kept pushing until I saw the finish. Marcus was 2 bike lengths behind me. Hands in the drops I drove my knees towards the line and sealed 5<sup>th</sup>. I nearly passed out at the finish and Laura was there to help me get out of the middle of the road and into a chair.

Yes I was glad to be on the podium, but not satisfied with 5<sup>th</sup>. I worked hard for it. I am striving for a win and am more motivated than ever to get one.  
-JohnP

## **Christopher Flanagan**

8<sup>th</sup> Place      Sea Otter Road Race      Juniors 15-16

The Sea Otter road race started off at an easy pace as we were neutralized for around a mile. For the Junior 15 to 16 field it was to be a 47 mile race with 5 laps then back up a 6% climb to the finish. What surprised me most from the beginning was that it was 95 degrees, a heat I haven't felt since last summer. As soon as the race began the field started breaking up. Several people got dropped and by the time we reached the top of the hill a break had formed of about 20 people. My teammate John Piasta and I took turns keeping the group together, chasing and pulling. On the second lap a Specialized climber took off with one other team rider. By this time the group had thinned to 6 or so guys in a break, 3 of which were Specialized and were blocking at the break. I pulled at the front several times trying to increase the pace and traded pulling efforts with John for several laps with little to no help from the rider's.

By the third lap my legs felt more tired than usual and I started to cramp up. By the fourth lap a rider from Idaho dropped out and my cramps were getting worse. Then on the fifth lap and final lap climb my legs started to seize. I turned to John and quietly informed him of my difficulties. I tried spinning my legs out at a high cadence and lowered resistance but with little result. The cramps came in waves but were only moderately controllable.

John and I had made a plan that the strongest would attack on the final climb and the other would block. As we came to the feed zone I moved over to the right to get a drink. I could feel just how tense my legs were but then, all of a sudden it became impossible to move them. I could barely see straight as I passed the feed zone. My legs were in utter agony and I was forced to stop several times before the finish. When I finally did cross the finish I had to be carried off the bike, but all I could think about was the pain. I later learned that John had attacked resulting in a sprint finish and a 5<sup>th</sup> place, which was good news. I managed to come across the line 8<sup>th</sup> overall, but mostly, I was thankful to have helped my teammate achieve his best.

-Chris F.

## **Zach Sargent**

23<sup>rd</sup> Place      Sea Otter Road Race      Juniors 17-18

This was the race I was looking forward to. I had been training and doing everything I could in the time I had to prepare for the Sea Otter Road Race. The

race started at 11:30 with the heat already pounding us. We started the race on the long descent down through the finish to the circuit. Upon entering the climb on the circuit the pack stayed at a good tempo but not unbearable. I stuck with the group through the first 2 climbs and was dropped going through the 1st climb on the 2nd lap. With me, about 4-5 riders either fell off and were never seen again or joined up with me to form a small group.

At this point the temperature on the course was getting to the uncomfortable point. The descents and flat sections were nice because you got somewhat of a nice breeze to help cool you down. You could feel the heat difference on the portions of pavement that where darker. I stayed with 2 other riders and we took turns pulling. I made sure to stay hydrated and took note on how they were performing on the climbs.

I was feeling pretty strong and confident with the riders I was with. After 4 laps we had one left. Just before starting the 1st climb on the last lap my group managed to catch a rider from Specialized. On the climb I could feel the cramps coming on. I knew I needed to stay strong and started the climb hoping to give the impression that I was a stronger rider in the group. One of the riders in the pack set a pretty good pace. The other rider made acceleration but not an attack towards the top. I did everything I could to keep with him but was unable. At that point I did everything I could to finish the race. The heat had grown to an incredible temperature for the nature of the course and I did everything in my power to stay hydrated and eat. I took 10 bottles from the feed zone on the 5 laps of 8 miles and finished the race solo. I was happy to survive that race.

-Zach

## **Joey Nygaard**

10<sup>th</sup> Place      Sea Otter Road Race      Juniors 15-16

The morning of the road race came bright, early and hot. After warming up, I began to make my way over to the start line. The whistle blew and we began to proceed along the four mile neutral promenade. As soon as the group hit the first major climb, Team Specialized set up a blistering pace and the group splintered. Stanley and I got off the back and we had to work hard on the descent to catch up.

Once we had caught up it was not long until we were back around to the climb again. Once again the group splintered and I found myself off the back. I found a rhythm and soon enough I was passing people left and right. I came up behind Stanley and as I was passing him, I slowed down a bit, just in case he had

enough energy to stay on my wheel. When he did not, I kept up my pace. I was slowly catching the group, and would have but the climb ended and I was faced with a long windy descent. At this point there was only one rider between me and the group and I buried myself to catch him. Once I had caught him we started working together, trying to reel in the main field.

We worked very well together. He, being bigger than me, pulled me down the descents, and I, in return, pulled him up the climbs. We worked together like this for almost the rest of the race, until he bombed the last descent and I could do nothing to stay on his wheel. All I could do was tuck, pedal and hope he didn't get too big a gap. As I made the turn onto the final two-mile hill he had a pretty big gap but nothing I couldn't catch--I thought. Unfortunately the hill was not that steep at all for the first half mile and although I was doing the best I could, the terrain suited him better and I lost ground. But not for long, soon the hill kicked up in gradient and I began to catch up rapidly. I saw the "1K" to go sign, and then 500 meters. By the time I saw 250 meters I had reduced 3/4 of his gap and was closing. But despite all my efforts I was about 10 meters behind him at the final turn, not close enough to pass him, and I crossed the finish line in a satisfying 10th place.

Because of the extreme heat, we only stuck around to check on results, get an iced mocha or two, and watch my teammates on the podium! It was a good end to a long weekend and All Sport-Team Swift had rocked.

Keep it up All Sport-Swifties!

--Joey Nygaard

---

#### **4. Chain of the Lakes Cycling Classic**

### **Ashlyn Gerber**

15 Years Old

Senior Women Pro, 1, 2, 3

3<sup>rd</sup> Place Chain of Lakes Cycling Classic Road Race Senior Women pro, 1, 2, 3

4<sup>th</sup> Place Chain of Lakes Cycling Classic Criterium Senior Women pro, 1, 2, 3

Last weekend was the Chain of Lakes Cycling Classic. We started off with a 28 mile road race on Saturday and then an all category women's criterium on Sunday. I really enjoyed the road race course. It was slightly rolling and very windy. All of the women and the masters 55+ raced together. The field was roughly 30 riders strong.

Right from the gun I settled into second wheel. The women's field was

small and lacked some of the power houses that usually race. About 8 miles into the first lap two women attacked off the front (Trish Cohen and Tracy Cundiff). I was pinned up against the yellow line and waited for a slot to move up. I drilled it and brought 2 other women with me. We had basically closed the gap down when the master's field flew by and engulfed us and the break. For the next 3 miles the masters sat at the front and hammered. I saw women getting shelled left and right. I felt awesome and was looking forward to the next lap.

A mile after the finishing climb a group of masters got off the front and Tracy and Trish followed. I was in a group of 15 riders with about 10 masters but only one woman 1, 2, 3. We organized a pace-line and had soon reeled the women back in. The rest of the last lap was uneventful. With 3 miles left I tried to move towards the front. I felt pretty good and was hoping for a good finish. We rounded the final corner and the tailwind made the speed rapidly increase. I followed a master's rider straight to the front. With about 500 meters left there was a surge but I managed to stay up front. Finally the sprint, I saw a woman (Jenny-Team ASV) whiz by my right. I instantly knew she won the race. On my left I could see Trish. I pulled ahead of her but was rapidly losing elbow room. Luckily the riders in front of me continued to sprint. I ended up 3rd. This was my first podium on the season.

The criterium the next day was pretty crazy. I arrived about 1 1/2 hour before my race and heard about all sorts of mishaps in previous races. I was a little nervous but I felt like I had a good shot at doing well. The course was pretty nice. It had 8 corners but the pavement was pretty good. There were not too many obstacles to get in the way.

Before my warm up I had a chance to meet and talk with Mr. Steve Johnson (President of USA Cycling). It was really cool talking to him and I was totally ready to get out and race after talking with him.

The women's 1,2,3 field was much smaller with only 5 riders but the women 4's were out in full force with close to 15 riders. About 3 laps into the race a break of three 1, 2, 3's got off the front. I tried to bridge but wasn't able to. I settled into the second group with about 7 riders and tried to get an organized chase going. The other girl in my category was also in this group. I could see the leaders get further and further away. They eventually had a 1 minute gap and I decided to settle in and wait for the sprint. With 3 laps to go we were caught by one lone leader. It was suddenly down to 2 laps to go. I moved up and made sure I was ready for the sprint. As we came past the finish on the final lap I could see a couple women advancing on my right. I gunned it and managed to gap the field. I was caught by two girls just before the second to last corner but the other category 3 was still about 7 seconds back.

I ended up getting 4th overall. I was not happy about missing the break

but after this past weekend I feel like I will soon get my finishes down. It was definitely a good learning weekend and I look forward to the 4 criteriums in Miami next weekend.

Ride safe,  
-Ashlyn Gerber

---

## 5. Wente Classic Road Race

### Nate Geoffrion

3<sup>rd</sup> Place      Wente Vineyards Road Race      Juniors 17-18

The goal of the day was for Sam and me to go one-two. We are both trying to upgrade to a Cat 3 and this was the kind of hilly race where we could do it. Luckily, we had Ryan at the race which saved us a lot of energy for the sprint on the uphill finish. About 20 guys showed up at the race and 5 guys who could stay with us until the finish.

On the first climb of the day, Ryan pulled at the front with a hard pace which dropped about half the field. The climb wasn't too long, but if you went hard enough it was easy to drop some of the sprinters. After the climb, Ryan pulled again but not too hard so that the guys who were ten seconds behind had to work to catch up to our lead group. On the first lap there were not too many attacks, which made the race easy for some of the guys who relax at the back all day. When everyone would just sit up and go easy because no one would want to pull, Ryan would ride to the front and do a steady tempo. On the flats after the descent a couple guys caught up to us. One of the guys was a somewhat good sprinter, so I learned from him catching up that we had to go faster after the uphill section for the last lap so he wouldn't be able to catch back on. On the second lap Ryan again pulled on the hill at the beginning. But this time, attacks started coming from behind which lifted the pace and dropped a few more struggling riders. Our group was now around ten riders; this made it easier to predict if a guy was going to attack. On the rolling section of the course, Ryan was taking a break and no one wanted to pull, so I decided to attack. The point of the attack was not to solo off the front, but to get the other teams working and to lift the pace. This also set it up for Ryan to attack with Sam on his wheel. Our plan worked and Ryan attacked followed by Sam. As soon as they were brought back, I attacked and forced the other riders to work and expend energy. At the start of the third lap, Ryan pulled for about 3 kilometers until the base of the climb. The attacks came again and when we crested the hill, the group had dwindled down to 5 guys. This was an ideal number of riders, because I only

needed a fifth place to upgrade to a cat 3. Now I could work for Sam on the last lap because it didn't matter that I finished last in this group. Ryan caught back up to us which made it six, and again pulled at the front and covered attacks. He did a lot of work for us, which was amazing. Up to the finishing climb we went, Ryan setting a fast tempo at the front; time trial style. At the base of climb again he pulled off. I set a hard tempo at the front, our group came to four, and two other guys couldn't hold the pace. I pulled off and Sam moved to the front. He set a really hard tempo which he kept all the way to the finish line for the win. One guy beat me for second, but I was content with third. My teammate won and I am we both upgraded to a category 3. Not to mention we demolished the rest of the race. It was an awesome day, chops to Ryan for working all day for us!  
-Nate

## **John Piasta**

Wente Road Race Senior Category 3

I got to the start of a huge field with 100 starters. At the start adrenaline started to pump and Alex, Coach Troy and Taylor (NorCal Bike Sport) were there to guide me in my first Cat 3 road race. The race started with a KOM right from the gun. Originally I wanted to go for it but Alex said to just stay calm. So I sat in comfortably on Troy's wheel getting an awesome draft. A break went with 4 guys which soon grew to 12. I continued to sit in and use as little energy as possible. I was in z1-3 on the flats and z4 on the hills. I never got to threshold. I think it was just that with the wind, by racing smart I was able to save a ton of energy. Troy came up to me and told me that we needed to move to the front because the pack was closing on the break. I just followed his wheel as we moved towards the front. Troy was assured that the last 2 laps would consist of us dropping 20 guys per lap. I wouldn't be one of them. We hit the climb not in an ideal location. Each time up the hill we took it one notch harder. I just sat on Troy's wheel as we paced up to the top. This time I was way over threshold up the hill. The pace was lifted and just as Troy predicted we dropped about 20 riders. Riders were shocked I was still in there, and as the pace lifted the 4th time up the hill I stayed with the leaders. It was cool to see how good of shape I was in compared to the other 3s. I was passing guys up the hill and Troy and I made it to the top 15. We sat there for the last lap and after catching the break a guy went solo off the front. After passing the masters, we were neutralized by them. It was frustrating because we were 15 seconds from the solo break and would have caught it. I moved to the front for the climb but 2 riders started bumping off each other and broke their lines. I was swept off the road into gravel. Staying

upright I jumped onto the road and caught up right as we turned onto the hill. Chasing back on killed me and I lost my awesome spot.

Well, I finished with the leaders. Exceeded my goal and saw awesome improvements. For my first cat 3 road race I just wanted to observe and learn. Troy was there to guide me to the finish and I really learned a lot from him. Wente was an awesome race and I wish I could have raced Juniors afterwards.  
-John

---

## 6. Wente Classic Criterium

### Nick Kinney

5<sup>th</sup> Place      Wente Classic Criterium      Juniors 17-18

I opted not to do Wente Road Race, in favor of prom (but Sam, Nate and Ryan seemed to have that race in hand) and the Cat 4's was too early in the morning after a late night, so I was off to Livermore to do the Juniors event at Wente Classic Criterium. Wente is an awesome course. A long sweeping arch into a fast series of right, right, left, right, right turns back onto the finishing arch all on great roads. Nowhere do you have to touch the brakes, not even in the pack.

Last year's race was full gas from the gun, I felt good, but got tangled up in the crash that broke Joey's collar-bone and was chasing with Greg Schubert (then Colavita) and Sam Bassetti for the rest of the race.

This year's start was no different. Specialized had 7 or 8 guys there, Tieni Duro had 2 or 3, Davis had 2, one guy each from Rio Strada, 2 from San Jose and 2 from VOS Racing. Specialized obviously wanted to make it fast and anyone who wouldn't normally make the cut was shelled within 3 laps. I tried to force a selection on the second lap after the first turn, but the Davis didn't want to work with me and Specialized pulled it back.

It was one attack after another from Specialized, and since John was dog tired from the Cat 3 road race the day before and the Cat 3's crit that morning and I'd had a minimum amount of sleep the night before, we were a duo in sad condition. I spent two solid laps on the front chasing (and cut 10 seconds off the gap according to the guys shouting times from the side of the course), not wanting to pull off because the guy behind me was, of course, Specialized. The Davis guys, Steve Larson (Rio Strada) and Sam Bolster (Kinetics) each took separate turns in the next few laps pulling back move after move from

Specialized, but each time we pulled them close there would be another Specialized attack.

John, or I, or both would snag the attacking wheel and hope for the best. The pace was so intense I ended up with bile in my mouth with 4 to go, which was less than pleasant. 3 to go I made one last attempt to get off the front with a Specialized move, and then dropped to the back of the pack to recover a bit. Davis made a big effort to pull the race back together and succeeded however one more attack snapped the elastic and made it off the front as we rounded the final corner of the second to last lap. John had dropped back a bit, picked me up and pulled me alongside the Specialized train with 3 corners to go. A Tieni Duro guy got John's wheel through one corner, which was fine with me, because I got into the Specialized train through the exit of the second to last corner.

The last few corners were sketch, a VOS guy was trying to push his way into the spot occupied by James LeBerge, who was my wheel. VOS was probably 6 foot six and 50 pounds more than James, but he held his own, thankfully. There was lots of shouting as we entered the loooooooooooooooooooooooooong finishing "arch" and the race swung from the right side of the road, to the left side gutter, across half a billion bot dots, where the sprint began. I put my head down and tried to get as aero as possible. I didn't have the legs to throw down a fast, out-of-the-saddle, acceleration at that point and was 5<sup>th</sup> across the line.

When all was said and done the Specialized guy off the front (15-16) in the last lap held on, and the Specialized sprint train had worked well, winning the 17-18. Good race by them, though I would say John and I did a rather good job considering the odds. John raced beyond his level, dropping me off where I needed to be. Great teamwork. Also, I didn't realize this until after I finished, but Wente was the first ever criterium were I took part in the final sprint for the win, usually I don't have the patience, attack early, get dropped and race off the back for the scraps.

I like this racing at the front thing. It's kinda exciting!

Cat's Hill here we come!

-Nicklovin

## **John Piasta**

8<sup>th</sup> Place      Wente Classic Criterium      Junior 15-16

The Cat 3 race was really uneventful. We dropped quite a few riders, got up to insane speeds and it was a pretty comfortable race for me. It was harder for me to move up through the entire race and with a field of 100 averaging low 30

mphs so I just sat in. A crash happened at the finish which slowed down my sprint.

Next was the Juniors race with my teammate Nick. For some reason I started feeling tired. Possibly from the 80 miles the day before and the 50 minute crit earlier, either way I felt slow and wanted to sleep. Since after getting my butt kicked by Nick in that weeks sprint intervals I decided it was Nick's race. I would cover early attacks, try get in a break and be there to lead him out. Well from the start I knew it would be a long race. My legs were filled with lactate. I chased down an early Specialized attack that Peter Taylor countered and went solo for a while. Tired I sat in trying to let other teams work. The gap was at 30 seconds. I wanted to bridge it and get a 2 man break going. I knew it was a manageable distance. I attacked and was covered. Nick went to the front and started to pull. He brought the gap back to a more manageable distance. However if I wasn't so tired, and if he wasn't so fast I would have gone to the front and tell him to stop pulling. We brought it back, Lanier attacked I was quick to cover and amazed at how bad I was feeling. When Benkoski attacked I covered but this time couldn't completely close it. Zach Wick took over and we were "back in business". Three to go I found Nick and made sure he was near me. Lanier attacked, I was boxed in. No one brought it back so I just let it go because he was only my competition (15-16) not Nick's (17-18). I didn't care about my result just wanted to get Nick a win. Last lap I heard Benkoski tell Joel Shaffer he was "on" knowing a lead out train was to happen I just sat on Benkoski and as Nick was telling me to move up told him to just stay still. Just as I predicted Shaffer and Taylor started a train. I stole Benkoski's wheel and thought Nick was right on. I thought the finish was way closer and countered the Specialized's train. As the pack literally screamed I thought I had Nick on my wheel and continued to drill it. I went thought the corner at the front and laid Nick off...where was Nick. Adam Hodes stole my wheel and Nick was in the pack. Sprinting by me he got 5th. If I went a little later he would have won. He had an awesome sprint. I got 7th. My only disappointments were that I didn't get a cool T-shirt, that went to top 6 and that I started the lead out too early. I went there to help a teammate and race unselfishly. I did just that and therefore achieved my goal.

I learned a bit from Wente Criterium. From leading Nick out too early I know what I need to do next time. I also learned how to race 3's crits. Jared from Christian Cycling, spun down with me after the race and explained to me how it is a cycle. You get to the front and more guys pass, so you have to ride that for the majority of the race, not fight it. And when you want to move up you have to go all the way to the front for the most part. Or else the guys that sat on your

wheel as you moved up, just come in front of you and you are back to nowhere.  
Good race, can't wait for Cats Hill.  
-John