

## Team Swift Race Reports

### August 2013

#### **Race Reports for:**

1. NCNCA Junior Road Race Championships—Dunnigan Hills
2. 2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium
3. Winters Road Race
4. Red Kite Criterium
5. Fast Freddie Gran Fondo
6. Death Ride Report

#### **August Top Results:**

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	District Road Race Champs	Juniors 10-12	Gianni Lamperti
1 <sup>st</sup> Place	2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium	Juniors 17-18	Ryan Clarke
1 <sup>st</sup> Place	2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium	Juniors 15-16	Ben Cook
1 <sup>st</sup> Place	2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium	Juniors Wm. 10-12	Isabella Brunner
1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Foothill College Circuit Race	Juniors 10-12`	Isabella Brunner
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	District Road Race Champs	Juniors 17-18	Ryan Clarke
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	District Road Race Champs	Juniors Wm. 15-16	Emily Abraham
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	District Road Race Champs	Juniors 13-14	Ben Clark
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	District Road Race Champs	Juniors 10-12	Luke Lamperti
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium	Juniors 13-14	Isaiah Chass
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	District Road Race Champs	Juniors 17-18	Alec Seivert
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Foothill College Circuit Race	Junior Wm. 15-18	Emily Abraham
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium	Juniors 10-12	Colton Swinth
4 <sup>th</sup> Place	District Road Race Champs	Juniors 17-18	Drew Gonzales
4 <sup>th</sup> Place	District Road Race Champs	Juniors 13-14	Isaiah Chass
4 <sup>th</sup> Place	2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium	Juniors 15-16	Brad Butterfield
4 <sup>th</sup> Place	2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium	Juniors 10-12	David Green
6 <sup>th</sup> Place	Winters Road Race	Senior Category 3	Alec Seivert
7 <sup>th</sup> Place	2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium	Senior Wm. Cat 4	Emily Abraham
10 <sup>th</sup> Place	District Road Race Champs	Juniors 15-16	Miles Daly
11 <sup>Th</sup> Place	Patterson Pass Road Race	Senior Category 4	Alec Seivert
14 <sup>th</sup> Place	Winters Road Race	Senior Category 3	Ben Cook
15 <sup>th</sup> Place	2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium	Senior Category 4	Ben Cook
26 <sup>th</sup> Place	Red Kite Criterium	Senior Category 5b	Emmet Pfau
31 <sup>st</sup> Place	Red Kite Criterium	Senior Category 5a	Emmet Pfau

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## Rider Race Reports

## **1. NCNCA Junior Road Race—Dunnigan Hills** 8/10/13 Yolo

### **Ryan Clarke**

Racing Age 17 Senior Category 3

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Dunnigan Hills Road Race (NCNCA District Road Race Championship)

The course for this race was pretty darn flat. I did it last year so I knew what to expect right from the beginning. The moment the race started, Tieni Duro started attacking. I covered their strong man Reese and didn't worry too much about their other two because I knew they weren't a threat. They got one guy off the front and my teammates Drew and Alec started chasing him down. This was one of Alec's first couple of races and I could tell he was really strong. Reese attacked over a roller and nobody but me could follow. After catching his teammate, the two took turns attacking me, but had no success. About 10 miles later, my teammates Drew and Alec caught back on giving me a chance to rest up. A few minutes after that Reese flatted, and I trusted my sense of good sportsmanship and teammate when we gave him a tube and a pump, waited until he got the tire off and set off again. He caught us again, but this time Alec had countered my attack and got away up the road. Reese flatted again and this time instead of waiting, I bridged up to Alec and we started time trialing to the finish. We were both pretty gassed and despite pushing it as hard as we could, we ended up getting caught around 3k from the finish. We tried attacking and I almost got away solo, but it was right outside 1k to go and I didn't have anything left for a 200m sprint. Alec did fantastic at this race. Not only was he able to read the race and know when to attack, but he was extremely willing to help out the team and even finished with a strong 3rd place. I was extremely impressed and I'm looking forward to racing with him again.

-Ryan

### **Alec Seivert**

3<sup>rd</sup> Place Dunnigan Hills RR -NCNCA JR State Championships Juniors 17-18

Dunnigan hills was my first race that I had do use team tactics and work for teammates (so fun). Once the race got past neutral, IT was on. There were breaks after breaks, people trying to get away and solo to the finish, but none of the early breaks were successful. At the halfway point my legs were feeling as if I had just ridden 100 miles with an average speed of 25 miles per hour. Then one of the other team's main guys got a flat so three of us took off; two Swift teammates and one other team. I had a break and it lasted for about 8 miles or so until the rest of the group caught me. At this point we were nearing the finish; coming in it was a super flat and fast road with me pulling 95% of the time. Coming over the last bridge to the finish I was sitting in 4th place, so I just tried to stay with the group until the last 200 meters. When the sprint came it was crazy, attack after attack after attack, I was just lucky to put the

hammer down and get a podium spot. Thanks to my teammates; I got 3rd, and had a great experience working with teammates.

-Alec

## **Drew Gonzales**

4<sup>th</sup> Place      Dunnigan Hills RR- NCNCA JR State Championships      Juniors 17-18

This was the first time that I had raced Dunnigan Hills, but after hearing from Ryan, who had raced it before, I felt much more confident about the race. According to Ryan, the race would be a flat, flat two hour race.

While checking the pre-registered riders, I noticed that the race would be between Ryan, our new teammate Alec, three Tieno Duro riders, and me. From reading this I knew that the race would be a good opportunity to practice race tactics -- not the kind of tactics that you would use in a field race, but good for when you're racing in a break or something.

The first part of the race was pretty routine. Small attacks, little jumps, and thirty second breaks were had. It wasn't until Reese flatted that the race became interesting. Reese was, without at doubt, the strongest rider in the race. So when he flatted, I thought it would be a good gesture to wait for him and give him a tube; I thought it would be the sportsman like act to make. But halfway through the flat change, I changed my mind. I told Ryan to leave so that Ryan would be up the road when Reese finished his flat change. Then I told our newest teammate to go with him. I waited with Reese to change his flat, and when he finished, I sat on his wheel. I expected never to see Ryan again.

Twenty minutes later, Ryan came into view. Reese had pulled back minutes. But a few minutes later, Reese flatted again. This time, we didn't wait, instead, Ryan went off the front again, and I waited with Reese. I didn't choose to go with Ryan because in the event that Reese did catch Ryan, I wanted one of us to be fresh for the finish. Ten miles before the finish, Ryan came into view again. Reese had pulled back minutes, again. We played cat and mouse for the remaining ten miles. We attacked the living daylight out of Reese, but nothing worked. He beat us in the sprint. I rolled in fourth.

-Drew

## **Emily Abraham**

2<sup>nd</sup> place      NCNCA Road Race Championship: Dunnigan Hills      Junior Wm. 15-16

I was excited to participate in this race since I hadn't done a road race for a while. I also was feeling somewhat nervous since I hadn't ridden my bike more than twenty-five miles in the past two weeks (I'm running cross country now) but I knew I could still complete the whole forty six mile race. When we arrived at the race, I hopped on the trainer to do a fairly easy warm-up before my race. I got my legs warm and I was feeling pretty good. I rolled over to the start line where everyone was lined up before their start. Only two other girls were in my race, but one girl was in the 17-18 category so I was really only racing against one other girl. The three of us had to wait

for a while the other categories to start since the officials were a little behind schedule. We eventually got to the start line and began the race. There were only three of us, so we took turns pulling. There wasn't much action throughout the race until about one km to the finish. That was when the girl in my category was able to make an attack. As soon as she stood up to start her attack, I followed. But my legs were screaming at me and I knew there was no way I could keep up with her. I finished the race with almost every muscle in my body hurting. From my experience in this race, I learned about the importance of giving your legs a rest. I didn't give myself a rest day from riding or running for over a week before this race. I hope to be better prepared for the next race.

-Emily

## **Emmet Pfau**

16 old, senior category 5

DNP     Dunnigan Hills Road Race- NCNCA JR State Championships     Juniors 15-16

Since this was my fourth race and I had been training a lot I thought I would have placed better than I did. At the start of the race my legs felt sore, so I knew the race would be a struggle. I wasn't expecting people to start attacking as early as they did, but they still did. At the first attack my legs started and I fell off the back but caught back up, that happen two more times then I got dropped. When I got dropped I kept trying to catch back up but everyone kept attacking so I wasn't able to. I wasn't the only to get dropped, two other kids got dropped, one from San Jose and the other from Davis. We rode together to try to catch back up then the kid from San Jose dropped off because he was tired, so it was me and the Davis kid and we kept working to catch back up but we weren't able to. At the finish line when we sprinted my legs felt dead which was great.

-Emmet

## **Ben Cook**

14, category 4

2<sup>nd</sup> Place     Dunnigan Hills Road Race- NCNCA JR State Championships Juniors 13-14

So Dunnigan Hills was the district road race championships for juniors, but there was one issue. I hadn't ridden in 4 weeks since I've been on vacation after Nationals. So I got there and warmed up some, mostly just to feel what it's like to ride a bike again, and lined up at the start with my teammate Isaiah Chass.

We started off slow, and Zach Gottesman, who I have raced with before, was right on my wheel. I made my first attack up one of the hills, and got caught soon enough. My lungs were full of junk and I felt awkward from not riding. Then I pulled another move to hide my suffering and was countered by Zach. I soon learned that I could not be the first one to attack. Isaiah was in a perfect spot, and riding very well. I

asked if he felt he could make a move, but he said no. So I told him that he was doing great, and to make sure to stay out of the wind. So this cat and mouse went in with a few more attacks throughout the race, and I finally made one big move on Zach on the final roller. I almost had him but he was right there. We came to the final finishing road and saw the 1K sign. A minute or so later, Zach made a big jump. He seemed to be starting his sprint. I saw 2 cones on either side of the road, and thought I had seen the finish. So I sprinted as hard as I could and crossed through the cones, but there was no line. Turns out we still had 300 meters to go, and Zach had used me to get me in front for the lead out. So we came into the sprint, me leading out, and Zach made one big move to the right, knocking Sam Hill from Davis off the course and into the dirt. Sam lost all his momentum, but saved the crash. I got second to Zach. I learned about attacks and how to play a game of cat and mouse, you wait until the other riders have to do the work, no matter how long it takes, and you never attack first when your competition is on your wheel. I was, in the end very proud of Isaiah, he got 4th! Out of 20! He had an excellent race and rode very smart out on the road. I was happy to race with him

-Ben

## **Isaiah Chass**

4<sup>th</sup> Place      Dunnigan Hills Road Race-NCNCA JR State Championships Juniors 13-14

The morning I woke up for Dunnigan Hills I thought "Am I really going to be racing in 4 hours!?" Well, 3 hours later we were going down the back roads to the start at 70 mph. When we got to the start I did a short warm-up and then rode to line up for the start. Right before the start I quickly swallowed a raspberry Clif Shot followed by some electrolyte water. Soon enough the race referee blew the whistle and we were off. The start was very slow at about 10 mph. Quickly, Ben made an attack and Zachary from Mellow Motors was right on his wheel. I waited for the next person to go across and right away got on their wheel. Once everyone regrouped we slowed back down. We rode at that pace for a couple minutes and then there was another attack. I got across to the rider right away and soon enough everyone was back on causing the pace to slow down once again. This same thing happened again and again for the next 15 miles, as riders would slowly get spit off the back by the fast attacks. At about mile 17 there was a surge in the pace and everyone was sprinting to stay on the wheel in front of them. I got dropped and was about 100 feet behind the pack. I sprinted as hard as I could thinking "Sprint Isaiah if you lose that wheel it's all over". I did it. I rejoined the group with around 3 km to go. Then, Ben and Zachary made an attack and got off the front. The rest of the group stayed together and tried to pull it back. As we went over the final overpass I got on Jake Yackle's wheel and followed him to 1 km. to go. We had the break in our sights and were fighting to catch back up. Then Ben and Zachary sprinted for a false finish, which were 2 cones on the side of the road. Once they realized it wasn't the finish they sprinted again. The peloton was sprinting for the finish and Samuel Hill was gaining on the break with Jake Yackle and then me on his wheel. I was thinking "I could win this" when Samuel rode into the dirt. I quickly got on Jake's

wheel and went all out for my own sprint trying to catch Ben. I suffered all the way to the line for 4<sup>th</sup> place. At the end of the race I was very happy considering everyone ahead of me was older than me and bigger than me.

-Isaiah

## **Gianni Lamperti**

1<sup>st</sup> Place      Dunnigan Hills District Championship RR      Juniors 10-12

The whistle blew and we were racing. It was going pretty slow so I went to the front of our 4 man field. I figured that it was going to be one of those races where everybody goes as slow as they can then they sprint at the end. So I did some work at the front then waved my arm for the next person to pull through so I could go to the back. Once I was on the back I was already back to the front within 30 seconds. It was pretty much cat and mouse till the first overpass and a kid attacked up it. We caught him on the other side and I was about to counter when my brother and Grover took a wrong turn. So I waited till they caught up then waited for a minute then attacked hard. I was by myself for awhile on a long flat road that felt like hours! My brother waited till the only person chasing was tired then attacked him and bridged up to me then we worked together till the finish line where he led me out and I came across the line in 1st place. It was a fun race!

-Gianni

## **Luke Lamperti**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place      Dunnigan Hills RR- NCNCA JR State Championships      Juniors 10-12

When the race started I jumped on Gianni's wheel and he pulled. Behind me were Nye and then Grover. Nobody really wanted to pull, but everyone took a turn. It then started to speed up when Gianni attacked, and I made a counter attack and tried to stay, but I got caught after a little bit. Then we rode for a couple of miles with a couple of attacks happening. Just after the first overpass Gianni made a strong attack that was still going after 7 minutes, so at that point I tried to bridge and ended up catching him so I worked with him and we kept taking turns until the final corner where I lead him out. I got second so I was super happy with my result!

-Luke

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## **2. 2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium**

8/18/13

Rohnert Park

Check out some cool photo's at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/jqnn2x4xu13hw9u/v5b9ZuCsdlV>

## **Ryan Clarke**

Racing Age 17, Senior Category 3

1<sup>st</sup> Place      2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium      Juniors 17-18

The Two Wheel Crit is a local criterium about 10 minutes from my house, so I had the luxury of sleeping in. I was the only person entered in my age group so I sort of won by default, but more importantly I was able to race with my teammates Ben and Brad who were in the 15-16 category. I've never worked for someone for an entire race before, but I've improved my crit racing a lot and my job was to help Ben do the least amount of work possible and help he and Brad with tactics during the race. The race started and right away I went to the front and set a decent pace. Ben and I had discussed several places with Coach where he should attack and try to get away so I could bridge and TT it to the finish with him. We tried, but after the first few attacks one of the kids in his field wouldn't leave his wheel and refused to take any pulls, so I went back to the front and let Ben sit in. I helped him attack a few more times through corners and such with no success and then set up for a sprint finish. It was an uphill finish, and I'd been on the front most of the race, so I knew what it looked like and how to time the lead-out correctly. Ben came around me really early, but he is one of the strongest 14 year olds I know and was able to hang on all the way to the line. I was pretty stoked when he told me he won. I'm really glad I was able to help him and Brad out during the race. Brad finished right there with us at the line and I couldn't believe that was his first race ever. We were movin' pretty fast and he was able to stay right there with us. Overall I was pleased that we got the win and to see that we have such strong up and coming riders like Brad is super exciting. Congratulations to Ben and Brad on an awesome race!

-Ryan

## **Ben Cook**

14, Category 4

1<sup>st</sup> Place      2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium      Juniors 15-16

We started off the race with only 4 other riders, not including Ryan, who had nobody else in his race, so he was all set to help me out. Ryan set a fast pace, and had me make a few attacks. None of them got off, but the rest were definitely working. Our other teammate, Brad, who was in his first ever race, was hanging in great. It was the final lap and I tried to pull one more move, but Ryan had me sit up, and he began to ramp up the pace. The final chicanes were coming, and I made my move, but a bit too early. Zach, the main contender in the race, almost took me at the line, but I held off until the finish. I rolled back around and thanked Ryan for his help, and we did podium with Brad, I went back to the cars to meet Gianni, Isaiah, Emily, and Luke to talk with Coach Laura about the upcoming Cat 4's race.

-Ben

## **Brad Butterfield**

4<sup>th</sup> Place      2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium      Juniors 15-16

My first race was a blast. I never knew that tactics played such an important role in winning a race. Going into the race I had no idea what the bells even meant. The race ended being a lot shorter than I expected, I thought we would go around at least 3 more times. Hopefully next time I can get a better go at the sprint finish. Overall it was a great learning experience and I can't wait for the next one.

-Brad

## **Emily Abraham**

7<sup>th</sup> place      2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium      Senior Wm. Category 4

I was especially happy about this race because I didn't have to wake up super early and the race location was only about twenty minutes away from my house instead of the usual like two-three hours away. I arrived at the race and immediately realized I forgot my racing license. Luckily, it turned out to not be a problem since they had me on record. I was given my number and all was good. Then I got on my trainer to begin my warm-up. When I first began spinning my legs were killing me, but after a while I started to feel really good. I did my pyramids and by the time I got to the start line I was feeling confident. The race started off at a fairly moderate pace, I tried to strategically place myself well within the pack. Unfortunately I had trouble throughout a lot of the race, trying to grab a wheel towards the front and stay there. I constantly seemed to find myself drifting towards the back when I should have been second or third wheel back in the front of the pack. This caused me a lot of trouble. At one point after one of the right hand turns someone made an attack, which allowed most of the pack to make a gap. I quickly sped up and caught back up with them at the small climb just before the start/finish line. When there were only two laps left in the race, I tried my best to place myself as second wheel. I knew that my position in the race really mattered at this point since there were only two laps to go. I once again struggled with being aggressive and claiming my place. On the last lap I did everything I could to just stay towards the front. Just as we began approaching the little incline before the finish, I remembered what Coach told me about starting my sprint mid-way through the small hill and just battling it out to the finish. I came around the right side of the pack because everyone seemed to be hugging the left curb. Right when I stood up to begin my sprint, I saw, out of the corner of my eye, everyone move and a crash almost happen. This made me jump a bit so I sat back down expecting someone to crash. Luckily no one did and the sprint to the finish continued. I stood back up but a woman was in front of me and I wasn't able to sprint around her without hitting the curb. My finish was a bit disappointing but I came out 7<sup>th</sup> and overall I was happy with the race.

-Emily

## **Isaiah Chass**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place      2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium      Juniors 13-14



At the start of this race I knew that it would be a short but hard effort. Knowing that, I did hard sprints in warm-ups. Right before the race I got in the right gear as the referee was telling us all the info. Right from the start there was an attack. I got on the next wheel going across and sprinted along with him to catch up. The pace was fast even when everyone caught up so everyone was single file. Then there was another attack on the back straight and there was a small gap, but then everyone got back on. People attacked and attacked and I was hurting to just stay on but I managed not to get dropped. With about 2 laps to go Gianni gave me a signal that he would sprint and we would try to get off the front together and work together, but a couple seconds later Gianni got brake checked by Zachary and we never ended up attacking. With 1 lap to go the pace slowed down a little and we were riding in a group instead of single file. There was an attack but it didn't win the race as we came into the final corners single file sprinting for the finish. I was last wheel going into the corners so when everyone sprinted I got stuck behind Charlie. From there I knew I couldn't win so I just saved my energy to get 2nd. On the final straightaway I sprinted and got 2nd place. I was a little bummed with my result but I knew I went really hard the day before in the Annadel XC Race so I was a little tired.

-Isaiah

### **Luke Lamperti**

1<sup>st</sup> Place      2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium      Juniors 10-12

When the whistle went off I jumped onto Zach's wheel. After the first lap we had four to go so I attacked. Right after that Gianni countered and I jumped on to the other riders. There were a few more attacks. When we only had 2 laps to go, everybody stayed together until we had half a lap to go, then the attacks started coming it was a close sprint but I was happy to hear I got 1st!

-Luke

### **Gianni Lamperti**

2<sup>nd</sup> Place      2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium      Juniors 10-12

As soon as we were off it was slow. Although, it was a little faster than some of the other races because we started with the 13-14 year olds. It wasn't too fast for the first few laps, but by 1 to go the 13-14 kids were attacking each other. At the bottom of the hill before the finish somebody kicked and I jumped on then at the top of the hill he kicked again and I could not stay on this time. At the top I was too highly geared and Luke was coming up my side and it was a bike throw at the line and Luke got it. It was a great race though.

=Gianni

### **Colton Swinth**

3<sup>rd</sup> Place      2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium      Juniors 10-12

The 2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium was a race that I have been looking forward to for a while. Out of all the races I had done that was the most fun race. All of my team mates in my age group were there. The course was a lot of fun it was just over a mile long.

-Colton

## **Ben Cook**

15<sup>th</sup> Place      2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium      Senior Category 4

I raced the 2 Wheel/Early Bird Criterium with my teammates, Gianni, Isaiah, and Luke. The race started off with an attack right off the bat. It was quickly covered and we carried through in a fast pace with little rotation. I made sure to keep myself at the front, as well as keep an eye on the others, since they are younger. Isaiah was feeling sick and ended up pulling out, but when I looked to my sides, Luke and Gianni were right there with me!

The pace soon picked up and we carried on our way. Attacks flew, and one guy kept trying to make his move stick. After seeing how strong he was, I figured he would be a good rider to work with, so I pulled my move. I ended up with him off the front, but soon we were bridged up to by another rider, who bounced off us and made an uncoverable move. I was soon passed by another rider who told me to jump on. Soon enough, I saw that 10 year old Luke was right on his wheel! And his 12 year old brother Gianni was waiting patiently in the field, and out of the wind. What champs! Eventually the catch was made, and I quickly found a great spot in the first five positions. We were on the move again. I stayed right in the second row back for most of the race, just out of the wind, but so close to the front that I could race tactically with the leaders and stay protected.

Three to go and the six of us are rotating on the front to keep us at a fast pace. I took my last pull through with 2 to go, and then followed the rotation back up to 3<sup>rd</sup> wheel as we came through on the final lap. I soon realized I had a competitor fighting from the outside to push me off the 3<sup>rd</sup> wheel. I was still fighting for the wheel on the backstretch. Soon enough, riders came around from all sides, and I could drop back and leave the front, or push forward and fight for that wheel. I was out closer to the wind at this point, but I wasn't going to get swamped. So I pushed as hard as I could forward to keep next to that wheel on the backstretch, and was still bumping shoulders and locking horns with the rider next to me. Nobody came around me, and I managed to get closer into the line, but coming around the final corner, I was pinched as they swept to the inside. I sprinted back up, but once I rejoined at 600 meters to go, I was toast. So I sat up and coasted in with the rest. I spun in and visited my family. It was good to see them at the race even though I was very upset.

I talked to coach Laura for the follow up on the race. "What's the point if racing so well if I'll never place?" I asked negatively. "You learn things by racing aggressively,

and you will soon enough get those placings, I'm sure it will happen, and you will upgrade soon. I'm sure of it." So that cheered me up, and indeed, I did learn a lot. So here's what's new to my racing knowledge; you move up on the outside, or you will be pinched in the corners. Even if the road is straight where you are, you need to go on the outside or you will be pinched and lose your momentum in the corners. More importantly, there is, as Coach Laura calls it, a "crunch" when the riders sweep over the center line of riders on all sides, many rows wide. So the crunch has gotten me stuck in bad places in many races, often leaving me boxed for the sprint. Knowing this should really help. In the end, I had a good day, and learned a lot, and had a good enough race to call it my best criterium ever!

-Ben

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### **3. Foothill College Circuit Race**

7/14/13

Los Altos

#### **Emily Abraham**

3<sup>rd</sup> place      Foothill College Circuit Race      Junior Women 15-18

I decided kind of last minute to do the Foothill College race. I had no idea what the course was like, so I was surprised when I got there to find out that most of the course is up and downhill. I wasn't really looking forward to this. Immediately from the start there is a steep downhill which then flattens out before the uphill then its downhill again just before a short uphill to the start/finish line. I stayed with the pack the entire race, although most of the racers spread out after a few laps due to the uphill. I raced in the junior women category and we were raced with the women 4 category. I tried to race against everyone instead of just the four girls who were in my race. When the last lap came, one of the junior girls went all out on the climb and moved up behind the leader of the pack. I tried to follow but my legs were screaming as I stood up to catch her on the uphill. By the time we got to the downhill section, I had lost her. I sprinted as much as I could but there was no way for me to catch up. I learned that it is important to place yourself well on the last couple of laps because it really makes a difference.

-Emily

#### **Isabella Brunner**

1<sup>st</sup> Place      Foothill College Circuit Race      Juniors 10-12

This was a nice hilly, curvy criterium style race. Every lap, the boy who drafted me the entire race, would ham it up for the crowd at the start/finish. He should have focused more on racing and less on showing off. I blew him away on the final lap. I wish there were more contenders in my category.

-Isabella

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## 4. Berkeley Criterium

7/21/13

Berkeley

### Karan Desai

Racing Age: 17, Senior Category 4

DNP- Berkeley Criterium Senior Category 4

Senior Category 4:

I started racing this summer quite late, I was hoping to start earlier but illness thwarted my attempts to race. I decided to race Berkeley Crit, a local race in "my neighborhood" (I live in San Francisco). On Saturday morning, I went to my local bike shop to buy Clif Blocks and Clif Bars. I went for a short little ride in the afternoon, doing some pre-race pyramids in the hopes of getting my legs ready for Sunday. I was nervous and anxious, not knowing how well I would perform or what would happen. I went to bed at around 9:30, looking forward to the race.

The morning of the race, my dad and I woke up at around 5 am. Although my start time was at around 9 am, I wanted to make sure that I had a proper breakfast and a warm-up. We put the bike on the rack and started our journey towards Berkeley. We arrived at the course around 7:30, just in time to watch the Cat 5 race. Before the Cat 5 race started, I went around the course to get a feel for street and wind conditions. It seemed like a simple course; four right handed turns, a slight incline, after turn two as well as a slight downhill section. I did about 3 laps and then got off the course before the Cat 5 race started. I did 2-3 pre-race pyramids. Afterwards, I consumed some Clif Blocks and bars and went to use the restroom before my race started. Since the 4's race was going to be 50 minutes, I thought it would be a good idea to take some Shots in my jersey pocket. I was able to get a prime front spot on the start line. The referee explained that there were 49 people racing in the category and he informed us to be careful and mindful of others. After a few seconds later, he blew the whistle and we were off. I made sure that I started in the first 10 people in the race, avoiding the chaos and mayhem the first laps of a bike race could bring. I noticed that after 10 minutes, I was quite burned out; I was doing too many turns up front and not sitting in. I realized that I had another 40 minutes to go so I thought that I could relax. I started to slip my way towards the middle of the pack. I hung out there and regained my energy. The race was pretty uneventful, a few attacks went but they were quickly brought back. On lap 17, I noticed I was at the back of the race; I was yo-yoing off the back when going through turns. I started to move towards the front. When we entered the downhill section, I had a good spot in the group but someone right in front of me crashed and as a result, I went down as well. I was lying on the ground dazed and confused about what happened. I thought I broke my leg as I wasn't able to move it; turns out I was just so shocked about the crash that my body didn't want to move. I moved over to the side of the road where the paramedics were awaiting to check out any damage to my body. Luckily, I had no road rash, just a banged up finger and a possible concussion (luckily, the doctors found that I didn't

have a concussion.) I have a broken right shifter on my bike, nothing that can't get replaced so I'm pleased about that. I'm very happy that I didn't suffer from any severe injuries. Next time, I will be staying at the front, avoiding crashes.

-Karan

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## **5. Winters Road Race**

8/24/13

Winters

### **Alec Seivert**

6<sup>th</sup> Place

Winters Road Race

Senior Category 4

As soon as I showed up to Winters, I knew that it was going to be a very packed category. We started the race out slow; it was a nice way to get the legs warmed up. In the cat 4 race there were 55 people who started. My teammate Ben and I worked together throughout the race; Ben sacrificed himself to work for me, which I truly appreciate. Halfway through each lap there was a very steep climb, which everyone went insanely fast up, trying to break up the pack. Coming in to the last lap there was about 25 or so riders left, this lap was the fastest with the most breaks and surges. Coming into the finish Ben gave me a lead-out just after the 1k to go mark. It was going well until the signs were definitely marked wrong. When I started my sprint at 200m I was in the top 3, but with the limited gears and my legs starting to die, I started getting passed by a couple other people. I crossed the finish line in 6th place, not a bad place for limited gears. haha.

-Alec

### **Ben Cook**

13<sup>th</sup> Place

Winters Road Race

Senior Category 4

I will start off by saying that Winters has been the greatest learning experience and the best race I have had in a LONG time, and got me super excited to get out and race more. So I lined up at the start with Alec (or AJ) Sievert, our new 18 year old teammate. AJ and I have raced together once before, but this was before he rode with Team Swift. So this time, I was working all for him. AJ is an exceptionally strong rider, and I had faith that he could take the win today. "I feel like I can get this one." He said, so I stepped up to help him. I established before the race that I would do anything he needed. He seemed happy about this. So we got off on our way, and for the first lap, AJ and I talked some with Connor and Jasper from Sierra Nevada/Bicycles Plus. We stuck close to the front over the first ascent of the climb, and I grabbed a bottle from the feed zone. It was a hot day, so I wanted to make sure I drank lots of water. The first ascent was fairly hard, but I made it over. I asked AJ how he was feeling, and he said that the climb was "perfect", and at a great tempo. It seemed easier for him than it was for me, so I made sure to keep him rested and hydrated when I could, since he

was feeling good. So we stuck close and I wanted to keep him towards the front, but out of the wind at all costs.

The second lap came around, and I was feeling much stronger so I wanted AJ closer to me. I felt that I could help him out some more now. I told him to always be in the same line as I was. Either me on his wheel or him on mine. Later I asked him which he preferred, and he said he wanted to be on my wheel. "Let me know when it's time to move up." I hear from behind me. "Just stay on my wheel and move with me, there may not always be time to tell you." AJ agreed and did as I said. I soon realized that he would do anything I told him, so I wanted to make the best of this and have him as safe from the wind as possible, and as protected and looked after as I could have him.

I told him about the difference between having a sweeper on your wheel, and having somebody lead you out. He decided he would rather have me give him the lead out. We took it easy through the flats and I began move up along the side of the line to move us in position for the climb. I wanted us to be near but not way at the front. So I took a big pull to move up, and found a wheel to recover on right towards the front, but not without making sure AJ was in line behind me first. I paced him up the climb and we made it over just fine. He was doing perfect.

We got to the bottom of the descent, He got right back on my wheel again, but there were 3 riders off the front, so I took my turn to pull and start the chase. I couldn't see behind AJ, and didn't want to risk losing momentum by pulling off and checking, and I couldn't have AJ in the wind. So I just started the long and painful time trial to bridge back up. I had a steady rhythm, so I could make it up with some good pain in my legs. AJ cheered me on once, and that seemed to help me out. Eventually we caught back on, and the leaders were together. Turns out we ended up towing the lead 20 of us up. Guess I should have checked first. So now that we were back together, I wanted AJ farther back and farther out of the wind. So I made sure he was settled in the back as went up to join the main rotation. We worked efficiently into the wind, covering attacks and closing gaps, until it was time to get AJ up to the front for the final ascent if the climb. I took a few pulls around the field, and AJ and I were just a row off the front. Perfect.

We stayed together until the feed zone, when a kid about my age made a strong attack, and no one could hang in. I stayed with AJ and a few more attacks came around, and AJ was feeling strong, and asked if he could follow. I said go for it. I set the pace for him until he flew around me and I dropped back and did my best to set up a light block on the field. The only issue with AJ in the break was he would have no lead out, but there was just one other rider, so if they could stay, I felt that AJ take it. If not, 2nd is still great, so I wasn't worried. I sat in the back doing my best to not lift the pace, and eventually the catch came due to the work of others. The final ascent was almost over, but people were still booking it over the top. The one kid was still off with about 30 seconds.

AJ told me his hamstring was cramping, so I stayed at his side, but he made it over just fine. He led down the descent in front of me, but once we got to the flats, I told him not to ever get off my wheel until the sprint. He never left. So I slowly began

to move up as we were in the last few kilometers. We were about 2k out, or so we thought, and I had I go around a rider on the right to get up farther, but AJ didn't make it, so I waited for him and made sure he got my wheel. I moved over to the left and even though I didn't have a wheel, but I was out of the cross wind and not using too much energy. AJ was in perfect position on my wheel as we passed the 1k sign. About 1'30" past the 1k sign, I knew that the 200 meter sign was just around the corner, so I made my move. I flew ahead with nobody at my sides and AJ right on me wheel. I was sure he had the win. I came around the corner, but there was no 200 meter sign, just another straight followed by a blind corner. "Too early." Was all I had time to say, he agreed. We began to look at each confused about where the sign was, but there was no time. The counter attack came from the right, and AJ did the right thing and jumped straight on it. There was nothing I could do, I was spent. I had given every ounce of energy that I had to AJ, and I was so happy that I just coasted into the finish with a big smile on my face, watching as AJ flew down the road right up there with the group. My legs were cramping so bad that they locked up, so I just took my time in. I watched as AJ finished towards the front, but I knew he didn't win it. I met him back in the parking lot as he had a big smile on his face and gave me a warm handshake and thanked me. I apologized for going early but he said not to worry because he felt that the 1k sign was far too. We were both so happy with the way it turned out, and I had my best race EVER. Yes, out of the dozens of starts, I've never raced better! And I finally got to work for a teammate, who got 6th! So it all paid off.

I learned how to work with and for a team leader (AJ in this case), and that the leader shouldn't have to think about his or her position. The leader is the strongest, so you need to use their strength to the advantage, and make sure that they aren't thinking about complicated things like position or how much work to do. One other cool thing is that I learned it all as the race went on; I learned new things every time I looked at AJ. From asking if he needed water to letting him go out in the attack, we were by FAR the strongest team there, even if it was just the two of us. The day worked out excellent, I finished my longest ever road race in 13th out of over 50 people, and worked for a teammate that ended up with a great placing! I felt like AJ did a phenomenal job of following directions, without asking questions. He trusted that I knew just how I help him, and felt confident in me. Which is a very brave and kind thing of him to do, and I have a great respect for him after the day. At the end of the day, I finally went home with a big smile on my face.

-Ben

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## 6. Patterson Pass Road Race

8/4/13

Patterson

### Alec Seivert

11<sup>th</sup> Place     Patterson Pass Road Race

Senior Category 4

I felt decent going into Patterson pass, from the very start the peloton was pushing a insane pace up the major hill, due to trying to catch a three man break. After climbing for 20 or so minutes we were finally reaching the top, the wind was insane.

Just to stay in your spot you had to lean your body into the wind. Reaching the summit I was in the main group, the descent was a screamer with lots of curves and power sections. Once off the descent there was a 10 mile or so straight way, the group was pushing a very consistent 38-40 miles per hour. On every lap this was where I had to use the most energy just to keep up with the group due to junior gears, I was also trying to find the best person to draft. On the last lap coming into the finish there is a steep 1/4 mile climb that shattered me after exerting all my energy on the long flats, I came to the line with the slowest sprint ever and got 11th place.

-Alec

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## **7. Red Kite Criterium**      8/17/13      Livermore

### **Emmet Pfau**

16 old, senior category 5

31<sup>st</sup> Place    Red Kite Criterium    Senior Category 5a

The first race was harder than the second. My computer broke so my intervals were a little off and then I rode the course a few times which helped. At the start I felt strong and ready to go, I ended up getting dropped off the back after the 8<sup>th</sup> lap. I got dropped with a few other guys and we worked together to catch the group which we weren't able to, then they pulled us out then but put us back in when the pack went by the start, then we finished the race. During the race my right leg was burning like crazy and my left leg wasn't.

-Emmet

### **Emmet Pfau**

26<sup>th</sup> Place    Red Kite Criterium    Senior Category 5b

In the second race I started right on the line and then ended up leading the pack for the first four laps. Then I fell back in to the middle and drafted people for the next six laps, then I fell off the back with two other guys and we caught back up, then I attacked to get back in the lead but I couldn't get in the line and there was a turn coming up so I fell to the back and then attacked to catch back up and then finished the race.

-Emmet

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## **8. Fast Freddie Gran Fondo**      8/17/13      Berkeley

### **Ethan Frankel**

15 years old

Fast Freddie Gran Fondo 2013



5:00 in the morning. My alarm goes off. My eyes snap open. I hop out of bed and prepare for an 88 mile, 10,000' of climbing Gran Fondo.

I ate a large breakfast, hoping to keep as much energy as possible for the big ride. At 5:30, my dad, brother, and I drove to pick up my friend from Boy Scouts, Eli Ferrell. He was already waiting outside with his bike and clothes. We drove to the start in Berkeley and registered for the Gran Fondo (my brother and dad for the Medio Fondo).

We met Coach Laura and we talked for a while. Soon enough, the mass start came about. Coach, Eli, my brother/dad, and I were all at the very front, and we waited for the start. At exactly 8:00 a.m., the gun went off, and we were riding out of Berkeley. The Fast Freddie Gran Fondo started off with a long, steep climb. The pace started off slow, but then got faster.

The peloton split up quickly, and I glanced back to make sure Eli was with me. A rider in a blue jersey was behind me, so I assumed that it was Eli (who also wore a blue jersey). Coach Laura and I rode together past the crest of the climb, and a little ways down the descent. I looked back to make sure "Eli" was with me. The blue jersey was. I motioned to him to go in front. He didn't. I slowed down to talk to him on a straightaway, and I realized that he wasn't Eli. Not even close. He was a foot taller and definitely not 13 years old. Coach passed me and told me to hang on to the wheel in front, as I was slowing down. I tried to motion with my hand that Eli wasn't here, but Coach was already gone.

I took the descent slowly and periodically looked to see if Eli was close. The road flattened out and went on for two miles flat. Then there was a slight incline. I let many riders pass me. At the top of the incline, I turned around to look for Eli. I slowly descended, looking at every rider to see if it was he. Near the bottom, I found him. I called out to him cheerfully. He was riding with another (much taller) cyclist. We talked for a few miles, and then the first rest stop in San Leandro. We met Fast Freddie at the rest stop and chatted for a few minutes. We then left for the infamous Mt. Diablo. Ten miles later, with a group of five others, we started up Mt. Diablo. I started off quickly, spinning at 100-rpm and 10 mph. I dropped that pace after a mile, down to 90-rpm and 9 mph. I stayed at that pace as I passed riders. I kept my head down and focused on keeping steady, constant rhythm. Three-quarters up the grueling climb, I passed the ranger station and campsite, grateful that there was a little shade to cool down in. I kept up my steady cadence and speed, but my heart rate was spiking to 185-bpm, and my legs were burning. I kept going and stayed focused. Soon enough, the rest stop came into sight. I pushed hard into the last turn and came out triumphant. I rolled into the rest stop feeling very accomplished.

After I set down my bike, I went over to drink and eat. I saw Coach and I told her what had happened. I ate a sandwich and replenished my energy as I waited for Eli. 7-10 minutes later, Eli came in and plopped himself next to me, relaxing. He got up and ate as well. Coach talked to us for a little while more about eating and hydrating, and then took off. We relaxed for a few more minutes, and then started to roll out. The ride officials in a red SUV called us over. Eli and I looked at each other with concern.

We went over to see what it was about. One official then told us that he had a video of me mashing it up the climb. We grinned like toddlers and were ecstatic. All of us watched the video, and then he took our names down. Eli and I thanked him, and then set out. "We're gonna be famous," he exclaimed to me. I grinned with him.

The descent was fun, but the pavement was a little sketchy. There were many switchbacks, and not many safe places to pass other riders. I took the corners at a fast speed, and passed many. At the bottom of the crazy descent, I slowed to allow Eli to catch up. When he did, I paced him up to a group a hundred meters in front. Once there, we chatted with the group and we all rode together at a comfortable, but good pace. There were some confusing turns, but we all managed to get through them easily enough.

Then, approaching the Bear Creek turn-off, we dropped off of the group and rode together for a while, with a few others who couldn't hold the pace of the group. There were some nice, small hills that we powered up, and then a long flat section. I led out Eli, and we went on the flat at a roundabout 22 mph. We were in the zone and staying focused on the road. At the turn-off to Bear Creek, we kept going straight, not noticing the small arrow pointing to the left.

We stayed in our focused state for a long time, and then we hit the town of Pinole Valley. We got skeptical at that point because we hadn't seen an arrow in over 15 miles. We went on the main road through Pinole Valley, and it led us to a...dead end. Eli and I knew that we had missed something, so we retraced our route, and didn't find any turn arrows. I told him that we must have missed it earlier, so we went back the way we came. Using our "scout skills" we figured that we had been heading the wrong direction. We should have been going west, but instead we'd been going northeast. It was a little unnerving, not knowing which way to go.

We came to the first junction and looked for any arrows. There were none. I suggested that we go another few miles, and if we didn't find anything, then we would go towards Lafayette. We went another two miles, and were on the verge of giving up, when we hit a three-way intersection. Eli searched for an arrow and found a small one on a telephone pole. We pumped our fists and found that we had gone an extra 16 miles. We hit the final rest stop very tired. Our hopes were dashed when we saw that there were only about ten other riders at the stop. Our delay had been over an hour. We had a quick thing to eat, and then set off for the final 11 miles. We had already gone 93 miles at that point, so we were eager to finish.

Our final few miles started with a fun descent, but that changed rapidly when we climbed over 1,000 feet in the next few miles. I started cranking out 80-rpm, but Eli couldn't quite stick, so I ended up going his steady pace. The climb was slow, grueling, and steep. After 95 miles, the climb felt twice as hard as Diablo, and twice as slow. But we held a steady tempo and got through it. There were some short descents/false flats, but for the most part, it kept climbing and climbing. We enjoyed the view and chatted while we had the breath, and looked into the valley below. We thought we could make out the Claremont Hotel start, but we weren't sure.

The climb and false flats went on for three more grueling miles. There were hardly any other cyclists on the road, and if there were any, we passed them. Soon, we

hit groves and forests of eucalyptus trees. Their piney aroma cleared our minds and our nasal passages, and we thought clearly. A sharp turn approached, and suddenly, we were descending. This time, it was the final descent. I wasn't so sure, but when we reached a junction that had been the top of the first climb, I realized we only had a few more miles of descent. I threw my hands up in the air, shouting into the wild wind. We were nearly home. The descent was awesome and Eli and I both felt great after accomplishing 100+ miles.

Before we knew it, we were at the bottom of the hill, and we passed our car. We rode to the finish, triumphant, and not in too much pain. We crossed the Muscle Milk finish line congratulating each other. We found my brother and my dad and talked with them for a while. Then we met Fast Freddie and told him of our adventure. Immediately, he called the commentator, Bruce over (after pictures). We talked about our recent detour amongst other things, and then Bruce and Fast Freddie congratulated us again. Finally, the food came. We ate gratefully and happily. Many came over to congratulate us on our feat. At 6:00, we left Berkeley and the Fast Freddie Gran Fondo, until next year.

Our experience was great, and I believe Eli and I inspired many of the younger kids present to pursue cycling. The GF was awesome and everyone had a blast. I am very glad I signed up for this event (although it was the day before)!

-Ethan



(Left to right) Elliot Frankel, Fast Freddie, Ethan Frankel



Ethan Frankel and Eli Ferrell chatting with Bruce and Fast Freddie

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## 9. Death Ride 2013

7/13/13

Markleeville

### Ethan Frankel

Age 15

Death Ride 2013

The 2013 Death Ride was to be my 2<sup>nd</sup> in two years, and I intended it to be a fun and fast one. My dad and I drove from a Boy Scout camp about an hour away (which I had been at for four days) on Thursday; two days before the actual ride. We did an "acclimation" ride to get used to the 5,000' altitude and climbed one of the five passes, around 3:00 pm. Then we set up our camp (inside our car with a nice mattress) about 10 miles away from the start. We relaxed afterwards and ate a nice dinner at a restaurant in downtown Markleeville (population 210).

The next morning, we got up in the stifling 85-degree weather at 9:00 and went to register at the Turtle Rock start. We got our bib numbers and many goodies for the ride. We then showered (YES! my first in four days) and went on a short ride near our campsite. My dad's colleague and fellow Death Rider found us and set up his camp. At around 6 pm., we ate a great pasta dinner in the town and went to bed early for the 4:00 wake-up.

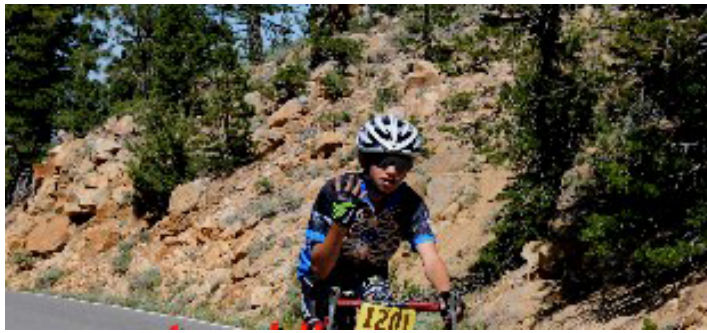
BRRRIINGGG! My alarm went off and I snapped my eyes open, barely able to see my hands. I searched for my clothes in the dark, and threw them on. I climbed out of the car, and my dad and I threw the bikes into the car, and we were driving to the start at 4:00 am. We got the bikes ready at the start and we already saw over a thousand fellow cyclists riding towards the first pass, all with lights and windbreakers. I ate a breakfast of yogurt, a banana, and trail mix and turned on my computer/lights. Then we took off at 4:31, starting down the road to the bottom of Monitor pass. I rode with my dad for those six miles, and then we accidentally found his colleague at the start of the climb. I hung with them for the better part of the climb, then said "Bye" and went off. I had started with a nice, easy 80-rpm warm-up, but now I wanted to fly. I shifted up into my 17 and kept a steady 90-rpm up the rest of the climb. I passed countless riders, and crested the first pass at 6:04. I got my sticker and went to the rest stop for five or so minutes. I ate some oranges and chips and refilled my water, then took off to start the descent. There was a short incline before the descent actually started, so I took it very easy to warm-up my legs. And now, the fun part.



The road was paved well, so it didn't take long to get up a lot of speed. By the time the third corner came around, I was already descending over 40 mph. There were numerous straightaways, but they were followed by large and twisting turns. Because of those turns, my speed decreased rapidly. I had hit over 50 mph, which was pretty scary, and I made it down to the bottom of the valley before 6:40. I stopped for a quick bite at the bottom, and then turned around, heading up the intimidating 3,500' climb that I had just descended. I again started up a good speed, moving along at 90-rpm, and about 9 mph, up the 7% incline. That slowly dropped to 70-rpm and 7 mph, but I held that and passed more riders. But to my disappointment, two riders passed me going up. I couldn't hang with the first one, but I stuck with the second for two miles. My legs were burning, my lungs were burning, but we were near the top, with about one mile left. So I gritted my teeth, smiled to the cameras, and stuck with the same pace I had been riding at for the rest of the climb. I made it to the top in pain but with dignity and stopped at the rest stop to replenish my water and eat.

I got out of the stop in five or so minutes, again. Then I started the descent off of Monitor pass. It took under 30 minutes, and I was flying. It was a fun and curvy descent although the pavement wasn't as good as the other descent. When I reached the bottom, I turned left and started on a small ascent. The ascent lasted about three miles and brought me to our campsite. I dropped off my arm warmers, and a few energy bars at our car, and then headed up Pass 3, Ebbetts. Ebbetts was the hardest climb, as it was long and steep. It averaged about 8% and had many switchbacks and little rollers that sapped energy very quickly. I powered through, legs, lungs, and mind burning from the exertion. 10 miles later, I made it to the top, hurting but happy. There was hardly anyone at the rest stop, but I filled my water bottle and belly.

I then started a short descent down from the crest to Hermit Valley. It was short, but there were hardly any sharp turns. I counted the people as I descended and counted about 100. Then I reached the bottom. I got my fourth and second-to-last sticker on my bib, and then turned around and climbed. I was very tired at this point, and my eyelids kept unwillingly closing. But somehow I managed to stay awake in the 80-degree heat (and it wasn't even 11 am.). I slowed down rapidly and found I was only climbing about 6 mph. I struggled to pedal, but soon the top came within sight, so I pushed at a 180-bpm heart rate and 100-rpm cadence. I made it to the top, sweat dripping from my eyebrows. I gladly ate and drank, and rested for a number of minutes.



Then I started my descent. I flew down as fast as my bike and legs could take me. I made it to my campsite by 11:30 and ate the provided lunch at the rest stop: a turkey sandwich with amazing sides. I ate quickly, not wanting to waste a lot of time. I hopped onto my bike minutes later and was off at 11:45. I rode at a steady, hard pace for the 13 miles before I passed the start again. It was pretty flat, with a slight 1-2% incline average. I reached the junction that also led to Monitor within minutes. A group of riders caught me soon afterwards, but I couldn't hold their pace on the flats, so I stopped chasing them and went at my own pace. Ten seconds later, another man passed me, this time moving a little slower than the group. I was able to work with him for ten miles. I kept up the pace, past the town of Markleeville and past the Turtle Rock start. There were many rolling hills up until the next rest stop five miles away. I noticed that the man I was with was slowing down and couldn't hold the pace. I went ahead again at my high-cadence pace. Suddenly, the group that had passed me a few miles previously came into sight. I caught them and passed them on the steep rollers. When I reached the Woodfords rest stop, I was grateful to be sprayed down and receive a water bottle full of ice-cold water. I left as soon as I cooled off, and then found my rhythm up the next pass, Carson.

Carson is a 17-mile pass, and it gains 3,500' of elevation. At the end of a long day, it isn't fun. It was nearly 12:30 pm. by the time I started the grueling ascent. It was at least 85°F and there wasn't much shade to ride under. I rode with another man who set a good, high pace until the next rest stop, which was nearly 10 miles from the previous one. I dismounted gratefully when we reached the stop and immediately ran to the shower. I know, a shower! It was ice cold, and absolutely amazing. I ran under it and cooled off. I had a quick bite, then remounted and rode off.

The rider who I had been with had already left, so I rode solo for the next 6 miles, keeping a steady rhythm in my head and my legs. Then, about two miles from the finish atop Carson, I caught another rider. I passed him, but he then passed me again. He held a very good pace, so I stayed with him for another mile of ascent. About 1 km from the finish, I attacked. We were still climbing, and I could taste the finish. I swerved around the rider in front and jumped out of my saddle. I shifted to a harder gear and kept pushing. I had set 20 seconds between us before I sat down. I cranked out a 130-rpm cadence and my heart rate spiked to 190-bpm. I kept that up for the next half-kilometer. I passed two other riders and by the time I was near the top, I could barely pedal. I rounded the final corner and saw the photographer. I



shouted with joy and sped over. I saluted with Peter Sagan's Hulk and smiled to myself. It was done!



I got my final sticker and many congratulations (or twenty from those who were finished), and ICE CREAM. I signed my name on a big poster, proclaiming that I had finished the Death Ride. I sat down and talked with many other people (in the shade, of course). I waited for my dad for an hour, and then found myself sleeping. I waited for two more hours, and then my dad wheeled in just before 5:30 pm. I was so proud of both of us! He rested and signed the poster, and after a half-hour, we left to go to our car. It took nearly an hour to get back, but we were elated and felt great. We changed and had a grand dinner at the Turtle Rock start/finish. It was a very fun, grueling, and awesome 15,000 feet of climbing in 129 miles.



This experience was awesome, and I later learned that I got 88<sup>th</sup> out of 2,000. I was proud of my dad and myself, and I will certainly ride it again next year.

-Ethan