

Team Swift Race Reports

February 2017

Race Reports for:

1. Valley of the Sun Stage Race
2. Harvey Lee Memorial Race
3. The Bump Circuit Race
4. Folsom Criterium
5. Chico Stage Race
6. Rosena Ranch Circuit Race
7. Cherry Pie Criterium
8. Alumni Reports

February Top Results:

1 st Place	Cal Aggie Criterium	Senior Category 3	Lucianno Lamperti
1 st Place	Valley of the Sun, Crit	Juniors 13-14	Andrew Mathiesen
1 st Place	Harry Lee Scratch Race	Women's Open	Sawyer Taylor
1 st Place	Harry Lee Elimination Race	Women's Open	Sawyer Taylor
1 st Place	Harry Lee Omnium	Women's Open	Sawyer Taylor
2 nd Place	Chico Stage Race, Circuit	Senior Category 3	Lucianno Lamperti
2 nd Place	Chico Stage Race, RR	Senior Category 3	Lucianno Lamperti
2 nd Place	Harry Lee Points Race	Women's Open	Sawyer Taylor
2 nd Place	Valley of the Sun, QOM	Sr W. Category 3	Sawyer Taylor
2 nd Place	The Bump Circuit Race	Sr W. Category 3	Sawyer Taylor
3 rd Place	Valley of the Sun, RR	Juniors 13-14	Andrew Mathiesen
3 rd Place	Valley of the Sun, G.C.	Juniors 13-14	Andrew Mathiesen
3 rd Place	Valley of the Sun, Crit	Juniors 15-16	Lucianno Lamperti
3 rd Place	Folsom Criterium	Senior Category 4	Creighton Gruber
4 th Place	Valley of the Sun, RR	Juniors 15-16	Gianni Lamperti
4 th Place	Valley of the Sun, RR	Sr W. Category 3	Sawyer Taylor
4 th Place	Valley of the Sun, TT	Juniors 13-14	Andrew Mathiesen
5 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Circuit	Senior Category 4/5	Creighton Gruber
6 th Place	Valley of the Sun, RR	Juniors 15-16	Lucianno Lamperti
6 th Place	Chico Stage Race, RR	Senior Category 3	Gianni Lamperti
7 th Place	Valley of the Sun, G.C.	Juniors 15-16	Gianni Lamperti
7 th Place	Rosena Ranch Circuit Race	Juniors 17-18	Parker Rous
8 th Place	Valley of the Sun, TT	Juniors 15-16	Gianni Lamperti
9 th Place	Valley of the Sun, RR	Juniors 17-18	Ben Cook
10 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Crit	Senior Category 3	Lucianno Lamperti
10 th Place	Chico Stage Race, G.C.	Senior Category 3	Lucianno Lamperti
10 th Place	Cherry Pie Criterium	Juniors 15-18	Jonas Crean
11 st Place	Valley of the Sun, G.C.	Juniors 15-16	Creighton Gruber
11 th Place	The Bump Circuit Race	Pro, I, II	Ben Cook
12 th Place	Valley of the Sun, TT	Juniors 15-16	Creighton Gruber

12 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Crit	Senior Category 4/5	Andrew Mathiesen
13 th Place	The Bump Circuit Race	Senior Category 2/3	Ben Cook
13 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Crit	Sr W. Category 3	Sawyer Taylor
14 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Crit	Senior Category 3	Gianni Lamperti
14 th Place	Chico Stage Race, G.C.	Senior Category 3	Gianni Lamperti
16 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Circuit	Senior Category 3	Gianni Lamperti
16 th Place	Chico Stage Race, TT	Senior Category 3	Isaiah Chass
16 th Place	Chico Stage Race, RR	Senior Category 4/5	Creighton Gruber
17 th Place	Chico Stage Race, TT	Senior Category 3	Lucianno Lamperti
18 th Place	Valley of the Sun, G.C.	Juniors 17-18	Ben Cook
20 th Place	Valley of the Sun, G.C.	Sr W. Category 3	Sawyer Taylor
20 th Place	Valley of the Sun, RR	Juniors 15-16	Creighton Gruber
20 th Place	Chico Stage Race, G.C.	Senior Category 4/5	Creighton Gruber
21 st Place	Valley of the Sun, G.C.	Juniors 15-16	Lucianno Lamperti
21 st Place	Chico Stage Race, TT	Senior Category 3	Gianni Lamperti
23 rd Place	Chico Stage Race, Crit	Senior Category 3	Isaiah Chass
23 rd Place	Rosena Ranch Circuit Race	Senior Category 3	Parker Rous
24 th Place	Valley of the Sun, TT	Juniors 15-16	Lucianno Lamperti
24 th Place	Folsom Criterium	Senior Category 4	Andrew Mathiesen
26 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Crit	Juniors 17-18	Ben Cook
26 th Place	Valley of the Sun, TT	Sr W. Category 3	Sawyer Taylor
30 th Place	Chico Stage Race, RR	Senior Category 4/5	Andrew Mathiesen
31 st Place	Chico Stage Race, Crit	Senior Category 4/5	Creighton Gruber
32 nd Place	Valley of the Sun, Crit	Juniors 15-16	Creighton Gruber
34 th Place	Valley of the Sun, TT	Juniors 17-18	Ben Cook
34 th Place	Chico Stage Race, TT	Senior Category 4/5	Creighton Gruber
36 th Place	Chico Stage Race, RR	Senior Category 4/5	Jonas Crean
36 th Place	Chico Stage Race, G.C.	Senior Category 4/5	Jonas Crean
37 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Circuit	Senior Category 3	Isaiah Chass
39 th Place	Chico Stage Race, G.C.	Senior Category 3	Isaiah Chass
39 th Place	Chico Stage Race, TT	Senior Category 4/5	Andrew Mathiesen
41 st Place	Valley of the Sun, G.C.	Juniors 17-18	Parker Rous
42 nd Place	Valley of the Sun, RR	Juniors 17-18	Parker Rous
43 rd Place	Chico Stage Race, TT	Senior Category 4/5	Jonas Crean
45 th Place	Chico Stage Race, RR	Senior Category 3	Isaiah Chass
48 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Crit	Juniors 17-18	Parker Rous
50 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Crit	Senior Category 4/5	Jonas Crean
68 th Place	Valley of the Sun, TT	Juniors 17-18	Parker Rous
73 rd Place	Valley of the Sun, TT	Juniors 17-18	Chase King

Rider Race Reports

1. Valley of the Sun Stage Race

2/17-19/17 Phoenix, AZ

Valley of the Sun – Juniors 15-16 Reports

Gianni Lamperti

8th Place Valley of the Sun, Time Trial
4th Place Valley of the Sun, Road Race
DNF Valley of the Sun, Criterium
7th Place Valley of the Sun, Overall G.C.

Stage 1 - Time Trial:

After warming up for the TT, I got off the trainer and rolled to the start. I got in the right gear, and then walked up the steps to the start ramp. I got up to speed and started to build to my pace and there was a huge tailwind, so I was going pretty fast. Although, it was uphill on the way out I figured it would be about the same speed after the U-turn. I was going pretty hard, but my power felt low for what I thought it should be. When I was getting close to the turn around there was a kid about a hundred meters in front of me and I was thinking to myself how I have to get passed him for the turnaround. I went way too hard to get past him and blew myself up. Once I turned around, I realized that it was not the same speed at all, but a lot slower with a big headwind. I felt like I was barley moving, so I focused on staying out of the wind as much as possible by getting closer to the center of the road, close to the center divider where there were some bushes blocking some wind. In the last 2k, I opened it up and was full gas to the finish. I learned quite a bit about pacing myself.

Stage 2 - Road Race:

The morning of the road race was pretty chilly, windy and there was a little rain. Once we started out, we were going super slowly and it really started to rain hard about 15 minutes in. I was in the back, and when it started to rain I moved up to the middle and it was actually quite a bit warmer. We continued to go slow for a little while more, and then Hot Tubes started to attack like crazy. They were countering each other's moves and Matthew Riccitello from El Grupo was less than a second down in GC, so he was covering almost everything from Hot Tubes who had yellow. On the back stretch of the second lap, there was a really loud crash to the left of me that took down quite a few people. On the right side of the road, Grover Rozek from Sierra Nevada attacked, but he got caught just a little ways up the road. We cruised to about halfway up the finishing hill to the KOM then it got fast. I was third wheel behind Matthew and he attacked up the left. I followed him and came around him for the KOM. He was right behind me and got the 2-second bonus, putting him in yellow. Coming into the final lap, on the back stretch, three kids rolled off the front and got about a 30-second gap. Nobody was going so I got on the front and pulled the field within about 5 seconds, but

the kid behind me didn't pull through, so I sat up a little. I did this because if I pulled the gap, there would be a counter from Hot Tubes when we got there and I wouldn't have a chance to get in the break. We drifted back to about 20 seconds and I attacked up the right side and got away by myself. The GC leader bridged up to me about halfway and I knew he wouldn't work as he had his teammate in the break who was only 4 seconds down in GC. Once we got there, Hot Tubes drove it hard on the front as Matthew was not there. We stayed away for about two minutes before we got caught by the field. We were at about 3k to go at this point and we went really slowly until 2k. Then, four kids just rolled off the front. It went slow for another little while and I was surprised that Hot Tubes did not chase it down, as they needed the time bonus to put them back in the lead. It got going fast again and we caught one of the riders by himself, but the three still had a good gap. At about 200m I jumped up the right and got the sprint. There was a crash with about 200m that took down a few kids, but luckily everyone was okay.

Stage 3 - Criterium:

The morning of the crit it had been raining all night and was coming down a little before the start. I knew the race would stay fast because it was raining and it was only 30 minutes long. At the start, I got a second-row lineup and got pinched in the first turn and was pushed to about midfield. I moved back towards the front and stayed up there as there were small attacks going, but nothing was sticking. They had already started the primes and they had them almost every lap. I decided to go for one and got it. I kept rolling after the sprint and took one guy with me, but we got caught after a couple corners. Coming into two to go, I was in good position, but my bike was feeling a little funny. I stood up and knew that I had a front flat. It was within three laps, so I could not get back into the race, so I stayed in the pit to finish it out following the 3k to go rule for stage races. I was bummed, but Luke got third to finish out the weekend. I had a blast racing and learned a lot this weekend.

-Gianni

Lucianno "Luke" Lamperti

24 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Time Trial
6 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Road Race
3 rd Place	Valley of the Sun, Criterium
21 st Place	Valley of the Sun, Overall G.C.

Stage 1 – Time Trial

Valley of the Sun is always fun. The TT is long and flat. I went in the afternoon so the wind was a big factor. I got warmed up and went to the line. I rolled down the ramp and quickly got into a rhythm. I was not feeling my best after having the flu but hoping I would start to feel a little better. I was looking at my power which was not super high but trying keeping it up there. As I made the turn around I got a bloody nose. There was a headwind on the way back blowing about 15mph. I kept my power

high and tried to keep my body tight. I came in knowing I did not have my best TT. I was not super happy with my result but was looking forward to next couple of days.

Stage 2 - Road Race

We started neutral until the first corner and over the cattle guard. A rider attacked and everybody got on and then a rider countered and everybody got on before we slowed down. We rolled pretty slowly for a while when nothing was happening. We made a right turn into the crosswind. People were attacking and countering until we made a right turn and started up the climb. We rolled medium until the top there were some attacks. We had finished 1 of 3 laps. I looked where the finish was so I knew for KOM next lap. It rolled pretty fast down as we turned right over the cattle guard. We kept rolling with no attacks. Once we got to crosswind there was a split. I was in the front half. It came back together right before the climb. The climb was fast with a sprint at the top. We rolled a little slower down the hill after the sprint. As we hit the crosswind before the climb a break went. My teammate bridged. There were 6 up the road. I thought they were going to be gone. With 3k to go it came back. The pace was high until 1k to go. 3 riders attacked. They slipped away and won. My teammate sprinted hard for 4th and I came in 6th. Can't wait tell next year.

Stage 3 - Criterium

Bang!! We started fast as we sprinted into the first corner. Another rider attacked and kept it hard. After the first 2 laps it settled down until a prime on the next lap. A rider jumped into the second to last corner and I followed. I jumped on the finish strait. A rider passed me before the line but we kept rolling. We were off the front for half a lap before being caught. Then for the next couple of laps people settled in. I attacked into the first corner with one other rider. We kept a gap for a lap before the field caught us. I sat in for a while with only 5 laps to go. Hottubes was at the front and with 3 to go there were attacks everywhere. I kept top 5 to stay safe. Two laps to I was 5th wheel and going into the last lap Hottubes attacked solo and got a gap. Nobody was chasing. I jumped to pull the gap back. Then another rider jumped passed me. I got on his wheel and was 3rd out of the last corner. Nobody's position changed from the last corner. I was happy with 3rd to finish off Valley of the Sun.

-Luke

Creighton Gruber

12 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Time Trial
20 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Road Race
32 nd Place	Valley of the Sun, Criterium
11 st Place	Valley of the Sun, Overall G.C.

Stage 1 – Time Trial

I rolled down the starting ramp. The first half of the course was fast because of a strong tail wind. My power in the beginning was also low because my hamstrings

were tight, but after a couple miles they loosened up. A Hot Tubes rider passed me in the first 15 minutes and a little bit after that a Team Specialized rider passed. The Team Specialized rider never got out of my sight and right after the turn-around he blew up and I caught him. I paced myself pretty well the first half so I had enough in the tank to hold my threshold power to the line.

Stage 2 – Road Race

Because of the rainy weather I got to the front of the race as quick as I could, which wasn't hard because of the slow pace the group was going. There was no real big attacks on this first lap, and on the first time up the climb the pack was neutralized to let the cat 4s pass. Once we got to the top of the hill someone attacked going into the descent. But when we got to the bottom the pack let up. There were a few attacks on the road before the climb but they were all brought back. On the climb of the second lap, the first attack wasn't until the last km because they were going for KOM points. On the last lap attacks were happening all the time and I tried to go with as many as I could. On the road before the climb one breakaway stuck. It was brought back on the climb. I got ready for the final sprint and I got myself in good positioning. With 200 meters to go a bunch of riders went down. To dodge the crash I rode off the road, leaving a gap between me and the main bunch. I finished a few seconds behind the main group, but after talking to the officials, they gave me the same time.

Stage 3 - Criterium

I felt a snap when I tried to shift to a smaller gear after rollout. I realized my derailleur cable had broken. I ran over to the wheel pit to find help. After realizing there was no way to fix it, I had to line up with my two geared bike. In the beginning of the race I was try to move up. It was a fast paced race so that was difficult, so after continuously trying I just sat on the back. For a moment the pack bunched up, so I tried to attack. It was not successful because I couldn't accelerate with such a big gear. I ended up just hang on the back of the pack to get a pack finish, holding on to my GC spot.

-Creighton

Valley of the Sun – Juniors 17-18 Reports

Ben Cook

18, Category 2

34 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Time Trial
9 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Road Race
26 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Criterium
18 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Overall G.C.

Stage 1 – Time Trial

It was, as usual, a sweltering and sunny day in Arizona for the opening time trial of Valley of the Sun. The race would be a true test of fitness for me, and my fourth weekend of racing in a row, placing me right at the top of my form. I tried to carry out everything as normal for today, I got the same sandwiches, did the same warm-up, kept the same routine as last year. Today I would be starting third to last, and though the order is clearly random, it is put an added mental pressure on my shoulder. After my long warm-up on the trainer, I headed over to the start line and went to the bathroom one last time. I ate a Clif Shot and checked my gears one last time. The plan would be to target a set power number at or a bit below my threshold. I walked up the start house and clipped in as I waited for my start. The official counted me down from 5. I breathed as smoothly as I could to try to shake out my nervousness, but it wasn't much help. I quickly realized I was in too big of a starting gear, but there was nothing I could do about it.

Finally I launched down the start ramp and shifted through my gears towards the end of the cassette. I was hoping for a tailwind on the way out and a headwind on the way back today, evening out the speeds either way. I held my rhythm steady towards the turnaround point, and realized that I was going to make it to the turn much sooner than I thought. Last year I made it out in 17:30 and back in 16 minutes, giving me an end time of 33:30, a goal I was shooting for once again. I made it to the turnaround in 16 minutes, but was passed by my 30 second man right as I made it to the turn. I think my added confidence of making it out much earlier than I thought hurt me on the way back, where I was suddenly confronted by a monstrous headwind, so strong I almost went off the road in the turnaround from the wind sweeping through my wheels. I regained my balance and took off down the road. I passed the rider ahead again and kept my pace high. I felt I was fighting as much as I could through the headwind, yet I was still coming back slower than I wanted to. After some more back and forth with the rider behind me, at some points the two of us riding on either side of the road to avoid drafting one another, I finally went on ahead and tried to keep my mind clear. I kept my pace steady all the way home, but soon realized my prior confidence was of little warrant. I charged all the way in from 3k to the finish line, but still couldn't make up the time I needed to, and I ended up with a 34:20, over a minute slower than I had hoped.

At the end of the day, 34th out of 96 riders really isn't a terrible run, but I was hoping to do better. The run in to this season made it tricky to practice time trailing, as I was mainly focusing on gaining my base and power (which, in less than 24 hours that work would pay itself off), and was distracting from practicing the specifics. Today served as a good trial run and I'm hoping to get back to my old time trailing skill in the future.

Stage 2 – Road Race

After not having my best ride in yesterday's time trial, I came into the day's road race with a calm mentality, knowing I would just set out to do my best. The weather called for rain and crosswinds, which should make a good race for me if I could stay safe. I would be racing with Parker and Chase today.

After a short warm-up on the road the three of us rolled over to the start line. We were in the back half, but I knew that it shouldn't be too hard to move up once things got strung out. The squealing of wet brakes and the shouts of angry riders guided us down the first neutral hill until we rounded the corner and made it over the cattle guard. The first lap was strung out with a cross wind coming hard from the right, and the field pushed up against the yellow line as semi's flew by on our left. I moved into the top 30 but couldn't find my teammates around me. The first climb went well, though I went for a feed and didn't know that there was no feeding on the first lap. I saved my water, rolled over the climb near the top 20 and came back over and settled back into the field.

A few squeals and squeaks from bikes led us down the open and fast stretch to the start again, and the skies suddenly opened up. Rain dumped for about ten minutes and drenched us all to the bone, but it was warm enough outside to not be bothered. Besides a large crash after the downhill that split the field in half, the second lap was much of the same. I looked through the feedzone for a bottle but couldn't find my dad anywhere, and was left with just one bottle at this point. As we started the third lap the field had gone down to about 30 riders due to another crash and crosswinds. Lux was driving the pace and the field was half over the yellow line, making a dangerous situation with oncoming traffic. The field remained calm once we made it to the rumble strips, and besides a few attacks, nothing rolled away. About a 1k before we hit the final climb, Specialized's Cole Davis attacked and got a gap, and began to hold it. I had graciously gotten a bottle from another Specialized racer, Zach Gottesman, to hold me over to the finish. Heading up the climb I knew that if I could hold until 1k when things flattened out I could do well in the sprint. I struggled up the steep part but made it to the false flat and pushed my way up to the front of the field. From there I held on in the drag race for the last 500 meters, and came around a small bunch of riders, praying for a top 10.

Afterwards I cooled down with Zach and Cole, who ended up hanging on for 2nd place. I went to the car and dried off, packed up the car, and finally went back to the hotel after a long day. I checked the results to see 9th place, just what I had hoped for. The team and I went out for barbecue again to celebrate and prepare for another good day tomorrow.

Stage 3 – Criterium

After a successful road race yesterday, I was looking forward to one last shot with the Valley of the Sun field to head on out and do my best. We arrived at the venue around 7:30am in preparation for my 8:50 start, and the rain was already beginning to come down. I watched Luke and Gianni warm up for their race before I hopped on the trainer to warm up for mine. Unfortunately Chase didn't finish yesterday after being involved in a crash, so I would just be racing with Parker today. But whether or not he was racing, it was a major help to have Chase around to support us, and I was really happy he could make it along for his first trip to Valley of the Sun. Parker and I did our warm ups and rode over to the start line. The ref announced that a few riders who didn't start yesterday would be allowed in the race today, as they suffered

consequences from the crash they could not control, such as broken bikes or helmets. Two Hot Tubes riders rolled into the start line after not finishing yesterday, one of them being Simon Jones, a great crit racer. The ref counted us down and set us off on the whistle, we would be racing for 40 minutes.

The first few laps were fast and the field quickly shrank as a few riders popped off the back. I struggled after a poor start position but moved my way up towards the top half and did my best to stay there. Every corner was a slippery mess; I grabbed my brakes only to find little resistance stopping my bike from hitting the back wheel of the rider in front of me. I feathered my breaks around the turns when I had to and tried not to worry too much about sliding in the corners, though my mind was beginning to get the best of me. For the majority of the race I rode around the half way point in the field, not where I wanted to be by any means, but every time I found myself moving up I would quickly start sliding back. I could feel had been a longer and more steady race, I would have been strong enough to sit near the front like yesterday, but today's race required handling skills, something I was obviously nervous about.

With three to go I finally found an opening on the side of the field and moved myself up into the top 10, but really couldn't hold myself there. Parker and I rode next to one another at times and I tried to move him up towards the end, but he was stuck in the same position that I was; I couldn't even move myself far enough forward to help a teammate.

The last lap was fast and hectic, and I did my best to hold position, somehow making it into the top third or so for the last turn, but not far enough forward to put me into contention. I sprinted in for 26th, in the top third of the remaining field, but not where I was hoping.

At the end of the day I had a fun race in the rain at the VOS crit, I just wish I had raced harder than I did. Some more guts and grit maybe, or maybe a little handling work while the rain came down back home in Marin. I left Valley of the Sun with two ok stages and one great stage, overall happy with the weekend but hungry to improve my weaknesses and come back strong for San Dimas, just a month away.
-Ben

Parker Rous

68 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Time Trial
42 nd Place	Valley of the Sun, Road Race
48 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Criterium
41 st Place	Valley of the Sun, Overall G.C.

Stage 1 – Time Trial

Valley of the sun is a race that I've only raced once before. Having said this, I was much more mentally prepared for the competition this year compared to last year. I knew this is a selection race meaning that there were going to be riders on top form even with it being placed so early on the calendar. I on the other hand was still in

soccer mode as my high school team was gearing up for playoffs. As much as this is a serious race, it was more of a chance to string 3 good days on the bike together (a liberty I didn't have until recently). We made the trek to Arizona in two days and had a chance to preview the TT. On the morning of the race the team did an easy spin while my dad raced. This was helpful because I was able to speak to my dad afterwards and he was able to give me tips. As race time was approaching I arrived at the course and began warm up. I am very familiar with a time trial effort seeing as I ran cross country for four years. With ten minutes to my start I rolled up to the start ramp, with a minute to go I was on the ramp and ready to go. As soon as I was left off I sprinted up to speed and got in an aero position on the drops. There was a tail wind on the way out and I realized there would be a stiff head wind on the way back. Still I didn't truly prepare myself for what it felt like at the turn around into a huge head wind. I stayed low and upped my cadence and was able to hold it until the finish. As I crossed the line I knew my time was not good compared to the other riders, but for having only ridden on weekends leading up to the race it was a solid effort for me.

Stage 2 – Road Race

The road race for Valley of the Sun was bound to be interesting considering the weather forecast had said it was going rain for the entire day. The weather did not let us down. From 5:30 in the morning to the start of my race at 12 it rained off and on. This made racing with arm warmers a necessity. On the start line it was the usual scene, a bunch of highly talented, seasoned racers mixed with a bunch of beginners and a few of us dangling in the middle. As the neutral start was let off we rolled down the remainder of the hill which led to a sharp, slippery right hand turn. Everyone got through safely. Lap one of four was typical with start and stop surging racing made interesting by multiple variables such as the size of the field (92 riders) and the less than ideal weather. Part way through lap two the center line rule became a mere suggestion as riders darted from one side of the road to the other, all the while dodging traffic on a busy highway as well as each other. This recipe for disaster ended as one might imagine.... A big crash. It happened midway down the group and took out many quality riders as well as some average ones. I was off to the right of where the crash started so as it spread backwards I was able to steer off the road avoiding it. As I was able to get back on the road and situate myself I saw that there was a large group of riders lying on the road and the group slightly bigger one up the road. My first instinct was to look for any Swift riders that might have crashed in the pile up. I didn't see Ben or Chase so I started to ride. Unfortunately I wasn't able to make it back up to the peloton but I did finish the race ensuring a start for the following days' crit.

Stage 3 - Criterium

Like the road race, the criterium was also very rainy this made me nervous considering there would be a large group of juniors racing around the wet circuit. As we got to the course in the morning, the 15/16's were warming up, and there is no doubt that that motivated me to finish out the stage race best I could. As I got on the trainer to warm up with Ben we knew that today's race would be another battle. As soon as we

got off the trainers and headed over to the start line it became clear that there was a much smaller field than yesterday seeing as many riders crashed out of the road race and we're not able to start the crit. As terrible as this sounds it did make me slightly happier knowing that there was going to be a much smaller field and theoretically a much safer field. As the race started the first few laps were ridiculously fast very, characteristic of a large junior crit. It took me a few laps to warm up but once I did I was able to hang in the group fairly easily and move around decently well. With some of the large teams controlling the race it was hard to make it up towards the front but this also made the pace very consistent and safe, something I don't usually experience in a junior criterium. Fortunately the rain stopped halfway through the race and the rest of the race was clean and without crashes. Neither Ben nor I were able to contest the finish and that was a little unfortunate but we finished a long weekend of hard racing.
-Parker

Chase King

73rd Place Valley of the Sun, Time Trial

Stage 1 – Time Trial

I had pre-ridden the course the day before and could see that it was flat, straight, and fast. The weather was perfect - not too hot - and the infamously relentless Arizona sun had me drinking noticeably more than usual. During the pre-ride, I felt really good; my power was right up there where I was hoping it would be. This would be my first flat time-trial race I had done and wasn't expecting much since I had little practice riding all-out on the flats (hills are more my discipline).

The following morning, we all went for a short and easy spin to warm up the legs for the race in the afternoon. When I was doing my warm-up, I could tell the power was slightly less than I was hoping for. The course was incredibly windy, which made for a hasty outbound leg and a miserably slow return leg. Within the first few minutes of the race, my power was about 20 watts less than I was hoping for, and dropping considerably. I passed the 30-second-man in front of me, and was passed before the turn by the Lux rider behind me, who went on to win the TT and overall GC. My power was now about 35 watts lower than I was hoping for (dropping down into my high tempo zone, where I was able to hold for multiple intervals of 30+ minutes in the weeks prior). I struggled on the return leg, as the intense headwind was physically and mentally exhausting. I finished about 5 minutes down from the winner's time, but I had a great time dipping my toes into the world of flat time-trials. I found them to be pretty fun, as it was a race against the clock where the strongest rider comes out on top, and am definitely looking forward to practicing them as this season unfolds.

Stage 2 – Road Race

When I was checking the weather forecast in the weeks leading up to the event, I was disappointed to see the only rain on the forecast fall on Saturday and Sunday, the days of the road race and criterium. Sure enough, I woke up on Saturday and looked

out the hotel window to see a misty rain and wet pavement. The drive out of Phoenix to the race venue was promising, as it looked like there could be some sun. At the starting line, the weather was chilly and overcast, but not rainy. Yay! There is nothing I despise more than riding in cold and rainy weather. However, as the race unfolded, the rain started to come down and so did the temperature. Wet roads and a massive field of twitchy juniors, all wanting the win resulted in a crash on the start of the second lap. Two large potholes on the road caused a crash toward the back end of the field and a good twenty or so riders went down. I was near the back of the field, and slammed on my breaks but unfortunately hit the back wheel of the bike in front of me. I fell down and got a few cuts on my left calf and slightly twisted my left ankle, making pedaling a bit painful. As I jumped back on the bike and maneuvered through the carnage, I saw that I was lucky with my minor fall; several other riders were bloody and lay motionless in the pileup. I later found out that about eight or ten juniors involved in the crash were sent to the ER in ambulances, a few with serious injuries. I formed a small group with about eight other riders who went down in the crash, and we rode another lap. On the finishing stretch of the third lap, I crested the top of the climb and looked behind me and saw that the other riders I was with had pulled off and called it a day. My ankle was starting to hurt more, and as I rolled down the back side of the hill I decided to drop out as to not stress my ankle and push through another lap solo in the cold, rainy, and windy miserable weather.

As disappointed as I was to not finish the road race, racing at Valley of the Sun with some of the best junior racers from around the United States was an incredibly humbling experience. I had a great time watching the crit race which was a learning experience too, as I was able to read the race tactics of the high-level teams such as Lux, Hot Tubes, and Specialized. Unfortunately, this is my last year as a junior (darn December birthdays!), but I'm looking forward to participating in some more stage races in the upcoming season!

-Chase

Valley of the Sun – Senior Women Category 3 Report

Sawyer Taylor

26 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Time Trial
4 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Road Race
13 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Criterium
20 th Place	Valley of the Sun, Overall G.C.
2 nd Place	Valley of the Sun, QOM

Stage 1 – Time Trial

After some really good pre-race pyramids the day before and a good, short spin the morning of, I felt ready for my TT at Valley of the Sun. This weekend I would be doing my second road race and first crit and TT since before my crash in January so I

was kind of nervous but super excited to race Valley of the Sun again! This was my second year doing Valley of the Sun meaning I knew all the courses.

My mom and I arrived at the TT course two hours before my start so I could get a really good warm up in. I don't have a TT bike so I did my warm up and TT on my road bike. Before I got on my trainer, I even had a chance to talk with Coach (who had raced and won the master's race that morning) on the phone about the race. With a little over 10 minutes to go, my mom and I headed to the line. Honestly I think she might have been more excited than I was. She even agreed to run out to the 1k marker to yell at me after watching me start. Having someone watch out for you at races like this is honestly one of the most helpful things I think a racer could have and I'm always surprised by and ever so grateful of the support I receive from not just my parents but all of the adults who have kids racing for Team Swift.

Back to the ticking clock. It seemed like forever before I rolled out, climbed the stairs, and finally rolled off the ramp. I quickly progressed to my threshold and within a few minutes I was at my TT pace. For about 10 minutes, I felt really good. Then my legs really started to ache and I started losing speed and time. By the time I was about a mile from the turnaround, my legs were feeling really heavy. By now, I had passed a racer and been passed by another racer. Going into the turn, I saw a racer in front of me who I knew I was going to pass. I paced up in an effort to pass them but ended up being caught behind them in the corner and lost even more time. After the turn, I passed the racer in front of me and then got passed again myself.

The second half of my TT was even more brutal than the first. Both my pace and my heart rate started to drop a few miles after the turn and I fought to get them back up. A few miles from the finish, I really started revving it up. I saw my mom at the 1k to go marker screaming at me and I pushed even harder to the line. Although I wasn't in contest for the win or even a podium, having my mom there definitely helped a lot.

Later on, I checked my time. I ended up in 26th. Although this definitely isn't the result I had been hoping for, I knew I went really hard and did the best TT I could at the time. Going into the rest of my season with other races with time trials (like San Dimas and Nationals); I know I can improve my TT to do a faster, better race.

Stage 2 – Road Race

"BUT IT'S THE DESERT." I yelled as my mom and I watched big, fat raindrops fall from the sky to hit the pavement outside our hotel parking lot. I knew it was supposed to rain, but that didn't make the reality of it actually any more enjoyable. We got to the course, and although the rain had let up, it was predicted to rain even harder in the evening around the time I was racing. So tiger balm, baby oil, and a jacket with arm warmers it was.

After signing in and a warm up on the road, I rolled to the line. I had spun in my room in the morning, so my legs didn't feel too bad considering the TT I had the day before. I talked with some of the racers I was friends with, and before I knew it, we were rolling towards the cattle grate to start our sixty-two mile road race. I looked up coming out of our first turn to see a sky filled with large, gray, puffy clouds. Then the rain came.

The lap was pretty relaxed. Yes, it did get really hard on the climb and people did attack but I never had to bridge anything and pretty much rode wheels the entire time. When we went over the cattle grate though I gave lots of room because it was so slippery. I saw a 2020 girl slide out near the front on one of the first laps so knew I had to be really careful.

Then came the QOM lap. I knew my field had some big teams. If a break went with certain racers, I needed to be with it. Last year this happened over the QOM climb, so I assumed that this is where it would happen again meaning I had to be near the front of the field in the last kilometer or so of the QOM climb. In addition to this, I didn't know if I would be in contest for the final sprint as my endurance was so down from my crash. However, I knew that if I timed it right that QOM was mine. Going into the final corner before the climb, I was in the middle of the field. Near the base of the climb, I started moving around and got a spot on third wheel. The pace got hard and people started to pop. Then, on the flat section 1k from the finish, someone attacked but didn't get anywhere. I was second wheel at this point. At the 200 meter mark, I went for it. Right at the line, Emily Rodger (last year's GC winner) got me. A few people tried to get off the front but were all caught at the bottom although of the descent.

Lap three was very similar to the first laps in terms of attacking although it was raining harder and we were being passed by multiple fields. At some point, Alex Reich got off the front in the rain and I (as well as a majority of the field) missed it. She won the stage by minutes to take the win in GC after not even getting on the podium in the TT.

Going into the last lap, I was feeling relatively good and thought I had a shot at a spot on the podium or maybe even the win. Emily had shown how well she could do on the finish but I knew I could still get her if I rode the right wheels. Going into the last corner, I was third wheel behind one of the strongest 3's I knew. Her name was Sandra Freeman and she had won the bump only a few weeks before. I knew she had a good sprint and tended to race really aggressive and made moves towards the ends of races. All the way up the last climb it was hard. Then, at 1K to go, someone attacked and the racer in front of me grabbed her wheel. At 200 meters, we all went for it. Emily launched herself from the left and Sandra Launched herself from the right. I went really hard but didn't pass either of them.

Although I didn't get the win, I was still shocked and completely ecstatic to get fourth. After my TT, I wasn't expecting a top 10 and I got on the podium. Still, there's a lot I can take away from this race to do even better in future races!

Stage 3 - Criterium

The only time I've ever started a race later than 5:00 pm was the p123 San Rafael Crit. That was during the summer when it was warm and got dark after 7:30. Disregarding the weird start time, I knew this was going to be an interesting race. While it wasn't supposed to be raining for my race, the course was still going to be slippery and covered in manhole covers. In addition, this was my first crit since August. I had done lots of road, circuit, and track races since then but no crits.

After watching my team race in the morning and then transferring hotels, I got to the course with lots of time to warm up. I had already packed my trainer for the trip home because I was planning on warming up on the road. Unfortunately, it started raining so I decided to wait to do my warm up until the last minute to avoid getting super cold. After some pyramids, I rolled to the start line. A few minutes later we were off!

I tried to stay somewhere in the middle of the field and in the draft but I got pushed out a few times and ended up having to bridge a few short gaps. Lap five was a \$100 prime lap which provided the motivation for me to sprint only to get second. However, I was able to open up my legs and actually felt a lot better going into the rest of the race.

With two laps to go, I started moving up and settled in four wheels back from the front. The last lap, however, someone went for it and everything shifted. I didn't have the legs to move back up and wasn't where I needed to be going into the last corner. I got 13th, and although I wasn't super disappointed with this, I was hoping for at least a top ten. Regardless, I'm still super happy with how I raced at Valley of the Sun. Coming back from my crash to get back into racing shape is going to take more than a few weeks. Valley of the Sun definitely helped in getting me to where I need to be and I even came away with a podium! Until next year, Valley of the Sun!
Sawyer

Valley of the Sun – Juniors 13-14 Reports

Andrew Mathiesen

4th Place Valley of the Sun, Time Trial
3rd Place Valley of the Sun, Road Race
1st Place Valley of the Sun, Criterium
3rd Place Valley of the Sun, Overall G.C.

Stage 1 – Time Trial

On the time trial, I did a long warm-up then I took a Clif Shot ten minutes before the beginning of the race. I lined up 5 minutes before I had to start and I was second in line behind a rider that I would usually race with. When I was about to start, I was getting really nervous. When it was my turn to go, I was so ready to go and get it over with. The official held the back of my seat until it was my turn to go. While going down the ramp, I got up to speed. On the way to the turnaround point, I felt that I did not put enough effort and it was shown in the time I got. At the last 2 miles, I was pretty much sprinting and giving it all; I have and ended up with 4th.

Stage 2 – Road Race

In the beginning of the road race, the pace was pretty slow and I was feeling great. Toward the middle of the 14 mile race, my legs felt like they were asleep and was not feeling 100%. On the last mile, a rider broke away. I was anticipating what

he was about to do and it gave me the chance to chase him, but I lost the momentum so I fell back to the pack. When I saw the finish line coming up, I knew that they would not catch him in time because he was too far ahead. Later, there was an attack; one of the riders broke away with the intent to catch the leader. I chased him to the finish line and got third. During the whole race, it was really sketchy because people would turn suddenly to try to avoid a pothole or just to avoid riders in front of them; they would swerve and come close to crashing other cyclists. It was a very dangerous race.

Stage 3 - Criterium

Before the race, I took a Clif Shot and was ready to win. I was feeling better today than all the other stages. I also had to win this stage to get into the top three in the general classification, so I needed to be mentally prepared to win this race. When I lined up for the starting line, I was second in line and I was nervous. After the race started, I was in the back but I kept moving up little by little. In the meantime, I was checking on the rider that I knew was strong. In the race, we were keeping a good pace, which I was happy about. I was in my drops constantly watching for any attacks or sudden movements in the group. Everything was steady until the beginning of the last lap. Then, there was a few people that tried to break away, but they never succeeded because one of the strong riders or I would catch them. During the last lap, I had my head on a swivel and was ready for anything. On the second to last corner, a kid tried to break away and I was right on his wheel before anybody else. On the last corner, the rider that just tried to break away took the inside corner and lost his speed while I chose to take the outside corner. Finally, I sprinted out of the corner to the finish line. For the last few meters of the race, I looked back and saw that nobody would beat me and I could celebrate!

-Andrew

2. Harry Lee Memorial Race 2/4/17 San Jose

Sawyer Taylor

Harry Lee Memorial Race

Women's Open

1 st Place	Scratch Race
1 st Place	Elimination
2 nd Place	Points
1 st Place	Overall Omnium

Every year at Hellyer Velodrome for the past three years, the track hosts a race in memory of junior racer Harry Lee. This race is a totally relaxed, unofficial, and was described as being as this was my first race back since my concussion and my first

track race in a long time, I was still kind of nervous but ready for some good, hard racing.

I arrived at the track an hour before my start and was able to spin around the track and say hi to everyone before getting on rollers. I would be racing all the mass start events in the women's omnium. After the C men went, it was time for the women to go. After spinning around the warm up circle I went to the rail for my eight-lap scratch race. With a bang we were off. The pace slowly increased for the first four laps until, going into lap five, there were four of us in the rotating in a quick pace line. Going into the second to last lap, the women who I was drafting off of popped from the group. I knew that if I wanted to win this I had to go for it. I accelerated in the saddle and went around the two women in the front with a lot of power and then got out of the saddle to get a gap with I had to hold for the remaining 500 meters to take the win. Immediately after finishing, I spun in the warm up circle before getting on rollers.

My next race was elimination. This was probably my worst mass start race as I didn't have as much mobility of the track as some racers do so I knew I would have to really focus to take the win in this one. After the B and A men did their scratch race and the C men did their elimination race, it was my turn. I went to the rail early enough to get the first slot. After one neutral lap, racers were pulled every lap. Going into the sprint with only two racers (who were teammates) aside from myself, the two other women tried to box me in. In the last 100 meters, I managed to push my way through them and not get myself eliminated. Then, with two racers to go, we only had two laps left with a sprint at the end of the second lap. In the last 300 meters, I went around the other racer barely got her at the line to take the win.

After the Harry Lee Crawl (a one lap race where you had trackstand until the announcer told you to go) it was time for the points race. This is usually my best race but I was feeling really tired. I lost a lot of endurance after my crash but knew that I just had to get third in order to win the omnium. Going into the first sprint, I attacked half a lap out but another racer came around me making it so I took second. For the second sprint, another racer attacked about a lap out. I wasn't able to go around her and took third. I again attacked for the third sprint and again got second. For the last sprint, I go another third because I was again not able to get around the racers in first and second putting me in third place in the points and giving me the win in the omnium. I did the men's B race right after this and dropped out halfway through but went for a couple sprints and did okay.

With a few races the next morning, I knew I had to spin so I rode rollers for about 20 minutes before stretching, changing, and getting ready to go. Getting back to racing felt so good, And although I think I could have done better, I'm shocked to have won the omnium and am really looking forward to the 2017 season!

-Sawyer

Sawyer Taylor

2nd Place The Bump Circuit Race Senior Women's Category 3

It was early, cold, and my legs hurt from racing track the day before. I warmed up on rollers, did a few hard efforts on the road, and rolled to the line for my 8:10 am start. I was shocked to see so many women! Between the 3's, 4's, 5's, and masters who all started together, there were over 50 women. Despite being tired, I was super excited to race again. I hadn't raced the road in a long time and was super happy to be back at it. The first three miles were neutral, so I moved around in the pack and caught up with a lot of racers I had become friends with last season. After the three mile start, we would be going around the 7 mile course in Livermore three times. The backside of the course had a few minutes of steady climbing followed by a sharp right and a steep, short sprint finish known as "the bump."

As soon as we went over the bump the first time, the pace got hard and the group split up. About 20 women were in the first group and everyone else followed. There were some really strong teams in the first group such as San Jose, JL Velo, and Team Mike's Bikes. I knew this would be a fast, fun race. The first lap didn't have a lot of attacks but on the hills on the back side the pace really picked up. Then, going over the finish at the start of our second lap, someone attacked going over the bump. I grabbed a wheel and held on although nothing stuck. For the remainder of the second lap, there must have been at least four more of these small, unsuccessful attacks. I just sat in the pack and let the bigger teams fight it out.

Going into the third lap, it settled down as we geared up for the finish. There was one really big attack about four miles from finish on the finish hill of the Wente RR short course. I thought this might be it so I countered and slid into fourth wheel. This attack lasted much longer than the others but didn't stick either. Going into the back side of the course the race was back together meaning it would probably end in a field sprint.

As we got closer and closer to that final corner, the pace just got faster and faster. I moved up and got third wheel. About 200 meters before the final turn, a Razzle Dazzle and a JL Velo girl went for it. I grabbed the JL Velo Girl's wheel. Although I was a little over-gear'd for the final 50 meters of the bump and wasn't able to get around her, I managed to hold her wheel to take second in the Cat 3's.

For my first race back on the road since my crash, I'm super stoked to come away with second. I was expecting to barely hang on in this race. Knowing what I know, next time around I'll use what I've learned to take the sprint.

Sawyer Taylor

DNP The Bump Circuit Race Senior Men Category 4

10 minutes after the finish of the women's 3-5's race.....

Daniel: "Sawyer, do the E 4 race!"

Me: "No I'll get dropped in 30 seconds."

Daniel: "No you won't. I'm sure you'll be fine."

Me: "It starts in less than 10 minutes."

Daniel: "Well hurry up and go register."

After getting pinned by the winner of the cat 4 women's race, I rolled to the line literally as the whistle blew. I didn't even have to unclip. I just rolled out with the field and started racing. While it wasn't 30 seconds, I was dropped off of the main group within 10 minutes along with a few others. I raced two of the three laps before stopping at the top of the bump before starting my last lap. While it wasn't a very exciting 20-ish miles, it was really good training and I'm glad I did it.

-Sawyer

Ben Cook

18, cat 2

13th Place The Bump Circuit Race Senior Category 2/3

The bump would be my second race of the year after Cal Aggie last weekend. The course was mainly rolling or flat, but featured a false flat climb and downhill, that ended on a 15%, 100 meter pitch to the finish line. Being my first of two races of the day and being a solo rider, I planned to stay attentive for breakaways, but mainly plan for the field sprint, as it had a powerful ending and I figured I could fair well if the race ended together.

The first lap or so was relatively tame despite a few lone attacks. The wind was strong enough to keep everybody together, since there were no big teams to make the race hard and split things up. I sat in the field and waited to see if anything promising would go, but nothing did. I held position in the top 15/20 riders in the 40 rider field.

The second lap was much of the same. The pace stayed steady and a few riders tried to form a break, but nothing major stuck. Taylor Kring from Specialized and Leo Yip from Echelon/Stork were aggressive but unable to stay away with the strong wind. I noticed up the climb that there was a tough headwind all the way through and passed the finish, which would make the sprint especially tough. I knew that I wanted to come around the corner at the bottom of the climb in the top 10, and try to be as rested as possible while there. I was hoping things would break up on the climb and I could round the last corner somewhere near the top 5. After the next lap had passed I kept my cool on the flats before the finishing climb. My heartrate was low and I was moving into the top 10. I came around near 7th wheel, right where I wanted to be. Unfortunately the pace stayed at a lighter tempo and riders began to fill the road from

side to side. I tried to hold position, but it was tough to stick in the front without facing the wind. As we climbed things got tighter and tighter, and the road narrowed down further. I found myself stuck back around 15th with no way to move around the field. Multiple times riders were either pushed or moved themselves intentionally over the yellow line, and I had no choice but to stay towards the right as much as I could. When we came towards 1k to go I still had not found my way to the front. The pace picked up and the long uphill slog to the finish had begun. By the time the field was strung out I wasn't able to move any further forward. I came around the last turn in around 10th, but had nothing for the final pitched and came in for 13th.

I was pretty bummed with the result at the end of the day, but was glad to be getting out and doing another race and learning new things all the time. The lessons for today were to mind the width of the road, and remember that fighting for position can be tougher than it seems. After the finish I spun around some and rolled back down to the parking lot to get ready for the pro/1/2 race in just a half an hour.

-Ben

Ben Cook

18, Category 2

11th Place The Bump Circuit Race Pro, I, II

After a somewhat uneventful 2/3 race, I was excited to see what I could do in the pro/1/2 field out at the bump. I rolled up to the start just in time to rollout and lineup. We would be racing for four 8 mile laps, and the course featured rolling hills and a steep, short uphill sprint finish (hence the race's name). We started at the bottom of a long false flat that climbed to the top of the course, about three miles away. Just a few minutes into the race Cole Davis from Specialized attacked, followed by Eamon Lucas, a current pro, who was racing in an all black kit. Two others joined and the break rolled. It looked promising so I tried my luck at bridging, but a stronger rider was right on my move and I was soon countered before I had a chance to really go after the break alone. A few riders went with the counter. I worried about the move a bit but largely kept my cool and watched the distance to the group. They were within 15 seconds so I knew I could wait.

Things stayed close over the top of the climb and on the downhill. Right after the descent there is a steep roller with a nice tailwind on it, and up ahead I saw the groups starting to fracture and fall apart. A few riders fell back on the following flat stretch and we kept the break close. Coming around for the next lap, a Dolce Vita rider attacked. I waited a few seconds to see if he could hold his own, then jumped. I quickly made the bridge and we were joined by two others. We started our rotation hard and steady up the false flat climb towards the finish. Two or three riders ahead were being dropped off; one of them was Specialized's Zach Gottesman, one of my friends from high school who I had been racing with since we were kids. I noticed Zach falling off the lead group and knew that he would be a good worker in ours. The race was now set, we had seven riders in our group, four leaders ahead, the field behind us,

and three laps to go. Two of the riders in our group had teammates up the road, so they would do no pulling. One of them continued to try to interrupt our rotation, heading to the front then sitting up or trying to enter the line at the wrong time. The rest of the group, who were not so considerate of such negative tactics, was quick to tell our friend to leave us to our business in the rotation. We carried on through the rolling hills smoothly and without further distraction. The race would go up the climb a total of five times, since we started at the bottom of the course and ended at the top. It was a short race, but it would feel like a long ways to the finish if our move held. I rotated through steadily as our group lead a double rotation, giving everybody a chance to rest and eat when it wasn't their turn at the front.

After two laps I was starting to feel the pain of being in the break so long. I had pulled through consistently all race long, only taking brief rests at the back. Up the previous climb, only three out of the seven of us still rotated. I did my turn, but in retrospect should have rested up while I could. Now, with one to go, I was worried about making it to the finish. The break of four was closer in sight than ever, just a few seconds down the road. As we rounded the corner for the fourth climb, I was struggling to hold the pace. I sat on the back, and while I tried to hold on and make it over the hill, it would soon be too much. Just as our group caught the leaders, I fell off. Though I couldn't hold the pace of the leaders any longer, I could still hold a pace of my own. I had 8 miles to go and at least two minutes on the field behind. I was in 11th place on the road, and was ready to hold on for the finish. I rode a hard tempo up the climb and caught some rest on the downhill while I could. I ate a Clif Shot to take me to the line and continued on as the road flattened out. I looked over my shoulder constantly for the first few miles, but by the time I was on the main drag of the course and could see up to a minute behind me, I knew I was in the clear. Even though I would make it to the finish in 11th, I still put my head down and continued to ride all the way in to the line. I spun out coming off of the rollers and held steady on the flats. When the climb came, I buried myself all the way to the top. I had been riding a hard tempo for the last 90 minutes, and just because I was out of contention didn't mean I wasn't going to try. When I rounded the final corner to come into the finishing pitch, Zach and a few other members of the field were cheering me on towards the top. I crossed the line and finally gave my legs a rest after an entire day in or chasing the break.

Though 11th out of 40 riders isn't the best placing in the world, it certainly made up for the 2/3 race, and it was a placing I was happy to take. As much as I wanted a top 10 placing, I know that I rode as hard as I could today and was really happy to make the break (or chase group) in a well contested p/1/2 race, and to still hold off for what could be considered a placing in the end. It's always a good experience to learn from the best at these races, and today I rode my first break away and learned about proper rest and the importance of a smooth rotation. Hopefully I'll take these lessons and get to ride the break more in the future!

-Ben

4. Folsom Criterium

2/4/17

Folsom

Creighton Gruber

3rd Place Folsom Criterium Senior Category 4

We started off fast, right on lap two there was a prime. To open up my legs I went for the sprint, and got third. From then on I tried to be very aggressive, following most attacks. The race continued being fast and not smooth. Towards the last 10 minutes of the race I tried to recover for the sprint. As I was doing this, two groups of two got away and nobody was chasing. I decided to try to bridge to the first group of chasers. I didn't make my attack hard enough to get away from the group, so I ended up just pulling the pack to the two chasers. Once the group brought back the leaders, Andrew attacked. I was second wheel at the time so when the guy chasing asked me to pull through, I told him that I wasn't going to chase my teammate. But people came around me and chased him down. With two laps to go two people attacked and they look like they were going to stay away. With one lap to go the pack didn't look like they were catch the two leaders, so I attacked with a half lap to go. I went all out and I didn't look back. I ended up coming across the line a bike length behind the leaders. Later I found I brought two people with but they couldn't come around me.
-Creighton

Andrew Mathiesen

24th Place Folsom Criterium Senior Category 4

Forty Five minutes before the race I warmed up with a one minute pyramid, and then I talked with Creighton till we could roll out for the race. After roll out I lined up and was feeling nervous. When the race started I was in the middle of the pack and when the race got closer to the end I was getting closer to the front. On lap six I was feeling alright and I was thinking about breaking away later in the race. On the fifth lap the field slowed down so I took a shot at trying to break away. That on the fourth lap I was at least fifteen seconds off the front. I held this for the following lap then the field started pulling me back and on the second to last lap from the finish they caught me. By that time I was died and had nothing left so I finished on the back end of the group.
-Andrew

5. Chico Stage Race

2/24-26/17

Chico

Luke Lamperti

2 nd Place	Chico Stage Race, Circuit	Senior Category 3
2 nd Place	Chico Stage Race, RR	Senior Category 3
17 th Place	Chico Stage Race, TT	Senior Category 3
10 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Crit	Senior Category 3
10 th Place	Chico Stage Race, G.C.	Senior Category 3

Stage 1 - Circuit Race

We rolled neutral onto the Thunder hill racetrack. Once we were on the track we started. It rolled easy, as everybody looked at the track the first lap. Then a rider attacked and there was a 3-man break. Once it was about 10 seconds up the road I jumped across the gap. It rolled for about a lap before being brought back. Another break went right away that my teammate Isaiah was in. It was off for about 2 laps. Once that break came back it rolled together for a little bit. The pace was pretty high with 4 laps to go. We were all near the front and in good position. With 3 laps to go a two rider break went up the road. Nobody chased for a lap. Then people started attacking to close the gap. They had about 15 seconds with 1 to go. My teammate Gianni jumped right before corner 2. I was about 8th wheel and heard a big crash. I was now the last rider on my group. I moved up in the small group. In the last corner we caught the break. I sprinted up the left and a rider passed me on the right. I was happy with second and glad to stay safe.

Stage 2 - Road Race

The Road Race started neutral for about 500 yards and then we started. We rode slowly for about 2 miles. About then a solo rider rolled off the front. Everybody let him go with a 90-mile race ahead. I was riding mid field sitting in and talking to some riders. The pace was still pretty slow. We hit a cross wind section. I moved up the field just in case there was a split in the field. The pace picked up and two riders slipped off the front. The chase got about 30 seconds up the road. They sat there for a while. It slowly came back. We got a time gap at the feed zone and the solo rider was 3 minutes up. I rode near the front for a little bit before the dirt. I knew I wanted to be at the front on the dirt. I was 4th wheel going into the dirt as people were fighting for position. I looked around and saw both of my teammates. It was not super hard through the dirt. As we came off the dirt onto a climb I attacked. I went up the climb solo but got caught at the top. As we rolled through going into our second and last lap we started going hard. The crosswind was coming. I stayed toward the front as we came into the crosswind. About halfway through the crosswind there was a field split. I was in the front of it. I knew it was going to be critical to ride good position on the feed zone rollers. We had to close a 4 and a half minute gap in the last 20 miles to catch the solo leader. Our group was rotating well. The second half of the field caught us right before the dirt. I knew after the dirt ended there was 4k to the finish. I rode good position through the dirt. Right as we came off the dirt we caught the solo rider. Everybody cheered him on after his 80 mile solo break. It was fast over the climb. I was about 5th wheel down just before we rolled up to the line. As we hit the bottom it spread out. I

jumped first then everybody went. One rider came by me and I could not get back by him. I happy with second and to take leader's jersey after a long hard day.

Stage 3 – Time Trial

I did a solid warm up and rolled to the TT start. I sat there for a second and then started. I got clipped in fast and into my position. I knew it was going to be about 20 minutes. I felt pretty good. I was counting quickly to 3 in my head to stay focused. I was counting and making sure I was on top of my gears. I had a good turn around and got back focused quickly. I knew I needed to be close the rider in front of me to stay well positioned in GC. I peaked at the end of my ride a felt like I had a mediocre TT. I was not super happy with my result but learned a lot and know what I need to improve on.

Stage 3 - Criterium

Bang! And everybody sprinted to the first corner. I was about third wheel through the first two corners. I attacked out of the second corner with one rider on my wheel. We had a small gap. We got caught about one lap later. Then another rider attacked with my teammate on his wheel. It was quickly pulled back. Then two riders rolled off the front about 5 laps in. I was near the front as people did not chase immediately. Then a rotation at the front kept the gap contained. People were fighting for position the whole time with the field spread out. I was top 10. There were about 5 laps to go now and the break had not come any closer. I knew I needed to motivate it being pulled back. So I went to the front and took a hard pull. I pulled off rested for about a lap. The gap was still not close enough. I attacked into the first corner. Everybody jumped on my wheel. Then people started pulling and the break came back as we had 1 lap to go. I was top 10 but pretty tired. I stayed up there on the last lap and sprinted for 10th. I was happy with my result and had a great 2017 at Chico Stage Race.

-Luke

Gianni Lamperti

16 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Circuit	Senior Category 3
6 th Place	Chico Stage Race, RR	Senior Category 3
21 st Place	Chico Stage Race, TT	Senior Category 3
14 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Crit	Senior Category 3
14 th Place	Chico Stage Race, G.C.	Senior Category 3

Stage 1 – Circuit Race

The race started out pretty slow, so I was at the front by halfway through the first lap of the course. The Course was 3k with not as many hills as the previous year but still two small risers. It was just over tempo for a while before there were a few small moves, but nothing stuck at all. All three of us were at the front for pretty much the whole race until 4 to go when 4 guys got off the front and we were not in it. They

rode away as we held them at about 30 seconds and at two to go the Dolce Vita team organized and started to chase on the front but only got within about 12 seconds. When they stopped working, the field sat up and they started to open up a gap again. Coming out of the first corner, nobody was doing anything so I had to go. I attacked right after we went over the top of the first hill and pulled it back to about 5 seconds. Into the second corner where there was wet paint, there was a big crash towards the front of the field and a ton of riders got caught behind it. Luke and I made it through, but Isaiah got held up behind it. I was done as the field started to pass me but I was holding on, catching wheels and staying as far up as I could. I came around the last corner and people started to sit up around me, but I drilled it to the line so I got the same time as the field. Luke got second and was 4 seconds behind in GC. I was ready for the Paskenta Road Race.

Stage 2 - Road Race

When the Road Race started, a rider from Davis rolled off the front and nobody did anything. We just rolled along for a while and it cruised in the crosswind, but it was easier to be in the rotation in the front instead of in the gutter on the right side. We turned right and I was accelerating in my hoods and I hit a pothole and my bars slipped down, but were still rideable. Coming to the feed zone it sped up a little and luckily there were no crashes, as there were in almost every other race. The moto ref came up to us and told us that the guy off the front had a six minute gap. I was towards the back, and we were about 10k from the dirt, I started to move back up to the front. As I was almost to the front some guys right to the left of me overlapped wheels and took out quite a few people. As we were almost to the dirt, a few Mikes Bikes guys came to the front and were asking for a pee break. This got Dolce Vita pretty mad though as they had been working on the front to pull the solo guy back and TMB had done nothing. We didn't stop and as always, it got pretty fast as we rolled into the dirt. Going over the first roller my teammate Isaiah flatted and I knew it would be really hard for him to get back in the race because the follow car would still be back at the crash. Sure enough, he ended up waiting for about 15 minutes before he got a wheel.

Going into the second lap, it was crosswind right away and Dolce Vita got about 20 guys to rotate on the front, but it only lasted for 10 minutes or so. Once that stopped, we waited for a little while before Luke talked to a Dolce Vita rider and mentioned trying to split the field and they thought it was a good idea. So they attacked and there were about four of us rotating through while the rest of the field was in the gutter. It only lasted 5 minutes and only a few riders were dropped. We cruised again until the small climb before the feed zone where the field did split and about 15 of us made it. Although, we didn't get organized enough and stayed off for only about 20 minutes. When we got caught, it was right before the dirt so I was already at the front. There were a few attacks on the dirt, but nothing stuck. When we got back on the street, I was still at the front but there were only about 20 guys in our group. I went with an attack over the top of the first peak and the field was on us by the bottom. I jumped in behind the guy who won the Circuit and was a fast sprinter. Coming into the sprint he stood up on the left side, and then sat up. I had to jump

around him but sprinted to the line for 6th. Luke got second and was now in the yellow jersey.

Stage 3 - Time Trial

When we got to the course, I hopped on my trainer and started to warm up. Once I was done I jumped off and headed to the start line. They had changed the course to an out and back the night before as the regular course was flooded, so it was now only 9 miles. I rolled out then set up and was off. I started out at what I thought was a good pace. I felt really good but for some reason felt like I was not producing power. There was not much wind as it was pretty early in the morning, so that was not a big factor. The biggest factor was the cold. It was freezing when I started out, but I was a little warmer as I got a little ways in. I had a good turn around and emptied it on the way back to the finish. It was not a good TT for me, but I was ready for the crit.

Stage 4 - Criterium

Before the crit, we did a little spin on the course to get warmed up. We lined up about five minutes before and all got on the front line. It started out pretty fast, as usual for a crit. We all stayed in the front and were riding aggressive. On about lap 4, two guys got off and none of us were up there. They had about a 30 second gap and were starting to pull away a little. The field got organized and we were going pretty fast again. I tried to bridge a few times, but got about halfway then the field caught me. Although, it was ok because we pulled them back quite a bit. Coming into about 5 to go, all three of us were at the front. The Davis rider that was off all day in the road race came to the front and pulled the break back in two laps. When we got there, Dolce Vita got there and started to set up their lead out. We were all in perfect position until we came into the first corner and it slowed up a little, letting the field come around and swarm us. I was then back about 20 guys and only moved past a few more riders for the finish. We raced really well as a team, just did not pull out the results at the end. It was a super fun weekend.

-Gianni

Isaiah Chass

37 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Circuit	Senior Category 3
45 th Place	Chico Stage Race, RR	Senior Category 3
16 th Place	Chico Stage Race, TT	Senior Category 3
23 rd Place	Chico Stage Race, Crit	Senior Category 3
39 th Place	Chico Stage Race, G.C.	Senior Category 3

Stage 1 – Circuit Race

I was super excited to start racing at Chico Stage Race. I rolled to the line with a few minutes until my start, and took off my extra clothing. It rolled easy from the start and I was at the front by the second corner. The next few laps I followed some moves and got in a break. We rotated a few times but then the field caught us. The first

quarter I tried to follow as much as possible because I was near the front. As the race went on, I sat in a little more and recovered a bit. There were a lot of accelerations out of the last three sharp corners so I made sure to do as much moving up as I could before then. It stayed mostly together for a lot of the race, and then towards the end a good move slipped away that we should've been on. With four laps to go, four riders got off the front and got a pretty solid gap. There were some more attempts to catch the break and hard accelerations out of some of the corners. We now had three laps to go and the break split up so there were two riders up the road now. Going into the last lap, I was sitting around top five. In the second corner, it started to slow up a little and people were trying to get to the front. The break still had a gap, and no one was pulling it back. My teammate Gianni attacked and started pulling super hard. I was trying to move up and follow my teammate Luke, and a group was coming up the inside. A rider tried to ride up the inside in a really slick corner and caused a big crash that I wasn't able to get around. The field was gone, so I rode to the line trying to lose as little time as possible not knowing if I was going to get field time.

Stage 2 – Road Race

I got to the road race early so I had some time before I needed to start getting ready. Once I was ready, I rolled to the start with my teammates Gianni and Luke. We started off pretty slow, and a Davis rider rode off the front and soon had a pretty big gap. He would end up staying off the front until a few miles from the finish. Anyways, it still rolled easy for a while before everyone started to realize that the Davis rider was still opening up a gap and was a few minutes up the road already. A few different breaks got up the road, but nothing really dangerous. The pace started to pick up a little bit, so I moved up and stayed top five for the rest of the lap until the gravel to stay safe. Coming into the gravel section wasn't as hectic as it was for me last year. I followed the accelerations and tried to follow good lines, as there were big potholes and lots of gravel before the actual gravel section. Going into the real gravel section I was sitting third wheel and I flatted a couple hundred meters in. After waiting a really long time for the follow car, I got a rear wheel and got going again. By this point I was definitely not going to catch back on, so I got in a group and we rotated the rest of the lap and the entire next lap because I had to finish this stage if I wanted to compete in the rest.

Stage 3 – Time Trial

After doing a solid warm-up, I got off the trainer and rode over to the start. On my way over, I did one more jump on the road just to make sure my bike was shifting well with my race wheels and to loosen my legs up a little more. Before the official starting counting down from five, I took a few deep breaths and stood up to get ready. Coming off the line I got up to speed, but not as quickly as I would have liked to. I did not want to blow up right away so I was trying to conserve a little more from the start and build to the finish. I split my effort into quarters and checked in with myself along the course to make sure I was staying on top of it. I kept my speed pretty steady and soon enough I saw the turn around. I didn't want to lose a lot of time in the turn

around so I kept my speed coming into it, but I didn't hold my speed well coming out of the corner. I sprinted out of the turnaround to get back up to speed, and saw a few more riders ahead of me that I told myself I needed to pass. I shifted into a harder gear and kept pushing harder as I was catching another rider. Coming into 1K to go, I got as low as I could and shifted again into a harder gear. I could see the finish now so I pushed as hard as I could to the line. I felt good with my effort but there were some things that I definitely could've done better like taking the turnaround better, getting up to speed quicker, and building my power sooner.

Stage 4 - Criterium

I was feeling tired but still pretty loose before the criterium. After getting ready, I rode the course and did some spinouts to open my legs up. I was able to do multiple laps on the course before my start, so I was feeling confident rolling to the start line. I was on the front line when the whistle blew, and I got clipped in quickly. A rider sprinted up the left side and my teammate Luke followed. I came into the first corner in fourth and was feeling comfortable. It stayed pretty fast throughout the race, and a crosswind kept making little splits on the finishing straight and the backside straight. There were some attacks that didn't get far but there was a good move that stuck. I wanted to be at the front as there were a bunch of accelerations out of each corner especially with the wind. It was hard for me to hold my position because the straight always were pretty wide and I wasn't doing a good job of moving up as the front got swarmed. A rider was still sitting off the front and was holding a good gap at around fifteen seconds, which was not closing down quickly. There were some attacks to get up to the break, and I should've tried to bridge the gap but I didn't think that I would be able to hold it solo. I was doing my best to stay near the front as we got near the end of the race and I was really starting to feel the three previous stages in my legs. It came down to a Davis rider putting in a solid effort on the front to bring the break back. On the last lap, there was a big acceleration in the field coming around the sides and I just didn't have the legs to keep moving up and hold my position. I drifted backwards on the back straight of the course and then just held onto the wheel in front of me. I moved up a little before the last corner but I had nothing left coming out of the last corner for the sprint.

-Isaiah

Creighton Gruber

5 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Circuit	Senior Category 4/5
16 th Place	Chico Stage Race, RR	Senior Category 4/5
31 st Place	Chico Stage Race, Crit	Senior Category 4/5
34 th Place	Chico Stage Race, TT	Senior Category 4/5
20 th Place	Chico Stage Race, G.C.	Senior Category 4/5

Stage 1 – Circuit Race

I didn't get a good warm up in so I tried to be very aggressive in this 30 degree weather. I tried to go with most attacks. After 20 minutes of attacking, the 5 laps to go cards were shown. That meant 10 miles to the finish. For the first two of those five, one guy on the front was keeping the pace high. With three laps to go the guy on the front attacked from the front and held it for another lap. Once he got caught the pack dropped the pace a bit. On the bell lap the group bunched up on the first climb. I got boxed in and was stuck in the back of the pack. For the next mile and a half I fought my way to the front. I was third wheel going into the last corner, but I had nothing for the sprint. I could only hold on to 5th.

Stage 2 – Road Race

The first hour of the race was fast and full of attacks. The attacks slowed down when someone got away. The pace was still high but there were fewer surges during all this and I stayed in the top 20. The attacks started up again when we turned on a road that had a decent cross wind. I started to lose positioning because I didn't have the energy. I then realized I made the rookie mistake of not eating. I tried to get as much food in me as I could during and in between the attacks. Luckily I started feeling fresher before the big rollers that were coming. I got to the front when we hit the rollers so I would stay with the lead group. After the rollers, the shrunken group road calmly to the gravel. When we reached the gravel I got myself in horrible position. So I ended up riding in the back of the pack. The gravel was actually pretty smooth, and not too hard. After avoiding a big crash toward the gravel end I started to move up, but by the time we reached the sprint I was too far back to be a factor.

Stage 3 - Criterium

Right from the gun I sprinted. I reached the corner first. I and five other people already had a gap. We held this for two laps, and in doing so we blew up half the field. I stayed at the front and continued going with attacks and attacking by myself. With eight laps to go there was a bad crash that neutralized the field. We ended up having to stop. When we started up again I had a little trouble clipping in and I lost my position in the field. After all the attacks in the beginning of the race, I had nothing in the tank to get back to the front of the pack. When the final lap came around I was in no place to sprint.

Stage 4 – Time Trial

After I finish the crit, I jumped on my trainer and spun until it was time to head out to my TT. The wind started to pick up right before my start time. Right from the beginning of my TT I was being blown all over the place because of my disc and deep dish front wheel. I couldn't hit my target watts, even though my heart rate was high. By the time I reached the turnaround I felt better and was opened up. I started to hit my target power, but I had lost too much time on the way to the turn around. I finished mid pack.

-Creighton

Andrew Mathiesen

30 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Road Race	Senior Category 4/5
12 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Criterium	Senior Category 4/5
39 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Time Trial	Senior Category 4/5

It was stage one of the Chico Stage race and I was feeling fine. I had to warm up on the road and was not fond of this decision. This was the first time I had to warm up without the trainer so I went with one of my friends from another team. We did hills and gravel roads to get ready for the race. When we got back to the car, both of my teammates were ready to roll to the start line to get good positioning so I took a Clif Shot and I was on my way. At roll out, I found out I could not shift to the highest gear and all the dads' were trying to help me. I could not find out what to do but I did not have any other choice but to race. When I lined up, my teammate Jonas saved a spot for me so I went next to him towards the front. Later, the whistle blew and I feel back to mid pack and stayed there until we got to the rolling hills which were half way through the race. I had a hard time with the rolling hills and I realized that I needed more practice on them because I was close to cracking. After the rollers, the pace started to increase and I started moving up, getting ready for the gravel part of the course. When we reached the gravel, it was sketchy because people would swerve and fall. In the middle of the gravel section, my teammates and I were in a single file line drafting off each other. Close to the end, someone fell on the left of us and his bike almost hit us; we swerved to miss it. Creighton and I were fine but my teammate behind me had to press his brakes and hope for the best. After this, I was in the very back of the group and the person in front of me was slowly dying out. When he finally blew out, I was not ready to catch the group; therefore I had not chance to bring them back. Luckily, there was a group right behind the main group that was keeping a good pace so I stayed with them for the rest of the way to the finish line. This was my first cat 4 road race so I thought I did fine.

Stage 2 - Criterium

In the criterium, I found out that they have me listed as a DNF and after talking to the officials, they told me that they would change it. Afterwards, I warmed up on the course with Creighton and we talked a little bit about strategy and what we should do in the race. Later, I lined up for the race as soon as I could and I got up in the front. When the whistle blew, I faded into the middle of the pack and kept moving back until I was almost in the very end. As a result, I had a hard time staying with the group. When I saw the field splitting, one of the riders was bridging the gap so I sprinted to catch him. Furthermore, I followed him all the way to mid pack where I stayed for most of the race. During the last lap, I started to move up. But so was everyone else so I did my best and could not get good positioning to contest the sprint. My last thought was that I should have stayed towards the front.

Stage 3 – Time Trial

For warm-up, I only did a one minute pyramid and some spinning because I raced one and a half hours before the time trial that I was planning to do. I was feeling okay for the time trial but my legs felt sluggish. When it was five minutes from the start time, I lined up and was third to go. At the beginning of the race, I started off really good and on the way to the turnaround point I caught someone. On the way back, I almost cracked half way through. I thought I went too hard on the way there and I did not have anything left for the way back. I really pushed myself and I threw up from the effort when I got done with the time trial. I think I should have not pushed myself as much in the beginning and I would have done better.

-Andrew

Jonas Crean

36 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Road Race	Senior Category 4/5
50 th Place	Chico Stage Race, Criterium	Senior Category 4/5
43 rd Place	Chico Stage Race, Time Trial	Senior Category 4/5
36 th Place	Chico Stage Race, G.C.	Senior Category 4/5

Stage 1 – Road Race

I was super excited to be in Chico and to be racing my first stage race! The first stage was a 45 mile road race with some rollers. Once I got to the start and was warmed up I went with my teammates to rollout and lined up. Our field was the biggest in the entire race with around 65 riders, so I knew it was going to be competitive. Once the race started I just hovered around mid pack and waited. One guy attacked and went off the front but nobody chased because we knew he was going to fry out. Around mile 20 is when the pace really started to pick up. The group was really hammering it over a set of rollers and I could feel myself cracking on the final steep one. However I managed to hang on and recover. Around mile 35 is when everything started to fall apart. We hit this section of pavement which was littered with craters and everyone was swerving all over the place. Then at mile 40 we hit one of the sketchiest parts of the entire race, the infamous Paskenta gravel. After the first gravel roller someone crashed a few riders up and goes down hard. This causes the field to split and I work really hard to catch back up. However on a final section of uphill within the last 2 miles I get dropped and finish 36th. Not the result I was hoping for, but I had fun and felt good for most of the way.

Stage 2 - Criterium

I really messed up the morning of the crit. I was unprepared, had a short warm-up, and barely ate anything. This was my third competitive crit, so I thought it was going to be like the other ones; slow start and gradual pace. Wrong. The pace was super aggressive right out of the gate and I lost good positioning because I was slow in clipping in my pedals. I really had to fight to get back to the middle but a crash with 8 to go slowed us down and we had to stop while the guy was carted off in an

ambulance. I was eventually barely hanging on and with one to go I got dropped. I was really bummed about finishing 50th in a 60 man field but I just wanted to do well in the TT.

Stage 3 – Time Trial

After a disappointing finish in the crit I ate some food then once I got to the start area I took my time with my warm-up and relaxed. It was an 8 mile course so it would be a fast TT. Once I was warmed up at 11:55 I started. I had never done a TT before so I just tried to stay in zone 5 for most of the time and was keeping an average cadence of 110 until I got to the roundabout. There was a headwind on the way back and my speed dropped from 24 mph to 22. I dug deep and finished strong. I got 46th. On the GC I came out 36th overall. To me this was a decent result for my first stage race. I had fun and will be back next year!

-Jonas

6. Rosena Ranch Circuit Race

2/25/17

Glen Helen

Parker Rous

23rd Place Rosena Ranch Circuit Race Senior Category 3

Rosena Ranch is a very unique circuit race. It is simply an Up and back 2 mile lap consisting of two main climbs per lap and several very long and windy straightaways. The first race that I did, the cat 3 race was 30 miles. With a large field including a former team Swift rider Ethan Frankel I knew this was going to be a fun race. Ethan and I were all over the front of the race for the early laps but no breakaway decided to stick, this was partially because of the long distance of the race as well as the windy sections. As the race dragged on and multiple riders tried a flurry of attacks to get away nothing stuck. I knew with five laps to go there was going to be a sprint finish. Having made up my mind I sat towards the front of the group and tried to stick my nose in the wind as little as possible, Ethan did the same. It is also important to both of us to stay fresh because each of us had another race later in the day. Going into the last lap the pace was high and it only picked up as we rounded the turn around to head back to the finish. I should've been more observant in the earlier laps by marking out how far the finish was away considering there was a long stretch leading up to it with no signs referring to the distance before the finish line. I went into the sprint with good positioning but jumped way too early and with it being the beginning of the season I still have yet to develop a finishing sprint. I was overtaken by many riders including Ethan who went on to win the race. Even though the placing it doesn't show like I gained much from this race it was nice to be in the finale of a race for the first time this season and I definitely learned that I need to pay more attention to the finish line especially when you pass by it multiple times in the same race.

Ethan Frankel

La Grange, UCLA Cycling
Racing Age 19, Senior Category 3

2nd Place Rosena Ranch Circuit Race Senior Category 3

I was going to race the Chico Stage Race. Two weekends before it, I had started planning out the logistics. Then I realized that logistics were a nightmare and that it would be easier to hang around Los Angeles. Besides, the weather is also infinitely better (although the past four weekends have had torrential downpours). I decided instead to race the Rosena Ranch Circuit Race and famous SoCal race, Vlees Huis (since hardly anyone knows how to pronounce it, say "Flays House") Road Race the following day.

With two days until the weekend, racers received word that Vlees Huis was cancelled due to poor road conditions. It was a bummer, especially since I would've stayed with a friend in Bakersfield and had a chance to hone my climbing skills. I instead decided to race two races at Rosena Ranch and take on the Cat 3s race as a warm up for the P/1/2/3s.

Sebouh, a teammate of mine from UCLA, also planned on racing Rosena Ranch in the Cat 3s. We left later than expected from campus, and arrived at the race venue with just 30 minutes before the race start. It gave us minimal time for warm-up, last minute fueling, and pinning. Therefore, my warm-up turned out to be just an easy five-minute spin. My fueling turned out to be non-existent. My pin job turned out to be atrocious. Within seven minutes of our race start, I lined up with some of my teammates from my new team La Grange, a local Santa Monica club team. I shifted into a better gear for the uphill start. BAM! My chain dropped. I looked down and helplessly tried to get it back on the chain ring. It was useless; the chain had slipped under the chain catcher and the only way to fix it was to loosen the chain catcher and slide the chain around it. I started to panic.

There were just five minutes until our start, and the masters before us were about to start. I called out to the whole field for a multi-tool. No one had one. I hopped off my bike. I wasn't expecting to be doing cyclocross today, but I guess it was my lucky day. I ran a good 100 meters to the neutral pit and explained the problem. The kind mechanic fixed the problem in a minute, and I was back on my bike after thanking him profusely. I rolled to the line as the masters started their race. That moment of panic ended and I was just happy to be racing.

A minute later, we were rolling. The course was short and simple: just two miles out and back, with two U-turns and two punchy rollers, each under a minute long. It was an ideal course for a sprinter. Or a breakaway. Pick your poison.

The first few laps out of 15 were simple. Some typical moves formed but never established as a threatening break. Since La Grange had so many guys, we were almost always in one of those breaks. The other six of my teammates, however, were pretty spent from an earlier race so didn't quite cover as many moves or take huge pulls at the front to bring back breaks. For the most part, I was free riding. I covered several

moves and followed certain attacks that seemed more dangerous than others. For the most part, it stayed together.

My legs were feeling great. My mind, however, felt exceptionally tired and groggy. It was hard for me to concentrate when there was a lull in the race. Then I glanced at the lap cards. Three to go. Immediately, my mind was where I wanted it: dialed in on the race and I was ready to jump as soon as someone else did. Lo and behold, a move went. I followed. They sat up, but we had a gap. "Let's keep it rolling," I called out to him. He gave me a nod and a few others soon joined us. My group had something like 15 seconds on the field. I could tell from the relative ease of their pulls that we weren't going to stick it. Not a day for the break. I sat up and allowed the group to swarm me.

Not long after, the bell lap began. Moves went, none stuck. La Grange was at the front, but we hadn't discussed a lead-out for me, so I was going to ride wheels until the finish. I had great positioning as we hit the final turnaround. Top five and we were going into the final 800 meters. There was a gap behind me that immediately got shut down and suddenly the group had more momentum than I did. I was shot back ten wheels back, the pace was starting to pick up, and we had hit the bottom of the finishing climb. It was a long, 300-meter drag race to the finish. I was still at least twelve wheels back, and the gaps between riders were starting to close as the sprint unfolded and people tried to gain as much aerodynamic advantage as possible. I saw a tiny gap and squeezed through. Into the top ten. I found another and squeezed through there. Top seven. I was giving it everything I had to make it through the bunch to catch the Big Orange train that already had several wheel lengths on me. With 150 to go, I launched. I came around my former Team Swift teammate, Parker, and the other five guys in front of me. I shot around as fast as my legs would take me, and bike threw at the line. As I crossed the line, I peeked over at my opponent's wheel and noticed my wheel had just barely made it past. I was elated. I had won! I pumped my fist and shook hands with my La Grange teammate, James, who ended up placing third. It was such a thrilling finish, and I had maneuvered my way through a crowded bunch and sprinted for a win. The race ended up being a sprinter's course after all! My La Grange teammates were just as excited for the win. One of the guys who had raced earlier came up to me and showed me a video of the finish. It had been extremely close, but it appeared as if my bike throw had pushed me over the line just in front. I couldn't stop grinning. That was easily one of the most rewarding wins I have ever experienced.

And then the results came out. Second place. Wait what? I was completely shocked, and I immediately went to the officials to protest. I asked if there was anything I could do to prove that I had won, including showing them the video my teammate had. "Sorry, that's not the official video. You can watch the official camera, but it's hard to tell. At this point, we, as race referees, have to make a judgment call." I watched the video, and after doing so, I ended up even more confused. Firstly, the camera was too slow and it hadn't captured the legitimate finish line. There were two frames: one three feet before and one three feet after the line. There was no in between. In the first frame, I was slightly behind the claimed winner, and in the second

I was clearly in front. I must admit: it was very difficult to determine who the winner was based on the video. To add to my confusion, the camera was angled in such a way that my front wheel wasn't even visible. I had sprinted around on the right side, closer to the camera, but I couldn't see the front of my wheel.

In the end, I thought it was irritating that they hadn't captured the proper finish, especially since I was confident that I had won. In the end, however, the officials' job is to ensure a fair result, and I can't say that the video refuted his win. It was ambiguous. I'm kicking myself for not sprinting one watt higher, getting one millimeter lower, or opening up my sprint from just a tiny bit farther back. At the end of the day, the officials did their job, and I understand that. I'm at ease with that, and the results don't have to show what in my mind (and the minds of my friends, family, and teammates) was a win.

-Ethan F.

Parker Rous

7th Place Rosena Ranch Circuit Race Juniors 17-18

The junior race followed the morning race of the cat 3's at the Rosena Ranch circuit race. Doing two races in one day is typical with a criterium where a race might be 30 minutes long but the circuit race was 30 miles long for the cat 3s and 24 miles from the juniors 17/18 men. This can be deceiving when the total is 54 miles raced, not a long road race by any means, but sprinting out of the corners and doing two climbs a lap can zap the power out of anyone's legs. Now that the soccer season was officially over I counted this as my first true race of the year. With a relatively small junior field the wind was a factor in wearing down the riders and considering I was the only one in the field to have raced earlier in the day I was automatically with a disadvantage. I also had no teammates which can tend to be a problem. I decided in the open laps that I did not have the legs to go out on a breakaway and rather decided that I would stay in the group and try to muster up a sprint finish. As the laps counted down it became clear that nearly everyone in the race had the same plan as I did. I knew that normally with fresh legs I would be stronger than most of the people in the race but as the miles tacked on I began to feel less and less able to put out an effort. Going into the final laps the pace did pick up but because many other teams had multiple riders in the race I was able to sit in and simply follow the wheels. Everything was going according to plan until the final lap when two people broke away. I didn't go with them because there were major teams not represented in the move and I simply thought that they would get caught considering going from 2 miles out is a risky move. Going around the turn around for the final time they had a gap that looked to be sustainable so instead of going to the front and trying to pull it back I sat in and thought I'd sprint for third. Winding up for the sprint I again had good positioning like in the cat 3s but as I started to go I cramped up in sat up still rolling across The line ahead of half the field.

-Parker

Ethan Frankel

After the Cat 3 race, I conversed with my La Grange teammates, met up with my UCLA teammates, and talked with a friend of mine from San Jose Bicycle Club, Justin Poulson. Justin had stayed with Team Swift at the Junior National Championships in Kentucky last year, and he's now living in San Diego training full-time. It was great to reconnect with him and he has certainly gotten stronger since I last raced with him in 2016. He'd be a man to mark today.

Despite an interesting and somewhat disappointing end to the previous race, I was feeling confident about my fitness and ability to race intelligently. This race was double the length of the Cat 3s: 30 laps totaling 60 miles. The temperature was dropping, a dark cloud formed overhead, and the wind began to gust a little louder and a little stronger.

Remember what I stated earlier? "It was an ideal course for a sprinter. Or a breakaway. Pick your poison." Keep that in your mind as you continue reading. The first two laps, I surfed through the 40-man field enjoying my time on the bike, testing out my legs, and thinking about which moves to follow. From the gun, there were several attacks that attempted to establish a big enough gap to get away. The moves, however, only came in ones and twos and nothing stayed for more than a couple minutes. Then, on the third lap, two attacks of two people hit it hard just as the field sat up. Suddenly, they had 15 seconds. Then 30. Before long that gap was up to 45 seconds. No one was willing to chase. Maybe this was because everyone was marking a guy in an Elevate-KHS kit or maybe because everyone thought it could be brought back as the winds picked up. Maybe both.

Several laps later, after covering several attacks that never stuck it, my UCLA teammate, RJ, went off with three others. The field never saw them again, except for as we passed them going the opposite direction. Somehow, both breakaways evaded capture even when the field was motivated to bring the gap down to 15 seconds. I guess it was a course for a break! With ten laps to go, fatigue, both mental and physical, was starting to kick in. I knew there were going to be more attacks, and for me, it was just a matter of finding the right move to hop onto. RJ had dropped out of the break, leaving just three in the chase. With nine laps to go, a SoCal Cycling rider attacked over the short hill in the middle of the course. I immediately hopped onto his wheel. Shortly after, I glanced under my elbow to find three others chasing the two of us. The pack, however, was already ten seconds behind. I pulled through, determined to ensure that this move stuck it to the finish. That was easier thought than performed. For two laps, we dangled off the front by twenty seconds. Soon, the gap was cut to just fifteen.

"Let's keep it going!" I called to my breakmates as I gradually increased our pace and motivation. We worked extremely well together and had a substantial gap by the time I saw 4 laps to go. My legs screamed for me to stop pedaling every time we climbed the finish hill. I knew I had a chance to place well in my second P/1/2/3 race ever. I pushed through the pain.

I've been in more legitimate breakaways in 2017 than I have in all of my previous seasons combined. Being in so many breaks has demonstrated to me that I have the physical fitness and smarts to get in moves that would stick. In the back of my mind, I knew that we were going to hold off the field, which was now nearly a minute back. Then again, if I skipped a turn or stopped working to conserve energy for the finish, I felt that we'd be caught. But it was time to start thinking about the finish. With three to go, the third man from the second group up the course came back to our group, after being in that chase group for the majority of the race. He was fatigued, so I knew I could at least outkick him. For the next two laps, the gap between the field and us diminished. By the time the last lap rolled around, we had twenty seconds. We were also close to the now two-man group, but there was no chance of catching them. I took a pull before the turnaround.

1.5 km to go. I sat second wheel, ready to take one more pull and then sit in to prepare for the sprint. I rotated and hopped into fifth wheel. My legs howled with pain. There was a surge with 500 meters to go. My legs were now roaring at me to stop. There was a point where they finally went numb and I didn't feel the lactic acid pouring through my muscles. 250 to go and the four launched their sprint. I opened up my "sprint" which ended up just being a 50-meter acceleration before I realized I wasn't going to beat any of them and that my legs couldn't take the strain. As soon as I crossed the line, my legs gave in and I pulled over to the curb. RJ, my teammate from UCLA, helped me get food and fluids in my body. "I'm so dead," I croaked. RJ laughed, "Yeah man. You had a good race." I had rolled in fifth in the group and 11th overall. Not an amazing result, but I was absolutely stoked about my race. Even after racing previously and attacking multiple times in this one, I had still managed to drive a breakaway for nearly ten laps. It had been 40 minutes of suffering to keep us away, and every minute was worth that 11th place. Had I sat in the pack by racing conservatively and waiting for the sprint, I would not have achieved that result and I certainly would not have had as much fun. I'm tremendously eager for the rest of the collegiate and elite season!

-Ethan F.

7. Cherry Pie Criterium

2/20/17

Napa

Jonas Crean

10th Place Cherry Pie Criterium Juniors 15-18

When I woke up I groaned. It was pouring rain outside. I ate an egg and some oatmeal and went over to Napa, where the race was. I thought that the rain would at least discourage some riders. Not at all apparently, because once I lined up the junior's field must have been close to 30. Once the race started we had a neutral lap and then BOOM, three started to break away right after. They looked strong but weren't going super fast, so I thought I would hang a little back with another group until the straightaway where I could bridge up. Unfortunately, when we were going around the round-about, someone two riders in front of me went down and took another guy with

him. I swerved, barely missed the pileup and had to do a U-turn to get back in the right direction. Of course this really frustrated me and I pushed hard to get with a group up ahead. Once I joined two of the guys peeled off leaving me and a guy from Limitless. We started working together and were passing some dropped riders. Eventually we caught up with another group of two or three and were doing pretty good. Then on the second to last lap another guy when down at the round-about at the same spot, but thankfully I was prepared this time and didn't get too off track. Coming into the last lap our group of five started to pass more people and eventually we got to the straightaway. The sprint wasn't very fast and I came up on the inside and passed a few people but then got boxed in and finished tenth overall. I wasn't sure what my standing in the 15-16's category was, but overall I was happy for about my first race in the rain and even happier that I didn't crash.

-Jonas

8. Alumni Reports

Ethan Frankel

La Grange, UCLA Cycling

Racing Age 19, Senior Category 3

1st Place, UCLA Road Race, Collegiate Men's B

February 11th, 2017

In college, I have had a multitude of new experiences, particularly on the bike. The UCLA Road Race is the first collegiate race of the WCCC (Western Collegiate Cycling Conference) season and it's a tough one. Over 12.5 miles, there's 1,500 feet of elevation gain, and it takes place in the high desert of Devil's Punchbowl near Palmdale, California. The race is in SoCal, in the desert, so it should be hot, right? That's what everyone figured, but everyone was wrong. It was close to freezing and 100% drizzling when the UCLA Cycling squad rolled in at 4 am to set up. The rain didn't stop until 8 am, making for a wet, muddy, and cold first wave of races. Additionally, all of the UCLA riders volunteered to help with registration and staging, so we were all exposed to the elements for hours on end. Personally, I had a great time running registration and getting my hands and feet dirty to help put on a race. Every time I go to a race, I now know exactly the time and effort that it requires to make a great, well-run event.

When 7 am rolled around, it was time for the first wave of races to start and I staged the sixty-plus riders. They went off without a problem, and for the next few hours I helped at registration as my race time approached. With 45 minutes until the start, I began my ritual: eat a bit, change, bathroom (no details needed), register, pin, and warm-up. I rolled to the line with just a minute to spare as the official was finished giving his spiel. I'd heard it multiple times, so I hadn't missed anything I didn't know. "You are off on the whistle!" The whistle came unexpectedly, and I rolled from the back to first wheel.

Rolling to the front was not particularly difficult. After all, there were only nine racers. I found myself next to a UCSB rider. "Wonderful day for a ride, isn't it!"

He responded with a chuckle. I rolled back a bit and found a former teammate from Team Swift, Remy Canto-Adams who is racing for Cal Poly. We conversed for the few minutes while we ascended the climb at a zone 2 pace. Being a less experienced field, very cold, and early in the season, a couple guys dropped quickly. The same UCSB rider went to the front and upped the pace a bit, but it wasn't anything the other six of us couldn't handle. My legs felt a bit slow, but they probably just needed to warm up.

I felt a rain drop as we were cresting the climb. "No rain, please!" came a plea from one of the riders. Fortunately, that was the last of the "rain" we'd get for the rest of the race.

Laps one and two were uneventful, just a bunch of moderately easy riding, and I found myself at the front often just holding a tempo pace. The start of lap three of four came around. My legs were warming up, and my mind was starting to wander due to the tedious pace of the race. I decided to kick it up a notch and began with 270 watts, which was slightly below my threshold power (the power I could theoretically hold for an hour all-out based on a 20-minute test). Four dropped, and now there were just three of us left at the front: one UC Davis, one UCSB, and myself. I ramped it up gradually to 300 watts as we approached the "Staircase," a four-minute section of the climb that has several, well, steps. I drilled over the first pitch, had about three seconds of relatively flat road, and then it pitched up once again. Four steps later, I had reached the top with about a one-minute advantage. The descent was where I would lose time since I was solo, 130 pounds, and going into a headwind. Nonetheless, I got as aero as I could and in fact made up more ground on the two chasers.

From then on, it was just an hour of time trialing. I hit the climb for the final time, and smiled at our UCLA coach, Matt Chatlaong. "Keep it up, man!" he yelled. Up the climb, the follow car for my race pulled up next to me. Danny's head popped into view and he informed me, "You've got a big gap, keep it going!"

Thirty minutes later, I had again reached the top of the climb. And no one was in sight. I started to pass many dropped riders from the fields that had started minutes before mine. I was excited. I glimpsed back periodically, but never caught sight of my chasers. Never before had I soloed to win a race, and my legs were starting to scream from the effort. I got to the base of the climb, and ramped it up for the finish. After putting my hands up in victory, I rolled around a bit before riding over to talk to Matt. Five minutes later, I saw someone from Davis about to finish. "Oh! There's second place!" I exclaimed.

"Dude, you destroyed that field," Matt laughed. A lot of credit goes to him, though, for having coached me for the past five months through stupid crashes and sickness. It was just the first collegiate race, and I'm already feeling tons of improvement.

Several minutes later, after having cooled down, the front of the A's race arrived. Sam Boardman had a slight gap on a UCSB rider, and as soon as Sam reared up for his sprint, that gap only opened up. In a display of raw power, I experienced Sam take the win for UCLA, and a minute later Eric Bryan and Rupert Cox finished in sixth and seventh. It was an awesome day for UCLA, not only in terms of race results (we took

wins in the Men's A's, Women's A's, Men's B's, and top 5's in Women's B/C and Men's D!) but also in terms of setting up an extremely successful event.

I was personally proud of my result because it had been a new experience. I found the strength and mental fortitude to open up early and solo for nearly 1.5 hours. As the collegiate season continues, I'm excited to start racing with the A's and see how I can improve and help the team!

-Ethan F.

Ethan Frankel

La Grange, UCLA Cycling

Racing Age 19, Senior Category 3

35th Place, Roger Millikan Memorial Criterium, Category 3

February 12th, 2017

Also known as the Valentine's Day Massacre (held the weekend before Valentine's), the Roger Millikan Memorial Criterium was notorious for crashes due to the wide roads where the race bunches and fast, tight turns where the bunches make the race dangerous. As I arrived later in the day for the Cat 3 race, I heard the tales of the previous races' happenings.

"There was a huge crash in corner 3!!"

"Did you see that guy who tried bunny hop over the crash??"

"Dude, I'm so amazed I didn't go down. There were bikes and bodies all over the road."

This was going to be fun. I registered and found some of my teammates. Rupert got me pinned up, as I talked with the A's about their race (which was held with the P/1/2s). RJ had come in 12th or so and first the collegiate A's. Matt Chatlaong, our coach, had finished 3rd after having the legs to seal the deal but was boxed out in the final corner and nearly crashed. Although I was bummed for him (and stoked for the rest of the team, including the women's team who also had great races in the A's and B/C's) I prepared myself mentally and physically for a 50-minute race. Matt instructed me to communicate with my teammate, Alex DeRoche, during the race. Alex and I were still 3s, but he was a Cat A in collegiate categories (I was still a B). In order to ensure that the races ran smoothly and on time, the organizers had to race the collegiate categories with the elite races. This meant that all of the A's who raced the P/1/2 race would be placed in front of those in front of those who raced the 3's. But this didn't mean Alex and I were going to stop trying to get him a top placing! There were still lots of other A's in the Cat 3 race, so our goal was to get him in front of (hopefully) all of them. I had a lead-out position!

In the past, I was always too small and weak to be an effective lead-out, but now that I'm more physically mature, I'd have the opportunity to do so. Alex was stoked, and I was even more excited to race. We had a front line position at the start. "The Elite 3's will start in THREE, TWO, ONE. TWEET!" We were off, and immediately there were two guys off the front. I dropped back a bit to tenth to survey the situation and ensure that if there was attack, I could cover it.

For the next 15 of 28 laps, I initiated zero moves and covered countless. And there hadn't been a single crash! So far, so good. Then, Steven attacked. Steven

Willemsen, aka the "Flying Dutchman", is an insanely strong rider for UCSB (in fact, he's the Dutch national collegiate champion) who has established himself as a breakaway specialist in races including Roger Millikan and UCLA Road Race. Currently, he is back in the Netherlands after only staying for a few months in the U.S. He will be missed. By his UCSB teammates, and the racers who wanted a real challenger. His being back in Europe, however, improves the chances of UCLA's future results. Personally, I enjoyed the challenge he presented (as did Sam Boardman, I'm sure, who went off the front with Steven at UCLA).

Where were we before that tangent? Oh yes, Steven attacked. No one went with him. I was a little surprised, considering he's known to be so strong. Knowing he was a threat, my momentary lapse in thinking ended and a few seconds after he went off the front, I jumped around the field and bridged to him. The effort cost me a match, but it was worth it. Shortly after bridging, a mid-race prime was announced. The two of us rotated extremely well together. I looked back and the field was out of sight. We hit the climb (and by climb I mean 15 seconds at 3%), and I pulled through in the rotation. We rounded the top of the hill and final corner before the finishing straight. I was still pulling, and it wasn't worth the effort to Steven to jump around me for the prime, so I took a \$60 cash value prime uncontested.

We still had a great gap on the field. Then again, I was taking hard pulls at an intensity that I knew I wouldn't be able to hold for the remainder of the race. Four laps later, I peeked under my elbow and saw several riders scattered across the road attempting to bridge to us. Suddenly, the field filled the entirety of my view. Well, there was no point in staying in the break anymore! I figured that I'd get back in there and recover before my lead-out. Good timing too, because there were only eight laps to go!

With four to go, I located Alex and moved him to the top 10. We passed the line for the antepenultimate time (third-to-last for non-English majors). Coming into turn two, I heard a huge crash behind me. When I was younger, I had an aversion to crashes. If I heard one, I would panic. If I was in one, well, that's happened too many times and I have learned that it's just a part of racing.

Anyways, I didn't panic. I just kept riding, focused on my job. I glanced behind me and spotted Alex. Phew, glad he wasn't one that went down. We cruised up the hill and rounded the final corner. Alex was on my wheel, and we were top five. Oh! Did you think Steven was back in the field? No, he had actually stayed off the front for five laps SOLO before anyone bridged to him. A two-man break had lasted the entirety of the race since lap 15, and I was going to be the one to be their downfall.

The break had maybe 12 seconds on the field, but they were definitely fading. We passed the finish line and the bell rang. Last lap. Alex shouted, "We're good to go! Hit it!" Boy, did I hit it hard. I completely let all of my energy into the pedals and got as aero as possible. After all, we did have to catch the break. The gap went down to five seconds at turn 2. I cornered so hard (the same turn where the crash had occurred); I honestly thought I was going to slide out. My tires gripped, however, and I ended up just carrying a lot of speed into the headwind-descent before hitting the hill. "Just 300 meters to go," I thought to myself.

"UP UP UP!" I heard from behind me. Alex. There was someone approaching from the right. I kicked my pedal stroke a few rpm's higher and shut the door on the rider to the right. We were rapidly approaching the penultimate corner, and the break was five feet in front of my face. I didn't brake. I sped up through the corner. I took a sharp, inside line, thinking I'd take Alex with me as we passed the remnants of the break and thereby shutting the door on the rest of the field. It was not meant to be. Alex went wide, losing some of that momentum. I was still going hard, but as soon as I glimpsed Alex on the left side of the road, I knew I'd done as much as I could and that the sprint was up to him. He launched halfway up the hill, still with 250 meters to go. Too early to win, but he was still able to pick up a fifth place and third in the Men's A's. I sat up and rolled easy to the finish, excited by such an invigorating race.

I finished 3rd in the Men's B's, and 35th overall in the 3s. Obviously, the results don't show the amount of work I put into that race, but I do have some Perfect Pushups as the prime prize!

This weekend was an outright success for the UCLA Cycling team and me personally. I was particularly proud of the way Alex and I communicated throughout the race (besides the one hiccup in the second-to-last corner), my being in the break, and my lead-out. In the past, I'd never been an aggressive racer, but I definitely am shaping up to be smarter about my racing in general.

-Ethan F.

Ethan Frankel

La Grange, UCLA Cycling

Racing Age 19, Senior Category 3

3rd Place, Cantua Creek Road Race, Category 3

February 19th, 2017

"Warmers or no?"

"Meh, I think so," Rupert responded.

"This sucks."

The weather was right in the range of "choose if you want leg warmers or not." I opted for a knee warmers compromise. Let me just say this: that was a great, great decision. Since we were lounging in the sun while we prepared to race, it felt very toasty with my knee warmers, arm warmers, and long gloves. With ten minutes until the race start, I began my warm-up. It was really more of an easy spin for five minutes before I realized I had to pump my tires and line up for the start.

My friend from UC Santa Barbara, Dom, rolled up next to me. I looked over at him and immediately decided he was not going to have fun today. His millimeter-thick kit was the only article of clothing on his body. "How are you doing?" I asked him as goose bumps materialized along his arms and legs.

"I've been warmer," he responded nonchalantly.

And then we were off for a 75-mile adventure on the flattest (besides the finishing climb of 2 km), most boring roads in California. The chill immediately crept

through my knee warmers and arm warmers as we descended. We kept it conversational for the first half hour as everyone warmed up. It started with Dom. Thirty minutes into the race he attacked. A few people chased half-heartedly, but the move was quick to come back. The next lap occurred in quite a similar manner. Attacks never established and the pace constantly surged.

As we were a quarter of the way through the second lap of three, Matthew Tracey-Cook of Herbalife-24 went for a dig. He did so on the tailwind section, so I decided to go with him. I figured the pack wasn't going to be willing to chase until we hit the turnaround into the cross-headwind. It was time to go. Seconds after Matthew attacked; I put in a fifteen-second dig to catch him. I reached his wheel, passed him, and told him to get on and gap the rest of them. The two of us hit the turnaround and were met with a wall of wind. Our speed immediately reflected the strength of the wind as we slowed to 20 mph on the flats. Matthew and I rotated smoothly and established a relatively large gap. A minute later, two others joined us. It was now four of us taking 15-second pulls into an intense headwind.

Matthew looked back and saw a solo rider bridging to the four of us. He seemed frustrated and immediately starting taking harder, longer pulls. Clearly, his intention was to get away. I was content with him killing himself at the front, because I knew that I could wait for a field sprint finish or have a good finish in a breakaway. Of course, I would've liked to finish in a break, but it wasn't meant to be. I faded quickly and had to take shorter pulls. Eventually, that solo rider made contact. It was Nick from UCSB. He sat on my wheel and I shouted to him, "How are you doing after that monster effort?" He squawked in response.

After 15 minutes off the front, the five of us were reeled in with around seven miles to the end of the second lap. Just 30 miles remaining.

As soon as we returned, a friend who I've raced with for a couple years, Tim McBirney, attacked with one other from NorCal, Travis Lee. They had a solid gap that for some reason no one was willing to chase down. Another rider attempted to chase them down with a chase that only lasted him a couple of minutes before he came back. If he hadn't jumped hard to get across, people may have followed his move and brought Tim and Travis back.

This breakaway, however, was meant to be. They stayed away for the remainder of the race, and by the time the Dom, Nick, Matthew, and myself decided to start the chase, they were too far-gone. With a few miles to go, Dom and I chatted about the race and how we were a couple of the only ones who were willing to chase anything down. Without warning, there was a crash directly in front of us. I moved right to avoid it, and Dom braked. I looked back and saw him chasing back. That slight disruption did not do much besides scare us into picking up the pace.

Dom, Matthew, and I headed to the front and rotated smoothly, keeping the pace high. We hit the base of the 2km climb. Matthew pulled the whole field up it. Except for Dom. Dom decided to hit it with a little over 1km to the finish. He promptly died. I stayed in the top 5 as we approached 500 meters to go. Someone went on my right. Too early. They would promptly die as well. Matthew was still pulling the field, and there were around 10 remaining. With 200 to go, Nick launched his sprint on the

left. We were approaching a shattered masters' field, making for a pretty messy sprint. I went right. Good move. I came around Nick, passed five masters, and crossed the line with at least several bike lengths over Nick and the rest of the field.

I was disappointed not to place higher, but I can't complain with a field sprint win, especially since I was active for the majority of the race. The last time I raced at Cantua Creek two years ago, I had dropped from the Cat 4 field on the second lap. Since then, the improvement has been vast, and I cannot wait to see what the rest of the season brings.

-Ethan F.