

Team Tortuga

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www.teamtortuga.org

Team Tortuga-A Brief History of Time

By Robert Brooks – Communications Director and Training Antagonist

Stephen Hawking's 1988 masterpiece, *A Brief History of Time*, opens Chapter One with a description of "Our Picture of the Universe." Hawking describes a lecture presented by a well-known scientist, perhaps Bertrand Russell, who described how the earth orbits around the sun and how the sun, in turn, orbits around the center of a vast collection of stars. When the scientist ended his discussion, a little old lady in a the white, blue and green kit of **Team Tortuga** stood up to proudly display her allegiance to Royal Toyota, Oliver Winery, Federal Express, Tabor-Bruce-Puzello, Bikesmiths, Church & Community, BikeMine/Vittoria Tires, Polar Electro and Rudy Project, in addition to telling the scientist he was full of rubbish.

"The world is really a flat plate supported on the back of a giant tortoise," emphasized the spunky lady. To which the scientist replied with a knowing smirk, "What is the tortoise standing on?"

The lady retorted, "The tortoise is not standing at all. It sits astride a Giant bicycle made of carbon, purchased from Bikesmith's in Bloomington, Indiana. The bicycle is

on loan from **Team Tortuga's** own Double District Champion, Chris Kroll. After all, anyone who can win back to back District Road Races on consecutive days, is surely strong enough to support a tortoise and a flat world on his brawny shoulders," smiled the lady.

"Furthermore," she added, "I've come to you from the year 2005 via a time warped wormhole to remind you that according to Hawking, time, like light, caves in on itself, allowing for travel to different dimensions and eras via said worm holes."

The entire audience fell silent as the scientist exhibited the stunned, glazed eyes and expressionless, blank face usually reserved for Team Tortuga's competitors after they've just realized the world *is* supported by a giant tortoise who dictates winners and losers in the Indiana Races Series and other Midwest bike races.

Because it's been a while since Team Tortuga presented a newsletter, we'll shift back to the past via the all-important wormhole. Join me now on a brief journey back to 2004, which actually began in 2003.

Upon forming the Masters squad in late 2003, the six members set lofty goals and promptly won the first race they competed in as a unit. The group raced aggressively, launching multiple attacks throughout the race from Brauner, Brooks and Kroll while Bauer and Heffner covered the counters. With 5 laps to go, another attack by Kroll and Brooks was countered by Tim Davis, who landed in the winning break and took the V with his famous up-hill sprint prowess.

The one victory was a springboard into the '04 season. Although the squad struggled early, Mike Brauner notched the first win in May at the Tour Da Vinci RR near New Albany. Minus the Louisville Huns, the Tortuga Masters controlled the field in Postal-like fashion, stamping Brauner's win with exclamation points by taking 3rd, 4th and 5th as well.

After a quiet June, the squad again notched several podium finishes in July and August, led by Chris Kroll's dominating District Championship weekend performances. On Saturday, July 24, Kroll won the 40+ USCF RR on a very hilly 16-mile circuit near Elizabeth, Indiana on the Ohio River. Kroll came back the next day to win the ABR 35+ District RR in Battleground, Indiana. Kroll is quick to point out that teammates Bauer and Brauner were instrumental in his Saturday victory and again, along with Brooks, in his Sunday victory.

While Kroll was winning his second title, Tim Heffner won his third

straight Masters 35+ District TT Championship in Kokomo, Indiana.

In August, the team was inspired by the presence of sponsor/teammate, Doug Bruce in the Bloomington Fitness Fest. Showing good form in the Fest, Brooks took it a step further a week later at Sherwood Oaks Christian Church, by joining Kroll in the winning break, which lapped the field, and winning the bunch sprint to notch his 2nd win of the season; the first being the low key, 35+ TT at Eagle Creek Park in May.

In Mid-August, Brian Gavette, Sam Nichol, Kurt Spoerle and Craig Eigenbrod joined the squad, making immediate impacts. When rival Indy teams first saw the new foursome in the Turtle kit, they exhibited the stunned look of our opening paragraph scientist.

In addition to contributing to multiple top 10 placings in the remaining races of the season, two new members turned in OUTSTANDING TT performances to close the season. Sam Nichol cranked a 57:44 in his final 40K effort. Kurt Spoerle set new standards for Team Tortuga with a blistering 54:26.

The new fire power provided by the northern contingent allowed the team to set a demanding pace during the Indy Stage Race. The team scored somewhat of a coup at the Fairgrounds when Sean Bauer beat Curtis Tolson for the field sprint to take 3rd place on the day. Sean's sprint ability was displayed several

times during the season, placing top 5 on multiple occasions.

Overall, 2004 was a very successful campaign for Team Tortuga. The Masters team garnered 8 wins and 32 top 5 finishes. Matt Kubal led the Category 3, 4 and 5s with three of the group's eight top 5 finishes. Kubal had 1 podium and five top 5s for the Cat 3s; Geraint Parry, the Wily Welshman, performed yeoman's work in finishing 22 races. That demanding work produced a sculpted set of broad shoulders, which has earned the Welshman the honor of supporting the giant tortoise in 2005.

Geraint further distinguished himself in 2004 by winning the team TdF Fantasy competition.

In past issues of the team newsletter, team riders have been featured and team directors have given their views

on the direction of the squad. We will resume these practices in the next issue, coming in Mid-February, along with some new additions, including articles on training, nutrition, power, and various champions from our region.

Until next time, team director, Chris Kroll would like to remind everyone that the website <http://www.teamtortuga.org> has one of the most comprehensive databases for team web sites in the entire region. Links include all the major cycling news outlets. Hundreds of new photos, courtesy of Sherry Davis, will be added in the coming weeks. The results page is so comprehensive, even our well-known, time warped scientist continues his struggle to grasp the magnitude. Perhaps our lady in team kit will appear next issue to break down the multiple databases at our disposal?

Become Involved with Team Tortuga

Team Tortuga is always searching for cyclists to become involved with the team, whether they are new to the sport or experienced racers. The best source for information on becoming involved with Team Tortuga is the team's website at www.teamtortuga.org; you will find a calendar with information regarding team meetings, dates for team development rides and training races, application materials, and contact information for team directors.