

Team Tortuga

Newsletter Volume 3

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Warm Weather FINALLY Arrives

March came in like a lion and as the old adage goes, it went out like a lamb, with pleasant, 65-70 degree days beckoning us all out onto our steeds. Despite cold, damp, cloudy days through the majority of March however, several Tortuga members began racing. But before we pass deep into spring, our winter champions deserve recognition.

While many of us toiled away on basement trainers to pass the dreary days of winter, Tim Heffner strapped on his skies for a season of downhill ski racing. A veteran with many years experience, Heff had an exceptional 2004/05 campaign, winning 8 of his 17 Giant Slalom races.

Reaching speeds of up to 35 mph, Heff says the ski racing keeps his head fresh for bike racing while maintaining his leg strength. Slalom racing places a lot of emphasis on the quads and hip flexors, both instrumental in producing power on the bike.

In addition to his personal success, Heffner enjoyed the company AND success of his wife Sarah. Wanting to spend more time with her husband, Sarah decided to take up Ski racing over the winter. With an athletic background that included collegiate

bike racing, Sarah Heffner was a quick study on the slopes, garnering one win, six 2nd places, and a handful of 3rd place finishes. Sarah said the camaraderie and support among all competitors were instrumental in her continued success throughout the season. She added that the couple have already made plans to attend a December Training Camp in Vermont.

March Racing

Sean Bauer and Matt Kubal initiated the racing season for Team Tortuga. Bauer has garnered a 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th in the Category ¾ Kentuckiana and Ohio Valley Racing Spring Series competition. Kubal has also placed in the top 5 on two occasions, also in the Category ¾ division. Scott Parrish and Geraint Parry have also participated in early season events.

Chris Kroll led the Tortugans in the first Indiana Race Series event of the season, placing 2nd overall and 2nd in the 35+ Category of the Southeastway Park Time Trial on March 26. Bob Brooks placed 4th overall (3rd in the 35+) and Tim Davis finished 5th in the 35+.

Sponsor Appreciation

The team and sponsors convened at Royal Toyota/Scion on April 8 for an evening of fellowship, photos and appreciation. The team appreciates the support our sponsors generously offer and the evening is one of our ways to show how much we appreciate that support.

John Smith at BikeSmiths has supported Team Tortuga for several years and John was recognized not

only for his longevity with the team, but also for his longevity period. On April 10 Bikesmiths celebrated its 30th anniversary.

Through the years, John has become a fixture in the Bloomington cycling community, sponsoring and coaching various teams including Little 500 squads and the Bloomington South Solar Powered team. John was also the first organizer of the Hoosier Cycling Festival Criterium in downtown Bloomington. As a former BMX racer, he was known for his tight cornered courses. John smiled when I shared that I still occasionally hear expletive-laced tirades against the tough former course.

These days, John rides a Soma Ti Folding bike with 20" wheels and a 60-tooth cog to alleviate the knee problems he's suffered in recent years. He also owns a Cannondale R400 and says he equips his steeds with Shimano groups.

Thanks to support from sponsors like John Smith, Team Tortuga thrives in the Bloomington community and has begun the season on a very successful note. Look for more sponsor features in the May Issue.

Indiana Race Series Begins

In honor of the BikeSmiths 30th Anniversary, Team Tortuga set out to win a race on Sunday April 10. All ten masters riders took the line for the hotly contested 35+ event. With the mercury elevating over the 80-degree mark for the first time this spring, nearly 70 middle-agers took *elevation* to new *heights* as just about everybody took a shot off the front. From the gun, the attacks were non-stop, culminating in an

average speed of 27 mph over the undulating, curving, 1-mile loop.

O'Brien Forbes of Revolution, Curtis Tolson, the lone Texas Roadhouse representative and Chris Kroll of Team Tortuga animated the race throughout, throwing out several attacks each. The field was too strong for a group to stay away however, with Bacardi/Nuvo, Team Barbasol, Papa John's and Heroes chasing down threatening moves. Throughout the mix, the stealthy Darin Marhanka of Estridge/Delta Faucet relied on his team to chase when necessary and followed wheels to potential breaks, saving enough energy for when it mattered most.

Tension mounted when the entire field came through the start/finish area with 3 laps to go. Tim Davis of Team Tortuga took a flyer, opening the floodgates to some of the most-dicey racing this side of NASCAR. Surges and swells were fended off with either expletive profanities or body checks when necessary. A crash in the final mile momentarily stalled the back two-thirds of the field, providing daylight to those with enough nerve to maintain a front position to the end.

With other squads revving it up on front, Darin Marhanka beat Tolson to the punch, launching with 300 meters to go and cruised home for the win. Tolson closed rapidly, but ran out of real estate. Craig Eigenbrod and Brian Gavette of Team Tortuga flew up the left side of the course, providing me with a perfect lead out and I capitalized by taking 3rd. Joining Tolson and Forbes in the money spots was the other race animator, Chris Kroll of Team Tortuga in 8th place, making the Tortugas the only team with two bread-winner spots.

Team Tortuga also placed 3 in the money of the 4s race with Scott

Parrish, Adam Fryska and David Elkins placing 4th, 5th and 6th, respectively, thanks to Ren Jai Shei's final lap lead out.

VICTORY

The team's successful day was punctuated by Sean Bauer's **win** in the Category 3 race. As expected, the large field remained together until the end, when Bauer exploded from the group at the base of the finish rise and won going away.

The stay-at-home-dad/handy man/graphic design creator of the classy Tortuga kit attributes his success to power work during the winter. "I rode the hills in and around Bloomington in my 53X12 for most of the off-season," said Bauer. Sean added that from January through March, he rode the Rockport Road route twice a week. It's not a route many of us would want to endure even once a month let alone twice a week.

The Wednesday World's begin April 13. Check the calendar at the team web site: <http://www.teamtortuga.org> for the complete schedule. And browse the calendar for the full plate of weekend races over the next several weeks.