
O U T S P O K E N

The official newsletter of the Owen Sound Cycling Club

www.owensoundcycling.ca

October 2005

Editor's Ramblings

Well – here it is: the last newsletter of the season. I hope we can continue to ride for a while. Just when you think you can put the bikes away, there's another nice day. Some of our members, including Emese and me, have been on cycling trips. We have their reports inside.

Points

Emese has been keeping track of all the points she knows about. That would include the rides we led and points earned as a result of competing in or helping at time trials. But if you know of other activities please let her know.

As you may know, we spend our points at a Points Party early in the New Year. So you want to be sure you have everything that's due to you.

Road Clean Up

We should really do one more clean-up of our road before November. I'll set a date as soon as possible and let you all know by email. The more helpers we have, the quicker it goes.

In this Issue

Editor's Ramblings	1
Points	1
Road Clean Up.....	1
Newsletter Editor.....	1
President's Message.....	1
Club Jerseys Now Fashionable at Work.	1
Stop Me if You have Heard This Already... ..	2
Notches and Gaps	3
New Pewee Member?	4
MTB RACING ON "THE ISLAND"	4
Arrow Racing Victorious in Season Finale.....	5
Laura and John Tie the Knot.....	6
Michener Competes at World Championships	6
The Great Race	7
Time Trial Talk.....	7
The Grape Squeezer.....	8
Contributors	9

Newsletter Editor

I took on the task of newsletter editor two years ago. It spun off a couple of other jobs. I'm looking after the web site,

collating race results and also maintaining the member list and distribution. In other words; it expanded beyond my expectations and is consuming a lot of time. I'd like to share the job with someone. Would anyone like to take on one or more of these rôles?

Trevor Stokes

President's Message

Members, friends and family, I have been very happy and honoured to be the president of this great organization. It is time for me to step aside and allow someone new to take over the wheel and continue the good work for the club. Who is the new president? I do not know. The Owen Sound Cycling Club is still looking for someone to take over and lead us for a couple of years. It is healthy for any organization to get a fresh group of thinkers from time to time and I have been doing some of the thinking for the last few years. I need to thank several people for making the job very entertaining. First and foremost my family, Rebecca for being confident that I could lead the club, John, Scott, Trevor, Jason, Pam and Kent who are the rest of the executive and are always good for keeping the club going and in the right direction.

So – are you interested?? I can give you a quick course on what your tasks will be. Most meetings are held online with an email discussion. Please let me know.

I agree with Trevor, that we should have an annual general meeting. This will give all of the members an opportunity to voice their concerns and give the executive direction for what type of events should be on the schedule.

Take care and see you out riding.

Greg

Club Jerseys Now Fashionable at Work.

Some of you may know that my day job is to walk door to door throughout the City of Owen Sound putting out fires before they start. In my work week I quite often see our club members doing the job that keeps them on their bike. This week I felt extra proud when I met with the property

manager of a large professional building. I stopped by his office unexpected. Well to my surprise there he stood, in all his glory behind his desk wearing a set of bike shorts and the OSCC jersey. I complimented him on his choice of attire.

I thought what a great idea, so I ran the idea past my boss but he was not receptive to the concept. So I guess that my job does not have all the perks that some jobs offer.

Greg

Stop Me if You have Heard This Already...

"Mary, who is that guy back there in that bright orange jersey?" "Oh, he's that Tom guy. He just came back from some tandem thing and he's dying to tell anybody who'll listen about it. Just keep riding"

"Hi there, you two are new in the club aren't you."

"Umm, yes we are, so what's new with you? Ouch, Mary that hurt!"

Well as a matter-of-fact, my wife and I just came back from our first tandem rally in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It is the Mid-West Tandem Rally and is touted to be the largest one anywhere. You see Bill Moriarty and Ann West have been going to these things for about 11 years. They talked John Brown and Ruth Ann English into going a few years back and all of them have been trying to persuade us into trying one. Jody is not an avid cyclist so she was reluctant to try something where she would have to ride long distances. Everyone assured us that there is no pressure to ride hard, fast or long distances and that the events are really a great deal of fun. Because this year's event was held in Grand Rapids (about 30 miles from our home town of Muskegon), we thought it would be a good year to give it a try. Then we could visit my mother-in-law after the rally.

After registering way back in January, we sort of forgot about the rally until a few weeks before and started to panic... Did we make the hotel registrations? Did we really sign up for the events we wanted to do? After checking the web site a few times (It's tough when you get old and computer stupid) we assured ourselves that all was in order.

Because I lived in Grand Rapids when I went to art school for three years, I assured everyone that I would guide them around the city when we got there. We arrived in the city late Friday evening (September 2nd) so we missed the first day's event "The Ice Cream Ride". All the cyclists were booked into the new Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, a twenty story monolith in the heart of the city. Since the hotel's address was right on Monroe Street (the main drag of Grand Rapids) I was sure it would not be difficult to find. After

driving around and around the city centre for about 45 minutes we spotted a bunch of tandems off on a side street. We found the hotel entrance just metres from where we had been driving for the last three-quarters of an hour. We didn't bother telling the others about this part of our adventure.



We finally checked in, had dinner and contacted the rest of the OSCC team. We agreed to meet early for breakfast on Saturday morning. After a hearty breakfast we got our bikes out of the massive storage building next door. The well organized security system worked extremely well considering they had around 500 bikes to contend with. The teams then assembled on Monroe Street for the 8:00 a.m. mass start. I was dazzled by the variety and luxury of the bikes. There were hundreds of Burleys, Co-Motions, Santanas, Bike Fridays in tandem, triple and quad formations, as well as recumbent tandems from Rans, Vision and others. In some cases, the whole family was mounted on one quad bike. Teams ranged in age from children as young as three to seniors in their 70's. Because it was 'team' day all were dressed in matching jerseys, including the OSCC team of six (see photo). Most of the teams were a bit larger than ours as a good number present belonged to large 'Tandem only' teams or clubs. These clubs for whatever reason use animal acronyms for their monikers. For instance, the host club this year were the MUTS (Michigan United Tandem Society) which seems pretty straight forward, but what about the PIGS (Paired Iowans Going Somewhere) or the RACCOONS (Rear Admirals & Captains Cycling Only On Non-Singles)... Well, they're from Minnesota!



After the mass start we all headed up to Rockford, Michigan for a great ride through rolling hills and dales. After each rest and snack stop (great food) Jody and Ruth Ann pulled out the excellent set of maps supplied and said "Let's try this route next." By the end of the afternoon we had covered 105 km. Jody's first metric century! On the other hand she didn't feel like celebrating as her posterior was complaining about the lack of saddle time prior to the big day. I also discovered that we only had about 40 lbs. of pressure in tires that should have been closer to 80 lbs. Aarrg! None-the-less, we all headed down the street to a yummy tapas restaurant the others had discovered the night before.

Sunday was another mass start, which we opted out of since we elected to do the shorter remote start to give the backside a rest. Though the ride was to head to Lake Michigan and loop back, Jody and I decided that since we grew up in the area and have seen the Big Lake many times (plus her bum was still screaming GET OFF THIS #&@#\$\$ BIKE!) that we would cheat a bit and cut the loop even shorter. We still had a nice ride while the others did a good 150 km. by days end.

That evening we sat down to a very luxe banquet where John and Ruth Ann won a trip to New Zealand (well, sort of) and I won a bright orange Co-motion jersey. We all wandered out as the dance started since our legs were done for the evening. On Monday morning we took the optional 'Heritage Tour'... snooping at all the elegant old homes in the downtown core. All-in-all, we had a wonderful time at this well run event. With that in mind, I wrote this limerick about our adventure...

There once was a couple from Canada
Who bought a tandem to build up their stamina
Their stamina improved
but her butt it got bruised
Now for sale reads this tandem from Canada

Tom Hakala

Notches and Gaps

If only the road levels out just a fraction after the next serpentine curve I just might make it. It didn't! In fact it got even steeper. I pulled onto the side of the road and flopped on the handlebars panting. I knew I'd never get started again. Why did I leave home? Smuggler's Notch can't be ridden in this direction without a triple chain ring.

A few weeks earlier, planning a cycling holiday in Vermont using mostly Google, I stumbled across Champlain Bikeways. I wrote to them and said I wanted to do some "significant mountain climbs". "Define significant" Lou Bresse wrote back. After a few email exchanges he faxed me a rough draft of a brochure they were producing.

Armed with those and a bundle of maps and brochures from John Brown, Emese and I headed for Vermont. We found a very nice Inn in Middlebury. Here we would leave the car for four days while we did rides called "Rebel's Retreat", "Otter Creek Ramblings" and "From Mills to Mansions".

After some acclimatization, we tackled "Gap to Gap"; Over 60 miles with a total of 6000' of ascent. Middlebury Gap started out very steep and we thought we had made a huge mistake. If it continues like this for 10 kilometers (sorry about the mixed metric and imperial) we'll never make it. But it eased off, with another last kick before the top of the pass.



Going down wasn't easy either. I'm sure Jason or Ken Avery would have enjoyed it. But not knowing what was around the next hairpin bend we were afraid to build up too much speed.

In the little town of Rochester we discovered a bike shop reminiscent of Tim's in Scone. Then came Brandon Gap - another 2200' high pass. At the top are some south facing, granite cliffs that are home to peregrines. We lazed in the 30° C heat for a while, before riding down the other side, around Lake Dunmore and back to Middlebury.



We moved on to Stowe, via Appellation Gap (driving – not riding) and discovered Fiddler’s Green Inn, an old house set back from the road and within earshot of a babbling brook. Bud, the owner, was very funny and was always pulling Emese’s leg. The price was right and, as we learned the next morning, breakfast was excellent.

It was late-afternoon and we hadn’t ridden that day, so we thought we’d take a look at aforementioned Smuggler’s Notch. A big mistake. It was raining, it was getting dark and we hadn’t really warmed up before we hit the steep part. After I bonked we walked to the next passing zone and discovered that there had just been two related motorcycle accidents. One rider had dropped his machine turning around to go back down and help another who had hit a rock outcrop and landed in the opposite ditch. We turned around not knowing that we were just a couple of curves from the top of the pass.

However, the next day we planned a loop in the other direction. It took us back into Stowe, to Morristown and Eden. From there, a very quiet road took us past a mountain lake, through Belvedere Center and into Jeffersonville. After almost 100 kilometers we now approached Smuggler’s Notch from the north. It’s much tamer, although it is eight miles long and ends in a single lane section that is out of bounds for tractor trailers and closed to all traffic in the winter.

Motorists in Vermont were generally very considerate of cyclists. Most roads have a wide, paved shoulder. There are no bill boards in the state – only small, tasteful signs for local businesses. An unofficial poll of bumper stickers seemed to indicate that Vermonters are peaceful (lots of anti-war and anti-Bush stickers). We had no problem finding vegan or vegetarian meals. The MacDonalds in Stowe went out of business.

The scenery reminded Emese of Czechoslovakia. It reminded me of the foot hills of the Alps in southern Germany or Austria. But Lake Dunmore could have been

Largo Di Garda. And yet the towns were very much New England.

Footnote: We liked the Fiddler’s Green Inn so much we reckon it would be a great venue for a club outing. The whole place can be booked. Between summer and the fall colours season rates are lowest.

Trevor Stokes

New Pewee Member?

This just in from member Andy Barton.

...just to let you know that I became a Father on Sept 27th to a baby boy; Thomas – 7lb 14oz. Mum (Kath) and Baby are both doing really well. I don't know if you put that type of thing in the newsletter, but we are just bursting to tell everyone.

I certainly do put that sort of thing in the newsletter and I know the membership joins me in congratulating you. Ed.

MTB RACING ON “THE ISLAND”

This summer I had the pleasure of taking my oldest boy to New Brunswick to begin his post secondary education. In planning for this trip I realized Justin and I would be missing one of our Ontario Cup races so I looked for an alternative in the East. It just so happened that the Atlantic Championships in P.E.I. were to be held on the same weekend that we would be away. The race was called the “RED MUD MOUNTAIN MAYHEM 9.” To me, this name suggested that there could be a huge element of fun and possibly some red mud.

I faxed in our entries and by that evening I received a call from the race organizer asking us what size of T-shirt we needed. I thought that was a very friendly gesture and became quite pumped about this race. Now it had been about eighteen years since I was on the island and I really couldn’t remember any big hills let alone any hills high enough build an alpine ski resort, but as we were driving closer and closer to Brookvale Ski Park it became clear that this little province had some amazing rolling terrain which would prove to be at least as challenging as anything I have ridden in Ontario. Upon arriving at the Ski Park we found a Nordic skiing and mountainbiking center adjacent to the alpine ski hill, which I thought would be great fun in the winter for people that would like to ski both

disciplines. This park was even equipped with a shooting range for biathlon. I was impressed.

Justin and I registered, picked up the swag, changed and started off on our bikes. WHERE'S THE RED MUD? As we started to ascend the hill of the first single track we soon realized that this wasn't going to be some high speed burn across some gentle rolling hills as I had pictured on the way. Instead, the first trail off the double track was this off camber, root-laden climb that was so steep I was unable to shift fast enough, and as a result, I was off my bike before I knew it. I was already pondering how many laps of this nastiness I would have to endure. Every piece of single track, whether up or down, was covered in roots.

We continued our pre-ride often smiling at some of the names like "Adam's Family, Okay Doky," and "Taco Hell." One particular section called "The Body," will always stand out in my mind because when I started into it on my second, third and fourth lap, I wished I had someone else's body, because my body was going to be hurting bad after I finished that section.

Near the end of the course we came upon this very steep descent, which had one of only two rock gardens right at the bottom. Again, I ask myself, "Where's the red mud?"

Finally, we popped out into the clearing where we began. Justin went up towards the parking lot, while I went to do that first single track again to see what gear I would need to clean the climb.

After changing, drinking and snacking, I went to talk to the race organizer about Justin's and my laps.

I was told Justin and all others in the ten-thirty start would ride the full lap of 8 km and I would have to do four. I suggested that the lap was too long for the under thirteen kids, but was told, "They have two hours to do the race!" I couldn't argue with that statement and thought, as I always do when we race in Quebec, we have indeed been spoiled in Ontario.

After leaving the venue in Brookvale we drove for twenty minutes to Charlottetown to find our accommodations where CyclingPEI had booked a block of rooms. Funny thing that we didn't see any other racers there, but at \$150.00 per night, I wasn't surprised. Thank heavens that the price of fuel was still at 99.4 as regulated by a government fuel price regulating committee. What an idea! It's too bad only the smallest province in the country has one.

I liked the fact that Justin's race wasn't until ten-thirty, instead of the usual nine o'clock start. We could sleep in and have time to eat a descent breakfast. Of course, two start times is possible only when the number of racers is small enough to allow for it or a super wide start area is used, as was the case here.

By ten o'clock the sport classes were warming up and the kids were vying for a spot on the start line.

By the way, instead of doing three laps, the sport classes had two complete only two. What a sprint off the start. Those guys took off faster than the Elite riders. After thirty-five minutes, racers began to finish and soon after I was surprised to see Justin roll in after about four riders from the under fifteen category. He was first and happy and I was still worried about how I would hold up this afternoon.

With encouragement from Justin during feeds and enthusiastic race fans scattered around the course I completed my four laps, but had no idea where I placed because my age group started with two other age groups and I'm really bad at guessing ages. What was clear was that a lot of riders struggled with this course. In fact, when the results were posted, half the elite category riders DNF'd, as did two of the six riders in my category. What was also clear, especially after talking to some of the faster riders, that this course was pretty average for difficulty in the Atlantic region except there are many more rocks in N.B. and Nova Scotia.

I changed, ate, then took in the beauty of this day in the most lush rolling hills of the country while talking to the very friendly athletes and their supporters and waiting for the results to be posted. What a venue.

As we started down the road back to N.B. I couldn't help, but imagine what awesome cycling, both road and MTB this tiny province has to offer.

Fred Zottl

Arrow Racing Victorious in Season Finale

Kelso Conservation area near Milton played host to the 7th and final Ontario Cross-country Mountain Bike Race on Sunday. Many overall provincial series championships were up for grabs with Arrow Racing leading in 4 categories while in the top ten in 9 others.

Owen Sound's Mack Thomson started the day off finishing in first place narrowly beating his competition. Thomson is Ontario's best Peewee rider winning the overall Ontario Cup series by a large margin. Jane Thomson, also of Owen Sound, finished first in her race and also won the overall championship in the Cadet and Junior Sport Female category. Meaford's KK Michener put her race "on ice" after the first lap when her main competition, Sarah Coney, wilted under the punishing pace set by Michener. "I wasn't sure if I would have the legs today but I stayed behind Sarah on the first hill and knew that I was stronger on the climbs. At the top, I just rode away from her and she never was able to catch back up." Michener captured the overall Junior Expert Female category.

The final Arrow Racing overall championship win was captured by Owen Sound's Scott Thomson. Scott completed the family "triple crown" with daughter Jane, and son Mack, as Ontario's top riders in their respective categories. Thomson's blistering pace was no match for second place Steve Varga who finished over 5 minutes back. "I felt so good today. This was a perfect course with great climbs, fast double-track, nice technical sections and super fast downhill", commented Thomson.

Top ten overall provincial finishes were Stephanie Martinek (Collingwood) 3rd overall Senior Elite Female, Stephanie Adams (Wasaga Beach) 3rd overall Junior Expert Female, Greg Knights (Collingwood) 3rd overall Veteran Sport Male, Amy Armstrong (Markdale) 5th overall Senior Expert Female, Justin Zottl (Chatsworth) 6th overall Peewee, Fred Zottl (Chatsworth) 6th overall Masters Expert Male 45-49, Matthias Purdon (Owen Sound) 7th overall Cadet Sport Male, Mike Pearson (Owen Sound) 8th overall Junior Sport Male and Rich Fletcher (Meaford) 10th overall Masters Expert Male 40-44.

This final race ends a great 2005 season for Arrow Racing. On October 2 Arrow Racing, along with the Owen Sound Cycling Club, will be hosting the infamous "Whemmy's Enduro" at Hepworth's Sawmill Trails. All mountain bikers are encouraged to find a 3 person team or ride the 3 hour race "solo". Check out www.arrowracing.ca for more information and entry forms.

Laura and John Tie the Knot

Cyclist, freelance writer, author, and long-time women's activist, Laura Robinson, is tying the knot on October 1. Of course she chose a guy who has more bikes and more cross-country skis than she has.

Her husband to be is John Cameron, who is teaching her about plutonium. His job at Bruce Power is to teach people how to run the nuclear reactor. Cameron is also pretty good at teaching the kids on the Niish Nobbie Cycling Team - the First Nation Elementary School cycling and Nordic skiing team that Robinson coaches - how to fix their own bikes, ride in a pace line, and how to stay on a wheel. According to Robinson "who wouldn't love the guy?"

The two met cross-country skiing on the Bruce Ski Club trails. They had been in the same club for ten years but never managed to meet or ski together. It was love by the first 10K skied.

October 1 is the big date with a cycling honeymoon in the mountains of North Carolina and a skiing honeymoon in Northern Norway.

From Pedal Magazine.

Michener Competes at World Championships

Arrow Racer Kaitlin Michener arrived home Tuesday from Italy after ten days with Canada's National mountain bike team. "The experience was awesome!" exclaimed Michener. "We flew into Zurich, Switzerland, took a train to St. Moritz and then the team vehicle picked us up and crossed the border into Livigno, Italy. It was exhausting but really exciting to be on the same team as athletes that I have looked up to and seen so many times in magazines", stated Michener.

Michener arrived a few days early to acclimatize and to pre-ride the race course. "I found the higher elevation pretty challenging and dehydration was an issue during the race. The course was crazy steep and the start was really fast. I was fighting to move up early in the race but it was tough to pass because of all the climbing". Kaitlin finished in 35th position and was very pleased with her result. "This year I came for the experience and wasn't sure how I could measure up against the best junior women in the world. Now I know I can compete which is motivating me to work harder over the winter to come back and improve".

This year's racing season is coming to a close with Provincials next Sunday. "It's been an amazing season with lots of traveling and racing. I really am thankful for all the support from the community. If it wasn't for all the fundraising, it would have been really difficult for me to have this experience. I will always be very grateful for everyone's kindness". With the support of individuals, local businesses and service clubs, Kaitlin was able to pay for airfare and accommodation in Italy.



From L to R – Kaitlin Michener, Ontario; Evelyn Pichette, Quebec; Emilie Beaumont, Quebec; Head Coach Michel Leblanc and Isabelle Jacques Quebec.

Rich Fletcher

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### Time Trial Talk

Well, another season of time trials has ended. It was a great season, with awesome participation by seasoned veterans and fresh novices. The number of participants was very consistent throughout the season, and the weather cooperated allowing us to run every scheduled time trial. Granted, at least one was run in significant inclement weather - it's amazing how the rain is not noticed much once you get started and working hard to do your best time. The September Annan ITT was very wet. Everyone still was "eager" to give it a go. Mack, Matthias, Brian, and Joe clearly get going when the conditions are tough! Otherwise most Wednesday evenings were quite nice, even when bad weather was called for. You really can't cancel until out at that night's venue.

The early July Epping Hill Climb time trial was a highlight for me - good turnout, great weather, demanding

### The Great Race



Thanks to Rich and Fred for taking on the Whemmys and doing a great job of it. The course was great, the numbers were great, and they must have prayed to the weather gods for a day like that. Thanks, guys!

*Tom Hakala*

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but short TT, and awesome company and food with a view! My low was marking the wrong turnaround at Shallow Lake - embarrassing. Highs have to include the excitement of new riders continuing to improve. The old guard was continuously infiltrated by new names - sub 26, 25, 24, 23 minutes for the 15K. Also, watching my own kids post times faster than anticipated.

Our small club has riders interested enough, and competitive enough, to compete at the Ontario Time trial Championships. Six riders made the trek down to Welland. The course was a flat out and back 40K for all but the very young - into a fairly brisk wind all the way out, and with the wind at our backs on the return, though it certainly didn't feel like it helped. There were an amazing number of competitors, over 200, from across the province, including growth in the young ages, and women, traditionally smaller groups.

Lynne Vaughan- MacDonald, competing in her very first cycling event outside the club, placed sixth in the Master 30+ Women, and I am certain she would have been Ontario Champion in a 40+ group. With the large number of competitors, I expect this group to be made a 30+ and 40+ Championship for next year. The Under 17 Men was officially split this year into the UCI U17, U15, and Under 13, because of increasing attendance and interest. Mack Thomson continued his winning season, placing tenth of 22 in the U17 Men, and Ontario Champion in the Under 13 Men. His time of 24:15.69 for 15K would also have won the U15 Men. Kaitlin Michener placed third in the Under 19 Women with a time of 25:32.47, and Jane Thomson placed fourth in the Under 17 Women with a time of 27:02.95. Nicki Van Der Wielen has attended several of our recent TT's, and is here on a school exchange from Holland. She placed fifth in Under 17 with a time of 27:57.35. Scott Thomson and Joe Chappell have both seen better days and we placed well back in the large pack. I had a fall on the road warming up minutes before my start, when a young rider turned in front of me without looking. I grabbed a fistfull of brake, which happened to be my front, and ended landing on my hip. Joe suffered leg cramps and never really got going. Maybe next year. John Brown was registered, and showed up Saturday to pre ride the course. He was surprised to see so many serious riders out for a pre ride, until he heard that it was race day and his race was finished!

Well, I have mixed feelings about the end of season. I will miss Wednesday nights out at Shallow Lake or Annan. But it is also nice to rest the body, let it slip back into a detuned state, put on some weight to keep Mary happy, and eat anything I want. It has been a rewarding season, both personally, for my family, and for the club. Regular attendees at our time trials have used the training to win three !! Ontario MTB Championships, three Overall Ontario Cup Championships, a TT Road Championship, a Sport Ontario Cup Overall, numerous Podiums at Ontarios and Ontario Cups, and have a number of riders placing well at Expert and Sport levels in Ontario.

Congratulations all!!

Scott Thomson

The Grape Squeezer

Let me tell you club members about a great race down Niagara way - The Grape Squeezer. This event has been running for 11 years now, and is the largest mountain bike race in Ontario. It is not a sanctioned OCA event, and keeps its costs down with a heavy infusion of volunteers, just \$30 registration. It runs on the last day of the Niagara Wine Festival in St Catharines. Apparently numbers were heading toward the 1700 mark, but a forecast of subpar weather slowed down registrations to about 1400, with 1150 riders braving the conditions on the day of the event.

The family spent the weekend down in Niagara, starting with the Ontario Time Trial Championships on Saturday. Mack and Jane were awesome and both raced their fastest times of the year, but I was less than stellar.

Fortunately I had heard about the Squeezer through the grape vine (?), and had pre registered for the Sunday race. Saturday afternoon we enjoyed Niagara Falls, including the Maid of the Mist, which is one of the few attractions I recommend in a very commercial downtown Niagara, besides watching the Falls itself - spectacular! Mary dropped me off early on Sunday in St Catharines, then returned for the rest of the family and went shopping over the border.

The Squeezer is a 30+/- mountain bike race starting in St Catharines and quickly heading south out of town on double and single track trails. The large number of participants are started in waves of 125 every 7 minutes.

Your placing in previous Squeezers determines your start wave, combined with an opportunity given to rank your ability. I was initially scheduled in the 3rd wave, but some gracious negotiating moved me to #124 in the first start.

The morning of the race started early with thunder and continuous rain.

Fortunately this cleared before I had left the hotel. However it left some water and lots of rideable mud on the course. After the time trial the previous day, I was uncertain how this race would go, and sensed that experience and course knowledge would be of use, in the future. I got on the front of the start line, and off with the mad dash! Hitting the trails I started to move up to the front groups. Riding on others wheels with the wet conditions meant grit and mud in the face, mouth, eyes. I was wearing protective glasses, but had to wear them down on my nose as I could not see well through them, but they still provided protection from the spray coming up. Four riders went off the front as soon as

we hit the trails, and I did not feel strong enough to make the effort to bridge up. Eventually I moved into the next group and rode off and on with 2 other racers. This was of benefit on the open portions of trail, since there was also a fair breeze Sunday. The trails were fun, and generally fast. This was the slowest Squeezer on record due to the morning's conditions, but winning speed still averaged 25 kmh. I was feeling good coming back into the final portion into town, and felt I could take the other 2 racers I was with at the end.

However I had a minor mechanical issue just as we were hitting city streets, relegating me from 5th to 7th. Crowds actually lined the streets at the finish, and a costumed "devil" chased us up the finishing steep hill! It was definitely a party environment at the finish. Most of the participants are recreational competitors, and there was lots of encouragement and cheering.

My number plate could not be read through the mud covering it, but timing was by computer chip. I managed a cold hose shower in a neighbour's yard, and felt great.

Registration includes 3 tokens (\$7.50) for food at the Festival. Many Winerys are arranged in tents around the Festival site, and each is associated with a restaurant or caterer providing 2 or 3 foods, all delicious and ranging from garlic shrimp skewers and middleeast fare, to ice cream specialties and chocolate covered strawberries! Use your tokens and buy some more. Live music plays all day. A jazz band from the Netherlands was on stage. Ron Sexsmith was scheduled for that night. Awards included a draw prize of a 1 year lease for an Acura, custom canoe, 2 bikes, etc.. I managed first of 300 in the 40-49 group and was given a nice Cave Springs Chardonnay and a custom Squeezer corkscrew. The draw prizes did not favour me that day.

All in, it was a great day, and I plan to attend next year with the kids also racing. Think about it!

Scott Thomson

Contributors

Andy Barton, Rich Fletcher, Tom Hakala, Greg Nicol, Scott Thomson and Fred Zottl.

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