

Texas State Road Race Championship Weekend in Copperas Cove

Last weekend, the Metro Volkswagen Cycling Team traveled south one last time for this year's State Road Race Championship race in Copperas Cove. This year's championship races were a little different, as they were held on a new course on the Ft. Hood premises, with more hills than normal for Texas and closed roads (i.e. no yellow-line-rule). Lauren Robertson, Mat Stephens, Austin Robison, Andrew Dahlheim and Christian Helmig loaded up the team van on Friday afternoon and drove down to the race.

On Saturday, Mat, Andrew and Christian raced in the Pro 1/2 class. Christian spent most of the day off the front and ended up in what turned out to be the winning break. The team's tactic had been to get a rider into the early break but no one expected this break to stay away to the end. Halfway through the race there was a big crash that took out about 30 guys and slowed to pack down considerably. In the end the break stayed away and Christian finished second in the sprint.

Lauren represented the Metro Volkswagen Cycling Team in the women's race. She battled it out with Christina Smith but couldn't shake her on the climbs. Christina beat Lauren to the line Lauren hung on for 2nd.

Both Will and Kyle raced in the Cat 3 race on Saturday. Both were very motivated. Will attacked hard up one of the climbs but just as the separation was happening there was a crash in the race and the officials decided to neutralize the field. The field came back together and Will had spent a lot of his energy up to this point for nothing. In the end both he and Kyle finished in the top 30.

On Sunday the Age-based races were held. This was an important event for our Junior riders. Will blew the field apart but ended up dragging 2 other kids to the line in the 15-16 class. They came around him at the finish and he had to be content with 3rd place. Kyle rode smart and made the split into the lead group of three in the 17-19 class. It came down to a sprint between the three and Kyle kept a cool head and out-sprinted the other two to take home the State Championship jersey. Austin Robison finished 9th in that same race. In the Junior Women's 13-14 race, Payton Thomas finished 2nd.

Mat and Christian raced in the 23-29 class. The pack splintered apart in the second lap and three guys got away, Christian being one of them. By the time the group came to the finish they were down to two and Christian and Stefan Rothe (Mercy) sprinted it out. Christian crossed the line first, taking the win but not the jersey. Mat finished 5th.

Lauren had a good race too in the women's 23-29 class. She tried again to get a separation early in the race but it came down to a sprint where she got beaten by a tire-width by Sheri Rothe and finished 2nd.

In the Master categories, Stuart Harbottle finished 8th in the 50-54 class while Terry Parrish got 14th in the same race. Stuart Hall made it onto the podium in the 55-59 class, finishing 3rd.

Overall it was a good season-ending event for the Metro Volkswagen Cycling Team. The course was a lot of fun and the organization was outstanding. Now, most of the riders are looking forward to some time off the ... the preparation for next season will start soon enough!