

TENSION BUILDING FOR DERBY NATIONAL CYCLO-CROSS RACE

Seven gold medals for East Midlands riders at National Championships

The National Championships took place at Peel Park, Bradford over the weekend and the racing saw great success for local riders before the Derby National trophy event to be held at Markeaton Park next Sunday.

On Saturday the conditions were hard and initially icy after days of sub-zero weather. Traditionally a muddy course the latest conditions made for faster racing. In the Over 50s Veterans race there was a gold medal for Dave Smith of Derby Mercury in the over 55s age group. He was in 5th place overall and was only 8 seconds in front of from his nearest rival in a close fought race. Also from the East Midlands Vic Barnett from Welland Valley emphatically won the over60s category and from nearer home John Dowell from Heanor Clarion took gold in the over 70s group.

The youths race followed and Derby's Sam Lowe had one of his best ever rides and showed his strength to come in 2nd. Josh Papworth beat him by a small margin after pulling away on the final climb of the steps and holding Sam off in the sprint. Still a great result for Sam, who still has a year to ride at this level. Lucy Garner from Leicester won the u16 girls race with Rosie Blount from Derby Mercury doing well in her first national race to finish 10th. At u14 level Joe Kirkham (VC Long Eaton) won from Heanor's Kieron Tennyson to make it a 1-2 for the East Midlands. Saskia Hook (South Pennine) who is leading the u14 girls in the National Trophy competition could only finish 5th. However she and Sam will be looking for wins next week on their local course at Markeaton.

In the main veterans race on Saturday afternoon the top surface had thawed by the ground was still hard. Local man Geoff Giddings was up against season-long rivals from Yorkshire Chris Young and Clough. On the first lap Clough took the lead by 5 seconds with Giddings in a chasing group of 6. On lap 2 Giddings made a break to chase Clough and fell on a tarmac corner before the steps allowing the group to catch him again. Later Giddings and young had a long battle to chase Clough but home support helped ensure a Yorkshire 1-2 with Giddings 3rd. Next week looks to be a continuation of this epic battle.

More local success followed in the u23 race with MTB specialist David Fletcher getting gold in a rare cyclo-cross race and Steven Adams holding on for Bronze.

On Sunday there were slightly milder conditions but a strong wind. In the women's race our local girl Annie Last from Great Longstone was up against international rider Helen Wyman. After a decent start Last started to lose ground and struggled as her bike clogged up with a combination of mud and leaves to finish a disappointing 8th. However Lincolnshire's Louise Day won gold in the veteran's category.

In the Junior event the strong Yorkshire crowd roared local Tom Moses to a great win with Leicester's Dan McLay 3rd and Derby's Tom Lowe fading to 9th. Home rider Lowe and McLay who is leader in the national trophy series will be out to do better next week.

At senior level next week's race will see Jody Crawford (Arctic –Premier RT) looking add the National trophy to his wins after claiming the national title at Bradford on Sunday.

Markeaton Park, Derby looks set to entertain big crowds and a large field including 3 international riders next Sunday. The event organised by Derby Mercury, South Pennine and Heanor Clarion is the first of 3 national races over the next 3 years for the city.

Derby's Mayor Barbara Jackson said "On behalf of Derby City Council I would like to say how pleased we are to be hosting the final round of British Cycling's Cyclo-cross National Trophy series in Markeaton Park. With a record number of race entries, and Cycle Derby's children's activities, the event promises to be an exciting spectacle - see you there!"

Racing starts at 10.30 next Sunday with free entrance to spectators.

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NOTE FOR NEWS EDITORS

Reporters and photographers are invited to attend the event, which takes place from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Jan 18th 2009 at Markeaton Park, Derby DE22 4AA. Note that entrance to event arena and car park is off A38/A52 roundabout.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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