

## LMC Cycling Impresses at Clemson

Written by Chris Parker

Monday, 17 March 2014 19:46

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The Lees-McRae cycling team saw four student-athletes earn top-five finishes over the weekend at the Clemson RR Course in Clemson, S.C.

The Saturday morning road race consisted of laps of a 20.8 mile loop with several miles of climbing, some sections over 20%, and included a kilometer uphill finish.

In Men B, Cody Phillips (Altadena, Calif.) and Gunnar Bergey (Ledrach, Pa.) were in a four-man breakaway that held off the pack that saw Phillips attack late to solo in for the win. Bergey was approximately one minute behind while Jose Avila (Miami, Fla.) won the pack sprint from the main chase group.

In Women A, junior Katherine Shields (Salisbury, N.C.) was in a four-woman break after the first lap. Shields and Brevard's Allison Arensman were side-by-side in the final 500 meters, but Shields attacked with 200 meters to go and held Arensman off for the victory.

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In Men A, Furman's Charlie Hough won an intense race in the final 200 meter sprint. LMC's Matthew Zimmer (DeWitt, Iowa) finished fourth, trailing only a couple of minutes while the field of over 30 riders was shattered into pieces. Many of the Men A riders dropped out due to the difficulty of the course and being so far back from the leaders.

"This race loop is perfectly suited for many of our riders due to the long sustained climbs. Cody and all the B riders had excellent races, and Katherine's attack in the final 200 meters to win was exciting to see. She beat an outstanding rider in Arensman, which will boost her confidence for future races," praised Director of Cycling Tim Hall. "Matt did a great job grinding it out in the Men A race among guys who are more pure climbers, so that's a great sign seeing him race so well."

The Team Time Trial (TTT) was an out-and-back course totaling 6.6 miles. LMC fielded a Men A and Women A team. The difficulty in the TTT was the start time was just over an hour after having finished the road race, so quite a few riders throughout the conference did not start due to fatigue.

On the men's side, Bergy and Phillips finished third with a time of 17:13, 43 seconds behind Brevard, who won the event. Shields, Paige Robertson (Oakland, Calif.) and Hailey Sarausky (Littleton, N.H.) finished second with a time of 22:37 for the women.

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"We originally planned two men teams, but the guys were shattered after the road race. We even altered our normal TTT starting lineup that included three B riders to race with Zimmer our A rider. This worked out best because the B riders had a little more rest ahead of the TTT," said Hall. "For this to be our first TTT of the season I feel both the men and women performed superbly, and as the season moves forward I know they'll get faster and more efficient."

The Bobcats performed well despite rainy and slick conditions. In the Men B, Phillips attacked with four laps to go and formed a two-man break with Cumberland's Luke Caldwell. Both stayed away as Phillips attacked on the final lap to ride in solo for the victory. Caldwell grabbed second while Samuel Dobrozsi (Loveland, Ohio) finished third.

Shields finished third in the Women's A race.

"Overall it was a fantastic first weekend to our season. It's nice to get some victories under our belt despite being shorthanded without a full road team available. I was especially thrilled to see our Men B team have a great weekend because we need their strength on our elite A team as soon as possible," said Hall.

"We lack some depth, but there are 4 or 5 B riders on the cusp of an upgrade. Once they move up it will provide our elite team more tactical cards to play. Only half our elite women competed this weekend too, so when we have our full squad of 6 women that will make a huge difference as well."

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LMC returns to action this weekend in Cullowhee, N.C.