

DSGP Race No. 1 // New Orleans // Results + Recap

Posted on [October 23, 2013](#)

Late Friday night, the finishing touches were put on the cyclocross course that Rouler Racing and Semi-Tough Cycling Club had been building since summer on the abandoned golf course in City Park. With great pride, 1.7 miles of swampy chicanery, off-camber turns, mud, sand, and grass was rolled out to be rolled on. Astounding numbers of riders and spectators came out to enact and witness what has never before happened outside some wild anti-bourgeoisie fantasy: maniacs on bicycles destroying a golf course to screams of joy from the public.

[New Belgium](#) came through with the goods, providing more than enough free Fat Tire and Shift to get the party started. And party we did. Huge thanks to title sponsors, New Belgium, [Bikelaw.com](#) and [Endo Customs](#). Many kudos to the race sponsors [Nola Criminal Law](#), [Oceana Grill](#), [Bayou Bicycles](#), [Bicycle Michaels](#) and [Buckler Embrocation](#). They made this possible, and many thanks to all our volunteers, riders, and spectators for MAKING THIS HAPPEN!

The Delta States Grand Prix opened with a mighty thunderclap that soaked the earth and, over the course of 5 category races, turned everything in sight to mud. The course, when dry, had some severely bumpy sections, and stretches of tiresome, spongy grass. It is difficult to say whether mud was a boost or a drag. It's transition to dirt soup improved some sections, while detracting from others; ultimately it all came out in the wash.

Race director, Wes McWhorter, was seen several times running back and forth in the finish line area alternately consuming beers, [helping riders with their bikes over the barriers](#), and shouting what can only be described as back-handed words of encouragement — mama used to call it “tough love”.







The extremely condensed technical sections carved into the bunkers and tee boxes on the front side of the course were slowed significantly, leveling the playing field towards those with less handling finesse. Mountain bikers gained an advantage that increased a hair each lap, as the course eroded into goo. To put the muck into perspective, Cat 4/5 Men put down significantly faster race times than Cat 3/4 Men, due almost entirely to worsening course conditions. Races broke down as follows:

Cat 4/5 Men - The biggest field of the day, possibly the biggest mass start in LA cross history, the first real run on a course that still has grass.

Micheal Boedigheimer takes the holeshoot, gunning for the \$35 breakfast prime from an anonymous donor/secret admirer. Ultimately he does not have the legs to hold off Skip Town, who takes home the bacon and sets an impressive pace. Accordingly, the 30 minute race is set at 5 laps, and turns into a 40 minute race as the course degrades. Skip tells me afterwards, "The course was getting rutted and sloppy even just from pre-riding. Picking clean lines and staying upright were the top priorities."

I wind up mid-pack after the jump and spend Lap 1 making my way up to around 5th. After Lap 2, Zach Thomas falls back from 3rd, trading places a couple times with me and Matt Gandy. On lap 3 I fall at "Robinson's Folly," the short uphill hairpin that can be precarious even when dry, and let Zach and Gandy slip up to 3rd and 4th. Meanwhile, Graeme Preston overtakes Skip, who would soon be caught by Zach, as well.

"After 3 laps I was up at the front and my lungs weren't on fire and my legs weren't cramping up," Zach remarks after the race, "So I said 'Screw it, let's do this.'"

At this point the podium is sorted out, with a bit of a lead over the next few riders, trading licks for the remaining shreds of glory. Gandy, Micheal Boedigheimer, and I shuffle around in 4th/5th/6th for a bit, before I pull ahead and take a respectable but not comfortable lead. Unfortunately a second fall and subsequent mechanical issues with my cleats/pedals slow me, conflated with my right shoe coming undone and nearly popping off. These errors cost me my lead; Gandy passes me after the technical bits are done, and only hammering remains, pulling ahead by 15 seconds

Graeme Preston reflects over a post-race drink that the ordeal was a definite learning experience, musing "I thought about a lot of things I had never thought about before. Like what a pit bike is and why you would have one. I came to understand what it means for a tire to 'shed mud well.'"

For all these untested riders on an untested course, the 4/5 race is most certainly an experience, learning or otherwise.

Leaderboard: In a field of 33 riders,
1st – Graeme Preston -43:13 – 30 pts
2nd – Zach Thomas – 43:25 – 27 pts
3rd – Skip Town – 43:49 – 24 pts

Masters/Women/Singlespeed - Sloppy seconds. Masters, Women and the Singlespeed categories all roll after the same gun, or in our case, the [bell ringing of Le Coq Mysterieux](#).

Early in the race, Brian Bourgeois [rolls a tubular](#) off his rim on an off camber turn. He shoulders his bike and runs several hundred meters to the pit, changes out, and manages to work back up to 2nd in Masters. Fellow [cycling blogger](#), and one of the wittiest men on 2 wheels, Matt Kyte, keeps his nose to the grindstone, stays upright for the duration, suffers no mechanicals, and pulls out his first podium ever. "Honestly, I think the limited field helped, but not as much as 30 years of mountain biking," Matt modestly reflects.

Masters Leaderboard:

1st – Rusty Bernard – 39:40 – 60 pts
2nd – Brian Bourgeois – 40:34 – 54 pts
3rd – Matt Kyte – 43:50 – 48 pts

Matt Gandy, apparently just warming up in the 4/5 race, runs away with the lead in the SS category by about a minute, executing the absolute smoothest, if not the most documented, [hand-up of the day](#).

Singlespeed Leaderboard:

1st – Matt Gandy – 40:41 – 60 pts
2nd – Benjamin Spain – 41:47 – 54 pts
3rd – David Feinswog – 43:00 – 48 pts

[Rosanne Simons](#), winner of the Women's category who absolutely crushed it on her MTB even felt the deteriorating conditions "The bike seemed to get heavier as the race progressed, but then it occurred to me. Someone must be raising the barriers!" she exclaimed after. Christine Moser, in her first ever competitive cycling event, became hooked. "CX gave my inner 12-year-old cause to rejoice when it made getting covered in mud not only acceptable, but mandatory."

Women's Leaderboard:

1st – Rosanne Simons – 45:11 – 60 pts

2nd – Christina Person – 46:50 – 54 pts

3rd – Samantha Stein – 47:00 – 48 pts

Cat 3/4 Men - Slopfest 2013 – Struggletown, USA.

In a world with no grass ... With the advantage in the MTB corner (see Rosanne, Rusty), Ryan Barnes (all-around speed freak) floors it off the gun, cranking the throttle on the ideal machine for the race – a hardtail 29'er on a short travel fork with 2.5 inch tires. Ryan blasts off and never returns. According to legend, he stops and dismounts to chug a beer, and later rides a one-handed wheelie across the finish line. (These legends are, in fact, not legends, but fact.)

Simultaneously, in a universe about 3 minutes later, the Cat 3/4 race is underway. Ed Novak holds down 2nd. Jaden Kifer drops out of 3rd due to a mechanical, allowing Robinson Sudan to slip onto the podium. Robinson evades Jaden in the final stretches of the course to finish just 9 seconds ahead. Graeme preston, who won Cat 4/5M ran out of gas. “It became painfully apparent at the first set of barriers that I was not going to be competitive in this race.”

Leaderboard: In a field of 13 riders,

1st – Ryan Barnes – 45:30 – 60 pts

2nd – Ed Novak – 48:08 – 54 pts

3rd – Robinson Sudan – 48:41 – 48 pts

All in all, the race was a huge victory for cyclocross and the cycling scene in New Orleans. If such a small group of individuals can gather so much support, carry out such a task, and attract as much attention as we did, then the future seems quite bright for upcoming cross seasons in the dirty south. As Matt Kyte said, “If a city and a cycling event were made for each other, this was it. The heckling; the hand-ups; the maniacal giant chicken. It all makes sense here. People who weren't there are kicking themselves for missing it.”

“This is easily one of the best days of my life!”, McWhorter said. “This race series might have been born of my vision to bring cyclocross to this region, but it is the hard work and enthusiasm of the organizing committee and volunteers and ultimately the efforts put in by the riders that is the ultimate indicator of success of this event. That visible look of exhaustion and baffled accomplishment you can see on every single rider's face is the best endorsement we can get. Every single person out here from the #1 spot on the podium to DFL has a smile on their face. To me, that's the gift of riding and racing bikes right there.”

Next Race: The action picks back up this weekend, Saturday October 26, at Highland Road Park in Baton Rouge, LA. The course is known for extended climbs and will be fast and hilly. Organizer Blair Krogh says the course will be laid out in a manner ideal for spectators, with most of the course visible from a single vantage point. As of today, weather will be dry and cool. I'm sure you're all as giddy as I am to get out there and put some more points on the board. See ya at [Highland Road Park!](#)

[Full results.](#)

[Tons more photos.](#)

Cheers,

Rich

Yeah You Ride

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