

Crossroads Classics

Cabarrus Creamery Criterium

Masters 45+

I love this crit! It's fast as heck, safe, and great for spectators. The setting is downtown Concord. The course zips around a tight three tenths of a mile rectangle with the long sides just barely long enough to get your bike up straight before diving into the two short sided turns at either end. There's probably less than ten feet elevation gain. There's shade, food, beer, and Cabarrus Creamery Ice Cream. There's never a dull moment either with racers doing laps about every thirty seconds. What a blast!

About forty of us lined up with the likes of Dave LeDuc, Randy Parker, Barney Baxter, Randy Shields, and yes, the plow boys (I talked with these two guys after the race and told them how much fun it had been racing against them. They've come from Texas the past two years to participate in this four day event. They told me they thought the competition here was better than at Nationals in Park City). Gary Moore joined me to represent the GVC and hoped to give his home-town crowd somebody to cheer for. He attacked hard at the gun showing his face and our jersey to the large crowd before being swallowed up. The pace never slowed for one second.

The inevitable attack from LeDuc came early and Barney hitched a ride. I'm told Barney never took a pull but it didn't matter. LeDuc lapped us in short order and the race was for third. I rode the first half of the fifty minute race in the top ten spots covering virtually every move. At least three of them seemed to be making ground on the pack only to be brought back. After a particularly hard break away effort got reeled back I decided to drift into the pack and catch my breath. I was suffering badly. About then Parker made his bid to lap the field. I wish now I had stayed up there and gone with him. It would have hurt, but we might have made it around. He soon returned to the field. With thirteen laps to go I began moving back to the front. Randy Shields attacked with five to go and some gaps opened up as those that could tried to respond. I managed to be on the front end of that response. As we came around the start/finish line with three to go I looked back and saw Peter Leousis (Randy's teammate) on my wheel. He shook his head indicating he wouldn't go with me. I took the gamble and jumped as hard as I could. I opened up a bit of a gap and managed to hold it for just over one lap. I wasn't closing down the gap to Shields though and Peter knew it. He began the charge and LeDuc sealed my fate ramping up the pace to hold off Baxter for the win. LeDuc, with the remnants of the pack in tow, caught me on the back side on the bell lap. I missed forth place by fifteen seconds and ended up twenty-first. That's racing. Gary finished strong in the top ten (eight I think).

This has been a great four day series of racing. We're lucky to have this event in our area. Neal Boyd of Charlotte Sports Cycling and Just Fresh/Cliff Bar deserve a huge thanks for their hard work making this event so successful. Races went off on time, results were posted quickly, and maybe even Chad will agree that the pay-outs were fair?