

Crossroads

Statesville Crit

Second verse, even worse than the first ...

Gary Moore wrote up Thursday night's Salisbury Crit. In case you didn't read it, allow me to summarize: real fast the whole time.

Fast forward to Statesville on Friday night for the second of the 4 race Crossroads series. Same guys, plus reinforcements, showed up. Smith Barney, having failed to score on Thursday, showed up with their Georgia contingent, which only added to the overall horsepower, which was high to begin with. We lined up Dave, Rodney, Blair, Gary and myself. Dave hates crits, Blair is regaining form after being sidelined for much of the season, Gary would be in only his 2nd race in this field after upgrading this week, and Rodney and I try to make do in crits with road racer genes. We certainly missed Mark Griffin. After 10 minutes, if you were still there, you had accomplished something. To stay with the ripping pace required accelerating hard and then keeping the pressure on out of a couple of the course's corners in particular, every lap. Rodney was a consistent presence at or near the front. The course was fairly flat, but tough because you never went far before you were having to corner and dig again. And they kept calling primes. It was a decent formula for torture.

Less than half way through, they called another prime following a blistering stretch of riding. Sensing that the race might be in a place to start coming apart, I bridged to make it 4 riders, then a few more, going ahead of the field just after the prime. That big dig was for naught though. The field responded and it was quickly back together. I was gassed. Fortunately Rodney took over near the front for us for a long stretch. I worked my way forward to rejoin Rodney near the front by the closing laps. Dave got gapped off about that time, Gary and Blair were further back, and Rodney and I sucked it up for the finish. Two riders -- Tony Scott and Charlie Storm -- were away with two to go.

Not dissimilar to Thursday night's late move, but the second verse was about to get worse. The field was going fast and jockeying hard for position -- critical on this course. On a fast, tight, downhill left turn, with Rodney on my wheel, I was toughing it out and playing hard for the finish one moment and skidding across the pavement the next. Still not sure exactly what happened, but in less than a second my season came to a most unwelcome finish due to a broken collarbone. Fortunately no one else got tangled up with me and Rodney made it past unscathed although not helped by the mishap. I don't think the guys even bothered with checking where they finished, as

they were too busy helping me get myself, my car, and my scuffed up gear to the hospital. The results are fun to play for, but not the most important thing, and the team showed that Friday night, for which I am very appreciative.

MLM