

Masters Report

French Broad Cycling Classic -- Time Trial

Friday night, July 22nd.

The French Broad Time Trial course is held on what the locals call "our only flat road". It's an out and back course along River Road and totals 12 miles. The road runs parallel to the French Broad River and is basically flat -- slightly uphill going out and a little downhill coming home. I like it. It twists and turns just enough to keep you focused on the road. It also rolls enough to force a change in cadence now and then. It's a pleasurable enough setting that the local riders out of Asheville have been doing Tuesday night training rides out there since the beginning of time.

This year's event showcased just how tough the competition has become in the Masters division and how popular this three-day is among the elite. The Asheville Bicycle Racing Club has continued to organize one of the best run and well attended events out there despite some difficulties over the years with venues. Hats off to that club for another great year of racing. It was tough.

The Time Trial was very well attended by the club. In the Masters division alone we showed Blair Palmer, Rodney Simpson, Terry Lanier, Dave Fuller, Lonnie Brooks, Michael Satterfield, Mark Griffin, Matt Mason and myself. Three GVC riders had standout personal best performances this year. Disappointingly though, none made much progress up the leader board. I'll use myself as the example: Last year I came to this event fired up and ripped the course shaving 15 seconds off my previous fastest time clocking 27:39. Breaking 28 minutes is kind of a big deal for us mortals. The time earned me a respectable 7th place in the 35+ division. I was one happy boy. This year I doubled that effort and shaved another 39 seconds for a time of 27:00. Guess what? It earned me seventh place -- again! I'll take it, but man, what have you got to do to get ahead around here?

Mark Griffin and Matt Mason had similarly best ever performances. Both took over thirty seconds off their previous best times with Mark rolling in at 27:16 and Matt hot on his heels with 27:20 (forgive me if I'm off a second or two here guys). Taking back even ten seconds on a course this length would be a big deal for most riders. I'd say we're doing something right. Mark and Matt would finish a very respectable 10th and 12th overall. The GVC and their sponsors had a very good day indeed.

It would only get better. You can check out all the results soon at <www.abrc.net>