

Masters 35+

Fort Bragg TT

To those unable to make the races this weekend in Fayetteville I can only say that this is an event you should consider putting on your calendar for next year. While the turnout was light, the promoters of the race were especially friendly and thankful of the racers they did have. Additionally, their support with an organized registration and post race water and Gatorade, and accurate start times made for a nice weekend of racing.

The event took place on Fort Bragg which is and eerie and interesting place. To get on base we had to show ID then have our vehicle and gear thoroughly searched. They spared us the super secret strip search, but not by much. Once on base we saw everything from camouflaged Hummers to Soldiers doing target practice and individual soldiers out for day long runs in full fatigues with fully loaded packs....yes I said runs, not hikes, in temperatures approaching 95 degrees! Makes you realize a 16 mile TT is not the most difficult or unpleasant thing you can do.

The Saturday TT consisted of one loop of the road race course. The sand hills of Fayetteville provided a roller-coaster of a course. As Matt Mason so accurately put it, "you could look down very long stretches of road, and the road always seemed to be above you." Additionally riders were exposed to 90+ degree heat...there was no cover anywhere on the course, and the loop was 16 miles in length, probably the longest time trial any of us will do this year.

Our results were topped by Matt Mason who finished 4<sup>th</sup> overall. Matt's ride was so good he beat Mac Cannon, a racer with skills we would all like to have. Seems Matt has developed these skills and has become a racer that is now seen as a threat in any race. Matt had Dave Petree behind him and I am confident that Matt had it in his head that he would not be caught.....And he wasn't!

In usual fashion Dave was ripping the TT and keeping Matt in sight, for a while. Dave first encountered problems about 2 miles into the event. Two cars had stopped on course at the intersection of the first right hand corner. Dave had to slow and make a decision to take the inside line. The red Mustang decided that it was about time to pull away. Dave had to nearly come to a stop and lost a bit of time. Incident #2 came when the course had

a split in the road marked by a "paper arrow" that had blown loose and was flapping in the wind. Dave, head down and cross-eyed, saw the arrow at the last possible second and had to make a decision. Unfortunately it was the wrong one and Dave was off course. Realizing that he could no longer see Matt, he turned around and got back on course. Good thing, with all the soldiers from Fort Bragg doing target practice, Dave could have put himself in even more danger! Back on course Dave rode hard but had lost more than 2 minutes and finished one place behind me in 10<sup>th</sup>. Dave has now been officially dubbed the "Mark Griffin" of time trials due to unfortunate incidents that occur during the course of his individual efforts.

My results were mixed at best. Good for 9<sup>th</sup> place.....now a top 10 sounds good but really wasn't. You see there were only 11 starters in the masters field and I was nearly 4 minutes back from the winner. While I rode consistent and solid, at about 20K I began to fade and lost time. I was on pace to achieve my goal to that point. With my minute man still ahead of me I dug deep and was able to catch him with 1,000k to go. But even with that I had lost my edge and missed my goal by 29 seconds. STINK!

Satterfield

Michael