

SO CAL CROSS PRESTIGE SERIES



Race Report – SCPS #11 – HIGH DESERT CYCLOCROSS, Palmdale, Sunday 12/7

By Christie Pleiss, Team CICLE

The history making cyclocross race and SoCalCross Eco-Sportfest 5K Fun Run presented by Landmark Insurance at Pelona Vista Park in Palmdale hosted by the High Desert Cyclists will go down as a fantastic event. 165 seasoned elite level riders and amateur cyclocross fanatics and runners from all over SoCal made the trip to the high desert for the 11th race of the SoCalCross Prestige Series.

The day brought us cooler temperatures and even a light rain fell blessing the new race venue. The 2.5km course offered a nice mix of grass, dirt (with the occasional jack rabbit crossing the trail) and a bit of pavement to give the legs a little rest from the grass. Handling skills paid off on the backside of course with some windy turns, sandy ruts and a good heart pumping power ascent back up to the grass fields.

Race action was fast and several close finishes were contested after numerous laps on the demanding course. The HDC's own Daniel Sivilingam took park in the Men's 4 race at 10:15am. This was his first race of any kind offroad! A low speed crash couldn't stop Daniel. He got up and kept going. After the race his most frequent comment was, "That was hard."

The Elite Women's race brought a smaller field than usual, but still provided a fast start with the field breaking up pretty quickly on the first lap. It was a Team CICLE party with Carolyn Popovic coming back from some USGP racing action on the east coast, lead the field from the start. Dot Wong (Team CICLE/Voler/Jamis) followed in hot pursuit in second for the majority of the race. According to Popovic, Wong's stellar barrier skills pushed her into the lead for part of the second lap. Sarah Kaufman (Roaring Mouse) kept a solid third position, gaining time each lap. Lisa Crowe and Christie Pleiss, also from Team CICLE/Voler/Jamis, rounded out the top five.

The Elite Men's race provided some exciting racing action as racers vied for podium spots. Brent Prenzlou (Celo Pacific/ALAN) took a commanding lead that increased in the final laps of the race. A very strong chase group consisting of John Behrens (Bailey Bikes), Jason Siegle (Team CICLE/BVB/Jamis), Fritz Bottger (PAA/Vitamix/Sixtufit.com) Anton Petrov (Team Prolong) and Gary Douville (Team Platinum Performance) traded positions several times but stayed together, finally breaking apart on the final lap. In the end it was Prenzlou, Douville and Bottger rounding out the top three. Petrov outsprinted Behrens in the final stretch to take fourth. Steve Marshall (Bear Valley Bikes/Team CICLE) took the elite start line for the first time and was one of the racers who went for the cash grabs in the Ellsworth/Mafia Racing Party Zone! On the course at the same time was the Masters Men 35+ 1/2/3. This race featured Jeff Herring (Team CICLE/Voler/Jamis) with a very strong race in front of Garnet Vertican (BVB) and Matias Mendigochea (Kahala LaGrange).

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Don't miss the SoCalCross Series Finale on Sunday December 21st brings us to Pierce College in Woodland Hills for SCPS #12, Santa Cross and Eco-Sportfest 5k run. Overall series prizes including champion jerseys by Voler will be awarded to top 'crossers, runners, iron crossers (doing both the XC and CX races), the GoGreenRacer Podium for the top 5 racers doing their part to reduce their impact on the planet. Also the top 3 CX teams will be awarded team trophies made from old bike parts donated throughout the season. Grand Prize drawings will be awarded including: an Ellsworth CX Roots frame, a Shimano Dura-Ace/Hutchinson tubeless wheelset, an Alpha Q Carbon CX Fork, a Fuji CX Pro frame/fork, Warner Springs Ranch Vacations, an SDG Saddle, SRAM Rival Cranksets, and more!!!

The Prestige Series will also be hosting a toy drive for the Boys and Girls Club of Los Angeles, so bring an extra toy, your holiday cheer and burn a few extra calories before holiday feasts begin (or continue).

For those of you hungry for more cross action after the holidays, check SoCalCross.com for information on the January 2009 Cross Fever Series. The series will visit four locations including last year's state championship venue at Hart Park in Bakersfield, and San Luis Obispo for a vineyard race at Talley Vineyards.

More details on the upcoming events can be found at: www.SoCalCross.org

Good luck to all who are racing at Cyclocross Nationals this week/weekend in Kansas City! See you there ☺