

Ride Sally Ride Race Report

By Matt Neigh:

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Category 3 race was first.Â Correcting some mistakes from the week prior, I: 1) didnâ€™t drink a bottle of wine and have some beers with the neighbor on Friday night; 2) got to the race in enough time to get in a suitable warmup.Â That done, the rest was easy.Â Given that all my team mates were out being group ride heros instead of racing in an event 45 minutes from home, I was fending for myself.Â The Ride Sally Ride course is flat, 3 non-technical turns, and fast.Â Getting off the front required an acceleration over 30 mph, and maintaining it.Â Although only 20 miles in length, I was thinking field sprint as the most likely outcome so the plan was to be in the action when it made sense, which meant anything that didnâ€™t have an ABRT, a Route 1 Velo, and a Bike Dr. in it was destined for failure.

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Lots of attacks, I followed wheels and maintained position in the top 5 to 10, even countered a few times trying to pull out some players, but the aforementioned teams were bound and determined to keep this field together.Â Second to last lap I took a wheel in the R1V leadout train that they've been advertising as legit.Â It was a good wheel to be on until just after turn 1 on the last lap when the R1V leadout train derailed with engine failure leaving me to have to re-shuffle.Â I thought about a flyer, but glanced under my arm to see too many fast guys licking their chops.Â Steve Wahl of ABRT threw down a big acceleration between turns 2 and 3, and I found myself about 6 back coming out of the final turn - behind Steve, Win Eliot of DC Velo, Andreas Gutzeit of NCVC, and two other donkeys I cant remember.Â I got around 4th and 5th wheel on my jump but Steve and Win were gone.Â I thought there was a chance I might have gotten Andreas with a bike throw at the line.Â The camera malfunctioned so no photos and the racers had to sort it out.Â Andreas was confident he had 3rd and I was hoping (i.e. not at all confident) in my bike throw so no argument from me.Â 4th place in what was a very fast race for a Category 3 field.Â Â

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M35+.Â This race was loaded including Dave Fuentes, Chuck Hutcheson, Nima, Dave Osbourne, Brian Vaughan, the full Team Saroff representation, Haymarket guys, and oh yeah, me by myself because my team mates were doing the local group ride.Â Who on earth was at this local group ride anyway?Â Everyone I knew in the racer community was either at the Ride Sally Ride or up in Philly!Â I was doing this race to stretch the legs, and stretched they got.Â I thought a break had a chance here given the horsepower and short distance of the race.Â My plan was to be in everything that included Fuentes and/or Hutcheson.Â Sidenote, those guys just toy with the M35+ field, they're at a totally different level of racing.Â They attacked a bunch, I followed a bunch, pulled through and even attacked a little, but things came back together a bunch.Â A prime with about 6 to go resulted in a gap with, you guessed it, Fuentes, Hutcheson, and a Haymarket guy going clear.Â I was too far back, and didnâ€™t have the juice to follow anyway.Â The break never got more than 5 seconds clear, but they were gone.Â Last lap, I was in pretty good position, but all the musclebound sprinter types that I hadn't seen all day were moving up and I decided sprinting for at best 4th place was just not in my interest.Â Sat up after the last corner and let the power guys do their thing.Â Great workout, fun race, safely finished in the pack.Â Â

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Thanks for reading.

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Matthew Neigh