



SPRAD TRACKS

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Tracks #16 October 31st 2003

Tour De Lizard~ 7SLegends

September 6th and 7th approximately 125 mountain bike racers descended on Camp Horizon's trails west of Arkansas City. Camp Horizon is a Methodist church camp along the Arkansas River. With Ozark style terrain, the remnants of an old Rock Quarry, and one really long hill at the end of each lap, Horizon is a challenging 7.5-mile loop.

Team LATR had seven racers representing several of the team's different locations in attendance. Eleven year-Old Nick Renard from Russell KS was first to test the Lizard's short course. Renard started the shortened 12 and under course in second place. Climbing the start hill on the heels of Nathan Renshaw, Nick overtook Renshaw and maintained the lead throughout. He finished in a much-unexpected 5 minutes and 5 seconds, 17 seconds ahead of second place, securing LATR's first trophy for the day.

As Renard was finishing, two of LATR's adult members were departing for their one lap spin in the beginner's bracket. Salina member Ryan Cole represented the team in the 19-29 class, while Attica KS member Paul Arnoldy carried the torch in the 30-39 year olds. Cole, while still in his rookie season has had some promising results for the team. Fresh off a summer job as a white water rafting guide, he was excited to be back on the race circuit. His lap time showed that. Finishing third in a competitive class of rookie racers, Cole secured another podium position for the team with a time of 54.01 minutes. Another newcomer to the team with a little less experience Arnoldy persevered finishing eighth, but finishing none-the-less. Paul's time was a competent 1:13.06 on the tough course.



Two World Champions lick the Lizard, photo by Donna Smith

The senior brackets had four Team LATR members in the Sport and Expert classes. LATR's female duo of Sara Kay Carrell from Marion, and Kim Smith of Wichita signed on for two laps around the course for approx. 15 miles of technical riding. Smith was still recovering from a very bad accident on the Horizon course during a training ride a few weeks prior. On a wet day while descending one of Horizon's more treacherous rock descents, Kim went over the bars and opened up a nice gash on her chin. Again upholding the team motto of "it's not a ride until somebody bleeds", she finished her second lap Sunday with some new abrasions on her shins, but still smiling. Somebody took her out during the jackrabbit start of her race. I understand she has sworn revenge on the perpetrator. Her time of 2 hours 10 minutes was good enough for second in her class and third overall female finisher. Sara Kay, LATR's 27 year old powerhouse racer finished 9 minutes ahead of her teammate for first in class and second overall female at 2:01.34

Male Sport rider Terry Spradley did not fair quite as well as the lady racers. After replacing a rear derailleur that disintegrated on Saturday's pre-ride, Sunday's luck was not much better. The 40-49 Sport class had a fast group of 15 preparing to challenge the fifteen-mile bike buster. Falling from fourth to sixth in lap one Spradley was closing back up with the lead group when an over used drive chain snapped on one of the more abusive rock climbs. This unfortunately was not the only time it would happen. Only minutes after repairing the chain at mile 9 it let go again putting team LATR's Captain far back in the standings. Spradley managed to hold things together well enough after the second repair to finish 10th in the field of 15 starters almost 20 minutes behind first place. ➡



Nick starting Second, photo by D. Renard



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Cameron Chambers, the team's shining star, returned to his home state fresh off his World Solo win in British Columbia. Chambers went back to his trusty single speed rigid bike for the shorter, faster Tour De Lizard event. He would be competing against National NORBA champion Steve Tilford and some other fast company in the 22-mile Expert race. Chambers maintained a strong pace riding third, less than a minute



Steve Tilford movin' on photo Doug Renard

behind Tilford and Bill Stolte. Unfortunately, Chambers flatted in the second lap dropping him significantly off the pace while he repaired it. Expert/Pro racers move fast, there is little time for errors or mechanical problems in that division. He regained some of the lost distance towards the beginning of lap three when he again flatted in the sharp rocks of Camp Horizon. Out of patches, and out of contention, he finished as only a champion can finish with the tire hanging around his shoulders and riding on the rear rim.

Team LATR did not have a clean sweep at the Lizard, but did quite well against the fast riders of Oklahoma's Tour De Dirt Series. Our lady riders ruled the day. Roy Hannah of Wichita, (I believe), won the cool cruiser bike given away in the raffle. With an abundance of swag, most left the event with something more than they came with, even if it was just a smile or a new scar. Excellent event, one I would like to see more Team LATR racers attend next year.



Left to right, Terry S, Kim Smith, Ryan Cole, Sara Kay, Nick Renard

Happy Birthday to Me! *by 7 Spradley*

More from the Tour De Lizard

September 7th was my 44th year of existence on this big blue marble. I decided to spend it trying to fall off the damn thing. Bobby Smith was holding the annual Tour De Lizard at Camp Horizon. I figured going down to Lick the Lizard was a good plan. Unfortunately, the lizard licked back

Saturday I joined 11-year old Nick Renard, and his father Doug for a pre-race ride around Horizon's slightly over 7-mile loop. Doug is a self-proclaimed "less than recreational rider". He did a fine job of piloting a discount store fat tire bike around the first half of Horizon's course. At the bailout point, he opted for the shorter choice while, Nicholas and I continued onto the rougher, more technical back section. Nick also did an excellent job negotiating the tricky rock laden trails. A better job than Sugar's rear derailleur. ➡



Cam finishing on the rim, by Doug Renard



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A few miles short of the finish, the pins just fell out of the XT derailleur hanging on Sugar's rear triangle. The springs pushed it all out of whack and shot the chain off at a crazy angle to the rest of the drive train. Surprisingly enough it was still ride-able just not very responsive in the shifting department. We made it out of the trees, but I was kind of bummed figuring Sunday's race was a wash.

Roy Hannah and a group of Wichita riders came to my rescue. They fixed me up with a nice Rapid Rise XTR derailleur and some entertaining bike antics. Nathan Hobbs from Newton joined our group and we all went up to partake of the provided meal. After the meal people gathered to socialize a bit and later listen to the sounds of *The Nightwatchmen*, an excellent group specializing in blues, but covering all the old party tunes. Unfortunately, the week preceding the Lizard, Kansas received record rainfall amounts throughout the state. The Arkansas River and lowlands around Camp Horizon were no exception. The result of all these rains were legions of newly hatched and very hungry mosquitoes. These were not your ordinary mosquitoes. These were no DNF, tougher than nails, born and bred in Mountain bike country mosquitoes. Typical sprays, Deet, and other deterrents had little effect on the determined bloodsuckers. With a ratio of about 1 million mosquitoes for every mountain biker *The NightWatchmen* lost out to the buzzing hoards as bikers retreated to their individual campgrounds to stand in the smoke of their bonfires.

Daybreak Sunday was a welcome event as the morning light sent the irritating bugs off to digest their stolen fluids diet. Sugar seemed to like her shiny new rear shifter, as the gear changes were crisp and clean. I guess yesterday's temper tantrum was just her way of telling me she was due for some new trinkets. With Saturday's tribulations, I almost forgotten it was my birthday. Before long multicolored race jerseys filled the common area near the start/finish line. Champion mountain biker Steve Tilford was in attendance along with CKMBC's Cameron Chambers. The expert event promised to be a good one. (See the *Tour De Lizard* story in this issue for more race coverage.)

*Please remove Dave Turis from your lists...
...You kind of have to be on the
Bike Kansas Groups to
understand the joke here.*

TEAM
LATR



It's Not A Ride Till Somebody Bleeds!



Happy Birthday to Me, happy birthday... photo D. Renard

After watching Nick Renard win his event and our beginner riders take off, it was time for me to join the rest of the sport class for our two laps around. I started off fast, but didn't last long. Halfway through lap one I started falling back in the pack. Aging another year must have stressed me more than I thought. Somewhere in my race-confused thoughts, the tune "Happy Birthday to Me" was playing in a loop in my head. Not the whole song mind you, just the one line "happy birthday to me". I slowed through the last half of lap one, but started getting my second wind as I started into the trees for lap two. Through the clearings in the trees, I could see I was making up a little time on the racers ahead of me. Then about mile nine, my chain snapped on an uphill. I should have seen it coming. Earlier in the week, I borrowed a chain tool from a friend of mine. Just in case, I might need it. My fate was sealed from that point on. That and all the stress I subjected the chain to the day before when the derailleur let go, was more than Sugar's metal lifeline could handle.

"Lower Altitude Team Racers"