

Hot summer Nights Race Report—week seven



July 13, 2007—HSN Racing

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WUN TUN RAMBLINGS

Well, well well.....here we are: Watching the Tour for the third time today, after reading every little snippet on line that can be uncovered and disgorged. Tomorrow is racing night once again - and I gotta tell you - I'm anxious, I'm ready. I'm looking forward to the banking, heat, lights, and left turns. And for my own good, my own well being - to nourish my soul, and pay penance for sins past and future - I will forego a beautiful night of racing. Yep. Won't be here....my choice, no familial pressure, no undue duress, no injuries of a physical nature....I just ain't gonna race. So I wish all of you (that'd be "all y'all" if you were from Chickasha, OK) the best of luck and safe, fast, thrilling rides out there on the banks of Major Taylor tomorrow night.

So what does that have to do with racing on Friday the 13th? Nothing....nothing at all. But I've been lacking motivation - no, not motivation, but lacking inspiration - yes, that's it, inspiration - to review my feeble memories of the events of the evening and set them to page. And memories feeble they most assuredly are.

3'S FIELD WELCOMES BACK HABEGGER

Kirk came back for Friday night, riding hard, smart and fast: 2nd in the scratch race, 4th in the elimination and 2nd in the Points Race—nice going, Kirk! (By the way, that was the weirdest elimination race I'd ever seen, and I've not seen that many! Folks attacking off the front, break-ways, chase groups, chase groups working to get back to the break - weird). Relatively-new Friday Nighter, Josh Prater, had a good night as well - 3rd in scratch, 2nd in elimination and 3rd in points race. Nice job, Josh! And the scribe would be remiss if he didn't point out Mikey Souers win in the scratch race, sprinting without humping his top tube.

WHERE HAVE ALL THE LADIES GONE?

Where have all the Ladies Gone? In June, the Women's field was larger than the Cat.3's. This week, only three women race, and one of them raced with the 3's. Geesh. (She was goddamn fast too!)

CURTIS WAS BACK!!!

Seventeen (or is it 18 now) time national champion, "The Kentucky Flyer", fastest and winningest man in the Midwest, Curtis Tolson was back at MTV for a night of riding hard and turning left. And as is Curtis' habit, he damn-near won everything: Second in the scratch race to Young (and soon to be Scabby) Tom, and winning the Elimination and Points Race. Quite a nice season debut, Curtis - Masters Natz must be approaching!

YOUNG TOM GETS SCABBY

The humble scribe did not witness this event in person, but did receive immediate updates from people who were there, and then I turned on CNN and caught live coverage there as well. As relayed to me by the most reliable of sources, Young Tom was setting up nicely to score another "V" for the night in the points race by winning the final sprint of the night. Approaching the penultimate lap, blasting out of turn four, Young Tom spotted a hotty in the packed MTV grandstands. How he picked this hotty out of the crowd while on the rivet and riding 40mph is beyond the scope of this account - suffice it to say: Young Tom is skilled in these mystical ways. So, as the story goes, Young Tom was screaming down the home straight, craning his neck back to maintain eye-contact with said hotty, who by now was wildly cheering for the young, fast, mildly-pierced and mildly-tattooed bike racer. Young Tom managed to ride straight up the banking in turn one - catapulted over the ballustrade, landed it ala Schickle and was still unscathed up to the point where he thought he could make a sharp right turn and head straight to the grandstands. You see, just like our politics - we turn left, not right.....Young Tom instantly became Young and Scabby Tom when he bit it hard. I swear this is the true story. (The story has a happy ending - he never made it to the hotty in the stands, saving several from months of heartache).

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FLYING 200M RIDES!!

On what was by all accounts a very slow night - heavy air, high pressure, and just generally slow times all around - a few standouts bear mentioning: First, Simeon was slower than expected foreshadowing the rides of most of those who followed. Some were slow - some were wicked slow! And the last rider to go, Young (and not yet Scabby) Tom, rolled into his start as if he was just finishing a nice, easy recovery ride. His jump coming out of Turn Two was not the least bit bombastic, and his acceleration down the banking and into Turn Three was nothing to catch the eye nor the imagination. And yet....and yet.....he just kept accelerating....all the way....all the way to the line. Riding a perfect line, quiet in the saddle, bike unwavering.....and DAMN - it was FAST! Unless you saw it, you'll miss the artistry, the elegance of this ride. It reminded me immediately of a passage from Jonathon Livingston Seagull: "You will begin to touch heaven in the moment that you touch perfect speed. And that isn't flying a thousand miles an hour, or a million, or flying at the speed of light. Because any number is a limit, and perfection doesn't have limits. Perfect speed is being there."

Wuntun ditched out of the 3's points race early, went home, got three hours sleep, got up, drove to Terre Haute, and rode his bike, Molly, across the state. A coincidence that he's not racing this Friday???

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