

# The Catalyst

Los Gatos Bicycle Racing Club  
Team Easton/Specialized

May 2005

URL: <http://www.lgbrc.org>  
e-mail: [lgbrc@topica.com](mailto:lgbrc@topica.com)

## Sea Otter Classic Race Reports



*Starr Falk tucks on the descent approaching the Andretti Hairpin in the Laguna Seca Circuit Race. Photo by Garrett Lau.*

### Women's UCI Stage Race

by Martina Patella

Sea Otter Stage 1: Downhill time trial, yikes! This stage is a short time trial that starts at the top of the Laguna Seca hill and ends at the finish line. Taitt, Starr, Natalie and I all suit up in skinsuits and aero equipment, get in a good warm up on the course, and head to the starting line. My tactic was: pedal pedal pedal, try not to use the brakes, pedal pedal pedal. Well, the pedaling part went really well but I did have to use my brakes once on the cork screw descent and a couple of times through the 180 degree turn. This course is very fun and takes a lot of guts at top speeds! LGBRC Easton/Specialized was off to a good start with all four riders making the time cut after the time trial.

Sea Otter Stage 2: After a good night's rest, I had plans to destroy the stage 2 Laguna Seca Circuit Race. There was big hill in the way of my plans for this stage. I am no climber, but I did my best to hang with the speedy pack as

long as I could. Taitt and Starr stayed with the pack almost the entire race! By the end of the race the pack was shattered and Starr was just behind the leaders! Way to go Starr!

Sea Otter Stage 3: Oh boy, Fort Ord Road Race is a tough hilly stage. We started in the Laguna Seca, climbed over some small hills and over Barloy hill into Fort Ord. The pace was fast as the pros sent off attack after attack. Out of the 80 some starters of Sea Otter, only 57 women finished all three stages. Taitt and I finished the road race near the back, but I was still so proud to finish on such a grueling course with a stacked field! Starr was again our shining star as she hammered with the best up Barloy hill.

Sea Otter was great for LGBRC Easton/Specialized! Thank you Joy and Karen for supporting us in the feedzone and thank you LGBRC for supporting women's racing!

### Can't Keep 'em Down: Sea Otter Road Race

by Jon Erskine

Two weeks after my spill at Pilarcitos and all systems are go. My back pain kept me off my bike for 3 days but my rollers called out to me by day 4. Three days on the rollers and I was back on the road by last Sunday. No pain from turning over the pedals, just the occasional jolt from potholes and the like, so this weekend I gave it a go at the Sea Otter road race on Saturday.

The M30+ 1/2/3 race basically had everybody else in it that wasn't doing the UCI stage race so the competition level was good. The race begins on the Laguna Seca circuit but is mainly held on a modified version of the "kinder and gentler" Fort Ord Districts course. It consisted of 6 laps around a technical circuit (think giant criterium) with several big ring climbs followed by a long downhill and then The Wall (maybe 1k or so long, 15% grade, tops).

The race was pretty aggressive with attacks every time over the wall and the occasional oddball attack here and there. With about 12 guys (out of maybe 70) including Michael Hutchison, the racing was mainly dominated by Team Spine. Every attack was either initiated or chased by them.

I got in an early break with Hutchinson, but too many people bridged up and soon the rest of the field caught us. About half way through the race a guy spilled on one of the turns and caused a pretty big split.

I was unlucky enough to be on the wrong side and came to a standstill for a bit. Nobody seemed interested in bringing back the front group so I bridged up myself but took dozens of my pals with me. When the split splat,

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# Tandem does Solvang Double Century

by Mike "Spike" Jessen

Early Saturday morning, and we were late. The sun hadn't broken the horizon yet, and we were late. Our intended start time of 5:30 passed. At 6:00 am we rolled out of the hotel parking lot, turned right, and headed due east into the rising sun.

Our general plan was to simply survive this. We were starting a 200-mile ride, with an estimated time in the saddle of maybe 14 hours. We hoped to maintain ourselves with lots of food, minimal racing, and maybe some pace line work. Yeah, right.

Onward we shivered. It was cold, a crisp 38 degrees! I couldn't shift gears let alone use the brakes; it's difficult with numb fingers. There wasn't a cloud to be seen horizon to horizon, only a glow from the sunrise. We crested a small rise and I was directly facing the sun, now I couldn't see either. Great start so far.

We zigzagged through some rolling hills and headed into Foxen Canyon. This was the first of what came to seem like an infinite number of climbs today. Other riders had said the course was easy, fast. We had visions of blasting this course. So far this wasn't happening. Here we are lumbering up this hill on rough pavement. Not much fun so far. At least my fingers were thawing.

We play leapfrog with a group of single bikes, they walk away from us on the climbs and we catch them on the flats. This is a typical tandem and single rhythm. On a reasonably long down hill we pass them and also a blue Calfee tandem. Next thing I know we're chatting with the

Calfee team, and the singles are lining up behind us. They know the basic rule of surviving long distance riding—find a tandem. Here is a rare opportunity, tandem tandems. We crested the hill and the pavement changed from potholes to brand new, and the terrain leveled for us. We dropped in behind the Calfee and put the hammer down.

Oh this was so cool! We're working with another bike that knew what they were doing! We kept trading pulls, and

the speed up. Anybody who has ridden behind us on Canada Road knows what this is like, now imagine two fast tandems. This section became one of the highlights of the double. I'm not sure how many singles were behind us, but it was over a dozen bikes. I glanced at the speedometer and we were cruising at 30 mph. On and on this stretch continued, finally another 17 miles later we came to the first rest stop. This was one happy pace line.

At this rest stop I made two tactical errors. I admit it, I'm sorry, they just kinda happened. My mistakes. We misjudged our water bottle supply and didn't refill them. Also I had to use the porta-potty. There were only five or six people standing in line so I waited my turn. It was too long a wait. The Calfee hadn't waited. And they had taken our singles too.

The chase began. The Calfee had a several minute head start on us but I was optimistic. We were in farmland now, flat and able to see everything. Ahead of us was a group within striking range; I was hoping the Calfee was leading them. But also there was this tanker truck between us. The truck couldn't pass because of the double yellow line, and I was worried he'd suddenly decide to turn to the right onto one of the many side roads. The choice of where to pass became critical as we snuck up on him. Which side, left into the oncoming lane or right on the shoulder? Only a couple of more seconds to decide. Also we had a couple of draftees sucking our wheel. What would the draftees do? Stick it out with us, or let caution rule? I closed on the truck, so close we could smell the diesel exhaust. With a last check of traffic, I dove into the left side. Liz waved at the driver as we passed. For the draftees caution won, they didn't pass with us. After all that, no Calfee tandem was in front leading the group.

Oh well. On we rode. A few miles later we slowed for a right turn and the same tanker truck passed us. I'd swear that the driver smiled and waved at us. At the 70-mile mark, with 130 miles to go

I paid the price for all that fun. We made a left turn onto a very short steep climb and both of my legs cramped. I finished a Gu package, drank alot of Cytomax, and tried to stretch. Somehow we counted down the next agonizing 12 miles to the second rest stop. Ironically as we pulled in the blue Calfee tandem was just leaving.

After a decent break we headed north again. In San Luis Obispo Caltrans had decided to rebuild a stretch of Mission Road, in the resulting confusion we made an "oops". We missed a turn and earned a couple of bonus miles. Somehow we fumbled back onto Highway 1 and headed north again towards the turn around in Morro Bay.

Highway 1, that mythical strip of coastal asphalt. Here we are, and I was feeling better. Until I looked up and noticed that we were facing a long, really long, ohmigawd long gradual climb. More climbing, I don't know the organizers planned it but for all the climbing there weren't many downhill.

Using a flat section to build some momentum we passed a group of bikes. After we passed a third group of bikes I checked the speedometer. This made no sense. We're moving uphill at 25 mph. The terrain leveled off, we passed a couple of more bikes, and increased to 30 mph. This still made little sense. Finally a pack of bikes caught us near the top. As we crested two things happened. First was the tailwind disappeared, and the second was we exited the highway. Again no real downhill.

We reached the turnaround point at sea level in Morro Bay. Now the vital statistics: 105 miles ridden, 5 hours 40 minutes, and average speed of 18.8mph. Without a doubt this was the fastest we had ever ridden a century, with another 95 miles still to go.

Southbound now, we hooked up with yet another tandem. We paced lined with them 15 miles to the next rest stop.

The following section wasn't much fun. We were riding coastal roads through small congested towns. Imagine downtown Los Gatos extended for

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## Sea Otter Road Race

*Continued from page 1*

Hutchinson attacked off the front group with another Spine guy and a third rider from Infineon. With a rider like that and a big team mucking things up behind, the three quickly gained time up the road (I didn't realize they had gone until the next time up the wall when I asked someone are those guys up there in our race?).

On the final lap the attacks occurred hot and heavy. I was determined to follow a couple of knowns (Andres from Argentina [Masters state champ from last year], Gustavo Gomez [super climber, likes to head bang with Pego]) and any Spines. This worked out well. On the long tail wind strait heading east about 5 miles from the finish the whole pack was on the left side of the road except one Spine guy on the right moving up slowly. I got on his tail and rolled around, just slightly increasing his pace. This was the sort of slow motion attack Rick and I used at Pescadero last year and the effect was the same - nobody reacted until we were a couple of hundred yards up the road. By that time we had hit turn at the base of the two big ring climbs before the long downhill. Out of sight from the pack I punched it hard up the climbs to start closing the coffin. I started to gap the Spine guy but I

slowed down so he could help me on the downhill to the finishing climb. He said thanks and we worked hard on the downhill. Ahead was one other guy who escaped a few minutes before my attack. I knew if we had a gap at the bottom of the finishing climb (the 5km Barloy Canyon) I'd be a happy camper.

Sure enough at the bottom of the climb the pack was nowhere. Now to reel in the stars and stripes guy in front of me and drop Mr. Spine. The climb starts off gradually and ends with two steep pitches. I got no help from Mr. Spine and just went into it mode feeling great and thinking of Boonen at Flanders ("You must win Flanders solo once"...ok Tom, whatever). I caught sight of Stars and Stripes about 1/2 way up and shortly after caught Mr. Infineon from the break of 3. With 500m to go I went bonkers out of the saddle making one last effort to catch S&S but to no avail.

The last 100m I was doing the Paper-boy weave all over the road and had visions of being swarmed at the finish but held on for 4th something like 6 secs behind S&S. Meanwhile behind the pack blew up during a drag race up the climb with Andreas leading the way. I was glad I didn't wait for that because it would have been ugly.

All and all a great day and a nice way to come back.



*Jon Erskine leads the chase group in the M35+ 1/2/3 race at the Wente Criterium, one week after the Sea Otter Classic. Photo by Garrett Lau.*

## Solvang Double Century

*Continued from page 2*

several miles. The turns weren't very well marked, and I wasn't familiar with the route. I just followed other riders.

Finally, finally at mile 145 we had endured that stretch and cruised into the rest stop in the farming town of Guadalupe, away from the SUV's and tourists of Pismo Beach. I remember two little girls in a second story cheering at all the bikes. Liz rang her bell back to them. They squealed and ran back into the apartment.

This upcoming stretch was lonely. We're riding by ourselves through flat empty farmlands. Occasionally we'd see a solitary bike ahead of us. This was useful as a clue that I was still on the right road. The bikes couldn't hold our pace and they dropped behind. Again back onto Highway 1, which changed to Highway 135. On Highway 135 we started to pick up riders again. At last, we had somebody to talk with. For years we had ridden distance with a stuffed toy alligator strapped onto the touring saddlebag. Somebody recognized it! They had ridden with us before.

Into Los Alamos, at mile 173, we pull into the last rest stop. The finish is so close only 25 miles left. At the flagpole in the center of town we made a right turn into Drum Canyon. All we had to do was make a turn onto Highway 246, ride through the town of Buellton, cross Highway 101, and the last 3 miles back to Solvang. Oh I was so tired and ready to get off the bike.

Drum Canyon was a surprise. After all the climbing we had completed, and only a low ridge of hills ahead it couldn't be that tough, right? Wrong. Brutal is a better word. Compare this to riding 180 miles and then climbing Old La Honda with a couple of steep pitches thrown in. It was very picturesque, and remote but I wasn't interested in that. This thing hurts. Three miles later we cross a cattle guard and crested the hill.

The sun was beginning to set we turned all our lights, one main headlight and three taillights. At last a downhill. Well, kinda a downhill. This pavement was ragged, worse than Tunitas Creek.

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## Race Results

### Land Park Criterium

March 19, 2005

Women 1/2/3: Taitt Sato, 9th; Maria Deason, 12th

Cat 4: Aaron Hanna, 6th; Stephen Butler; Neil Gift

### West Sacramento Criterium

March 20, 2005

Cat 3: Ben Dodge, 13th

Cat 2/3: Ben Dodge, 18th

Cat 4: Matt Mosby, 1st; Stephen Butler, 19th; Jun Aishima; Jim Ryan

Women 1/2/3: Taitt Sato, 1st; Natalie Mik, 15th

Juniors 14-under: Daniel Tisdell, 1st; David Tisdell, 7th; Canaan Linder, 8th

### Copperopolis Road Race

March 26, 2005

Cat 4: David Porter

Cat 5: Thomas Oelsner

M35+ 1/2/3: Kalen Gruber, 14th;

Michael Rowe; Mark Davis; John Sevic

Women 1/2: Starr Falk, 14th; Taitt Sato, 18th

Junior 15-16: Phil Mehlitz

Junior 13-14: Daniel Tisdell, 2nd

Junior 10-12: Daniel de la Cruz, 5th

### Pilarcitos Stage Race

April 2-3, 2005

Cat 4: Aaron Hanna, 9th; Daniel Tisdell

M35+ Cat 5: Thomas Oelsner, 10th; Bob Skubis, 19th

M35+ Cat 4: David Puglia

Women 3: Jennifer Van Muckey, 9th

M35+ 1/2/3: Michael Rowe, 8th;

Kalen Gruber, 9th

### Wards Ferry Road Race

April 2, 2005

Cat 3: Mark Davis, 18th

Cat 4/5B: David Porter, 12th

### Tuolumne Township Criterium

April 3, 2005

Cat 4/5: Jim Ryan, 4th; Matt Mosby, 15th

### Thursday Night Points Race #1

April 7, 2005

C: John Sevic, 1st

### Stockton Waterfront Criterium

April 9, 2005

Women 1/2/3: Martina Patella, 2nd; Taitt Sato, 4th

M35+ 4/5: Thomas Oelsner, 3rd; Steven Woo, 9th

Cat 4: Steven Woo

Junior 13-14: Daniel Tisdell, 2nd

Junior 15-16: Ben Barsi-Rhyne, 4th

Junior Women 15-16: Dawn Tisdell, 2nd

### Specialized Morgan Hill Grand Prix

April 10, 2005

Pro/1/2: John Knotts; Ryan Wong; Brian Heneghan; Dennis Hopp; Kalen Gruber

Women 1/2/3: Starr Falk, 8th; Taitt Sato; Martina Patella; Natalie Mik; Jennifer Van Muckey; Maria Deason

Cat 4: Neil Gift; Stephen Butler

M35+ Cat 4: Steven Woo

M35+ 1/2/3: Kalen Gruber, 20th

Cat 3: Erik Bergstrom

### Thursday Night Points Race #2

April 14, 2005

B: Steven Woo, 6th

C: David Puglia, 5th

### Sea Otter Classic UCI Stage Race

April 14-16, 2005

Men Pro/1/2: John Knotts; Ryan Wong; Brian Heneghan; Dennis Hopp; Kalen Gruber; Matt McNamara

Women Pro/1/2: Starr Falk; Taitt Sato; Martina Patella; Natalie Mik

### Sea Otter Classic Road Race

April 15-16, 2005

M30+ 1/2/3: Jon Erskine, 4th

M30+ Cat 5: Bob Skubis

Cat 5: Brent Bellm, 5th

Cat 4: Aaron Hanna

Junior 13-14: Daniel Tisdell, 17th

### Sea Otter Classic Circuit Race

April 15-16, 2005

M30+ Cat 1/2/3: Mark Davis, 17th

M30+ Cat 4: Jun Aishima; Chris Pearson

Cat 4: Aaron Hanna, 20th

Junior 17-18: Jim Ryan

Junior 15-16: Ben Barsi-Rhyne, 6th; David Tisdell, 13th

### Sea Otter Classic Cross Country

April 17, 2005

Sport Men 40-44: Darrel

Brokeshoulder; Jeff Vadasz

### Sea Otter Classic Dual Slalom

April 15, 2005

Beginner Men 19+: Joe Fabris

### Sea Otter Classic Mountain Cross

April 17, 2005

Beginner Men 40+: Joe Fabris, 8th

### Sea Otter Classic Downhill

April 16, 2005

Sport Men 40-49: Joe Fabris, 16th

### La Mirada Criterium

April 17, 2005

Cat 3: John Sevic

### Thursday Night Points Race #3

April 21, 2005

C: John Sevic

### Wente Vineyards Road Race

April 23, 2005

Cat 4: Aaron Hanna, 4th; Neil Gift; Matt Mosby; David Porter; Jim Ryan

M35+ 4/5: Thomas Oelsner

Women 1/2: Taitt Sato, 7th; Martina Patella, 19th

Women 3: Jennifer Van Muckey, 10th

Cat 5b: Gene Ragan; Keith Adams

Junior 15-16: Ben Barsi-Rhyne, 2nd; Daniel Tisdell, 12th; Phil Mehlitz, 13th

### Wente Vineyards Criterium

April 24, 2005

Pro/1/2: Kalen Gruber; Jon Erskine; Richard Pego; Brian Heneghan; Dennis Hopp; Darrell Eng

Cat 3: John Sevic, 8th; Greg Juneau

Cat 4: Matt Mosby, 2nd; Jim Ryan

5th; Aaron Hanna, 6th; Stephen Butler, 16th; Steven Woo; Neil Gift;

Garrett Lau

Cat 5: Abe Gore, 14th

M35+ 1/2/3: John Sevic, 20th; Jon Erskine; Kalen Gruber

M35+ 4/5: Chris Pearson, 7th; Steven Woo; David Puglia

M45+: David Puglia

Women 1/2: Martina Patella, 2nd;

Taitt Sato, 7th

Women 3: Jennifer Van Muckey, 4th; Maria Deason, 10th

Junior 15-16: Ben Barsi-Rhyne, 1st; Phil Mehlitz, 6th; Daniel Tisdell, 8th;

Dawn Tisdell, 10th



2004 team photo by Jeff Tse.

## Cat's Hill Information for LGBRC Members

### Team Photo

**Team photo** will be taken at 7:00am at the base of Cat's Hill on Nicholson. Wear **current team clothing** and **cycling shoes**. No sunglasses, please.

### Race Registration for Workers

If you are working the Cat's Hill, you may race for free. However, the procedure is a little different than in past years:

1. **Register** through **Active.com**.
2. **Sign up** to help with the race. Be sure to choose a time slot that does not interfere with your race or warmup.
2. **After race day** we will mail you a check for the amount of your registration fee.

### Post-race Party FAQs

**Location:** Los Gatos Lodge in Los Gatos, CA

**Who's invited:** workers and their guests. Guests may sign up to work the Cat's Hill. If they choose not to, the cost for the post-race party is **\$20**, payable at the door.

**Time:** 7:15 pm

**Menu:** Pastas, salad, bread. No-host bar.

**How to sign up:** LGBRC members, click on the **Evite invitation OR** you may **email Aldene or Christine**. Non-club members may sign up by sending an email. (Please do not email if you've already signed up on Evite - we don't want to count you twice. Thanks! )

## Solvang Double Century

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After two hairpins the road straightened and I let the tandem run. The pavement was rough enough it seemed the bike was airborne most of the time.

By now twilight ended and we were relying completely on our lights. Another climb into Buellton, and we crossed over Highway 101. The last few miles were pitch black. Near the end of a ride like this everyone is pretty much brain dead and running only on will power. Suddenly a near miss! Another bike rider was fumbling with something on his bike and dropped it! He almost had a too close an encounter with a 350 pound tandem. We scurried away from him.

At last we came to the last climb, the one I had been waiting for. The one at the Solvang city limits. We had finished. We rode up Mission Street, turned into the hotel ready for dinner. It had just turned 7pm. Final ride results: 195 miles, 11 hours riding time, 13 hours total time, 17.7 mph average speed. 10 waterbottles, 6 Clif Shots, countless Clif Bars, and two tired riders. We had finished the first leg of the California Triple Crown.

## Parking, wine tasting at Testarossa Vineyards

Parking will be available on race day at Testarossa Vineyards, with a shuttle from the winery to the race beginning at 9:30 am. Free wine-tasting for race spectators and participants will start at 11:00 am with the shuttle taking interested adults from the corner of Bean and Tait (see map) up to the winery, about a mile away.

print page and cut out coupon for free wine tasting

### Complimentary Tasting Coupon for 4 people -- a \$40 Value



2004 Winery of the Year  
Restaurant Wine Magazine (Napa Valley)



Bring this flyer to Testarossa Vineyards' 19th Century stone wine cellars for a **complimentary tasting** for up to four people. Testarossa is open daily from 11am to 5pm and is just minutes away at 300 College Ave. - **testarossa.com** - Expires: 6/30/05

print page and cut out coupon for free wine tasting

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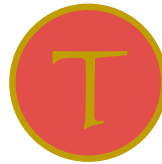
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www.rudyprojectusa.com

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Specializing in Prescription Sports Eyewear  
www.rx-spex.com

**Teschner Frames**  
www.teschnerbikes.com

**LATHAM & WATKINS LLP**  
www.lw.com



*Kalen Gruber and Jon Erskine stay near each other in the Wente Criterium.  
Photo by Garrett Lau*

## **LGBRC Board of Directors for 2005**

**Barry Gordon  
President**

(408) 395-6611 (hm)  
(408) 978-8200 (wk)  
BGordon@structint.com

**Gina Dias  
Treasurer**

(408) 369-9049 (hm)  
(650) 462-8100 x221 (wk)  
gdias@nvt.com

**Aldene Gordon  
Web Designer**

(408) 395-6611 (hm)  
aldeneg@nicerpage.com

**Jon Erskine  
NCNCA Representative**

(510) 663-4203 (wk)  
jerskine2002@yahoo.com

**Sam Marye Lewis  
Publicity Coordinator**

(408) 499-3194 (cell)  
sammarye@ix.netcom.com

**Michael Rowe  
Vice President**

mr\_10am@yahoo.com

**Stephen Butler  
Secretary**

(408)225-7055 (hm)  
stephen@bonnydoonvineyard.com

**Christine Rowe  
Member at Large**

(925)829-4341 (hm)  
cmrowegoimobile@yahoo.com

**Scott Barth  
Race Director**

(408) 248-8313 (hm)  
scott@scottbarth.com

**Kathy Ryan  
Juniors Liaison**

(408) 257-9280 (hm)  
ryan@numerix.com

**Garrett Lau  
Newsletter Editor**

(408) 249-0695 (hm)  
(650) 357-3800 (wk)  
garrett\_lau@yahoo.com

## **Meeting Schedule**

The LGBRC team meeting is at **7:00pm** on the first Monday of each month. The next meetings will be May 2 and June 6. Location:

**Round Table Pizza**

101 Town and Country Village  
Sunnyvale  
Phone Number: 408-736-2242.

## **BOD Meetings**

The Board of Directors' Meetings are usually held on the last Monday of every month. All LGBRC members are welcome. Please contact a BOD member for the time and place of the next meeting.

## **Sunday Rides**

A social, no-drop ride leaves from the Starbucks in Rancho Shopping Center, Foothill at Springer in Los Altos every Sunday. Route is determined by group consensus prior to departure. Meet at 8:30am. Roll out at 8:45am.

## **Ongoing Club Deals**

**Steelman Cycles:** Contact Gary Davis, 700cmoffroad@sbcglobal.net.

**Athlete Octane:** 20% off phone orders, 520-325-8808.

**Cupertino Bike Shop:** 10% off.

**Wheel building or soft-sided bike case loan:** Free. Contact Kwan Low, kwanseng@yahoo.com.

**IN-SPEX Prescription Sports Eyewear:** 20% off, www.in-spex.com.

**Rudy Project:** Contact Barry Gordon for an order form.

**Teschner Frames:** Contact Bill Koerner, BK4WHEELS@aol.com.

## **Newsletter Input**

Please send pictures and articles to garrett\_lau@yahoo.com

The deadline for submissions is the 25th of the month prior to publication.



Rudy Project - Technically Cool Eyewear is our official team eyewear. This year they have exceeded the limits of 'coolness' with some great additions to their sunglass and helmet lines. Rudy Project has 14 new sunglass models and 4 new sport version models with lots of cool new smaller shapes, hip casual styles and high performers that rock! We have also introduced a larger T-Rex helmet for those of you with big noggins. To check out the newest styles for this season contact Barry Gordon for a Club order form.

Rudy continues to support the top cycling teams such as Prime Alliance, Schroeder Iron, Jelly Belly, and Sierra Nevada as well as top athletes like Barb Lundquist, Chris McCormack, and Steve Larsen. Rudy also is a team supplier for Team in Training, USA Triathlon, US Ski Team, and Pro Tennis Registry.

Along with Rudy Project's great products, they continue to give us the great warranties that set them apart from the rest. All glasses come with the Replacement Lens Guarantee - you scratch 'em, they'll replace 'em for a nominal S/H fee - no questions asked. This year Rudy Project is also doubling the frame warranty to two years! And of course, all glasses come with free hard and soft cleaning cloth cases.

Remember we get Club pricing in exchange for promoting Rudy and steering customers to their dealers including our shop sponsor.

Please show your support and wear your Rudy's when training, competing or on the podium! Let's have a great 2005!

**The Los Gatos Bicycle Racing Club**  
**P.O. Box 2842**  
**Saratoga, CA 95070**