

# MASTERS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2009

## RACE UPDATE

Hi all...

Well here we are in beautiful Colorado. The legs are feeling pretty good in spite of our 2 day, 20 hour drive. We arrived in plenty of time to test the legs on the track and get used to not being able to breathe due to the high altitude. High altitude can give you pretty fast times since there is less air resistance, but it can also make it difficult for us sea level athletes to get enough air.

My first race was the 500 meter time trial which was scheduled in the morning. I was a little nervous because I usually don't do as well in the morning. It's hard to get warmed up. This morning was particularly difficult. We had thunderstorms all night and it was still really windy with temps in the 50's. The track is an outdoor concrete track 333 meter oval with 33 degree banking. It's typically a fast track when it is warm and the wind isn't 30 miles an hour. Initially I was hoping to do a time faster than our indoor 250 meter track in Carson but with the weather the way it was I wasn't sure I could pull it off. The race is only 1 and 1/2 laps but when you are starting from a standstill and pushing a big gear, the race can feel a whole lot longer. My best time so far this year was 39.5 seconds.

I was the 44th heat of the morning; the last heat in my age group and was paired with a gal from San Jose that beat me last year. We started on opposite sides of the track. I was starting into the headwind, she was starting with a tail wind. Apparently we were neck and neck through the first lap, but the last half lap I finished strong and she fell behind. She finished with a 38.9 second time and I finished with a 38.5 breaking not only my personal best for the year, but also the National Record and the World Record and winning the National Championship!! I was in total disbelief. I still am. I can't believe I actually pulled it off!

On Tuesday evening, Shane competed in the 500 meter time trial for her age group 35-39. She was also the last heat in her group. The wind had calmed down a little but thunderstorms were still on the horizon. Shane started on the back-straight so at least she would get a little tailwind at the start but a head wind on the finish. She started out with what I saw as her best start ever. She rounded the turn to the home straight and started hammering. The best time so far and the time to beat was 40.6 seconds. As she crossed the finished line I couldn't believe my eyes! She posted her best time ever! 39.02!!! I cried! She cried! She won a golden medal!

We had Wednesday off and rode our regular road bikes about 30 miles. Got lost and nearly killed (no bike lanes in Colorado Springs) but we survived.

On Thursday, Shane had match sprints and I served as the bike mechanic, carrier, helper of all things, and photographer. Match Sprints are very, very difficult. First of all, everyone does a 200 meter time trial for seeding and then they organize the riders into heats. The time trial is a flying 200, which means you ride at the top of the track for a lap and a half, going faster and

faster until you're at top speed and then you dive down the track for about 3/4 of a lap to the finish line.

The first seeded rider is paired against the 8th seeded. The 2nd against the 7th, the 3rd against the 6th and the 4th against the 5th. So you want to do really well in your time trial so you can qualify in the top eight and then get paired against a slower person first. Each heat you have to win 2 out of 3 rides. The winners advance to the next round and race against the winners of the other heats. This goes on and on until you finally (hopefully) make it to the finals and into the gold medal round. It's not easy to get there by any means. Each ride is 2 laps but a true sprinter can only be at top speed for about 3/4 of a lap. So the first lap or so is cat and mouse to see who is going to jump, or take a flyer, or force the other rider to do something stupid. Then it's an all out drag race to the finish.

Shane did great! She seeded second overall and was only 2/10ths slower than the top seed. She was up against some really good competition but each round she rode smart and fast. She made it to the finals and into the gold medal round. She raced hard and won her first match. Then the second match her opponent won. So they went to a tie breaker. Her opponent was from New York and had obviously been riding a long time. She was very good. By the time they got to their 3rd ride Shane was pooped and couldn't match the speed. Such is the life of a sprinter. She fought hard and was very happy to earn her Silver medal.

We were off on Friday, but our friend Jennifer flew in for the Friday night points race. Also, my mom and Jim drove in from Utah so we trained for a few hours during the day and then we all watched the races Friday and took lots of pictures. Jenn won Silver in her race.

Saturday was my turn for Match Sprints. I qualified 2nd seed too, missing the top spot by only a tenth of a second. I won all my heats and made it into the finals for Gold and Silver. I was up against a gal I had beaten last year in the sprints and who had said earlier in the week she was determined to beat me this year. She even slept in one of those oxygen tent thingys for 7 weeks so she wouldn't have the problems with altitude and oxygen deficit. I took round 1, leading it out with 1 lap to go and winding it up forcing her to have to come around me on the outside. She couldn't get around. 1 more round to go and I'd get the Gold. Unfortunately, she didn't get the memo that I was supposed to win this thing. She came out fighting in the second round and won that round with a flyer from the top of the track. I chased but couldn't get her before the line. We were tied. Darn it. I hate it when that happens. So we had to go to a 3rd heat. Only problem was we had to wait for about 45 minutes while another race took place. Bummer. These old legs don't stay fresh very long. I actually fell asleep while we were waiting. (That's the altitude.) So round 3 is called to the starting line. The winner of this round gets Gold. The other, Silver. We're both a little jumpy. I'm not going to let her take another flyer and make me chase. I'm going to control the race and make her come around me again. The first lap we're at the top of the track. I'm leading it out and draw her down the track so she can't use the banking to jump around me. I start winding it up and with about a half lap to go she starts to charge and come around. I dig deep and match her speed. We're side by side drag racing into turn 3 and then turn 4. As we're rounding turn 4 I see her front wheel inch ahead of mine. Noooo! I surge again. Now I'm just a little ahead. The finish line is about 10 meters now. She surges once again and crosses the line for the win! Rats! Silver it is. ☺

So, the next morning, Sunday, is the team sprint. The team sprint is similar to the 500 meter time trial but 2 people race for 2 laps. You start together from a standing start. The first person pulls the first lap while the second rider sits behind using the draft to conserve energy. After the first lap, the first rider pulls off and the second rider has to ride the second lap to the finish. Best time for the 2 laps wins.

Shane and I were in the last heat for the women. There were some really good teams put together to try to win the gold. The best time before our heat was 52.19 seconds. We went to the starting line. We looked at the flags. The wind was blowing hard. Another storm was brewing over the mountains. We're starting into a head wind and we're going to finish into a head wind. We looked at each other. We want this one bad. We both won the 500 TT. We want this one too. On the opposite side of the track is another team. One rider is 34 years old, the other 40. We're 36 and 45. We're all in different age groups and we all won our 500 TT's. They're fast. We're fast. The timer counts down. 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 GO! Shane takes off like a rocket ship and nails the start. I dive in behind her and get as much draft as possible. She pulls off after one lap and I dig deep and turn myself inside out for the last lap. I cross the finish line and hear the announcer say we had a time of 50.47. Almost 2 seconds faster than the time to beat. Then I hear the announcer say the time for the other team. 50.32! 15/100ths faster! Darn it! Could it be they started with a tailwind and finished with a tailwind? Oh well. It is what it is. We'll get 'em next year! Silver is a very pretty color! ☺

So here's the tally:

CJ BOYENGER	
500 Meter TT	<b>GOLD</b> <i>New National and World Record!</i>
Match Sprints	Silver
Team Sprint	Silver



SHANE ELLIS	
500 Meter TT	<b>GOLD</b>
Match Sprints	Silver
Team Sprint	Silver



Can't wait for next year!

Cj