



## Leading PRT Teams Claim Crowns in Pro Races at Sunny King Criterium



**Anniston, Ala. (April 14, 2019)** - - The royalty for bicycle racing took center stage at the Sunny King Criterium in downtown Anniston, Ala. for a 17th year on Saturday. Morning showers for junior races quickly changed to sunshine by midday, bringing huge crowds to the adjacent Noble Street Festival and headwinds to the uphill straightaway at the start line. The final two of 21 categorized races finished under the lights and crowned champions for professional men and women.

Summer Moak (Scottsdale, Ariz.) of Rally UHC Cycling blasted across the line in a sprint finish for the title in the Women Pro 1/2 race. Veteran Eric Young (Boulder, Colo.) of Elevate-KHS Pro Cycling took the top spot in the Men Pro 1 contest.

The Alabama Cycling Classic combines the well-established Sunny King Criterium with the Piedmont Road Race for two full days of road racing. The Sunny King Criterium is the first criterium of the year for the USA Cycling Pro Road Tour, which has a total of 18 road events across the country. The junior races are part of the USA Cycling Road Development Race Series, which offer 30 events for aspiring young athletes.

It was the ninth year for a live streaming broadcast of the Sunny King Criterium. The webcast, which was sponsored by Alabama Power and was complimentary for viewers, covered nine hours of racing, from Noon to 9 p.m. CDT. Professional sports commentator and broadcast producer Brad Sohner called the action.

“Being close to Talladega, speed is the name of the game for the Sunny King Criterium,” said Sohner. “It is one of the few events in the country that offers a full nine hours of free webcasting to showcase amateurs and pros.”

The archive for video is available online at [annistoncycling.com/videos/](http://annistoncycling.com/videos/). All results are available online - [click here](#).

The Pro Women’s criterium featured 43 riders in the 60-minute contest. Among the call-ups to start the race were four previous Sunny King Crit champions - Samantha Schneider of ISCorp Pro Cycling (2016), Erica (Allar) Carney of Rally Cycling (2012), Tina Pic of Colavita-Bialetti Racing (2006 and 2008), and Lily Williams of Hagens Berman I Supermint, the 2018 defending champion.

For the first half of the race, Williams' team took a few turns at the front to test the responses from challengers on the four-turn, one-kilometer course. A few counter punches were made by Fast Chance Women's Cycling presented by The Happy Tooth Foundation, Supra Cycling Team, Rally UHC Cycling and CWA Racing presented by TREK. No moves would stick.

With nine laps to go, the tight pack began to stretch into an aggressive, single file formation, pushed by Hagens Berman I Supermint and CWA Racing at the front. With five to go, Madison Kelly (Naples, Fla.) of CWA Racing made a move. This was followed by a series of attacks - by Moak, then Christina Gorkey-Smith (Denton, Texas) of Colavita Bialetti Racing, then defending champion Williams. With three to go, the lead group had nine riders, led by Janelle Cole (Newaygo, Mich.) of Fast Chance Cycling p/b The Happy Tooth Foundation.

"It was a really aggressive race, we knew we wanted to make sure to cover all the moves. The late move was super dangerous since we didn't have anyone in it and I bridged across and I knew this was going to be the move," said Cole's Fast Chance teammate Laura Jorgensen (Asheville, N.C.). The team had five riders in the race.

With two laps remaining, Jorgensen pushed across the line for a \$500 prime. Like the gusty conditions, Jorgensen continued to vault forward in the final lap, but could not maintain that position in the final hundred meters.

"Going into the last laps, I went for the Gambler's Prime and I was not sure it was a good move or not, but I won it," Jorgensen said. "I hopped back in and my teammate (Cole) drove it and put me in a good position on the downhill. I am not really poppy (in the sprint) so I should have gone a little earlier, but Summer had an awesome finish."

Moak crossed the line as the new queen of crits in Anniston. Her winning time, 1 hour, 1 minute, 15 seconds, was matched by six other riders.

"Coming into the finish we knew that either me or Erica (Carney) could go for the win and we both have a pretty good kick if we are riding smart," said the 20-year-old Moak about the pre-race strategy. "Today it was who was feeling better at the finish. When that last move went, I was feeling pretty confident in myself and I was seeing stars at some point, just kept my head down coming to the finish. I knew I had a good sprint and I had to be smart."

Jorgensen finished second and Daniely Garcia (Venezuela) of CWA Racing presented by TREK was third. Williams and Gokey-Smith were fourth and fifth, respectively.

Of the past winners in the field for the women, Pic finished 12th, Carney 15th, and Schneider 36th.

"You don't really expect to win when you come in with just two riders against full teams. We know we can win. Today we did," added Carney about working together with her teammate. The Rally UHC Cycling team is currently the top-ranked women's team in the PRT standings.

"I haven't won this race since 2012, and that's a really long time ago now. It's one of my favorite races that I have always gone to because they have been a pioneer in supporting women, and one of the longest standing races with equal prize money," added Carney.

The men's 60-lap criterium featured a field of 71 riders. Evident from the start was the team in blue kits leading in overall PRT points, Elevate-KHS Pro Cycling. All six riders made an impact in the race, which was completed by the leaders in 1 hour, 32 minutes and 58 seconds.

After a couple failed breakaways, Frank Travieso (Athens, Ga.) of EDA Evolution Cycling Team and Kyle Swanson (Fort Worth, Texas) of Elevate-KHS Pro Cycling led a group of five on a solid attack with 44 laps to go. They were joined by Sean Burger (Philadelphia) of CS Velo Racing presented by Cannondale, Tanner Ward (Little Rock, Ark.) of DNA Racing, and Kyle Perry (Indianapolis) of Texas Roadhouse Cycling Team.

In the next eight to 10 laps, Akil Campbell (Trinidad and Tobago) of the NNGCA Elite Team presented by Tyler Perry Studios and Young had joined the group, bringing the gap with solo breakaways. A couple more Elevate-KHS teammates, plus Daniel Holloway (Boulder, Colo.) of Texas Roadhouse, made it an 11-man lead group. With 30 laps to go, they had more than 30 seconds over all chasers.

Riders from the Toronto Hustle team made big efforts to bring the gap with 13 laps to go. It looked like the 11 leaders would begin to lose interest. With eight laps to go, riders from Elevate-KHS began to take charge again, with Young tapping out the tempo at the front. Summerhill crashed out in a turn and a few other in the lead group began to fade.

“With four to go or so, we had five guys in there, so we were really just super focused as a team to keep it together,” said Young about the strength of his Elevate-KHS team. “We led the last corner. They did a great job in the lead out, and as a sprinter you feel the momentum in the last 100-200 meters. You kinda feel when to go, and I knew I could go a little early, since Alfredo was on my wheel. So I just got within range of the finish line and kept running.”

It was a drag race in the final lap, with Young and his 21-year-old teammate Alfredo Rodriguez (Mexico) going one-two at the line. Travieso would finish a bike length back for third, edging Thomas Gibbons (Miami Beach, Fla.) of New Jersey Bicycling Association in fourth and George Simpson (Ft. Collins, Colo.) of Elevate-KHS Pro Cycling in fifth.

“I got comfortable the last two laps, because I knew the right tempo. The only thing I needed to do was follow the sprinter’s wheel. I worked too hard, I was cramping,” said Travieso, a veteran of criterium sprints won the Sunny King Criterium back in 2007. “I know how to race this race, there’s always a breakaway. Only one year was a field sprint. Every year is going to be a breakaway. It’s a hard course.”

All the riders mentioned the wind picked up throughout the evening and created a challenging headwind on the final uphill section. This wind was predicted, as storms were forecast for much of eastern Alabama on Sunday. Due to the severity of weather conditions to come, all Piedmont Road Race events scheduled for the Alabama Cycling Classic on April 14 were cancelled. The decision was made Saturday morning by Alabama Cycling Classic race organizers, the City of Piedmont Public Safety and Calhoun County Emergency Medical Agency Advisory.

“It is in the best interest of athletes, volunteers and spectators that we make this preemptive decision 24 hours in advance to cancel the road races in Piedmont, Alabama. Safety is our primary concern,” said Alabama Cycling Classic race director Marilyn Hill.

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### **About Alabama Cycling Classic**

The Sunny King Criterium began in 2002 as Anniston’s signature cycling event for professional and amateur male and female cyclists from around the globe. The start/finish line for the criterium is located at 11th and Noble streets in downtown Anniston, with 21 categorized races for adults and juniors. The criterium is one of 18 national cycling events on USA Cycling’s Pro Road Tour. Six categorized road races for men and women will be held on Sunday for the Piedmont Road Race. This event features a 40-mile loop with rolling terrain through the

Talladega National Forest. The start/finish will be in downtown Piedmont, Ala. Admission is free for spectators. All races are managed by Start Smart Cycling.

#### **About Sunny King Automotive Group**

Located in Anniston, Alabama, the Sunny King Automotive Group has been in business since 1922, when it began as the King Motor Co., Inc. The Sunny King Automotive Group offers new & used car sales, finance, body shop and service repairs. Among the dealerships which support Sunny King Criterium and Noble Street Festival are Sunny King Ford, Sunny King Honda and Sunny King Toyota. Sunny King Honda and Sunny King Toyota have been recognized as President's Award recipients for multiple years. Learn more: [www.sunnyking.com](http://www.sunnyking.com).

#### **About Start Smart Cycling**

Start Smart Cycling, LLC (SSC) provides professional management and consultation for all areas of cycling and community-based events. SSC specializes in the production and management of sports events. Follow on the web ([startsmartcycling.com](http://startsmartcycling.com)), on Facebook (StartSmartCycling), and on Twitter (Start\_SmartBike).

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