



****RACE REPORT****

Emergency Services TT championships 2020.

Irvine, Scotland 19-20th September.

Hosted by GTR - Saviours of Scottish cycling, on behalf of Firesport UK.

The Emergency Services championships were originally pencilled in for June and to be hosted by Northumbria Police. However 2020 showed no mercy to cycling, with all events from April through to July cancelled, effectively ending the season.

As the world re-emerged from months of gardening and turbo training, our organiser Chris Smart bravely stepped up to the unenviable task of arranging a National championship with only 6 weeks notice.

Chris Spencer of Bioracer quickly followed suit, prioritising our champions jerseys ahead of Wout Van Aert's, he could wait.

Sharon Dyson of Northumberland and Durham Cycling Association kindly offering to round up time keepers like cattle if required to make things happen.

The people wanted a RACE!

I must take this break in the excitement as an opportunity to thank the good folks of GTR and Irvine for welcoming us to their region in these uncertain times. They demonstrated that races can and will go ahead safely, whilst adhering to new rules and restrictions placed upon us. The slick organisation and no frills affair proved an overwhelming success. 4 separate races delivered in under 24hrs, confirming the moniker - Saviours of Scottish cycling.

On to the details of the races -



10 mile championships.

With the Scottish sun melting the tarmac our racers met in what has become the norm, a socially distanced fashion - Testers find this naturally easier to achieve than most folk, due to the personalities of individuals involved in the sport.

A car park as HQ, the organisers garden furniture as a sign on area and a unit of Royal Marine Commandos enforcing the 'No pen sharing' rule. What more could we ask for?

The pre race favourite based on his Zwift displays throughout the year was undoubtedly Terry Wilkinson of Tyne & Wear FRS. Led by Dave Linsley, the nations premier fire service had assembled a Tour de France level squad to back up Wilkinson and take on the might of Strathclyde in their own back yard.

But as we all know, reputations count for nothing in this game.

Richard Butler of Cumbria FRS proving this point by ripping up the form guide and shoving it down the throats of his competitors. The Lakes man stunned Wilkinson, beating him by almost a minute and his better looking Tyne & Wear teammate Hall by 24 seconds. Finishing in an impressive 19.54.

Hazel Smyth of Police Scotland proved to much for Esther Hamill in the female category. The Fechan Flyers rider recorded a winning time of 23.20, fellow Dumfries rider Hamill kept herself in the game by finishing in 25.33.

David Lines swapping crits and cyclocross for dual carriageway racing took the honours in the Vets category. Lines just edging out reigning champ and bike fitter to the stars Nev Martin.

Lines 20.42, Martin closely behind in 21.04.

Back at HQ (The Smart family motor) news reached Butler of his victory. Overwhelmed by emotions he fell to his knees in delight, a dangerous position to be in at that time of night in an out of town car park, yet an honest display of the meaning of the race to those involved.

As Butler rejoiced, those around him began to mutter excuses and explanations. Hall couldn't clip in, Oguona didn't swim prior to riding, Bonar didn't know the course. They all had them!



25 mile championships.

Almost as quickly as our riders departed, they returned again the next morning. Most parking in the same spots, otherwise the world might end.

Met by the organising committee they collected freshly disinfected numbers and headed out bravely for war.

All eyes were on the race leaders, did Butler have the endurance to match his short game power? Could Lines hold off Martin? Could the triathletes ride a full 25 miles without crashing?

‘The Dreghorn Darling’ William Bonar returned in a sterling time of 52.39, however this was no match for the on form Butler. The newly wed Sassenach stopped the clock at 51.23, guaranteeing the silverware returned alongside him to Kendal. Dedicating the win not to his blushing bride, but his mate who helped him set up the bike.

The Dumfriesshire duel continued in the 25 mile ladies championship, with Smyth and Hamill trading blows once again. Smyth doubled up for the weekend, winning in a time of 1.00.33 and sewing up the female title in the process.

Given the average age of the Emergency services workforce is in excess of 92, the battle for the Vets title is arguably the toughest to win.

Dave Lines asserted his dominance on the category by backing up his 10 mile victory with an equally impressive 25 mile win. Lines recorded 52.40, his nearest competitor Martin 53.55.

Brief and informal presentations took place, with jerseys dished out from a distance. Cars packed and riders on their way without fuss. McDonald’s braced for a rise in footfall.



10 mile championships

Overall

1st Richard Butler.
2nd Andy Hall
3rd Terry Wilkinson

Female

1st Hazel Smyth
2nd Esther Hamil

Vets

1st David Lines
2nd Nev Martin
3rd David Ross

25 mile championships

Overall

1st Richard Butler
2nd Andy Hall
3rd William Bonar

Female

1st Hazel Smyth
2nd Esther Hamil

Vets

1st David Lines
2nd Nev Martin
3rd David Ross

2020 champions.

Overall - Richard Butler (Fire)

Female - Hazel Smyth (Police)

Vets - David Lines (Fire)