



BELINDA GOSS

RACE

The Start of Good Things to Come



Manchester Track World Cup. My first GOLD medal at a world cup.

I had known for some time that I was going to be doing the Manchester World Cup (the first world cup of the track season), so this year I had given some planning as to where I wanted to be at leading into October. After having a road season of devastating setbacks involving broken bones and wasted trips overseas, I was determined to turn things around for the track season.

Leading into the world cup, I decided to do things a little differently from previous years. Normally I would just jump on the track bike at the start of our two week training camp in Adelaide prior to flying into Manchester. But instead I thought it might prove fruitful to find my track legs earlier this season. I didn't want to do too many track sessions but just enough for the velodrome to feel normal again before heading into training camp. I was able to find the perfect balance – Thursday night club racing at DISC velodrome in Melbourne. While it was only one track session a week, having started club racing around a month before I was due for camp gave me a great boost for the world cup. Racing against the A Grade guys at DISC allowed me to try different things and experiment with new tactics.

With the track world cups the approach we normally take is fly in, race, fly out. For our Manchester trip it meant that we left Adelaide on Tuesday afternoon and arrived on Wednesday morning. Staying awake all day the day you arrive is said to be the best method to combating jetlag in the shortest possible time – napping is forbidden! Wednesday's training was just an easy session of one hour rolling around the track. Thursday's training consisted of pre-race day hit outs (efforts), a normal track warm up with two or three efforts, depending on how the legs are feeling, followed by racing for the next three days with a flight back to Australia on the Monday.

The Scratch Race was on the first day of competition. My heat went to plan and I made it comfortably into the final. Having placed more of an emphasis on the Points Race, which was the following day I went into the final feeling quite relaxed and composed. It's an awesome feeling that is hard to explain but everything just seems right and you get a kind of calmness that washes over you when you're on the start line. This hinted to me that I was going to have a good race!

The race started fast and attacks were made from the beginning. I had a feeling one of the attacks would stick so I made sure I stayed near the front of the bunch and went with a couple of different moves until we formed what turned out to be the critical move. There were six of us that got a gap and eventually lapped the field. For those who are not familiar with the points race; if a rider or riders lap the field the whole bunch still sprints for the minor placings but only the people who have taken a lap can actually win the race.

Not having been in this situation before I found myself thinking; do I just mark the girls who took the lap with me and try and win that way? Or do I sprint as if I'm still racing the whole bunch? When we made contact with the field there was only nine laps remaining so I choose to position well and sprint as I normally would, at the same time being aware of where the other girls who took the lap with me were.

My approach worked well and I won. I had finally achieved a world cup win! I have finished on the podium a few times at world cups before but it's amazing how much better a gold medal feels!

I guess it relates back to what we are all trying to achieve – to be the winner! A silver or bronze medal is satisfying and at times can be extremely pleasing but a gold medal brings about a much greater sense of elation and feeling of accomplishment.

After an exciting start to the world cup series we headed straight to Perth for our next training camp. With not much time between the first two world cups our preparation for Melbourne World Cup needed to start as soon as we arrived home.

Until next time,
Belinda

What a big smile! Gold is so much better than bronze!

Gerry McManus