



SHIMANO®

Race Report For August/September 2009



Man, the last two months have been absolutely hectic. There was Crankworx, the World Champs and the World Cup finals as well as Interbike and a whole lot of sitting on planes in between. They were, however, the last events of the season and now with the season over it's been really great to have a break from racing but I'm already looking forward to next year.



Crankworx in Whistler is one of my favourite events of the year. Normally it's a bit of a mid-season break and a great place to have some fun and relax. This year, I used it as an opportunity to train for the World Champs so it wasn't as much fun as usual but I still had a pretty good time and had some good results in the races there.



My day's in Whistler mainly consisted of going to the gym and training on the XC bike but I raced the Slalom, the Giant Slalom and the A-Line DH race. For the Slalom, The eventual winner and my Californian neighbour, Kyle Strait took me out in the second round but it was really close and could have gone either way so I was pretty happy with the result.



The next race of the week was A-Line and I used it as an opportunity to set up my bike for the Worlds in Canberra. It all went pretty well and I ended up 4th. I had a sneaky line over the last jump which a few other guys tried blindly after seeing it on the TV and unfortunately it didn't work out so well for them but it made for some quality entertainment. Funny stuff.



The Giant Slalom was pretty long as far as slalom tracks go and it was really hard. I qualified fastest and finished 2nd behind Brian Lopes. I had absolutely nothing left by the finals but it was good to get a good result and win some prize money after just missing out in A Line (for A-Line 3rd = \$750 and 4th = \$0).

So, from Canada it was back to California for a couple of days and then straight to Canberra for the World Champs which I have been waiting for what seemed forever. I was incredibly pumped on the World Champs and also incredibly nervous. Stromlo looked awesome and it was great to catch up with everyone who I hadn't seen for so long.

I really just tried to treat it like any other race but the pressure was always there. I couldn't believe it when I was in the start gate for the World Champs at the top of Stromlo! It was insane to think that this would ever happen. I don't remember too much of my run but I do remember coming into Triple Treat and the crowd going absolutely ballistic. It was by far the loudest I crowd I have ever heard and is something I'll never forget.

All up it was an incredible World Champs and I could go on about it forever but, I'll just say it was the highlight of my career as a pro racer and something I'll never forget. I was hoping for a top 10 result but ended up in 16th which was still my best result ever at a World Champs so I was happy with that. I was just glad it was all over and everything went smoothly. It was awesome.

From Canberra I came back to California for a few days of sunshine with my girlfriend and then went to Austria for the World Cup Finals in Schladming. Schladming is one of the roughest tracks on the circuit and also one of the hardest races of the year.

I really wanted to get a good result and move up a little in the World Cup Overall standings but that idea was short lived when I cut my rear brake hose in my qualifying run and my back brake pulled into the bar. It was really sketchy after that and after I crashed trying to ride it down, I just took it easy and admitted defeat. I didn't qualify and that was that. A disappointing end to a pretty disappointing World Cup season, but overall, I think the Worlds made up for it all.

I went to Interbike in Vegas after the World Cup Finals which is the biggest bicycle trade show in the world. I was only there for a couple of days but it was fun to hang out in Vegas and catch up with a bunch of people I haven't seen in a long time.

After Vegas I was ready for a break, which is what I have been doing for the last week. I have been on about 50 different flights for the year, flown about 110,000 miles and have spent way too much time sitting in plane and car seats. Time for a holiday... at home. It was a great year, despite it not being that great as far as racing goes and I can't thank all my sponsors, especially Giant Bikes and Stromlo Forest Park enough. I'm already looking forward to next year and can't wait to do it all again.