

Race Update - 15th March, 2009

Not so much racing to report on for February and the first part of March but some pretty cool other stuff. I arrived in the US on the 25th of February and had a few days to get settled before I went to our team camp for the start of the season.

Normally, we have the team camps at the Giant offices in Newbury Park, which is about an hours drive North of Los Angeles. But this year, our team manger managed to hook up the team camp at Woodward West.

Woodward West is basically a action sports camp for kids, but the facility is also used for different comps, visiting pros on road trips and other things, like team camps! There's a mountain bike slopestyle park, DH runs, 3 or 4 different skate parks, dirt jumps and all sorts of other cool stuff.

I was stoked- I've always wanted to go and check it out and the camp was great. We got all our new gear and bikes, did some great riding and met some new team members for the year. These being my new mechanic Justin and our new soigneur, Felice, who is Australian and has spent a fair bit of time in Canberra. It's a small world....

I also had a chance to do some riding with my team mates who are normally off competing in different competitions. I spent a bunch of time riding the foam pit in "Hanger 18" in the skate park with Giant's free ride guy, Kurt Sorge and I went on a "training" ride with the XC guys and Kelli which was a little more than I anticipated.

I'm not lazy and I'm pretty fit. I do XC races, race crits and train really hard. The training ride I went on with Giant's XC Olympian's Adam Craig and Oli Beckinsdale and Giant's female XC racer Kelli Emmet, was one of the hardest things I have ever done. We rode for a solid 4 hours on some sweet single track. I was loving it for the first 2 hours. The 3rd hour was really hard and I was done for the last hour of the ride. It was super fun though and reminded me why I'm not an XC racer.

At the camp, we also shot a bunch of photos for Giant, met with Magazine editors and shot some video for Universal Sports which is a new action sports channel here in the US, kind of similar to Fuel TV.

I was absolutely stuffed by the end of the week and we were flat out the whole time. Coming home to Hunting Beach was great- mainly because it was absolutely freezing the whole time at the camp.

Since then, I have been in full on training mode, and trying to be as prepared as possible for our first big race of the season in two weeks at Fontanna. Fontanna is a US National and not too long after that is the first World Cup in South Africa.

My training has been going really well and our new bikes are great, so I'm really hoping for a positive start to the season, especially after such disappointing results at the Nationals and Mt Buller earlier this year. Fingers crossed and I'll let you know how it all goes.

Jared