

# Hamilton Cycling Club

The Newsletter of  
the Hamilton  
Cycling Club,  
Promoting Cycling  
and an Active  
Lifestyle Since 1889.

March/April

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## Good Friday Road Race

by: Editor

Critics raved with comments ranging from “you animals are my heros” in reference to the race organizers, to the unanimous “isn't it cold?” The volunteers all showed incredible dedication marshaling corners, managing registration, and driving the commissaire/ pace cars.

With Good Friday being early on April 6<sup>th</sup>, the weather was always a concern as the executive planned the race. Even days before the race, discussions took place debating whether to just cancel the race before things got underway. Taking a brave stance the organizers decided to go ahead with the race.



*Racers on the Start Line for the 55<sup>th</sup> Good Friday Road Race*

As morning dawned, many racers awoke to snow on the ground and temperatures that hovered below freezing with a wind chill reaching the minus teens. The morning races were delayed for two hours to allow for the temperature to rise slightly. Promptly at ten o'clock and with snow flying in the air, the first race of the 2007 cycling season got underway.

The first races off were the cadet, junior, elite 3 and master women, who all raced two laps of the challenging course for a distance of 38 km. The other

master, junior, and elite male categories followed, showcasing riders to watch for the rest of the season.



*Registration Flanked by Some Cooper Tires*

After the morning races finished, followed by a scheduled break to let the volunteers and commissaires warm-up, the elite ½ men and master 1 men's races started. As is typical with these categories, the attacks were hard and frequent, and the winner of both races came from breakaways.



The course was a smash hit with all the riders, not only for its length, but also because of its climbs, long straightaways, and crosswind sections. It ensured that only the best riders would win.

Aside from one unfortunate incident that resulted in Malcolm Eade separating his shoulder, the racing was very safe. The City of Hamilton was kind enough to send out its salt trucks early in the morning to ensure the corners were ice free. As club president and race announcer Chris Kiriakopoulos said in his cautionary warning to the racers, “they don't sweep the cobblestones in Europe, we don't sweep the salt off the roads in Ontario.”



*The Registration Crew*

Some dissenters of the race criticized the club for holding the race in such unfavourable conditions, but almost **TWO HUNDRED** riders decided on race day that they should come out, the same number as those who had preregistered. In total 309 riders took to the start line on race day. Of special note, Susan Palmer-Komar took time out of her busy schedule to greet the racers at the registration table, many of whom had never met

her before.

Even with all the volunteers and police present, the race could not have taken place without help from generous sponsors. Ziggy Martuzalski of ZM Cycle Fitness in Toronto was very helpful by lending his “race in progress” signs, sound system, and expertise. Another big supporter of the race, and previous Hamilton Cycle Club races, was Cooper Tire. The list of ways that Cooper Tire promoted and supported the race is long. They lent a truck to move people and equipment around, supplied the blue tents for registration and sign-on, produced event flyers, and even placed ads in the Hamilton Spectator advertising the race. As before at the Valley Park Cyclocross event, Cooper Tire went above and beyond what the club even hoped for, all while asking for nothing back. The HCC

encourages all members to support such a outstanding company with their business, and don't forget to mention you heard about them at the Good Friday Road Race.

The club would like to thank all volunteers, marshals, the Hamilton police, the City of Hamilton, Flamborough Speedway, the above mentioned sponsors, and especially the racers for making the race a resounding success. It was very cold and tiring for the volunteers who had to stand outside for several hours.

If you like to plan ahead, we can't wait to see you on Friday March 21, 2008 for the next Good Friday Road Race!

Note: Complete results and more pictures can be found on the club website. [www.hamiltoncycling.com](http://www.hamiltoncycling.com)



# Don Sloan's Trip to Portugal

*Courtesy of Don Sloan*

## **33<sup>a</sup> Volta ao Algarve, 2007, Portugal.**

The Volta ao Algarve is a five day race across Algarve Province in southern Portugal and this year I happened to be there during the race. The race is ideal for sprinters and rouleurs as it is contested in relatively flat lands without the long Alpine mountainous climbs. It is the first race in the Portuguese cycling calendar and took place from 21<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> February. The locals regard this as their 'Tour de France' and it gets maximum cooperation and support from the province and the G.N.R. (police).

This year there were twenty-four teams of eight riders plus their support staff including Discovery, Rabobank and T-Mobile, etc. The teams stay at one hotel for the duration of the race and travel in the team buses to and from the start and finish. This was good news for me as the Portuguese team LA/MSS were not only staying at my hotel, but their rooms were next door and across the hall from mine, so I got a chance to chat with them (they spoke a little English and I have limited Portuguese). The team bus, cars and the mechanics support vehicle (a large cube van) was parked in the hotel's enclosed parking lot. When they returned after the race, the two mechanics could be found cleaning and servicing the bikes and washing all the vehicles (including the bus) for the next day's stage. Everything had to be 'squeaky clean'. These poor guys were working until late in the evening under flood lights when the rest of the team was dining.

The first stage started in front of the Town Hall in Albufeira, just down the street from my hotel and all the parking lots were cordoned off for riders and race personnel vehicles. There was also a signing on area restricted to race officials and the media, however security was pretty lax and I managed to enter. This is a very friendly event and everybody talks to each other. I spoke to Tiago Machado an under twenty-three Portuguese rider for BOAVISTA and was told that this was the third time he has ridden the Volta. He said the mountains in the Algarve were only about 100 meters and this was a sprinters race. He was a climber and did not think he would place high in the G.C. Part of his prophesy came true as Italian sprinter Alessandro Petacchi proved to be unstoppable and went on to become the overall race winner.

However Tiago finished sixth in the G.C., was the first under twenty-three and the first Portuguese rider. Not bad for a young guy in a field of 192 riders!

Although these riders talk about this being a sprinters course and the climbs not be as long as the Alps, the back roads the race covers are very narrow and very twisty and really steep. A 1000 meters climb is still no mean feat, but I guess it is all depends what you are used to.

The LA/MSS in my hotel were pleased with their results too, as one of them finished in fourteenth position.

The riders line up with their entourage behind them and at eleven o'clock a dozen police motorcyclists with their florescent lime green coveralls and blue flashing lights lead the procession through the neutral start zone before the race begins in earnest. In Albufeira the start was at a major road intersection in the centre of town, and half an hour before the race started all traffic was stopped. This must be the accepted practice as nobody complained and there was no horn blowing. It was really

quite exciting and a colorful spectacle for me to see 192 riders with their support caravan.

On day three I visited Lagos where the stage finished, and also the race came through earlier in the day, so I got to see them twice. The finish was along the waterfront and again everything grinds to a stop. I had a spot at the finish twenty-five meters from the line and the next day the photograph in the newspaper showing Petacchi winning the sprint had me in the background at the twenty-five meter post!

When the stage finishes, all of the riders except the winners, head for the team buses and return to their hotels. This makes it difficult to see them as the buses are usually parked away from the finish area. However, adjacent to the finish line, the winners get presented with flowers and the leaders' jerseys and the public are all around to see this.

## **The Stages.**

**Stage 1:** 191.3 km. Starting in Albufeira, passing through Quarteira, Loule, Castro Marim, Tavira, and finishing in Faro. The course is flat with a 600 meter climb at 140 km.

**Stage 2:** 177.0 km. The shortest stage starts in Castro Marim passing through Monte Gordo, Altura, Vaqueiros and ending in Tavira. Another flat course with two climbs of about 300 meters at 70 km and 120 km.

**Stage 3:** 208.3 km. The longest and hilliest stage starting in Lagoa and passing through Portamao, Vila do Bispo (near Cape St Vincent, the most southwesterly point in Europe), the Monchique Mountains and finishing in Lagos. This stage is mostly flat until the mountains when they climb Monchique at almost 1000 meters.

**Stage 4:** 187.2 km. This is called the 'Queen Of Stages' between Vila Real de Santo Antonio and Loule. It passes through Tavira, Sao Miguel, Querenca, and California. This is an undulating course rising to about 600 meters at 120 km.

**Stage 5:** 185.6 km. The final stage, between Vila do Bispo and Portamao, passing through Bensafrim, Guia and Lagoa. There are two climbs of 400 meters at 50 km at 100 km before the run in to the finish.

## **Results:**

### **General Classification:**

1 <sup>st</sup> Alessandro Pertacchi (Ita)	Team Milram	23 hr 23 min 02 sec.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Rene Haselbacher (Aut)	Astana	@ 20 sec.
3 <sup>rd</sup> Tomas Vaitkus (Ltu)	Discovery	@ 22 sec.
6 <sup>th</sup> Tiago Machado (Por)	Boavista	@ 31 sec.
11 <sup>th</sup> Hector Guerra (Esp)	Liberty Seguros	@ 34 sec.
12 <sup>th</sup> Luis Pinheiro (Por)	Liberty Seguros	@ 37 sec.
14 <sup>th</sup> Pedro Cardoso (Por)	LA/MSS	s.t.
19 <sup>th</sup> Jose Azevedo (Por)	Benefica	s.t.

49<sup>th</sup> Hugo Sabido (Por)

Barloworld

@ 1 min 38 sec.

62<sup>nd</sup> Sergio Paulinho (Por)

Discovery

@ 6 min 04 sec.

This is the first European race I have ever been to and as well as being a surprise (I did not know of it until I arrived in Portugal), I can honestly say it was a great experience, a very colorful spectacle, and I hope you enjoyed reading this little report. I think it should be mandatory that all aspiring and aging cyclist go and see a race in Europe. I only wish I had done it sooner.

Yours in sport,

Donald M. Sloan.

(03 March, 2007).



*Coach Don*



*Who says cycling is all hard work?*

## Rob Chesky gets Married

*by: Editor*

Congratulations to Rob Chesky who flew to China in late March to get married on Good Friday. Rob said that this is the first time in 22 years that he will miss the Good Friday race.

Once again this past winter Rob was racing cross country ski events with several podium finishes. He is back on the bike though since returning from China and preparing for another season of road racing, likely to be followed by a season of 'cross.

# Racing Calendar

by: Editor

A reminder to all club members that the first events on the Hamilton Cycling Club racing calendar are rapidly approaching. By time of publication, the first time trials on White Swan Road will have taken place. A very popular course, it is shaped like a horseshoe and features undulating terrain. There are two challenging climbing portions and there always seems to be a headwind in many parts of the course. Rumour has it Mirek Mazur will try to lower the course record this year. The time trials take place every Tuesday bar rain with the first rider off at 7:00 pm.

Also coming up soon is the Ayr Road Race on June 9. Riders will race four laps of the 12 km circuit. Riders will be challenged by the hills and inevitable headwind. The course is unique in that there are no stop signs on the course, even though it runs through downtown Ayr.

A new addition to the calendar this year is recreational rides on Sunday mornings. The rides leave from the parking lot on the south side of Gage Park. Contact Martin Reid for more details.

Check the calendar page of the website for complete details on upcoming races along with directions and maps.

## Hamilton Cycling Club Youth Program

by: Editor, with comments from Chris Kiriakopoulos

On April 22 the Hamilton Cycling Club ran a Sprockids cycling skills clinic at the finish line area of the Paris-Ancaster bicycle race. In Chris Kiriakopoulos's words, "Fantastic day! There were 21 riders who participated. Julie Bieri, Leo Rock and I lead while Sue Palmer-Komar, Mike Harrington, Jordan Bieri and Spencer Bieri were support riders. We worked on skills for an hour on the baseball diamond, then went out on the trails to apply our skills." Look for more stories from the youth group to come in future newsletters.

