

# Olympic-class bicycle races tap Ags for beer, prizes and exhaustion

"Now for the beer!" huffed exhausted Hans Schneider of Houston as he accepted first prize for the Olympic-class Aggieland Criterium bicycle race held at the Texas A&M drill field, Sunday.

Schneider, who sprinted to victory on the last lap of the 75-lap, 50-mile Senior Open feature race, outlasted 19 other serious 10-speed bicycle racers on the hot and humid event. The race was sponsored by the Texas A&M Cycling Team and drew racers from five states.

Jerry Anderson, a Texas A&M student riding for his hometown Dallas bicycle racing club, took sixth place in the final sprint that saw the racers pushing their bodies and bikes to almost 40 mph. But Anderson felt much better about his finish when he picked up \$30 cash in mid-race prime prizes offered during the races.

Most of the fast action was forced 1972 Olympic team member Marc Thompson who lead for most of the race but got swallowed up by a late-

charging pack of riders. He got fourth in the final sprint but walked away with \$50 cash in addition to his fourth-place merchandise prizes.

In the Senior Men III category race of 30 miles, Texas A&M Cycling Team member John Simmons uncorked a powerful sprint to take second place. Another Aggie, Mike Fulfer, who recently won the Houston April Fools Stage race while wearing the maroon and white, was fourth.

Texas A&M team member Gene Kraft captured that elusive first place prize in the 15-mile Senior Men IV class. Aggies Malcolm Bredemeyer and Tim Purcell took fifth and seventh place respectively in a race that was marred by crashes. "There were lots of cocky riders in that pack," said Kraft. "I'm just glad I finished in front of them."

In the four-mile Novice race, open to any students and non-licensed racers, team mechanic Rick Denny out-sprinted Miles Johnson for first. Dan Harrison and Harlan Harris of the A&M Wheelmen, the racing team's sister touring club, were third and fourth, respectively.

Other students that competed but didn't finish for physical, mental or mechanical reasons were Karl Jackson in the feature race and Charles Braffet in the Senior IV. "We had a good showing," said race head David Champlin. "Both by our team members and the local bike shows and other merchants that provided our \$1,000 prize list."

Exhausted racer Anderson added from his near-by prone position. "That race was so fast, I think I'm gonna go slow all next week to make up for it."

# Italian police recover stolen Flemish art

ROME, Italy — Police recovered 10 Flemish art treasures worth over \$1 million Saturday night, less than 48 hours after they were stolen from one of Italy's most famed museums.

Cultural Heritage Minister Dario Antonozzi said police had recovered all the stolen paintings, including "The Three Graces" — a one-color, monochrome plate by Peter Paul Rubens.

The art works were stolen from the Pitti Palace art gallery in Florence early Friday by a gang that apparently acted with inside information.

Florence police earlier told reporters they had detained three persons for questioning in the case.

The thieves entered the museum through the skylight and played hide-and-seek with the building's four night-watchmen by following a long and complicated route to the room where the Flemish masterpieces were kept.

The night watchmen provided the only protection of the gallery's priceless art treasures because an electronic alarm system has not yet been fully installed.

Museum officials said the thieves apparently had inside information on the rounds the guards followed

and selected the Flemish paintings because of their small size.

"It don't think they hoped to take our Titians, Raphaels or Van Dycks. Their size makes them nearly impossible to transport. I am sure the small Flemish paintings were the thieves' actual target," a museum official said.

Experts estimated the value of the stolen art treasures at about \$1.1 million. They valued the Rubens alone at \$350,000. The other stolen works, mostly landscapes were by Cornelis Van Poelenburgh, Peter Molyn the Elder and Paul Brill.

They were the latest of an estimated 50,000 art works stolen from Italy's poorly guarded museums and churches since the end of World War II. The rate of a theft has now risen to about 12,000 a year.

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