

National Youth Omnium Finals

Race Report By Mari Porton RRPCC

It was a very early start to the day on Sunday 21st of July 2019 so we travelled to Manchester the night before. It was an amazing feeling walking into Manchester velodrome knowing I would be racing there because I have seen my idols race there! However, I was very nervous. I set up my rollers and other kit in the centre of the track.



My first race of the day was the 1km Individual Time Trial (ITT). I did around 25 minutes warm up before my ITT to make sure I was prepared for such a big effort. I got a personal best in my time trial of 1:25.300 minutes, as a result of this I placed 9th overall which was a great start to the day. After this (and all the other events), I had to do a warm down as there were gaps in between my races and it wouldn't be good for my muscles to suddenly stop.



Before my next event I warmed up on my rollers again so that my legs were ready and also my heart rate was high and it wasn't a big shock to my body when I started to race. My next event was the elimination: where every lap the last person over the line is eliminated until

there are only two riders left to sprint. Once we started, I found myself quite near the back of the bunch which isn't a good place to be as I was at a big risk of being eliminated. Therefore, I made a big effort and rode all the way around the top of the bunch and sat at the front for as long as I could. However, it took a lot of energy to go over the top of the group and stay at the front. Lots of other riders were trying to do this so after a few laps I got pushed away from the front. I finished 13th in the elimination race.



The third race of the day was the scratch race, this one was 5km (20 laps). In this race the points are given for the order over the line on the last lap. At first, the scratch race was a steady pace. A few laps in a rider attacked and there were splits in the group. I got caught

too far back but managed to make it back across to the front group. In the last three laps, everyone was back together again and I found myself at the front of the bunch. I didn't want to pull up as that would have been giving my position away so I kept looking over my shoulder to see who would start the sprint and with two laps to go it was started. I managed to finish 8th in the scratch race.

The next event was the keirin. The keirin was split into heats of six riders, depending on their overall position of the day so far. I was in heat 2. All of the riders in each heat pick a card at random; the cards are numbers 1-6. This indicates the position in



the line behind the deryn (a little bit like a motorbike) that they have to hold for 1 lap. After the first lap the riders have to stay behind the deryn but can move out of their position in the line for another 3 laps. The deryn gradually speeds up until 2 laps to go when it pulls off and the riders have 2 laps to race and try to win. I drew number 1, meaning that I sat behind the deryn. When the deryn pulled off I stayed at the front and tried to keep the pace high whilst watching the other riders. With just over one lap to go one of the girls in my heat attacked and got around me. I followed her and by the end had almost

got back past her but didn't quite make it. I finished 2nd in my heat giving me joint 4th overall in the keirin.

The final race of the day was a 8km (32 lap) points race. In the points race every 6 laps there is a sprint where 1st = 5 points, 2nd = 3 points, 3rd = 2 points, 4th = 1 point and on the last lap it is double points. Just before the first



sprint some riders attacked off the front. In the main bunch no one wanted to chase it and as a result more people kept attacking and the group out front was getting bigger but a few riders were dropping away from the leading group. Later on, the main bunch really sped up and a few splits were appearing but it all came back together again. It was very hard to go at the speed we were going after a long hard day of racing but I managed to stay in the bunch and when it split nearer the end I was in the front half. I didn't get any points in the points race.

I had a great day and got lots of good experience and overall, I placed 9th. I am very pleased with my result as I went into the day trying to finish in the top 20. Also, as I am a first year in the U'14 category I hope to return and do even better in the Youth Omnium National Finals next year.

Thanks to all at RRPCC who have supported and encouraged me on my cycling journey. If anyone is interested in starting track racing I would definitely recommend it! It would be very nice to see more Team Redditch riders competing in the omniums next year.