

BRITISH MOUNTAIN BIKE SERIES ROUND 2

WASING, READING

RACE REPORT BY CARLA HAINES- ELITE FEMALE

Round two of the British Series was already here. I was looking forward to it but still quite anxious as well.

Saturday I pre-rode the course- as I already raced it at the first round of the southern I knew what to expect. The single track sections flowed quite well on some parts, until it came to the drop about half way around the course. For some reason I was nervous to attempt it. I thought to myself I've done much worse things than this, why am I still stood up the top worrying about it! So off I went down it, and to my expectation...it wasn't as bad as it seemed!

The orange monkey team asked me to participate in the team relay as they didn't have a female. I thought why not; it would give me a bit of a warm up before tomorrow. We got 4th place in the end..I really enjoyed it and was nice to get to know the other riders.

I had a good carbohydrate meal the night before and made sure I drank plenty. Bottles, gels and puncture kit were prepared so I didn't have to rush around last minute in the morning. I headed off to bed at a reasonable time, so I could get a good sleep.

Race day

I woke up 7.30am and prepared my porridge for breakfast. My bottles etc were all ready but checked over them to make sure.

I made my way over to the team tent just before 9am. I started my warm up on the turbo at ten past 9 so I was at the start line ready 20 minutes before the race.

As the weather was colder we had to be at the start ten minutes before, which I did turn up a little bit late for to get a good position at the front.

At this point I was very nervous and tried to focus on my race. The gun went off and I had an awful start. I couldn't clip my foot in then it came out again which slowed me down a lot and the pack were getting further away. I sprinted as hard as I could to get on the end, which I did but didn't keep up the pace.

The first lap seemed to take really long. At this point I was 10th, behind a rider I can beat, which in fact made me frustrated. I concentrated on my riding slowly trying to catch 9th up. By lap 3 were together for a little while then I dropped back a bit. An expert female passed me so I stayed on her wheel as long as I could which made up a bit of time. This really worked and I was back on her wheel again and stuck there.

I know I'm quite a good sprinter so I knew when I was going to attack. Unfortunately it didn't end like that as I crashed on one part of the course. I got stuck in between my bike and a tree which took a while for me to get out. Once I was up back on my bike I could feel I was slightly winded and just concentrated on breathing and finishing the race.

I did enjoy the race and really pleased that I now have my first UCI point. I just have to look back and work on my weaknesses and improve for the next round, which I'm really looking forward to.