

**Shimano series PR
Verge series PR
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McConneloug and Lindine Take Impressive Wins in Providence

The second day of the Providence Cyclocross Festival presented by Interbike saw another spectacular day of racing complete with sprint finishes, dominant victories and surprise winners. The fourth round of the Shimano New England Professional Cyclocross Series showed why New England's racing is among the highest caliber in the nation.

Temperatures were well into the 80s by the time the Elite Men and Women took the line at Roger Williams Park in Providence, Rhode Island. The heat combined with another day of absolutely clear sky meant that the Tom Stevens designed course would be even faster than its been in years past. Sunday's course was less technical than Saturday's and featured an extended pavement stretch through the start/finish – this was a course that promoted larger groups on the road and would lend itself to road racing tactics.

Elite Women

For the second day, an extremely strong field of Elite Women took to the course. From the outset, it seemed like the course would provide an ideal platform for Laura Van Gilder (C3 p/b Mellow Mushroom). With over 400 career victories, Van Gilder specializes in the sprint and can take advantage of a course where she is able to sit in a draft. The group at the front numbered ten racers through the first couple laps. As the group began to pare itself down through the ensuing laps, the group at the front was down to six. Van Gilder and Mary McConneloug (Kenda/Seven/NoTubes) largely set the initial pace while Sally Annis (crossresults.com p/b JRA Cycles), Andrea Smith (LadiesFirst Racing), Arley Kemmerer (C3/Athletes Serving Athletes) and Crystal Anthony (LadiesFirst Racing) came into play as the laps pressed on. The hard driving of McConneloug and Smith brought the group down to four elite racers – McConneloug, Van Gilder, Smith and Annis. On the final lap, these four were tightly bunched, Van Gilder attacked on the pavement and only McConneloug could cover the move. While Smith and Annis drove to make contact, their form began to loosen with Smith overcooking a corner shortly before the finish. Caught behind Smith's crash, Annis could not make up the ground and the stage was set. Van Gilder led McConneloug heading into the barriers, only a few hundred meters from the finish, but when the C3 racer's chain slipped on the remount, McConneloug took advantage. "I only picked up a couple bike lengths," said McConneloug after, "but what people don't know is that I have a secret sprint." McConneloug harnessed her sprint and held off the challenge from Van Gilder, whose second place cements her control of the Shimano Series. Gracious in defeat, Van Gilder

said of McConneloug, “the ideal cross racer is a mix of mountain biker and roadie. Mary has those both, she’s incredible.” Annis came across the line third for a second very strong showing on the weekend. Smith, despite hitting the ground so close to the finish, held on for fourth.

Elite Men

Perusing the registrants for the Elite Men’s race, it was clear that, with a course like today’s that biased towards racers with strength as road racers, it would be a dogfight. USA Crits Champion Luke Keough (Champion Systems p/b Keough Cyclocross) and several of his road teammates from the Team Mountain Khakis squad toed the line. Former National Criterium Champion Shawn Milne (ECV/Mazda) came to play. Hard riding Canadians Evan McNeely (EMD Serono/Specialized), Derrick St John (Stevens p/b The Cyclery) and Mike Garrigan (Lapierre Canada) were there to animate as well. With so many road racers of such prestige, it was no surprise that the group at the front numbered nearly twenty for the first three laps. As the group passed the finish line heading into the third lap, Saturday’s victor, Justin Lindine (bikereg.com/Joe’s Garage), blasted up the inside in an effort to trim down the group, this new pace was matched by St John, Josh Dillon (Richard Sachs/RGM Watches), Tyler Wren (Boo Bikes), SmartStop/MOB p/b Ridley teammates Adam Myerson, Travis Livermon and Jerome Townsend and St John. Lindine continued to drive the pace and Wren hit the deck and fell out of contention. The group eventually whittled itself down to Lindine, Myerson, St John, Dillon and Keough.

Lindine, in a repeat of yesterday, made his attack about halfway through the fifth lap, and immediately pulled himself free. The chase reshuffled and a chase group of five emerged – St John, Milne, Keough, Joachim Parbo (Challenge Tires) and Jeremy Durrin (JAM Fund/NCC). For Parbo, it was a return to the front group, where the many-times Danish champ is accustomed to be while for Durrin, this was a dream come true, he was positioned for the best result of his career.

As racers approached the final lap, Lindine’s gap was virtually untouchable 25 seconds and, while St John was driving hard, Lindine kept composure. His second victory of the weekend proved that he has his sights set on the Shimano Series title. To round out the podium, Luke Keough blasted up the pavement for second and victory in the U23 race. St John crossed the line third ahead of Milne and Durrin. Parbo crossed the line sixth to close out his New England campaign for the season.

The Shimano Series, led by Laura Van Gilder in the Elite Women, Justin Lindine in the Elite Men and Luke Keough in the U23.

Verge NECCS Fields

Nate Morse of cyclocrossworld.com returned to the top step of the podium in the Amateur Men’s field, outsprinting Peter Goguen (Team CF). Chandler Delinks (cyclocrossworld.com) picked up his fourth Amateur Men’s podium of the season.

Fifteen year-old Ellen Noble (Trek Portsmouth) once again won the Amateur Women's race ahead of Lori Cooke (Cycle Lodge) and Christina Birch (MIT Cycling). Noble is in her first season of cyclocross. It seems like she's getting the hang of it.

Michael Owens (Bliss Racing/Belgen Cycles) topped the Junior 10-14 race ahead of Kevin Goguen (Team CF) and Donnie Seib (bikeman.com).

Van Dessel Factory Team racer Bill Ellison once again won the sprint for the Masters 35+ race. Today he beat out Kevin Hines (Corner Cycling), Van Dessel's own Edwin Bull and Series Leader Brian Wilichoski (cyclocrossworld.com).

Paul Richard (cyclocrossworld.com) won the sprint in the Masters 45+ race ahead of Ralf Warmuth (Highland Park Hermes) and Jeff Molongoski (Joe's Garage).

Paul Curley (Gear Works/Spin Arts) doubled up on the weekend ahead of Tim Groesbeck (CCB) and Gary Passler (ECV).

The Verge New England Cyclo-Cross Series gets back underway on October 22 and 23 with the Downeast Cyclocross Weekend in New Gloucester, Maine at scenic Pineland Farms. One of the secrets of New England racing, Downeast has become a favorite of many racers.

About the Shimano New England Pro Cyclocross Series Presented by Verge: The 2011 Shimano Series includes eight races in four venues: The Great Brewers Gran Prix of Gloucester, Oct. 1 & 2 at Stage Fort Park in Gloucester, Mass.; The Providence Cyclocross Festival Presented by Interbike, Oct. 8 & 9 at Roger Williams Park in Providence, R.I.; The Cycle-Smart International, Nov. 5 & 6 at Look Park in Northampton, Mass.; and The NBX Grand Prix of Cyclocross Dec. 3 & 4 in Goddard Park in Warwick, R.I. For more information visit www.NEPCX.com.

About the Verge New England Cyclo-Cross Series: The Verge New England Cyclo-Cross Series includes fifteen races in eight venues. The opening weekend is in Williston, Vermont on September 17th and 18th with the Green Mountain Cyclocross Weekend. The following Saturday, September 24th brings Nor'Easter Cross at the Nor'easter Festival in Burlington, Vermont. The Great Brewers Gran Prix of Gloucester comes next on the 1st and 2nd of October followed by the Providence Cyclocross Festival presented by Interbike on October 8th and 9th. Rounds 8 and 9 bring the series back to New Gloucester, Maine for the Downeast Cyclocross weekend on the 22nd and 23rd of October. The series hits the home stretch on November 5th and 6th in Northampton, Massachusetts for the Cycle-Smart International. After a two-week break, the series pays its annual visit to Sterling, Massachusetts for Tom Stevens's Bay State Cyclocross on November 26th and 27th. The series finale comes the next weekend with the NBX Gran Prix of Cyclocross. For more information, visit <http://www.cycle-smart.com/neccs>