

Jody Cundy

World and Paralympic Champion

June Newsletter

So much has happened since my last newsletter, and also because I didn't get chance to update you last month I've now got 2 busy months to fill you in on!

Kit Issues!

First up was the Good Friday Track Meet, the debut for my cycling team and first outing for the new kit. Actually, getting the kit was the first hurdle to overcome: Due to the production times and delivery slots it was going to be tight to whether we'd actually have any kit to race in. Sure enough the last possible time (the day before!) the kit could be delivered, was when it was due to be delivered. Tracking it online, I could see it had arrived at the depot and was due for delivery, now I was just waiting for the buzzer in the flat to go off. By 3pm there was still no sign of the parcel, so I gave the company a ring to see where it was, but the response I received was not the one I expected "The driver tried to deliver at your address 10mins ago, there was no response and he's bringing the parcel back to the depot!". I wasn't best pleased at this response, especially after I'd stayed in all day just to take this parcel. A few phone calls later and I'd arranged to pick it up from the depot, literally the last opportunity possible as the following day was a bank holiday, and the day of our race!

I breathed a sigh of relief when I took the kit out of the box and it looked as good as it did in the designs we'd received months before.

Good Friday

My first race was the Flying 200m to qualify for the international Sprint competition and having only been on the track for a few sessions since the World Championships, it was going to be a bit rusty with my track skills. However, I qualified well, importantly under 11seconds and 10th overall with a 10.995, which considering the level of the field I was pretty pleased with.



Qualifying 10.995, 10th Place



1st Round of the sprint against Ross Edgar

The first round of the Sprint was a 3up and I was going to face a tough challenge as I was racing Ross Edgar. I gave it my all and with a lap to go I made my move, dropping down the track and getting the jump on my Dutch opponent and managed to get onto the shoulder of Ross, so it was now a straight drag race to the line. However, coming out of turn 4, I could see Ross had the better of me, but I think he had to work a lot harder than he was expecting to take that round.



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In the recharge, I rode well but for some reason I felt the urge to get out of the saddle when I was already doing 70km/h, not a good idea especially as I was trying to go around Itmar Esteban from Spain. Once again, I was 2nd best, and now out of the Sprint competition. But in both rounds I'd done myself proud and only been beaten by a few cm's on the line each time.



Recharge against Itmar Esteban from Spain

Next up was the 1Mile Dash, a 6lap Scratch race with all the losers from the Sprint competition and all the riders who didn't make it through to the main competition. I got stuck in the bunch and went with the group as the speed increased and could feel the benefit of all the pursuit training I'd been doing in the last year. Coming out of the final corner I was in a good position and sprinting hard, but unfortunately I timed my run slightly too late and was pipped on the line. Nevertheless, I did come 2nd again by a few cm's and I was happy, as it was my first podium finish in Para-T colours.

Last up was the Keirin. Buoyed by my performance in the Mile Dash I was feeling good about this race. As the derny peeled off the track, I made my move from the back of the field to the front. I had a quick look over my shoulder and realised I'd taken the other riders by surprise and had a gap, so I then went for it full gas. Unfortunately as I came across the line, I realised it was 2laps to go and I had some quality riders chasing me down, especially in Pete Mitchell who'd won the Sprint competition earlier in the day. Coming into turn 3 for the final time the inevitable happened and the two GB riders, Pete and Philip Hindes came past, as my legs finally faded. I could give no more.

A great debut for the team with some good results from Helen Scott, Jon-Allan Butterworth and Tel Byrne.



Team Para-T

Tel Byrne, Jody Cundy, Helen Scott, Jon-Allan Butterworth



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Sydney Road World Cup – Travel

The day after the Good Friday meet was a trip to the airport and the start of my road season, with the target of scoring some all important qualification points for London. With all the bags and equipment checked in with British Airways it was a quick flight down from Manchester to Heathrow, before the longer journey onward to Sydney. In the end, it turned out to be a longer journey than normal to Sydney. With everybody on the plane, the pilots voice came over the PA system to announce that there was an electrical storm over Heathrow, and which would delay our departure by 15mins. However, after 15minutes the pilot was back on the PA system to tell us that there was a medical issue with someone on the plane and we weren't flying until this had been resolved. Another 30minutes and passed and we were informed that it was a crewmember who had been taken ill, and now had to be taken off the plane, along with their luggage. In the mean time a replacement crewmember needed to be found and the affected crew member removed from the plane, along with their luggage. Another 30mins and to a cheer from all the passengers on the plane a new crew member boarded, and we were all set to go. After the issues on the ground, the flight to Sydney was pretty straight forward, and with a quick refuel in Singapore we made it to Australia. After a long day travelling the next issue was collecting all the luggage and equipment we had brought with us for the trip. Not an easy task with 11 people and over 35pieces of luggage, most of it oversized with bike bags and boxes, wheels, hand cycles and kit bags. Although the Australian officials at the airport appeared reluctant to help we finally made it through customs, just to be delayed by yet another problem: the van we had, got stuck underneath the entrance to the car park, even though the hire car official told the driver to go that way! So we had to wait for another van to transport us to Wollongong where we would be based for the week prior to the world cup.

Finally we made it to Wollongong just in time for breakfast, which was very welcome, and the view over the beach and the surf outside more than made up for the delays.



At the top of Bald Hill on Gran Pacific Drive, with Sea Cliff Bridge in the distance



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Sydney Road World Cup

After a week of training down in Wollongong with rides through the Royal National Park and on the grand Pacific drive, the team was over the jet lag and all set to race in Sydney.

Our hotel for the World Cup was in the Olympic Park overlooking the Sydney Olympic stadium, a venue I knew well and had good memories of, especially as 11 years prior to this I was a swimmer winning 2 Golds and a Bronze at the 2000 Paralympic Games. One of the first things I did on arrival was go for a walk around the Aquatic centre, it felt like yesterday I was in there racing, although it's changed since then. Unfortunately the 15,000-seat stand has been reduced, but I think it's still one of my favourite sporting venues.

My next mission in the Olympic park was to find the water fountain that was made from the Olympic Flame Cauldron, as I'd been told that all medal winners from the 2000 Olympics and Paralympics had their names on a brick in the base. Sure enough with a bit of searching I found mine!



100m Fly Golden Brick



100m Backstroke Bronze Brick



Relay Golden Brick

Once I'd reminisced, it was onto the job in hand which was the World Cup. With our hotel in the Olympic Park, checking out the TT course was going to be easy, and with a few laps done I had it all sorted even though it was going to be a technical course it would make for an interesting TT, certainly better than the normal GB straight out and back dual carriageway affair.

However, the TT was on the 2nd race day and first up was the Road Race, 8 laps (78.3km) around the Eastern Creek racing circuit and complex. Having only done a few races prior to this, it was going to be a learning experience, but the goal was to finish top 10. Although I got dropped early on in the race, and with part of the course going up and down the drag strip out of the back of the course, riding on my own into the headwind in this section was pretty depressing, especially as I could see the field get further and further away with each lap. I managed to persevere and make it to the finish to cross the line 9th in the C4 category, which importantly scored points for the London qualification process.

The following day was the time trial, and thankfully the course was dry. In fact, there wasn't a cloud in the sky, which compared to the wet week we'd had in Wollongong was welcome.



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With 4 laps of the Olympic park course it was a case of going as fast as possible and trying to hold as much speed as possible through the technical bends. At the end of the 22km I crossed the line in 6th place just 90seconds down on the leader. Although I hadn't won, I had moved up the field compared to the road race and scored some more important qualification points.

Well my next update will be much sooner as I've already rode Piacenza and Gippingen, and will be racing the 2nd round of the World Cup in Sergiovia Spain this weekend.

Catch you soon.

Jody

