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Ofoto / Lombardi Sports take 2nd in sprints, 9th overall in NYC race “Rough” ride for team’s local National Champion

SAN FRANCISCO (August 3, 2003) – The underdog Ofoto / Lombardi Sports Cycling Team featured prominently in today’s New York City Cycling Championships presented by BMC Software, part of the Pro Cycling Tour and one of the highest-profile bicycle races in America.

The team placed riders Russell Hamby (Sacramento, CA) and Tim Larkin (Berkeley, CA) in a lead group of 17 that formed very early in the 100km race, held on a flat 2km course in Lower Manhattan.

Despite being, as Hamby, 24, put it, “outnumbered, out-manned, and out-horsepowered,” the Ofoto / Lombardi Sports team helped to maintain a high pace at the front that neutralized sprinters like 2002 race winner Ivan Dominguez (Saturn) and Gord Fraser (HealthNet).

“The other teams like Saturn wanted to control things, but we wanted a more aggressive race,” said Larkin, who, at age 33, also works as an architect in the off-season.

Larkin’s aggressive riding would eventually earn him 2nd place in the race’s sprints competition, which awarded points every other lap to the first riders across the finish line.

“Tim rode like an animal,” said Hamby. “It was Tim and Chris Horner [of Saturn] battling.”

As storm clouds gathered towards the end of the race, Larkin’s 2nd place in the sprints was secure, and the Ofoto / Lombardi Sports duo changed their focus to Hamby’s position at the finish.

“I started cramping with 5[km] to go; the little sprints started to wear on me,” Larkin recalled. “Unfortunately I wasn’t strong enough to help [Russell] too much.”

In the end, Hamby would finish 9th, a great result for the second-year pro, since the lead group contained two members of ONCE-Giant’s 2003 Tour de France squad and 6 of the Top 10 riders in the most recent US National Racing Calendar standings.

“Once the last corner came about, I got pinned against the barriers,” he said, “so I sprinted as hard as I could but I could only pass one or two guys.”

Ofoto / Lombardi Sports’ Jonathan Erdelyi – the current U-23 National Champion and a native of Brick, NJ – suffered from a stomach virus and dropped out with 15km remaining.

“It was pretty rough out there today for me... but a lot of people were out there cheering for me,” he said.

The race won by Marty Nothstein (Navigators), a 2000 Olympic Champion in track cycling.

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Lombardi Sports is the San Francisco Bay area’s premier sporting goods retailer, located at the intersection of Polk and Jackson Streets in San Francisco. www.lombardisports.com

Formerly America’s premier amateur cycling team, **Ofoto/Lombardi** is in its second season as a professional team. The team contains a current National Champion, four ex-National Champions, and a current US National Team Member. National and racial diversity are key elements of the team’s make-up, with an Irish, a Swiss, and a Canadian amongst the American contingent, which contains two of the three African-American professional road cyclists in the world. www.teamofoto.com



Sports Media

1755 Van Ness #502
San Francisco
CA 94109
Tel. +1 415 346 8422
Fax +1 415 704 3341
www.o2sm.com