



Australian Open Road Championships 7 - 11 January 2009 BALLARAT Media Release



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McDONALD SPRINTS TO GLORY

Sydney cyclist Peter McDonald, (Drapac Porsche) stole the march on his more fancied rivals in a three up sprint to claim the gold medal in the elite men's road race on the final day of the Scody Australian Open Road Championships at Buniyong, near Ballarat, Victoria.

McDonald outfoxed three time time trial World Champion and newly crowned Australian time trial champion, Michael Rogers, and his Team Columbia team mate, Adam Hansen in a spurt of speed down the final straight into the finish.

The 30-year-old bike mechanic crossed the line in 4hr10min34sec to claim the biggest win of his career so far.

It hasn't sunk in yet, this is huge," said McDonald who last month claimed the silver medal in the Australian Criterium Championship and was thrilled to claim the victory. "It doesn't beat anything and is the biggest win so far by a mile.

They had two riders against me which makes it really hard," said McDonald. "I was happy when it was just Dodger (Rogers) and myself, but when Adam came across I thought no way, two Team Columbia riders, I had no chance.

So to beat two guys that race full time for one of the world's biggest teams, I really didn't know what to think, I couldn't believe that I won a finish like that against two Pro Tour riders,

Whilst neither Rogers, who claimed silver, nor Hansen in third place are renowned for their sprinting they admitted they got it wrong in the final kilometres allowing McDonald to use his sprinting speed to full advantage and claim the win.

Today I tried everything I could and unfortunately it didnt come off at the end," said Rogers. "Thats just the way cycling is and unfortunately thats the way it happens, just a communication error between us, so if it happens once in a hundreds races, thats not too bad.

Two sets of legs are better than one and Adam rode really well to get across to us, but unfortunately for Team Columbia it didnt go the way we wanted it but there are plenty of other races in the year."

But Rogers, who on Wednesday signalled a return to form with victory in the time trial, is still pleased with his racing this week.

I am super happy with the few days I have had here, and I think its a sign of the start of a good season and when you have that, you usually have a good season.

Hansen, the silver medallist in last year's road race, admits it was an opportunity missed.

I was feeling great, much better than last year and I just used everyone in front of me until I had used all their energy and moved across to the next guy," said Hansen. When I moved up to Mick I thought yes we have got this, but in the end, I just got to nervous and didnt have the ideal finish."

However, Hansen was happy to improve on a disappointing showing in Thursdays time trial, where as defending champion, he finished 11th.

The result is disappointing for me but, with two laps to go I was way back and made really good moves, so with that sense I am happy with my ride, and its a good turn around from my time trial," said Hansen. Silver and gold last year and bronze this year, its not too bad.

Early in the 16 lap event a group of six riders including reigning Australian Criterium Champion, Bernie Sulzberger, and fancied climber Trent Lowe established a lead of around five minutes but the main contenders were just biding their time and after 11 laps the face of the race changed completely with an attack group including Rogers and McDonald forging ahead. Hansen chased to join the leaders and just before the finish of the penultimate lap Rogers made his move. Rogers was solo across the line on the bell lap with a ten second lead but soon after McDonald bridged the gap and then Hansen rode up to join them and set up the three man battle.

The Championships are being staged at Buninyong, near Ballarat in Victoria, from 7 to 11 January. Further information about the race routes and to download entry lists please go to the event website aorcc.com

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