

Lea, Simes team to win Madison

More than 2,800 attend season finale at the velodrome.

By Gary Blockus, OF THE MORNING CALL

Bobby Lea achieved something he's dreamed about since 1992, and Jackie Simes did something his legendary father never had the opportunity to dream about.

Lea and Simes, sons of cycling racing families and who represent the Lion of Flanders.com team, combined to win the Salamander Madison Cup XXXIV on Friday night with more than 2,800 people on hand to say good-bye to the 2010 World Series of Bicycling season at Valley Preferred Cycling Center in Trexlertown.

"I've had every other place on the podium but first, and now I have that," said the 27-year-old Lea, who moved to Topton as a 16-year-old from Maryland in order to begin serious cycling training.

"I've won other Friday night races," said the 21-year-old Simes, the third generation of racers in his family, "but this is a big one. I've always wanted to win this."

The pair clinched the Madison Cup in the final Madison event of the night, a 90-lap chase that saw them go on the attack following the sprint for points with 30 laps remaining despite having an eight-point lead at the time.

Simes took second in that points sprint and relayed Lea into the race, and he went on the attack. The pair not only lapped the field with seven laps to go, but re-took the lead in the race before settling down to enjoy the win over the final lap.

Lea assessed his top competition throughout the race, Shane Kline and reigning Madison national champion Iggy Silva, and saw them looking tired.

"I knew that Shane was starting to fade a bit and decided to take advantage and kick 'em while they were down," Lea said.

The Madisons were marred by two crashes in which teammates took each other out during the hand-slings. In the opening 50-lap Madison, New Zealand's Andy Hughson and James Canny took each other out. During the 15-lap scratch race Madison, Perkasio's Matt Baranoski, a four-time 2010 junior national champion and a bronze medalist in the keirin at junior worlds earlier this year, crashed out with partner Mitchell Lovelock-fay, a member of the Australian team pursuit that won the junior world title this month. The two were in fourth place in the points standings, but crashed and lost three laps to the field as neither rider could continue in that race.

Rider of the year: Kim Geist, the home-grown talent who climbed through the velodrome's developmental programs to become a U.S. Olympic hopeful, won her first title as The Morning Call's Rider of the Year.

Geist, from Emmaus, was a hopeful for the 2008 U.S. Olympic team when she was run over by a tractor-trailer while she was on a trainer ride. She suffered a broken pelvis, broken vertebrae, a collapsed [lung](#) and other injuries.

"There was a question that day if I'd ever walk again, if I'd ever ride again," the 23-year-old Geist said.

"It's really nice to win this honor. I've never been remotely close before ... My training is for the pursuit and it doesn't really translate well for this ... It's really nice to know I have this fitness."

Geist had no problem recalling the date — "three years ago, Aug. 7" — that derailed her dreams of a trip to Beijing in 2008. Today, she is squarely focused on London 2012, but never forgets what happened in 2007.

"It's something I think about every time I'm on the road," she said. "It's no different today."

Velo notes: Jeff Pierce, the first U.S. cyclist ever to win the final stage of the [Tour de France](#) and only the third American to win a stage in the Tour was on hand last night, supporting his wife, New Zealand's Joanne Kiesanowski.

Pierce, who is in charge of e-commerce in the U.S. for T-Mobile, was working at the company's store on Airport Road this past week as part of an initiative to find out what customers want.

No one asked for his autograph.

"They have no idea who I am," he said, not just of the customers, but of the T-Mobile employees.

The pro cyclists donned orange "Live With [Lupus](#)" T-shirts during the rider introductions for ceremonial laps around the track with Chris Paradysz, who set the track's 24-hour record last year to raise funds for the charity. Chris's daughter Allie, who is living with Lupus, was also on hand. She found out on Thursday, her 21st birthday, that she has been matched with a kidney donor.

... Tyler Nothstein won both races in the Bear Creek Future Stars juniors races ... 2008 U.S. Olympian Bobby Lea won the 10-lap scratch race ... Two-time U.S. Olympian Gideon Massie won the two kilometer scratch race ... Kiesanowski won the women's elimination and 10-lap scratch races.