

Mark's break wins it

HASTINGS and St Leonards rider Mark Markowski left all the top Sussex riders trailing in his wake as he finished more than two minutes ahead to win the county road race championship at Cowbeech.

Markowski, who said afterwards he broke away rather than risk a sprint finish, stayed clear despite a determined chase by Colin Tamon (Central Sussex) and Brighton rider Vernon Smith (Regent), who sprinted in together to take the silver and bronze medals.

The young Hastings rider came to the fore last year after finishing third in the Etoile two-day race and his championship win all went according to plan.

Applause

He was confident enough to ignore an early break by East Grinstead's Steve Dennis, and was right in thinking that the 84-mile race over 14 laps would break up later. When he made his bid with 20 miles still to go that was the last the main field saw of him.

Two of the top riders, Alan Green (Etoile) and Barry Coomber (Regent), were unlucky to puncture and they gave up after a lengthy chase to try and regain the field. Another fancied rider, Lewes time trial star Tony Deacon, dropped back on the 11th climb of Kingsley Hill with cramp, but pluckily continued to finish 15th.

Cycling

Dennis may have been overshadowed by Markowski, but he earned special applause as he finished. After his first break failed, he stayed in the main field for a while but when the three medal winners went clear he again went on the offensive and beat the rest home for fourth place.

Other leading finishers: 5th, J. Johnston (Tridentum); 6th, R. Allen (Hastings); 7th, 8th, 9th, T. Goddard, P. Lipscombe, D. Awcock (all Central Sussex); 10th, P. Blackmore (East Grinstead); 11th, J. Withey (Etoile); 12th, P. Baker (Hastings).



● MARK MARKOWSKI