



—Staff photo by Lee Crum

All bikes away as 10th annual Tour de Louisiana takes 80-mile bicycle tour of Louisiana Sunday afternoon

The cycle of time: 80 miles to make up 21 seconds

By BOB MARSHALL

At 12:30 p.m. Sunday, as he sat astride his racer at the start of the third and final stage of the 10th annual Tour de Louisiana, Ian Bowles felt fairly relaxed, and confident. After all, he had 80 miles to make up 21 seconds

to make 80 miles to make up 21 seconds in Colin O'Brien, and capture the trophy for the prestigious Seniors I and II. Three hours, 35 minutes and 16 seconds later, the confidence and poise

gone. "What happened," the 21-year-old from St. Petersburg, Fla. said "was nothing. No one wanted water had something to do they felt they were too had to do was sit back

by what O'Brien did behind the fr-

trated Bowles for 80 windy, rain-soaked and bone-chilling miles, crossing the finish line at the same time and picking up the winner's trophy, his first in a major stage race.

"I was really surprised how easy it went," O'Brien confessed. "I kept waiting, at times wondering if someone to go out, someone to start pushing, but no one did."

"My biggest challenge today was holding myself back, and staying warm."

O'Brien's overall time of 5:57:38 topped a field of 89 cyclists from across the country who competed in the event, sponsored by the New Orleans Bike Club. Bowles was second in Seniors I and II, followed by Don Casboro of Carbondale, Ill., John Morstead, Lake Charles, La., and Scott Dickerson, Austin, Texas.

John Prosser, of Green Bay, won the

Seniors II and IV class, followed by Tom Thompson, of Haverhill, Mass.; Scott Yarbo, College Station, Texas; Tim Montagne, Sparks, Nev.; and Tim Laug, Hargerstown, Mont.

New Orleans swept the top three spots in the Juniors class, with John McCallister taking first, followed by Patrick Hennessy and Albert Vallotton. Alabamians James Foley and Peter Williams finished fourth and fifth.

Tracy Stiller of Tallahassee won the women's class, followed by Jackie Sutton, Atlanta; Sally Draper, New Orleans; Cassandra Garley, Atlanta; and Darlene Hejmanek, Baton Rouge.

Howard Skipper, of the Alabama Wheelmen, captured the veteran's class, followed by New Orleans' Bob Perra.

Sunday's confrontation in the ci-

matic third stage of Seniors I and II was set Saturday when Bowles and O'Brien came out of the first two stages within striking distance of each other. The 23-year-old O'Brien, training in Phoenix but racing with his hometown team from Green Bay,

Wisc., had turned the first stage, a 40-mile time trial in 8 minutes, 20 seconds. Bowles covered the distance in 8:55 but cut the advantage to 21 seconds by finishing first in the second stage, a 60-mile road race Saturday afternoon.

Sunday's cut and chase game was an act of cycling, the cat is trying to run away from the mouse.

"All I had to do was hang close, make sure he didn't get ahead of me out on the course, or make a break I couldn't control," O'Brien teased. "I really expected to be pushed. I kept

waiting for someone to make a run, but it just never happened. I was really surprised."

No more so than Bowles, who's frustration over the slow pace may have helped prompt the tactical error which sealed his fate.

"When it was obvious no one was going to race, the only chance I had was to beat him with my sprint at the finish," said Bowles. "But I blew that."

"I went out much too soon. I was probably a mile from the finish line. That's too long a distance to sprint. He was able to hang with me. He was in my shadow all day."

Right where he wanted to be. And when the last of the 80 miles had been covered, the distance between first and second places remained 21 seconds: 5:57:38 to 5:57:59.