

SENIOR GAMES

Woodside cyclist Novitsky 7th again

Two-time national champion leads most of 40k race

BY JOHN REID Daily News Staff Writer

Close, but no medal. Woodside's John Novitsky exhibited his patented power in leading the 50-54 age group 40k cycling road race in the National Senior Games on Canada Road in Redwood City on Friday.

However, for the second straight day, Novitsky couldn't hold on. And for the second straight day, the two-time Time Trials champion settled for a seventh-place ribbon. Novitsky — seventh in Thursday's 20k at 31:57.8 — was timed in 1 hour, 10 minutes, 37 seconds in the 40k. His time was one second behind winner John Platero Jr.

Novitsky, fresh off winning his second straight national 50-54 Time Trials championship in Louisville, Ky., was ahead of the pack for much of the race. Platero hung back, then kicked it into high gear down the stretch to win.

"Platero is a very good sprinter," Novitsky said. "I didn't see him put his nose into the wind. And I had my nose in the wind a lot. I wasn't strong enough to quite shake him. I had one lap where I had a total breakaway, but the other guys brought me back."

Novitsky, who has been racing seriously for seven

years, had a 10-second lead at the 9k juncture of the race.

"There were 20 guys who probably said, 'Crap, that's the national Time Trials champion. If we let him go, he will,'" Novitsky said. "In about a lap they brought me back. If you're leading, you're the enemy. I gave it my best shot."

This was the first time the 6-foot-1, 153-pound Novitsky and Platero have raced each other. Platero, a four-time gold medalist at the World Senior Games, paid his respects to Novitsky. The two seem to have an instant rivalry going. "Novitsky is brutally strong," Platero said. "He is super strong. He was an animal (out there). He was pulling the whole race, so I knew he had no interest in winning the race. His strength was amazing."

"We'll find out on Monday what Platero is like in the Time Trials," Novitsky said. "For two days in a row, he has been the best 100-second sprint. He has strong legs."

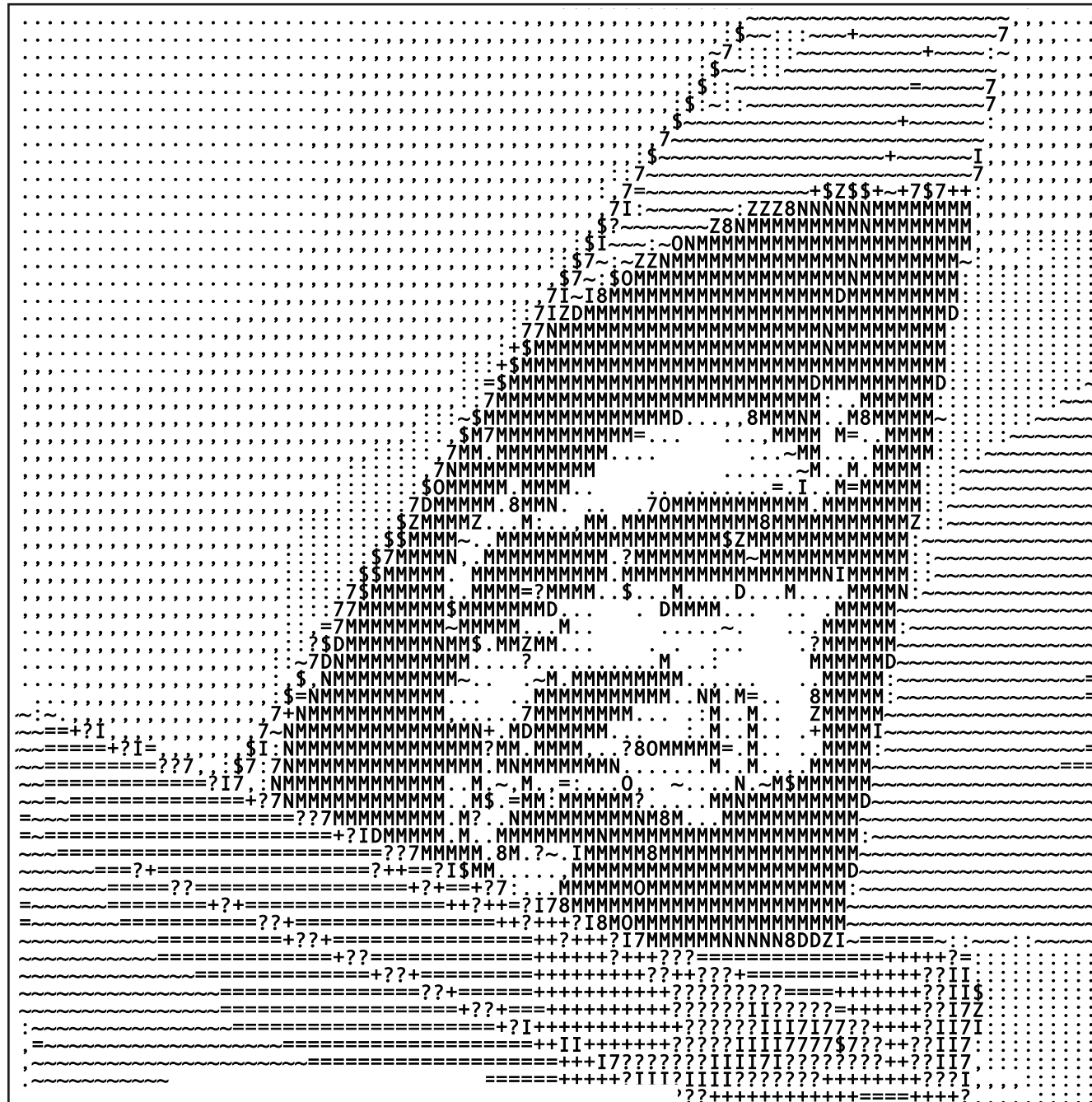
Ted Zaynor of Woodside was 21st in 1 hour, 18 minutes, 54 seconds. Zaynor was 25th in Thursday's 20k in 33:57.5.

"I'm happy with my results," Zaynor said. "I haven't raced in awhile. I'm not as fast as some of these fast guys like John Novitsky and a few others. I hung with them a full lap (Friday) and almost a full lap (Thursday). Today was a little harsh. There was a big wind out there. If you lose it after the first lap like I did, you're all alone in the wind. It was a

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TODAY'S SCHEDULE

- All events at Stanford University unless otherwise noted
Badminton: Burnham Pavilion (men and women 60-64)
Basketball: Arilaga Rec Center (men 65+, men and women 55+, 60+); Ford Center (men and women 80+)
Horseshoes: Columbus Park in San Jose (practice for men and women 65-100+)
Race walking, 5,000 meters: Stanford Campus (men and women all ages)
Road race: Stanford Campus (5K for men and women all ages)
Shuffleboard: Manzanita Courts (men and women 65-100+)
Softball: Twin Creeks Complex in Sunnyvale (men and women 65+, women 55+, men 70+)
Tennis: Taube Center (men and women 50-69); plus practice for men and women 90-100+)
Tennis and field: Cobb Track/Angell Field (men and women 65-100+, finals in long jump, triple jump, high jump, discus, 800 meters, 200 meters, 400-meter relay; men and women 50-64 prelims in hammer, javelin, shot put, pole vault and finals in 1,500 meters, plus practice for men and women 50-64)
Volleyball: Stanford Campus (women 70+, men and women 75+; plus practice for men and women 50+)
Celebration of Athletes Special Event: 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at Maples Pavilion
Fencing (demonstration sport): Treasure Island YMCA (all ages foil, epee, sabre)



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