

Bike Cops Rule!

Maureen Becker, IPMBA Executive Director

Members of the law enforcement training community quickly learned that bike cops possess more than just pedal power as police cyclists walked off with 24 medals out of a possible 45 during the First Annual Law Enforcement Skills World Championships, a feature of the American Society for Law Enforcement Training's (ASLET) Annual Conference. The Championships, held on February 16 in Orlando, Florida, consisted of six skills events: tactical foot pursuit, tactical pistol response, threat recognition, pursuit driving, use of force, and, of course, police bicycle pursuit.

When ASLET decided to include a mountain bike competition as part of the Skills Championships, they came to the experts at IPMBA. IPMBA was proud to share the collective experience of certified instructors Artie Gonzales (Topeka KS), Gary McLaughlin (Sacramento CA), T.J. Richardson (San Antonio TX), and Kathy Vonk (Ann Arbor MI). With the seemingly unlimited support and resources of Sgt. Rich Adair and the Osceola County Sheriff's Office (FL), a challenging course was designed and constructed.

After negotiating numerous obstacles, including several tight cone maneuvers, a series of teeter-totters, a fence, and a balance beam, competitors were required to take down and cuff Controlled F.O.R.C.E. "Freddy," a training dummy that possesses wrists, arms, elbows, and knees that function much like those of humans and that "resists arrest." Bike patrol officers from as far away as California turned out to put their skills to the test. They competed, individually and as teams, in the bike event as well as in all but one of the other events. The only event in which bike cops declined to participate was pursuit driving – no big surprise.

When the Skills Championships came to an end and the winners announced, the results were clear – bike cops rule! Not only did bike patrol officers sweep the awards for the bike competition, they walked off the stage with an impressive number of medals in the other categories as well. IPMBA congratulates all the winners, but especially the following police cyclists:

David Brady (Dublin PD, CA): First Place Team, Tactical Foot Pursuit; First Place Team, Bicycle Pursuit; First Place Male, Bicycle Pursuit.

Kit Bryan (Orange County SO, FL): Second Place Team, Bicycle Pursuit.

Brad Conway (Seattle PD, WA): First Place Male, Tactical Pistol Response; First Place Team, Tactical Foot Pursuit; First Place Team, Bicycle Pursuit.

Edward Croissant (Tampa PD, FL): Third Place Male, Threat Recognition.

Bill Edgar (Orlando PD, FL): Third Place Male, Bicycle Pursuit; Third Place Team, Bicycle Pursuit.

Lou Ann Hamblin (Van Buren Township PD, MI): First Place Female, Threat Recognition; First Place Female, Tactical Foot Pursuit; First Place Female, Bicycle Pursuit.

Paul Hollingsworth (Orange County SO, FL): Second Place Team, Bicycle Pursuit.

Sonya McCaughy (Tampa PD, FL): Second Place Female, Bicycle Pursuit.

Jason Pearson (Winter Garden PD, FL): Third Place Male, Tactical Foot Pursuit; Third Place Team, Tactical Foot Pursuit.

T.J. Richardson (San Antonio PD, TX): Third Place Male, Tactical Pistol Response.

Kathleen Vonk (Ann Arbor PD, MI): Second Place Female, Tactical Pistol Response; Second Place Female, Threat Recognition; Second Place Female, Tactical Foot Pursuit; Overall Champion, Female.

John Ward (Orange County SO, FL): Third Place Team, Bicycle Pursuit.

Darin Zarembo (Medina PD, OH): Second Place Male, Bicycle Pursuit.

First place bike pursuit winners David Brady and Lou Ann Hamblin each went home with a brand-new Ibis police bicycle (non-motorized), courtesy of Zapworld.com, and a year's membership in IPMBA.

IPMBA thanks ASLET, Controlled F.O.R.C.E., and Zapworld.com for their roles in putting together a terrific event. Please visit www.aslet.org, www.controlledforce.com; and www.zapworld.com to find out more about each.