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Nate Wendling Wins First-Ever Race At Edwardsville Rotary Criterium Festival, Looks Ahead To Future In Bike Racing

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EDWARDSVILLE - Nate Wendling, in his fifth-ever race, won his first event in the juniors 15-16 division in the first race of the day in the Edwardsville Rotary Criterium

festival, presented by Busey Bank, on a very pleasant afternoon of Aug. 19 in downtown Edwardsville.

Wendling, who's from the Springfield, Ill., area, hasn't been competing very long in cycling, but was very excited to have won his first-ever race in Edwardsville.

"I'm feeling good," Wendling said in an interview shortly after receiving his medal in a podium ceremony. "I won the race. It was kind of confusing because I thought it was a (premium) lap (where the rider at the end of the lap wins a bonus). But, I won."

Wendling liked the way things went for him at the festival.

"It was pretty good. I was kind of beating (Jacob Moye of Edwardsville, the runner-up) in the corners and then, I got a gap on him quite a bit," Wendling said.

Wendling hasn't been involved in bike racing very long. In fact, this was only his fifth race of his young career, but his first-ever win. He credits his father for getting him involved in racing and being his inspiration.

"My dad," Wendling said. "He got me into it and he's my motivation."

Wendling, who's 15 and goes to school in the Springfield area, has an ambitious ultimate goal for him in his racing career.

"Hopefully in the Tour de France," Wendling said, in a reference to the world's most famous bicycle race. In the meantime, he's hoping to accomplish much as he goes along and is focused on his next race, which occurs next year.

"Hopefully to win my next race that's coming up soon," Wendling said. "June 15, with a (Category) 4 and novice."