Down and Dirty!

Phil Esempio, President

As many of you know, cycling on the road isn’t my only, or even first, passion when it comes to two wheels. Previously on these pages, I documented my obsession with the burgeoning sport of cyclocross, the origins of which are usually claimed to be rooted in the European road racing scene prior to World War II. But while I discovered cyclocross less than 10 years ago, it was in 1993 that I first fell in love with the American born-and-bred sport of mountain biking.

By today’s standards, the mountain bikes available in 1993 were very primitive. Like most “roadies” in that day, I had previously viewed them with disdain; I saw them as little more than overweight adult versions of the 20” BMX bikes most of us had used as kids, but soon outgrew. They were heavy – often weighing as much as 45 lbs! – were designed with an unusually upright seating position, and were equipped with super-low gears and fat, knobby tires. I never quite understood the point of it all.

Yet somewhere, somehow, someone did get it. In that year, mountain bikes dominated the retail bicycle market, accounting for over 90% of all bicycle sales. Working in a small neighborhood bicycle shop in ‘93 and ‘94, I discovered it was nearly impossible to get new cyclists to even consider a road bike, even when they clearly stated their only intent was to ride on paved bike paths. It soon became obvious to me that, ensnared in the European road racing scene that I still followed, the major road bike manufacturers had missed a valuable point: American cyclists, particularly those new to the sport, wanted to be comfortable. Upright handlebars, fat saddles, and wide, low pressure tires were just what the doctor ordered for the novice rider of the early ’90s, particularly in the wake of a surge in the construction of paved bike trails on abandoned railroad beds. It was possible to steer some customers towards hybrids, which were lighter and had larger 700c wheels, but still retained most of the comfort characteristics of true mountain bikes; but the mere mention of drop bars was usually enough to send potential customers running for the door.

So it was that spring, goaded on by a fellow bike shop associate who was an avid off-road enthusiast, that I bought my first mountain bike. Just a few days later, on a sunny morning before we had to report to work, the same co-worker took me out on some of the local trails in Maryland, with the intent of showing me what I’d been missing. It was a disaster at first – I crashed riding over the smallest rocks, ended up over logs, and slammed my handlebars into the trees that lined the paths which were barely wider than my tires. I rode, I fell down, rode some more, and then crashed some more. It was as if I’d never ridden a bike before in my life.

And yet, I was enjoying myself as I hadn’t in years. Somewhere in there, while swooping along twisty singletrack for the first time as an adult, I had begun to recall the freedom that I’d felt as an 8-year-old riding along forest paths behind my house in the Berkshire Hills of Massachusetts on a battered Schwinn Sting-Ray, complete with polo seat and ape-hanger handlebars. In that moment, cycling was no longer about how far or how fast, but about the experience of the moment – the sight of wildflowers that lined either side of the trail, the smells of spring in the air, the sounds of the river below and the wind in the trees.

Suddenly, I understood. And for me, cycling has never been the same.

Phil Esempio
Flight 93 Memorial fundraiser

Join other local cyclists for a great ride in support of a great cause. On Saturday, May 22, a charity ride and band concert will be held in Emmaus Community Park to benefit the creation of a Flight 93 National Memorial in Shanksville, PA. The cost is $20 if you register by May 15, $25 after May 15. Each rider will receive a $5 credit towards lunch at the park and a commemorative pin. There will also be a random drawing for prizes donated by Bikeline of Allentown, Cycledrome, Nestors Sporting Goods, South Mountain Cycles and Spectrum Cycles. Rides of 25 & 50 miles have been mapped. Following the ride, at 1:00 PM there will be a concert in the park by the Macungie and Somerset County bands. Additional information is available on the website and at local bike shops. Contact Jack Helffrich at 484-610-212-6535 for National Bike Month. Locally, CAT is the place to go for support at http://www.car-free.org/.

Flight-to-Work Week is May 17-21 and Friday, May 21 is Bike-to-Work Day. You’ll find plenty of support on the League of American Bicyclists’ official site for National Bike Month. Locally, CAT is the place to go for support at http://www.car-free.org/.

LWA Meetings

 Held the 3rd Monday of every month.

Next meeting is:

Monday, May 17, 2009
Business Mtg – 7:45 -8:15 PM
Speaker – 8:15 – 9 PM

MEETING LOCATION:
Valley Preferred Cycling Center – Velo deck

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New Sponsor: Watergap Coffee Co.

We are a Micro-Roaster. We only roast to order and we deliver. So our coffees are fantastically, fresh, fresh, fresh! (if you have never had real fresh roasted coffee, it is well beyond what you can possibly imagine). Our organics are phenomenal!! Anyone who sends us an online order or calls one in, or sends us an email and identifies themselves as a member of LWA, gets 20% off their entire purchase!! All purchasing is online through www.gapcoffee.com

Kindest regards,

James Enman, owner.

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LWA Discount Sponsors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action Wheels*</td>
<td>531 W. Broad St.</td>
<td>610 866 1113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Line Allentown *</td>
<td>1728 Tilghman St.</td>
<td>610-437-6100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Line Bethlehem *</td>
<td>2112 Schoenersville Rd.</td>
<td>610-691-0943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycledrome*</td>
<td>8150 Hamilton Boulevard</td>
<td>610-398-6631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keswick Cycle Co *</td>
<td>408 N. Easton Road</td>
<td>215-885-7433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric J. Loch Diamonds &amp; Fine Jewelry**</td>
<td>3370 Lehigh St.</td>
<td>610.967.3479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longswamp Bed &amp; Breakfast</td>
<td>1605 State Street Mertztown PA 19539</td>
<td>610-682-6197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nestor’s Sporting Goods*</td>
<td>2510 MacArthur Rd., Whitehall, PA 18052,</td>
<td>610-433-6051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saucon Valley Bikes *</td>
<td>824 Main St.</td>
<td>610-838-1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping Dog Cycles*</td>
<td>330 W. Weis St. Topton, PA 19562</td>
<td>610-682-1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Mountain Cycles And Coffee Bar *</td>
<td>303 Main St., Lower Level Emmaus, PA 18049</td>
<td>610-967-4490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spokes Bike Shop*</td>
<td>16590 Route 61</td>
<td>610-562-8900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapeutic &amp; Sports Massage</td>
<td>Sallie Uffer, CNMT, LPTA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:massagewithSallie@gmail.com">massagewithSallie@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaver’s Bike Shop*</td>
<td>729 Park Rd. Fleetwood, PA 19522</td>
<td>610-944-9565</td>
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*10% off all parts and accessories
**Free Lithium Battery
Bob Rodale Fitness Park

June 27, 2010  Sponsored By: BIKE LINE / LWA Racing

$1,585 Cash Prizes

Field limit: 100 max., Category 5 / Citizen 50 max., USCF #2010-1159 USCA rules apply
Course Description: One mile with a short steady grade. Races are run rain or shine
Registration: Opens at 7:30am  CLOSES AT 2:00pm  First race at 8:30am

<table>
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<tr>
<th>RACE</th>
<th>LAPS</th>
<th>PLACES</th>
<th>PRIZES</th>
<th>START TIME**</th>
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<tr>
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<td>$255</td>
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** Times are estimates. Races start after the preceding race. FREE LAP wheels in/out
Entry Fees: USCF Racers $27, Additional race $10  Unattached USCF add $5.
Unlicensed $32 includes one-day license fee. Form to be filled out the day of the event.
Late Fee $8. If postmarked after 6/20/10. BikeReg closes 6/24/10 at 11pm.

No Category 5's in the Masters races.

Directions: Across the street from The Valley Preferred Cycling Center.
From I-78 to Rt.100 South to Rt. 222 West. Follow signs for Velodrome.

Send Standard Entry Form to:
Pete Siegfried
2265 Seipstown Rd,
Fogelsville, Pa. 18051
NO PHONE ENTRIES
ALSO: BIKEREG.COM

Race Information Call
610-285-4006 BEFORE 9pm
E-mail: xracer866@aol.com
Make Checks Payable to:
LWA RACING DIVISION

Additional surcharges could apply to enter the race electronically.

revised 3/18/2010
The New BETHLEHEM CRITERIUM
Sponsored By: BIKE LINE / LWA Racing

June 19, 2010 Bethlehem, PA
$1,720 CASH PRIZES

Streets: Linden, E. Elizabeth Ave., Grenadier Blvd., & E. Fairview
Course Description: square 0.85 mile Loop, flat and fast
Field limit: 100 max., 10 min., Cat 5 & Unlic. 50 max. USCA # 2010-1158
Fields may be combined. Races are run rain or shine USCA rules apply
Registration: Opens at 7:30am CLOSES AT 2:00pm First race at 8:30am

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RACE</th>
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<th>PRIZES</th>
<th>START TIME**</th>
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<td>$300/110</td>
<td>9:13</td>
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Entry Fees: USCF Racers $27, Additional race $10, Unattached add $5
Unlicensed $30 includes one-day license fee. Form to be filled out the day of the event.
Late Fee $8, if postmarked after 6/12/10. BikeReg closes 6/17/10 at 11pm.

No Category 5's in the Masters races.

Send Standard Entry Form to:
Pete Siegfried
2265 Seipstown Rd,
Fogelsville, Pa 18017
NO PHONE ENTRIES
ALSO: BIKEREG.COM

Race Information Call:
610-285-4006 BEFORE 9pm
E-mail: smacer866@aol.com
Make Check Payable to:
LWA RACING DIVISION

Directions: From Rt 22, take 191 south to course. The course is around Liberty High School, 1115 Linden Street, Bethlehem PA 18018.
From Rt 378 take Main Street Exit to W. Fairview St turn right to Center St Left on to E Laurel (small alley) street. This will bring you to a
parking lot on the backside of the course. Please be considerate on parking for this venue. We want to return!

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**revised 3/12/2000**