



Professional bike racing returns to Toronto

The Toronto Criterium is back at St. Lawrence Market - Toronto's first downtown bike race in 17 years

(Toronto, ON – April 16, 2008) Professional cyclists are gearing up for Toronto's first downtown bike race in 17 years.

The Toronto Criterium at St. Lawrence Market will take place Friday, May 30 on a road circuit in the city's historic St. Lawrence Market district (see attached map). Many of Canada's top bike road racers are expected to compete. Race organizer Ziggy Martuzalski has already noticed overwhelming interest in the event from across Ontario, Quebec and the Great Lake States

Criterium races are popular in urban centres all over the world. They feature a short, looping course with sharp corners. Bike speeds can reach thigh-burning speeds of up to 70 kilometers per hour. The frantic pace and tight corners make for an exciting spectator event.

The Toronto Criterium kicks off with a Children's Race at 5:45 pm. Anyone under 18 is welcome to participate. Competitive cycling begins at 6:00 pm with Masters level amateur races. The professional and elite athletes race at 7:30 pm. Each of the competitive races last for one and a half hours.

'I am ecstatic that we have been able to bring this classic event back to this beautiful and historic venue', says Councillor Adrian Heaps, Chair of the Toronto Cycling Committee adding, "This is a showcase event in our Bike Month activities; it is a sign that the City openly embraces cycling both as a sporting event as well as a vital mode of transportation ."

Racers can register for this Ontario Cycling Association sanctioned race at www.ontariocycling.org. The total value of prizes for the race is \$20,000.

Spectators will also be able to browse the Bike Expo in Bercyz Park behind Toronto's historic Flat Iron Building where world class manufacturers and Toronto bike retailers such as **Cervélo, Duke's, Toronto Trek Store, Racer Sportif, Skiies and Biikes, Sweet Pete's Bike Shop, KHS Bikes, Rocky Mountain Bikes, RB Inc, Velend Tech and Opus Bikes** will be exhibiting the latest in bikes and bike related equipment.

The Criterium builds on Toronto's long heritage of bike racing. From 1894 to 1927, the City hosted the annual Dunlop Trophy Race, attracting North America's top competitors. Now the Criterium at St. Lawrence Market is poised to once again take over as Toronto's premier bike race.

The Toronto Criterium at St. Lawrence Market is brought to you by:

TORONTO Bike Month

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For more information, please visit www.torontocriterium.com.

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The City of Toronto is Canada's largest city and sixth largest government, and home to a diverse population of about 2.6 million people. It is the economic engine of Canada and one of the greenest and most creative cities in North America. In the past three years, Toronto has won more than 70 awards for quality, innovation and efficiency in delivering public services. Toronto's government is dedicated to prosperity, opportunity and liveability for all its residents.

The Bicycle Trade Association of Canada (BTAC) is the national voice of cycling in Canada and the hub of the Canadian bicycle industry. BTAC advocates, builds partnerships, promotes trade and commerce and seeks to motivate, unite and inspire Canadians to make bicycling the pre-eminent form of transportation and recreation in Canada. See www.btac.org for more information.