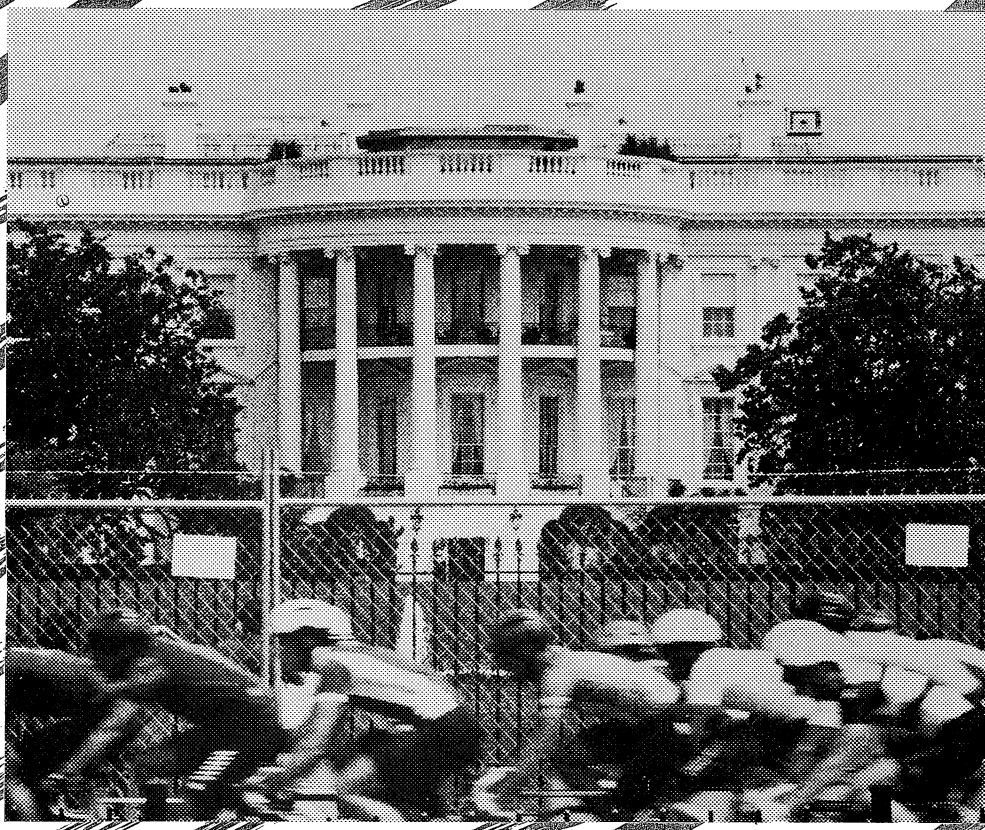


GORE•TEX®

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NATIONAL CAPITAL OPEN

PRESENTED BY OMNI MAGAZINE.



MAY 8, 1988

The Ellipse

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Schedule of Events

Time	Event	Distance
8:30 a.m.	Hawaiian Punch Juniors 9—11	5km
8:30 a.m.	Hawaiian Punch Juniors 12—13	10km
9:00 a.m.	Hawaiian Punch Juniors 14—17	15km
9:30 a.m.	Continental Airlines Senior IV	20km
10:30 a.m.	Lo Coq Sportif Women B	15km
10:30 a.m.	Hawaiian Punch Junior Clinic conducted by Connie Carpenter Phinney and Mark Gorski. All cycling enthusiasts aged 17 and younger are invited to participate and receive a Hawaiian Punch goodie bag.	
11:00 a.m.	Spenco Senior III	25km
12:00 noon	Sundance Natural Juice Sparkler	
	Women A	25km
1:00 p.m.	OMNI Magazine Pro/Senior I & II	60km
2:30 p.m.	Seagrams Cooler Veterans	25km

All awards will be presented immediately following the individual races.

SEOUL SEARCHING

At the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, the U.S. Cycling Team reaped an unprecedented medal harvest: four gold, three silver and two bronze medals. These represented the first Olympic cycling medals for the United States since 1913. Because of this performance and other results in international competition, the United States became recognized as one of the top cycling powers in the world.

The United States can repeat the '84 results. The Eastern bloc countries which excel in cycling will be present in Korea, heating up competition for both track and road medals. Many

top American Olympic contenders will be competing in the 1988 Gore-Tex fabric National Capital Open presented by OMNI magazine. The following is a list of those and other contenders for spots on the 1988 U.S. Olympic Team. The following is based on information from the United States Cycling Federation. ☉

WOMEN

Road

Inga Benedict
Janelle Parks
Katrin Tobin
Rebecca Twigg

Sprint

Renee Duprel
Connie Young

MEN

Road

Norm Alvis
David Farmer
Todd Gogulski
Steve Hegg
Leonard Harvey Nitz
Andy Paulin

Team Time Trial

Kent Bostick
John Frey
Steve Hegg
Andy Paulin

Sprint

Scott Berryman
Ken Carpenter
Mark Gorski
Nelson Vails

Individual Pursuit

David Brinton
Steve Hegg

Team Pursuit

David Brinton
Dave Lettieri
Mike McCarthy
Ron Storer
Carl Sundquist

Kilometer

Bobby Livingston
Leonard Harvey Nitz

Points Race

Frankie Andreu
Leonard Harvey Nitz

WHAT IS A CRITERIUM ROAD RACE?

The GORE-TEX fabric National Capital Open presented by OMNI MAGAZINE is a criterium road race.

Usually a mile or less in length, a criterium is a multi-lap, medium distance event on a closed course. Racers in various categories will circle the one kilometer course around the Ellipse for total distances of 10 to 60 km. Points and primes are awarded to the winners of certain designated laps during the race. Prime laps heighten the excitement because these are actually short races within a race. The fast and frequent passage makes this type of race a favorite of both spectators and riders. ☉



A criterium rider
starts his breakaway
with the pack
in hot pursuit.

50

Years of Going Round in Circles

A History of the National Capital Open

by Neil Sandler
Editor & Publisher
SPOKES Magazine

The National Capital Open.

Mention the name and just about everyone involved in cycling around the nation's capital has a different story to tell. Some fact. Some fiction.

But all are part of the thread that weaves the colorful tapestry that makes up the history of Washington's oldest and best known bicycle race.

Some old codgers say there were races in the Ellipse in front of the White House on high wheelers around the turn of the century. Others say the one kilometer oval there served as Washington's answer to the velodrome craze that saw the construction of more than 100 banked bike race tracks nationwide in the early part of this century.

But one thing is certain. In the early 1930s, the owners of several District bicycle stores got together and decided to sponsor a bicycle race on the Ellipse. Depending on who tells the story, this race was called either the National Capital sweepstakes or the National Capital Open (NCO).

Ed Bieber, 76, a native Washingtonian, raced in what he believes was the first "official" NCO in 1933. "It was a cold fall day. Spectators were wearing overcoats and gloves," he recalls. "The government people wouldn't let them hold the race in the Spring because they didn't want a bunch of bike people in the way of the tourists.

"We all rode fixed gear bikes back

then and you raced for the fun of it, not the big money and prizes they have today; watches were popular prizes in those days. Because the Ellipse is a fairly flat course, I think the fixed gear bike is still the way to go. You didn't have to worry about people changing gears or hitting their brakes. That's what causes the pile-ups.

Like many sporting events, the NCO was not held during the war years of the early 1940s, but was restarted in the late 1940s. However, by this time America's love affair with the bicycle was replaced by its obsession with motor sports. Interest in the NCO languished and it was held sporadically until the early 1960s when a French-speaking Moroccan Washington immigrant got the NCO back on track.

For the past 25 years the NCO has been synonymous with the name Mel Pinto. Pinto and his brother owned and operated a hobby and crafts wholesale distribution business in Washington. As a youth in Morocco, he followed the Tour de France just as American youth follow the World Series, and was astonished at what he observed at a bicycle race in Falls Church, Va., in 1958. The racers rode upright three-speed English racers. Pinto decided to import 50 ten-speed, drop handlebar racing bikes and to try and sell them through the hobby and crafts business.

An avid cyclist, Pinto decided the next step was to work with other local enthusiasts to form a racing club. What resulted was a merging of several small groups into the Federa-

tion of Washington Area Bicycle Clubs. Today, known as the National Capital Velo Club, this group began by training and racing on the road that circled the Polo Field near the Lincoln Memorial.

In 1963, Pinto's cycling companion Marcel Galopin, commercial attache at the French Embassy, asked him and members of the club to consider coordinating a bicycle race. The Embassy and Pinto's import business provided the prizes and seed money and the Federation provided the leg work.

The event developed an international flavor, with Pinto and the Embassy inviting amateur riders from France to participate.

While Galopin eventually left the area, Pinto and the club assumed responsibility for holding the event which by now had become an annual occurrence.

Today, multi-geared bicycles have replaced the earlier fixed gear bikes. Speeds have increased and the number of entries grows yearly. Except for 1978, when the NCO was held on a hilly course in Rock Creek Park, it has always been held on the Ellipse. The primary advantage according to promoters is that it is an excellent course for spectators who can see the action in its entirety. The number of spectators has steadily increased to nearly 5,000 in 1987.

The event is rising to a dramatic new level in 1988. With significant cash and merchandise prizes, some of the nation's strongest riders and teams will put the NCO on their travel schedule. ●

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COVER PHOTO	Cap Frank
OFFICIAL CHARITY	National Multiple Sclerosis Society

EVENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Event Director	Parker Lee
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Senior Vice President	Steve Disson
Cycling Manager	Jenny Obremskey
Event Public Relations	Lisa Gordon
Public Relation Assistant	Kevin Jordahl
Event Staff	Andy Church
Event Staff	Andrew Ross
Event Staff	Pat Ingram
Event Management	ProServ, [™] Inc.

Special thanks to the following for their generous contribution and support: Rob Bushnell, Larry Black, Mike Butler, Beth Caruso, CBM Parking, Champions Bar & Grill of Georgetown, Ted Ewanciw, Seth H. Goltzer, Angie Grabill, Tom Larson, Lindsay Moremen, Montgomery County Department of Recreation, National Capital Velo Club, Peter Nye, Quick Messenger Service, Amy Rethman, Neil Sandler, Eric Sommer, Spokes Magazine.

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The Bicycle Pro Shops Salute The Athletes of the 1988 National Capital Open

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