

# The Race is On!

By Lee Borrowman

As the Tour de France winds its way through the high mountains between Le Grande-Bornand and Tignes, cycling enthusiasts who couldn't make it to Europe this month can enjoy an exciting race a bit closer to home. The 3rd Annual Lafayette Criterium will be held on Sunday, July 15. Early risers can watch Stage 8 of the Tour de France on Versus TV from 4:00AM to 7:30AM and still catch the end of the first heat in Lafayette.

Criterium racing is unique to the United States. A "crit," to use the jargon, is a fast race around a short course, traditionally taking place on city streets. Top cyclists will average speeds of 30 miles per hour, and sprint up to 40 mph. The 1 km route along Mt. Diablo Blvd., 1st Street and Golden Gate Way will be closed to car traffic, although the west-bound lanes of Mt. Diablo Blvd. will remain open.

Criteriums are spectator-friendly, and taking place right in middle of downtown Lafayette, this should be a great race to watch. Walking clockwise around the inside of the course, opposite the direction of the riders, will offer the best viewing opportunities. If you'd rather not walk, Mt. Diablo Blvd before the finish line is the place to be, as riders round the last corner and sprint to victory both at the end of the race and in "prime" laps (a prime is a race



within the race; a bell is rung and a small prize awarded to whoever completes the lap first).

The day's event is not just a single race but rather many, as cyclists are classified by age, gender and ability, and race in competitive groupings. Some riders will be competing in an "Omnium" this weekend, which combines scores from the Criterium with those achieved at the Mt. Diablo Hill Climb that takes place on Saturday, July 14.

Meet some of the racers on page 10.



## Lafayette 2007 Criterium Schedule

Time	Classification	Duration	Prize
7:15	Cat 5	40 min	Medals
8:00	Women 3/4	40 min.	\$150/\$150
8:45	Men Masters 45+/55+	40 min.	\$150/\$150
9:30	Men Elite 3	50 min.	\$300
10:25	Kids 8-9	10 min.	Ribbons
10:35	Kids 6-7	10 min.	Ribbons
10:45	Kids U5	10 min.	Ribbons
11:20	Men Pro 1/2	70 min.	\$1,000
12:35	Women Pro/1/2/3	50 min.	\$500
1:30	Men Masters 35+ 1/2/3	50 min.	\$350
2:25	Men Masters 35+ 4/5	40 min.	\$200
3:10	Men Elite 4	40 min.	\$200

**About the categories:** Category 1 and 2 racers are the young pros and semi-pros. Category 5 cyclists are generally the least skilled and experienced, in their first year of racing. Older cyclists are grouped both by age and ability, 35 years and up, 45 years and up, or 55 years and up. Master racers can choose to race with younger age groups. At press time, the Masters 35+ 4/5 field was full at 50 racers but all other categories had plenty of room for last-minute entries (a racing license is required).

Cyclists aged 9 or younger can take a crack at the track, too! Register your little racer in front of Boswells Sunday morning before 10:15. Sponsored by the Oakwood Athletic Club, this event is free but donations to the Lafayette Art and Science Foundation will be happily accepted at registration. All participants will be rewarded with race ribbons and cookies.

### Kids race by age groups, each for 10 minutes:

Ages 8-9 roll at 10:25  
 Ages 6-7 at 10:35  
 Ages 5 and under, including those on trikes and training wheels, take off at 10:45



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