

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INAUGURAL LONG BEACH BICYCLE GRAND PRIX ANNOUNCED

Long Beach, CA (February 5, 2009) – The inaugural Long Beach Bicycle Grand Prix festival and race will be held Friday April 3rd and Saturday April 4th, 2009, organizers have announced. The Downtown Long Beach US Cycling Federation approved criterium course will feature pros and amateurs competing for more than \$16,000 in prize money. The Festival will run all day Friday and Saturday with family oriented events, music and live bands, food and vendors, kid's races, fixed gear races and demonstrations, face painting, a bicycle fashion show, bicycle safety training and equipment sales. Friday's events will center around First Street in the East Village, and Saturday's events and the main races around Pine Avenue, both located in the heart of Downtown Long Beach.

Similar to the Long Beach Sea Festival, a collection of water-oriented events in the summer months, the LBBGP Bicycle Festival April 3rd and 4th will kick off the "Month of Wheels," three exciting events on wheels, three weeks in a row. Formula Drift Pro Championship hosts its 3rd annual event on April 12th. And the grand-daddy of street racing, the 35th annual Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach, returns April 16th through the 19th featuring Indy car racing.

The Downtown Long Beach Associates (DLBA), Convention and Visitors Bureau and Long Beach Redevelopment Agency are sponsoring this inaugural bicycle event to highlight the roll-out of the Long Beach Bicycle Master Plan, which includes new bike lanes, bike boulevards, Safe Routes To School (SRTS), improved signage throughout the city and public education and awareness. "What a great way to celebrate our Bicycle Plans for the City of Long Beach," said City Manager Pat West, "we are committed to become the most bicycle friendly urban city in the US."

Festivities will kick off in the East Village Arts District on Friday, April 3 at 2:00 p.m. with a vendor expo, food booths, beer garden and a workshop pavilion with repair demonstrations, safety clinics and technical workshops. A bike valet will be available for guests who would like to cycle to the event and the Gold Sprints Pavilion and Fire Lane Contest will add an element of competition to the mix. Live music and a special performance to be announced at a later date will round out the evening.

Pine Avenue Festivities will kick off at 11:00 am Saturday with USCF Junior bicycle races at 11:00 a.m. The women's pro race starts at 1:50 p.m. followed by community races starting at 2:50 for children between the ages of two and 14. Kids can hop on their bicycles or tricycles, and compete for medals. Each participating child will receive an official race number and medal. Firemen and Policemen will compete Saturday afternoon at

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3:30 p.m. in a regional individual and team competition that should prove fierce. The grand finale of men's pro twilight race starts at 5:30 p.m. and runs to 7 p.m. Come see 125 competitors in 40+plus mile-an-hour sprints on \$8,000, 15-pound bicycles. An awards ceremony on Pine Avenue will be followed by a live band at 8 p.m. Cyclists and racers can purchase a "Passport to Pine" for a drink and appetizer at one of the many outstanding Pine Avenue restaurants.

The twilight race will feature pro teams and competitors, including Long Beach local professional cyclist and favorite, Tony Cruz of Team BMC, formerly a teammate and training partner of Lance Armstrong on Team Discovery, and a United States Olympian in Sydney 2000. Tony was recently announced as the Bicycle Ambassador of Long Beach.

The challenging criterium course features six turns through the heart of Downtown Long Beach. Racers ride clockwise starting at Pine and Broadway turning north onto Pacific Avenue and right onto 4th Street. A tight right-hand turn south onto Promenade then a sharp left onto 3rd Street wind through City Place mall. Racers then head south on Long Beach Boulevard and make a final 90 degree turn onto Broadway for a 300-yard sprint to the finish line at Pine Avenue. The short 0.75 mile course means lap times as short as one and a half minutes offering great spectating and lots of action.

The race should prove attractive to the large collection of pro teams that come to California to train every spring and race in the Redlands Bicycle Classic, which is being held this year March 26th to 29th. "We can expect an action-packed day of pro and amateur racing," said Chris Lotts of VNC Racing. "The LBGP Bicycle Festival will bring out thousands of cycling enthusiasts from all over Southern California. Bicycle racing is exploding in popularity." A website with further information will be available shortly; please visit www.bikelongbeach.org for more information on the Bicycle Master Plan. Sponsorship opportunities are available. Race registration will be handled through www.socalreg.com.

About the sponsors:

DBLA - The Downtown Long Beach Associates (DLBA) is a non-profit organization operating on behalf of the tenants and commercial property owners of the Business Improvement District. It is dedicated to the management, marketing, security, maintenance, advocacy, economic and community development of the assessment districts in cooperation with the City of Long Beach and the private sector. www.dlba.org

CVB - The Long Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is the official organization for convention and tourism marketing in the Long Beach area. Established in 1982, the LBACVB is a private non-profit organization funded by city hotel bed tax and membership contributions from over 400 area businesses and community organizations. The mission of the Bureau is to contribute to the economic development of the city of Long Beach by selling, marketing and promoting Long Beach as a destination for conventions, meetings, tradeshow and tourism. www.visitlongbeach.com

LBRDA - Long Beach Redevelopment Agency – Since 1961, the mission of the Long Beach Redevelopment Agency (RDA) has been to enhance the quality of life by improving blighted areas of Long Beach, revitalizing

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neighborhoods, promoting economic development, creating jobs, providing affordable housing and encouraging citizen participation. The RDA partners with business and the community to revitalize our project areas. It is because of our partnerships with our citizen-led Project Area Committees, and small and large businesses working together that the Long Beach RDA is one of the leading Redevelopment Agencies in the state. www.longbeachrda.org

For more information about the DLBA, please visit www.downtownlongbeach.org or call (562) 436-4259.

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