



2003 NORBA National Championship Mountain Bike Series

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CRUCIAL ROUND OF NORBA SERIES SET TO GO AT MOUNT SNOW

Third of five rounds marks halfway point of series

WEST DOVER, VT. (June 20, 2003) - Competition on the NORBA National Championship Mountain Bike Series is heating up with three rounds to go, and round three at the long-established venue of Mount Snow, Vermont, June 19-22, will be a crucial stop in one of the world's most important national series.

Leading athletes from nations as far-flung as France, Australia and Japan have arrived in the Green Mountains of Vermont to compete against the best from the USA – and all are aware of their placing in the overall series standings. Depending on how the first two rounds went, the pros are looking to catch up on lost points, or to defend their lead. After this fulcrum event the balance of the five-round series will start to tip for many athletes.

Chris Kovarik (Australia, Intense/Fox) and Eric Carter (Temecula, Ca., Mongoose-Hyundai) will be aware of pressure from below, after Carter did the “double” at round one at Snow Summit with wins in both the downhill and mountain cross, and Kovarik notched a downhill podium at Snow Summit with a third place finish and captured the victory at round two at Snowshoe Mountain.

Two of the main U.S. gravity contenders will not race Vermont as both Tara Llanes and Brian Lopes recently suffered ankle injuries. Llanes broke her ankle in a car accident while traveling to Mount Snow and Lopes was hurt racing in Europe. Even without these two talented racers the gravity events in Vermont will be extremely competitive as World, Olympic and National Champions will provide spectacular racing.

The outstanding newcomer, Jill Kintner (San Jose, Ca., Staats Bikes) will attempt to make it three in a row in the women's mountain cross after winning the first two races of the series to take the lead in the overall point standings. Kintner may have one less competitor to think about since Llanes, second in the overall series, is hurt, but Katrina Miller (Australia, Jamis Bicycles) and Lisa Sher (Capistrano Beach, Ca., Chumba Wumba) will be looking to improve and gain points as they sit third and fourth in the series, respectively. Marla Streb (Los Osos, Ca., Luna) must be considered for another win this weekend in the women's downhill after displaying precise technical skills and fearless riding in wet and slippery conditions at round two on a course similar to Mount Snow in its skill requirements.

The cross country event goes ahead without 2001 World Champion Alison Dunlap (Colorado Springs, CO., Luna), who sustained a separated shoulder at last week's Snowshoe Mountain round. Jimena Florit (San Diego, Ca., RLX-Ralph Lauren) and Ryder Hesjedal (Victoria, BC, Subaru-Gary Fisher), both coming off Cross Country victories at Snowshoe, are considered favorites, especially if conditions are similar to last week's wet and muddy racing.

World Champion, Roland Green, (Victoria, BC, Trek-VW) will return to racing in Vermont after sitting out last week to fully recover from the after effects of a serious crash in the Tour de Georgia in May.

This will be the fifteenth time Mount Snow has hosted a NORBA NCMBMS event showing the resorts allegiance to the sport. In addition, Mount Snow and the other four venues in the series have reinforced their commitment to Mountain Biking with increased financial support of the series. Mount Snow continues to be a cornerstone venue on the U.S. off-road cycling circuit.

The NORBA National Championships Mountain Bike Series is North America's premier off-road cycling series. The series crowns USA Cycling's Mountain Bike Champions. USA Cycling is the national governing body for cycle sport. GaleForce Sports Marketing is the series management and promotions company, and is recognized as the USA's leading cycling and events management group.

About NORBA & USA Cycling

NORBA is the mountain bike member association of USA Cycling, the national governing body for cycle sport. Recognized by the U.S. Olympic Committee and the Union Cycliste Internationale, USA Cycling Promotes American cycling through its 80,000 members and 2,000 annual events. For more information, visit www.usacycling.org, or contact Communications Manager Andy Lee at 719 866 4867.

About GaleForce

GaleForce Sports Marketing is an expanding sports marketing and event management company based in Redwood City, 25 miles south of San Francisco. GaleForce has promoted, marketed, and managed right across the sporting spectrum. Properties owned or managed by GaleForce include the Sea Otter Classic and the NORBA National Championship Mountain Bike Series. For more about GaleForce, visit www.galeforce.org or call 650 367 7797

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