



Media Contact
Pamela Heisey
415.299.0898
pheisey@o2sm.com

ULTRA-ENDURANCE ATHLETES GO TO THE EXTREME TO TAKE ON 'RACE ACROSS AMERICA' (RAAM), WORLD'S TOUGHEST RACE

American Favorite Mike Trevino Signs on to Challenge 2004 Solo RAAM Winner, Slovenian, Jure Robic

TEMPE, Arizona—2005 Insight Race Across America (RAAM), the world's longest ultra-marathon cycling event, tests the limits of human endurance and potentiality. Rated the 'World's Toughest Race' by *Outside magazine, this grueling 3052-mile (4912 km) transcontinental journey through the heartland of America takes place over a period of nine days, pushing athletes to their mental and physical limits. Riders endure combined climbs totaling 110,000 feet (33,538 m)—nearly four times the altitude of Mt Everest—and punishing weather conditions that include 120 degree heat in the Sonoran desert, below freezing temperatures in the Rocky and Appalachian Mountains, hail storms on the plains, and headwinds that can reach 50 mph (80 kph), all for the honor of being added to the prestigious roll of RAAM finishers.

130 athletes head inland from San Diego, California, in two waves, solo riders depart on June 19th and teams on June 21st. Of the solo RAAM riders, only 42% are expected to reach the finish line in Atlantic City, NJ. In 23 years, only 169 solo riders have finished RAAM, compared to 1,300 who have conquered Mt. Everest.

The event, paradoxically more revered across the globe than on its own turf, includes 34 international competitors from 14 countries. Often times referred to as America's answer to the Tour de France, RAAM differs in that it is about 40% longer and it is not a stage race, which means RAAM athletes aren't afforded the luxury of 6-9 hours sleep a night. If they're lucky, they'll grab 1-3 hours.

There are as many inspiring human-interest stories in RAAM as there are participants in the race.
**At the end of the release is a list of some such stories.

Local cycling clubs, community groups, and volunteers along the race route are readying themselves for the festive 10 days of RAAM, making banners, preparing gift baskets for crews, and calling friends to save the date so they can come out and cheer on riders as they pass by designated time stations in their towns (see RAAM website for a list of time station and estimated arrival times).

Solo RAAM presents an almost unobtainable challenge for the individual competitor. Athletes cover more than 650 miles in the first 35-40 hours on the first stint, without sleep. After the initial jumpstart, a typical solo rider's schedule consists of 22 hours and 350 miles on the bike, per day, with 1-3 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period, for 8 days.

American favorite, Mike Trevino (San Diego, California), aged 30, and 2004 RAAM 'Rookie of the Year' finished 2nd last year and said of his experience:, "there's no black out period, no time to sleep, and that's part of the strategy. If you've got 8-10 hours to sleep per night, it's an equalizer in terms of someone's ability, whereas if you've got an event that goes straight through, with no time outs, then that's a pure test of endurance."

2004 Solo winner, Jure Robic (Slovenia), 40, calls RAAM, "the most difficult sporting event in the world." Three months after Robic won Solo RAAM he set the Ultra-Marathon Cycling Association's unpaced 24-hour record, posting a time of 21.75 mph (35 kph). This year Robic is back and the favorite to top the podium. "I will be back next year to claim the record," Robic said at last year's finish line.

The current record holder for the Solo men's category of RAAM is Pete Penseyres, USA ('86) 8d 09h 47m – 3107 miles (5000 km) – 15.40 mph (24.78 kph). This year's RAAM presents riders with an additional 7,000 ft (2144 m) of climbing and tags on 100 more miles (160 km). \$10,000 (8,068 Eur) will be awarded to record setting rides in the Solo and 4-person team categories, based on average speed. All record holders and past year's times can be found on the RAAM website. The total purse for RAAM is \$175,000 (141,226 Eur), awarded in cash and prizes.

RAAM is 10% physical and 90% mental," said Michael Lau, crew chief for RAAM soloist Bob Rich.

Solo riders are sent deep into the realm of sleeplessness after about four days. At that point the race really starts taking an emotional and physical toll, in some riders causing frequent hallucinations and delusional thinking. "My body will hold up through the pain and suffering but

mentally I'll be a pedaling zombie, says Thomas Rodgers (Arlington, TX), 44, 2005 RAAM participant and owner of endurathon.com. "I forewarned my crew I won't have a lot of sense once I get deep into the race and I'm probably going to yell like an old man one minute and be crying the next, trusting that, regardless, they'll be there to support me, encouraging me with the immortal words of Winston Churchill, to "Never ever, ever, ever give up."

"Race Across America is ultra endurance," says David Hasse (Fond du Lac, WI), 37, 2004 participant and 2005 entrant. "There's nothing harder to do than RAAM and the severity of the challenge pushes a person way beyond what they would ever think humanly possible. When people tell me 'you're crazy,' 'you're completely nuts,' that's when you know you're doing something pretty special!" As a rookie, Hasse, a ski/bike/snowboard shop owner, came out of nowhere and rode a much more experienced race than anyone had expected, coming within five minutes of 3rd place of Austrian, Wolfgang Fasching, a three time Solo RAAM champion and conqueror of Mt. Everest. Hasse was forced to drop out of the race 451.5 miles (727 km) from the finish line due to an ugly malnutritional cocktail of hyponatremia (low concentration of sodium in the blood), severe muscle damage, extreme dehydration, swollen extremities and a malfunctioning kidney: caused by mistakes he says he won't make again this year.

No BONKING:

Minor imbalances in an athlete's nutrition can have major consequences when competing in RAAM. Striking a balance between nutrition intake and energy output is absolutely essential to keep competitors out of the emergency room. Steve Born, senior technical advisor of Hammer Nutrition, a company producing supplements and fuels for endurance athletes, has been involved in ultra-marathon cycling since 1987, including three RAAM finishes, "there are many important strategies we believe all endurance athletes need to remember in order to achieve optimum performance. These include: drinking appropriate amounts of fluids—less is sometimes more; avoiding junk foods and products containing refined sugars and artificial ingredients; replenishing the body with appropriate amounts of calories, 240-300 cal/hr; replenishing electrolytes during exercise; not relying on salt tablets to fulfill electrolyte requirements; using liquid fuels as the main energy source, even during prolonged training and races; not using any new supplement or fuel, or supplement/fueling protocol, in a race without having first tested it in training; and, being flexible with fuel consumption during a race."

Why athletes choose to take on such a momentous feat?"

"There aren't enough sporting events in this world that scare us anymore," says Rodgers. "As hard as it is to get into the Hawaii World Championship Ironman, once you've done it, it's not nearly as hard to finish as RAAM. RAAM is scary. It is still a real colossal event."

Andrew Lapkass, 46, (Breckenridge, CO) a 3-time conqueror of Mount Everest, "As far as the pure, physical and mental challenge, RAAM is the harder of the two (Mt Everest). It's very hard work but the scenery is incredible. You've got your station wagon behind you carrying food and clothing and playing the music you want; RAAM is the ultimate bike tour."

"The racers will, without question, have a new sense of confidence and belief in their abilities, on and off the bicycle," says Kerry Ryan (Bakersfield, CA), 45, leader of the ActionSport team, the current record holder of the 4-person Team division, and four-time RAAM participant . "No rider has entered this race and not questioned how they would do under near sleepless conditions, and most of the riders on my teams have cracked emotionally at one point or another. The reward the riders get is seeing the terrain, smelling the flowers, plants and trees. It's seeing the state signs, watching the locals shake their heads while clapping for you. The reward is one you have given yourself."

Lee "Fuzzy" Mitchell, 69, (Woodland, CA) member of the Grand Pac Masters Team, says: "You're born and you die, and you better have some fun in between,"

Media Coverage

The 2004 RAAM received two hours national broadcast on NBC Sports, and live coverage on NBC local television. 105 newspapers and 48 local television stations covered the 2004 event.

About Insight:

Insight North America Inc. ("Insight") is a leading provider of IT products and services to businesses, government and educational institutions in the United States and Canada. Insight's offerings span the entire IT lifecycle with more than 200,000 name-brand hardware, software and peripherals -- the largest selection in the industry -- along with a full line of services tailored to support the changing and unique needs of technology buyers. Insight is a wholly owned subsidiary of Insight Enterprises Inc. (Nasdaq:NSIT), ranked No. 537 on Fortune Magazine's 2004 "Fortune 1000" list. For additional information, call 480-902-1001 or visit www.insight.com.

About Insight Race Across America:

The Insight Race Across America has run every year since 1982, and since 2003 has followed its current route from San Diego, California to Atlantic City, New Jersey. Outside Magazine has called it "The World's Toughest Race", and others have described it as "The Tour de France done the American way". Top individual racers pedal roughly 350 miles per day, burning 9,000+ calories and sleeping just 90 minutes. Two-person and four-person relays comprising men and

women race non-stop, covering over 500 miles per day. The race's senior management and ownership is in the hands of Race Director Jim Pitre, current co-holder of the 2-person 55+ Teamrecord, and Head Official Lon Haldeman, 2 time solo winner in 1982 and 1983. For further background and race history, please visit www.raceacrossamerica.org.

*In 2003 Outside magazine rated the **World's Toughest Races:**

1. **Race Across America, bike 3051 miles, 676.2 points**
2. Vendee Globe Challenge, sail around the world, 675.0 points
3. Iditarod Sled Dog Race, mush 1,100 miles in Alaska, 417.5 points
8. Hawaii Ironman Triathlon, swim 2.4 miles/ bike 112 / run 26.2, 67.2 points

****Human Interest Stories:**

Green Bracelets benefiting Organ Donation - On the heels of the success of Lance Armstrong's yellow bracelet benefiting Cancer research is **five-time Olympic gold medalist and pro cyclist, Dr. Eric Heiden's green bracelet** to help raise funds and awareness of the need for Organ Donations in the United States. 2 Teams have entered RAAM to **raise awareness of the 88,500 people in the US awaiting a transplant.** **"Organ donation saves peoples' lives, and there can be no greater love or joy in the world than to save a life," says Dr. Heiden.**

The Ultimate in Team Building, RAAM's 24-hour Corporate and Team Challenge - This non-stop, 494 mile ride from San Diego, CA to Flagstaff, AZ was introduced when it was discovered that **companies who entered teams in RAAM received a significant boost in cohesion and morale** amongst its staff. 24-hour RAAM is seen as a good entry point into the race. **"They were treated like heroes. Everyone couldn't believe how well they had done."** **Richard Ellis – PING golf clubs**

Local Communities Ready Themselves for RAAM - Cycling enthusiasts and community members of all ages ready themselves for a **festive 10 days of RAAM, making banners, preparing gift baskets** for crews, and calling friends to save the date so they can **come out and cheer on riders as they pass by** designated time stations in their towns.

Women Role Models - Colorado-based **'Border to Border Divas'** ride to **represent the voice of children affected with HIV/AIDS**, to compel people to act, to protect themselves and get tested and, erase the stigma of those affected. Winners of the women's 4-person team category last year, team members come from a variety of athletic talents ranging from ultra-distance running and mountain biking to back country hiking and ski mountaineering." Their goal is to raise \$100,000 to fund a study to investigate the long term effects of HIV drugs on children.

RAAM-Time Tours – an entirely new form of spectating. Cycling enthusiasts have an opportunity to get out there and **ride with the athletes as they pass through their town.** Well, not exactly 'with' the athletes, they ride in the opposite direction, on the opposite side of the road, starting at designated RAAM Time Stations. Entry to the RAAM-Time Tour is free. All ages and families welcome.

What's 'up Doc?

Why all the Doctors in RAAM? - At least 24 of the people entered in the race are doctors, and possibly some that we don't know of. That is 14% of the field at least. So **what do the medicos know about cycling that the general population isn't aware of?** Could it be health related? Let's think about it: it's a **low-impact sport, a great stress reliever, very good for the cardio-vascular system, and a key part of any weight control program.** Surely we should be told. I would be happy to set up interviews with some of these folks to find out stats, success stories, etc.

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