



## 2002 – 2003 Year in Review

### **Who We Are**

The University of Massachusetts Bicycle Racing Club (UMBRC) is a non-profit, student organized group dedicated to promoting the sport of competitive cycling. Since 1978, UMass cyclists have won national honors, promoted popular cycling events and brought together generous businesses with cycling enthusiasts and nearly 20,000 students at the Amherst campus. All of this is done by motivated students who are earning full-time degrees from the University!

Each year, over 50 students participate on some level in the UMBRC. In addition many community members and alumni are actively involved with our organization. The most recognizable feature of the club is the race squad, which often numbers more than 30 – one of the largest in the National Collegiate Cycling Association (NCCA). Each year, representatives from UMass compete in well over 20 race weekends across all disciplines: mountain, cyclocross and road. Among these races are the National Championships in which several distinguished UMass racers have been successful. Activities however, are not limited to racing alone.

Club members participate in daily organized group rides, and annual events such as trail maintenance and skills clinics. The promotion of fun, healthy activities for cycling enthusiasts is the club's greatest concern. The UMBRC is club sport at UMass and is therefore subsidized in part by the Department of Athletics and Intramurals, but primarily chartered by Campus Activities and the Registered Student Organizations Office. This provides the club with some resources, but these are far too limited to support a large club that competes in

intercollegiate competitions. Thus, the majority of our funding comes from partnerships with businesses, both local and national, that recognize our potential. We enthusiastically represent our sponsors in our racing, our events, and amongst the general student body at UMass. Our sponsors are an integral part of who we are.

### **Our 2003 sponsors are:**

- **Iron Horse Bicycles, USA**
- **Competitive Edge Ski and Bike (Hadley, MA)**
- **Bueno Y Sano (Amherst, MA)**
- **Zanconato Custom Cycles**
- **Voler Team Apparel**
- **Supplement Watch**

### **2002 - Year in Review**

Although the UMass Bicycle Racing Club saw little in the way of concrete results and success last year, a great foundation was laid for success in the coming year. Last year saw the departure of several top racers, but also welcomed the arrival of several more young enthusiasts. As can be expected with groups run wholly by full-time students, it is difficult to maintain steady momentum throughout the years especially with changes in leadership and organization. After 2000, a pair of newcomers took leadership of the club.

These growing pains were felt in 2001, but 2002 has seen things come together. One of the biggest highlights of 2002 has been a dramatic increase in alumni partnership. Thanks to one alumnus (*Steve Roszko, '93*) who has become successful in the online business arena, the UMBRC was given web space and its very own domain. UMBRC.com went active last year and has made it much easier to steer traffic to our website.

These days, it's very easy to tell students on campus to check out UMBRC.com to see our ride schedule rather than trying to find a scrap of paper

on which to scribble a long URL buried within the UMass student activities directories.

Another cycling team alumni (*Todd Seplavy, '99*) who has gone on to work in the bicycle industry actually came forward and worked out one of the biggest partnerships in club history. For the first time, the team has been given a squad of custom painted road frames from Iron Horse Bicycles. These frames, which will be owned by the club, will be distributed to top riders as well as new men and women needing a bike on which to get started. This is a great step for the visibility of the UMass team, as well as a big help in our goal of promoting racing to new cycling enthusiasts.

Continuing the long tradition of quality cycling events promoted by the UMBRC and local cycling community, 2 races were held in 2002. The Orchard Assault Mountain Bike Race was once again a favorite of the fall collegiate calendar thanks to our spectator friendly cross country course and exciting dual slalom competition. The Verge National Cyclocross Series made its stop on our campus as well. The event, organized by a UMass alumnus (*Adam Myerson, '98, National Collegiate Cyclocross Champion 1997*), drew nationally ranked professional riders from across the country and hundreds of spectators to the campus.

Starting in 1987, UMass was almost always a top three school in the Eastern Conference, and has been able to place in the top twenty nationally. However, 2002 was a dismal year in terms of national competition and saw UMass go unrepresented. A lack of funds made it impossible for racers to go to New Mexico for the National Collegiate MTB Championships, and a veteran team was plagued by injury and slight lack of organization losing out on a spot in the National Collegiate Road Championships. This was particularly disappointed in light of the fact that the event was held in Burlington, Vermont. We have learned many lessons in the past two rebuilding years, and with the new solid partnerships we have already made, 2003 promises to be a very successful year.