

TEAM TREK-VOLKSWAGEN TARGETS THE GREENBRIER CHALLENGE

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April 20, 2007; Frederick and Hagerstown, Maryland, USA: When racers are called to the start line for the Greenbrier Challenge Mountain Bike Race in Maryland on April 29, there will be no fewer than a dozen Trek-Volkswagen sponsored riders competing. "The Greenbrier race is an event that is very important to Trek," said Trek's Mountain Bike Product Manager John Riley. "The UCI points that this event holds helps us bring the dream closer of sending a Trek Athlete to the Olympic Games."

And, for corporate sponsors with international business and ambitions, the 2008 Olympics are even more important than usual because they are being held in China, where the economy is expanding explosively and new business opportunities are created daily. "For Trek-Volkswagen, it would be great to have a high profile contender in the Olympics," remarked Jeremiah Bishop, one of the team's star riders and a leading candidate for one of the spots on the US Olympic team. "Because of China's expanding economy, there is a direct market benefit for our sponsors. In fact, Trek Bicycles already has several stores in the Beijing area. UCI races like the Greenbrier Challenge are important opportunities for me to work toward achieving my personal goals, and those of our country and my trade team."

Nobody knows the importance of scoring every point more than Trek-VW's Susan Haywood. Four years ago, in a highly-publicized drama, an administrative error at one race kept the points she should have scored at that race from being properly notated, which was enough to keep her from going to the Athens Olympics after traveling the globe for two years. As her Trek-VW teammate Jeremiah Bishop said, "The UCI is the international governing body of the sport of cycling, and only those races sanctioned by the UCI, such as the Greenbrier Challenge, count toward our country's international ranking and subsequent selection process for the Olympic team."

This year, Haywood is again making a concerted effort at making the team as part of the Trek-VW onslaught at the Greenbrier Challenge. Even though the Greenbrier Challenge is one of only

6 American races that carry the UCI International points that are necessary for Countries (and riders) to qualify for Olympic starting spots, USA Cycling has sanctioned a "National Mountain Bike Series" event, with no Olympic implications, in direct conflict. According to the Greenbrier Challenge's Media Director, Ken Getchell, "While some of the top racers are being prevented from coming to Greenbrier because of contractual obligations, other top racers like multi-time National Champions Todd Wells and Katie Compton will make this a very competitive race. This year's Greenbrier Challenge is still the biggest Mountain Bike Race ever held in the Mid-Atlantic region -- an area that includes Washington, DC, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York City. And, the race is still a direct qualifier for the US National Championships in the USAC-sanctioned classes."

The Trek-Volkswagen team, however, has decided to put all that behind them and look toward their Olympic future following the model that has made their sponsors household names around the world: be the best among the best. Jeremiah Bishop, who last year scored the best U.S. World Championships result in over a decade, was asked why he personally wanted to compete at the Greenbrier Challenge, "Even though there are other high-profile mountain bike races on the same date, the UCI points available, and a course that is cooler than most of the big races I attend, makes the 2007 Greenbrier Challenge the obvious choice. I cut my teeth racing in Maryland and have been racing at Greenbrier for many years. As a junior racer, I watched in awe as former Trek-VW rider Chris Scott won the pro men's race!" Now, it is Bishop who is in Trek-VW colors and is one of the men to beat. He is so enamored with this race that he is hosting a free rider's clinic and course preview for amateur riders on the day before the big race.

Even with all that is at stake, Trek's John Riley can't avoid an expression that belies some regional competitiveness when he speaks of the Greenbrier Challenge, "Even beyond this (Olympic) dream, there is the connection to Trek that this event holds. Our Factory Race Team is made of athletes that are mostly from that region. And I think most have raced at some time in their career on or near this course. I myself being from Maryland have raced this area many times. So I can appreciate the fact that this area is finally getting the recognition it deserves." And so, it seems that the old saying is true, 'You can take the boy out of the South, but you can't take the South out of the Boy'.