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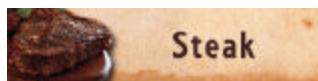
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Current Conditions

Today: 61°F / 16°C
Partly Cloudy
Wind: NNE at 6mph / 9km/h
Current Weather Forecast



Your Opinion

Your Fears

What are you most afraid of?

- Bees
- Mice
- Snakes
- Spiders

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Town Crier

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Full Story Details

Greenbrier Challenge: UCI Mountain Bike Race

Reported by: [Karen Loftus](#)
04/29/2007 07:06pm

The Greenbrier Challenge drew over 550 mountain bikers of all levels, but the big event of the day was the U.C.I (Union Cycliste Internationale) Elite race that drew internationally ranked riders to Washington County.

"It's fantastic to have a big U.C.I. race here in Maryland," said six-time World Champion, Chris Eatough. "I've been racing at this park for probably nine years now. I actually did my first ever mountain bike race here in this race and it was fairly small back then. It's great to see it grow and have it's biggest year ever this year."

"The Greenbrier Challenge is one of only six American races that awards U.C.I. International points-- points that riders need to accumulate to qualify for Olympic starting spots.

"This race is important," said Todd Wells, who is eighth-ranked in the world in U.C.I. points. "It is a U.C.I. race, which is key to our Olympic selection for not just ourselves, but the number of slots we get to send to the Olympics as a U.S. team, so it's a big race."

Even if riders aren't in the running to make the Olympics themselves, the U.C.I. points they get from placing can help their country's team qualify to have more riders in the Olympics. The top eight teams in the world get to have two riders and all other countries are only allowed one.

"Pretty much all our top riders here today," Eatough said, "I think at least the top four, were all Americans, so that does accumulate well for the Men's American Olympic placings. I'm glad to contribute to that."

"We're constantly checking on France's points, China's points, Norway's points," said Susan Haywood, the top-ranked women's rider in the Greenbrier Challenge. "We want to make sure we're getting enough points, but it's really about results. If you have good results, you don't have to worry about the points because they take care of themselves."

The road to the Beijing Olympics is far from over though, as International Elite riders will be able to continue earning U.C.I. points in races until September.

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