

Meet John Novitsky (1981, LBC Computer Science) –US National Cycling Champion

(East Lansing, MI) – Speed is what John Novitsky is all about. In his professional career he proudly earned a reputation among computer engineers as a “micro-processor nerd.” As an athlete, his passion for speed has led him to the championship podium at the 2008 and 2009 US National Cycling Championships. A competitive cyclist since 2003, his efforts have led him to consecutive US National Championships in the individual time trial for men aged 50-54.



John Novitsky leaving the start house gate at the 2008 World Masters Cycling Championship held near Salzburg, Austria, where he placed 10th wearing the “stars and stripes.” He returns again this year, planning to improve his position.

“That’s no easy task,” says John. “Most of the pro and Olympic cyclists of each generation keep racing. So to win, you have to compete against these accomplished cyclists. It’s kind of like playing one-on-one basketball against MSU’s Magic Johnson. He’s Magic and you’re not.” To add perspective John notes that, “Even Lance Armstrong has never won a US National Cycling Championship.”

Love for the competition and a patriotic spirit provides John with all the incentive he needs. “At the world championships, every country can enter as many racers as they want, but only one gets to wear the ‘Stars and Stripes’ in the championship race: the current national champion in that event. I was proud to earn that privilege and responsibility in 2008, and again in 2009.”

John graduated from Lyman Briggs College at Michigan State University in 1981, with a degree in Computer Science. He lived in the Evans Scholars House while at MSU. After graduation he moved to California to work in Silicon Valley, and to attend Stanford grad school. His career began at Intel in 1981, where he worked on the 386, 486, and Pentium processor projects. From 1998 to 2003, John served as Vice President for Business Development at FormFactor, which grew to become the world-wide leader in probe cards sold to the semiconductor industry. He is a member of IEEE and IMAPS, and for 11 years served on the editorial board of *Microprocessor Report*.



2009 US National Cycling Championship podium, where John Novitsky placed first.

John and his wife of 21 years, Donna, are raising two children, ages 11 and 10. In 2004, he began working part-time - he found it impossible to be a good dad and continue to work as an executive in Silicon Valley start-ups. Currently in between serving on the Board of Directors of two corporations, coaching little league baseball and soccer, being a Cub Scout leader, and serving on a charter school board, John maintains an active training and race schedule. Bike racing initially started as a way to stay fit and compete a little, with all the other aspects of middle-aged life being quite the opposite (e.g. stay at home dad). His wife is currently CEO of yet another Silicon Valley start-up; it's in the blood.

John also has a passion for science education. He sponsors and conducts a yearly science fair at Berkley High School, in Michigan, named in honor of his mother who taught math and science there. Fellow MSU grads Molly Brennan, Steve Kamin, Alan Davis and John Waring, frequently serve as judges for the fair.

Always an optimist, John points out that he has survived the economic meltdown and his body is holding up okay as he ages. He says jokingly, "Perhaps optimism is in the water supply here in Silicon Valley."

Lyman Briggs College is a residential college at Michigan State University for the study of science in the context of society. While at MSU, John was also involved with the College of Engineering, which also helped to prepare him for a career in computer science and electrical engineering.

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