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For Immediate Release

For the 29th time, the Twilight Criterium will fill downtown Athens, GA with competitive and entertaining cycling, excited spectators and family-friendly fun

Atlanta, GA (April 24, 2008) – Thirty thousand fans are expected to keep their annual date with the Twilight Criterium in downtown Athens, April 25-26. These loyal spectators will also get *Speed Week* and the *2008 USA CRITS National Series* off to a great start in the Southeast with the help of R.E.M.'s new CD, *Accelerate*. R.E.M. Accelerate is sponsoring prizes for the winners of the first lap of the men's and women's pro races, when the most acceleration is likely to take place.

The uniquely urban sport of criterium racing is fast, furious, and exciting to watch, as riders race their bicycles down city streets, across intersections and around tight corners on a challenging course. After 29 years of sporting entertainment, the Twilight's reputation as the premier criterium attracts some of the best professional teams and racers from the USA and other parts of the world. 2007 Men's Pro winner Mark Hekman of TOSHIBA-Santo and Women's Pro winner Katharine Carroll of Aaron's Corporate Furnishings are expected to be at the starting line on April 26, hoping to repeat last year's successes. Hekman says he is expecting stiff competition this year, especially from his TOSHIBA-Santo teammate Frank Travieso. "I'm also on the lookout for Emile Abraham, but there are lots of other strong riders and teams to battle," Hekman adds.

Back in 1989, the Twilight became the first handcycle criterium in the USA and, as a result, the Twilight has symbolized inclusivity—a place where disabled and able-bodied athletes can compete in separate races or side by side. It's no surprise then that, this year, the Twilight will be a premier event in the U.S. Handcycling Series. Ian Lawless, Executive Director of U.S. Handcycling is eager to explain why. "This is a very important year for us. We're excited that handcycling racing has returned to the Twilight, because it is a great proving ground for several Paralympic hopefuls." Monique Van der Vorst of the Netherlands will be among those competing for a title at the Twilight. She is the current women's world handcycling champion and a leading contender to win gold at the Paralympic Games in Beijing, China this year. California's Oscar "Oz" Sanchez and Florida's Scott McNeice will join the men's handcycling field for the Twilight. Their match-up is a likely precursor to their battle for a place on the US Paralympic team heading to China.

Criterium racers and fans are as diverse as they are loyal to the Twilight experience, so event organizer Swagger, stages several races, a jazz festival, an expo and other entertaining experiences that create a fun-filled atmosphere not just on race day but for an entire weekend. Swagger's Gene Dixon, who is also one of the Twilight's founders, says, "This event is like no other criterium, because it's the granddaddy of them all." The Twilight experience is also something of an unofficial homecoming for alumni of the University of Georgia, so tens of thousands return to Athens every year to enjoy happy reunions and watch the cyclists compete at breakneck speed on and around the famous College Avenue that abuts UGA.

Swagger's Ravi Rajcoomar says the Twilight is not just for professional riders or adults. As in past years, the Twilight schedule has something for everyone, including kids who can learn about bike and helmet safety before they get a chance to race. "We also encourage as many people as possible to take part in *the Gambler*, where they can join hundreds of other amateur cyclists for a 50 or 100 kilometer ride through northeast

Georgia’s countryside and compete for a chance to win prizes.” Rajcoomar adds that the schedule of events may be found at www.athenstwilight.com and lists what he says are “other, less strenuous activities for adults who don’t have an athletic bone in their bodies.”

Twilight Criterium Schedule of Events

Friday, April 25, 2008		
Event	Location	Time
Computrainer Qualifiers	200 Block of College	9:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Twilight Jazz Festival	200 Block of College	Noon – 8:45 PM
Twilight Expo Area	100 Block of College	6:00 PM – 11 PM
Twilight Registration	200 Block of College	7:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Twilight VIP Dinner	College Ave Parking Deck	7:00 PM – 10:00 PM
Computrainer Finals	200 Block of College	9:00 PM
Saturday Day-Time, April 26, 2008		
Event	Location	Time
Twilight Registration	200 Block of College	7:00 AM – Noon 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Twilight Jazz Festival	200 Block of College	10:00 AM - 5:45 PM
5K Twilight Road Race	Washington at College	8:30 AM
USCF Greenway Races	Willow Street	8:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Twilight Expo Area	100 Block of College	9:00 AM – 9:00 PM
The Twilight Gambler	Washington at College	10:00 AM
Twilight KidsZone	300 Block of College	10:00 AM – 4:00 PM
BMX Flatland/Street Contest	300 Block of College	11:00 AM – 3:30 PM
Kids Criterium	300 Block of College	11:30 AM
Kids Big Wheel Race	Washington at College	Noon
Saturday Night-Time, April 28, 2007		
Event	Location	Time
USCF Amateur Finals	Start/Finish Line, Clayton	5:45 – 6:30 PM
Handcycle Criterium	Start/Finish Line, Clayton	6:30 – 7:15 PM
Kids Parade Lap	College/Washington	7:15 – 7:30 PM
AKO Parade of Vehicles	Thomas/Washington	7:15 – 7:30 PM
\$1,000 Mile	Backstretch Line, Washington	7:15 – 7:30 PM
Women’s Criterium	Start/Finish Line, Clayton	7:45 – 8:45 PM
Men’s Pro Criterium	Start/Finish Line, Clayton	8:45 PM

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About USA CRITS

USA CRITS National Criterium Series has been developed to feature a brand of cycling unique to the United States, the criterium. Criteriums are historically run on short laps through city streets. They offer spectators the opportunity to watch Olympians, world and national champions up-close as they ride at top speed. This has made the criterium format the most spectator-friendly form of cycling entertainment. Events on the USA CRITS series have the ideals that have made criterium racing an American legacy: Challenging courses that showcase arts and entertainment districts; a large and energized base of spectators; broad community support; and strong marketing opportunities for sponsors. For more information, visit www.usacrits.com.