

## HINCAPIE, HORNER, JULICH, LEIPHEIMER HIGHLIGHT TOP AMERICANS TO RACE AMONG INTERNATIONAL FIELD AT 2008 TOUR DE GEORGIA PRESENTED BY AT&T *Rock Racing Replaces Saunier Duval to Complete Field of 15 Teams*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ATLANTA, Ga. (April 16, 2008)** – Top-ranked American cyclists confirmed as competing in the Tour de Georgia presented by AT&T include USA Cycling Pro Road Champion Levi Leipheimer (Astana), 3-time USA Cycling Road Champion George Hincapie (Team High Road), 2003 Tour de Georgia champion Chris Horner (Astana) and ProTour veteran Bobby Julich (Team CSC). There are a total of 15 professional teams who have accepted invitations in March to compete in the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the Tour de Georgia presented by AT&T. Each team will bring eight athletes to ride in the 600-mile, seven-day event, which begins Monday, April 21 on Tybee Island, Georgia.

The original field of invited teams included Saunier Duval-Scott, a ProTour team based in Spain. Due to a high number of injuries in races the past two weeks, Saunier Duval did not have enough riders for a competitive squad in the Tour de Georgia and was given permission to pull out of the field. Tour organizers invited Rock Racing, a UCI Continental Team based in California, to fill the 15<sup>th</sup> slot for next week's race.

Rock Racing will be bringing an all-star roster to Georgia, led by former individual time trial world champion (2002) Santiago Botero of Colombia. The 36-year-old veteran was the overall winner last week in the Redland Bicycle Classic, his first-ever win in the United States. He also took home the red jersey of best climber in the four-day race. Botero will be joined here by American teammates Fred Rodriguez (Tour de Georgia sprint champion in 2003, 2006) and Tyler Hamilton (2004 gold medalist in individual time trial). Rodriguez has the most stage victories for any rider in the Tour de Georgia with four total.

There are many notable Americans in this year's contest. Leipheimer (Astana), the reigning USA Cycling Pro Champion (road race), returns to Georgia for third time. He won two stages in 2007, including the "Queen Stage" of the Tour, Stage 5 that finished at the top of Brasstown Bald Mountain. In 2005 he finished 2<sup>nd</sup> overall racing for Gerolsteiner. He will be joined by teammate Horner, who won the Tour de Georgia in 2003 and is a three-time USA Cycling National Racing Calendar Champion (2002-2004). Hincapie (Team High Road) is a two-time USA Cycling national champion and won the Tour of Missouri in 2007. This is his third trip to the Tour de Georgia. Julich (Team CSC) finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the 2004 Tour de Georgia. Riding as a pro since 1992, Julich won the bronze medal at the 2004 Olympic Games in the Individual Time Trial and in 2005 won Paris-Nice stage race.

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*2.8 million  
spectators in five  
years*

*15 of the best  
national and  
international  
cycling teams*

*4,000 volunteers  
each year*

*\$27 million in  
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**BENEFITING**



Other top riders from the United States include: Tom Danielson (Slipstream Chipotle), who won the Tour de Georgia in 2005; Christian VandeVelde (Slipstream Chipotle), 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Tour last year; David Zabriskie (Slipstream Chipotle), three-time USA Cycling National Time Trial Champion; and Chris Baldwin (Toyota-United), second overall at 2008 Redlands Bicycle Classic.

Look for a distinct international flavor this year in Georgia, as pro riders represent 26 countries. Li Fuyu (GE Marco Polo) is a top contender from China, Bradley McGee (Team CSC) is one of the world's best sprinters from Australia, fellow Australian Rory Sutherland (Health Net) won USA Cycling's NRC title in 2007 and Canadian Svein Tuft (Symmetrics) is the 2007 UCI Americas Tour Champion.

With a worldwide reputation as a tune-up for the Tour de France, the Tour de Georgia presented by AT&T has perennially drawn the attention of teams from Europe and across North America. Five teams in the field this year have also received invitations to race in the Tour de France in July, including American-based teams High Road and Slipstream Chipotle presented by H30. Team CSC has been the No. 1 ranked ProTour team in the world for several years.

Final team rosters will be posted at [www.tourdegeorgia.com](http://www.tourdegeorgia.com) by Thursday, April 17.

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#### **ABOUT THE TOUR DE GEORGIA PRESENTED BY AT&T**

The Tour de Georgia presented by AT&T is North America's premier, professional cycling event and rolling festival of community activities. The Tour was first held in 2003 and has become a spring tradition with a varying route of over 600 miles of racing. Over 2.8 million spectators have traveled to Georgia to watch the event in the past five years, and direct economic impact has totaled over \$148 million. The event is sanctioned by the Union Cycliste Internationale (2.HC ranking), and is part of the USA Cycling Professional Tour USA Cycling, Inc., making the event one of the top stage races for elite athletes around the world. The Tour de Georgia is owned and operated by the Tour de Georgia Foundation (501 c3) and managed by Medalist Sports ([www.medalistsports.com](http://www.medalistsports.com)). Route maps, host venue information, merchandise offerings and sponsor news are available at the official website, [www.tourdegeorgia.com](http://www.tourdegeorgia.com).

#### **ABOUT USA CYCLING**

Recognized by the U.S. Olympic Committee and the Union Cycliste Internationale, USA Cycling promotes American cycling through its 60,000 members and 2,500 annual events. USA Cycling associations include the BMX Association (BMX), National Off-Road Bicycle Association (mountain bike), U.S. Cycling Federation (road/track), the National Collegiate Cycling Association and the U.S. Professional Racing Organization professional men's road). USA Cycling is the license holder for the USA Cycling Professional Individual Time Trial Championships and USA Cycling Professional Road Race Championships. For more information visit [www.usacycling.org](http://www.usacycling.org), or contact USA Cycling Director of Communications, Andy Lee at 719-866-4867.

#### **ABOUT THE AFLAC CANCER CENTER AND BLOOD DISORDERS SERVICE OF CHILDREN'S**

The Aflac Cancer Center and Blood Disorders Service of Children's Healthcare of Atlanta is a national leader among childhood cancer, hematology, and blood and marrow transplant programs, serving infants to young adults. Recognized as one of the top five pediatric cancer centers in the country by Child magazine, the Aflac Cancer Center treats more than 325 new cancer patients each year and follows more than 2,000 patients with sickle cell disease, hemophilia and other blood disorders. The Aflac Cancer Center is one of many programs at Children's committed to enhancing the lives of children through excellence in patient care, research and education. Children's, one of the top three pediatric healthcare systems in the country, is a not-for-profit organization that benefits from the generous philanthropic and volunteer support of our community. Visit [www.aflaccancercenter.org](http://www.aflaccancercenter.org) or call 404-250-KIDS for more information.

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