



The World's Toughest Endurance Bicycle Race

Boulder, CO - [The Race Across America](#) (RAAM) and the Race Across the West (RAW) are pleased to make the following announcements regarding their ultra-endurance coast-to-coast bicycle races are both beginning June 17, 2009 in Oceanside, California.

RAAM is pleased to welcome back the only person to ever win 4 Solo Male RAAM Championships, [Jure Robic](#) of Slovenia. Robic's dominance will be challenged this year by several international racers; one time RAAM Champion, [Daniel Wyss](#) of Switzerland; [Gerhard Gulewicz](#) of Austria who survived a spectacular crash in RAAM 08; [Marko Baloh](#), one of the world's greatest ultra-endurance cyclists who also is a Slovenian national; [Navy Seal David Goggins](#); [Julian Sanz Garcia](#) who rode a strong race in 2008; and an Austrian rookie who shows all the promise of becoming a future RAAM Champion - 26 year old [Christoph Strasser](#).

In a world of orchestrated events that attempt to manipulate the impression of something spectacular, RAAM delivers the real deal. For 28 years, RAAM has been producing champions from everyday people and the trials and tribulations they endure never fails to intrigue, motivate and inspire all those that cross their path. Regardless of whether they witness firsthand a RAAM team and its' entourage of support vehicles racing through their town or by following the progress on the race's official website, www.raceacrossamerica.org, RAAM creates an energy of its own.

While maintaining an extremely competitive perspective, many racers find the desire and ability to utilize RAAM as a forum to raise awareness and funds for the charities and causes that they support. In each of the last three years, RAAM contestants have used the race to raise over \$1 million for various charitable causes in the United States, Canada and Europe.

In Team RAAM, which starts June 20, 2009 in Oceanside, CA, many interesting teams have signed on to give it their best. In the 4 person division Big wave surfer, [Laird Hamilton](#) has again teamed up with Bally Total Fitness founder, [Don Wildman](#), Rage Against The Machine bassist, [Tim Commerford](#) and Ironman participant, [Jason Winn](#). This extreme team has more than a world record in their sight, as they are riding to raise awareness and funds for various causes. Wildman, an 8 time Ironman participant, is no stranger to RAAM, having raced in 1994. The 76 year old picture of health completed a 500-mile journey of standup paddle boarding and cycling in 2006 with Hamilton in an effort to raise awareness for Autism (www.nationalautismassociation.org) and Lou Gehrig's disease (www.alsa.org). Hamilton, referred to by Men's Journal as the "World's Greatest Surfer", is also a co-inventor of tow-in surfing. A long time supporter of Autism, Hamilton will be pedaling for The Beautiful Son Foundation (www.beautifulsonfoundation.org). California native, Jason Winn is a seasoned athlete who completed his first Ironman Triathlon at age 23. Musician Tim Commerford, who is riding for Hans Rey's "Wheels4life" (www.wheels4life.org), is known as an obsessive mountain biker who thanks his bikes in the liner notes of his albums. The athletic prowess and inspiration goals of "Team Surf" make them a force to be reckoned with.

Not to be outdone by the maturity of Don Wildman is Team Grand Pac Masters, this 4 person entry consisting of Lee Mitchell, Robert Kash, Lew Meyer and Chris Stauffer, are vying to establish a record as the first team aged 75+ to complete RAAM. Also

expected to make an impact are two-time 8-Person Team RAAM Champions Team Type 1 and Team ViaSat a perennial frontrunner in the 8-Person division. Many new faces have signed on in the 4 person division and race organizers and fans anxiously wait to see who will emerge as front runners.

In 2008 the Race Across the West was introduced, primarily, as an introduction for people not ready for the challenges of a 3,000 mile race. RAW will be contested by racers from Europe, Canada, Australia, South America and the United States. Joining the ranks of Race Across the West racers this year is [Gary E Johnson](#), the Governor of New Mexico from January 1, 1995 to January 1, 2003. Once referred to as the Most Dangerous Politician in America, Mr. Johnson hopes to bring his edge to the sport of ultra-cycling. Mr. Johnson who has competed in approximately 500 sporting events around the world is no stranger to serious athletic endeavors. Asked how he assesses the difficulty involved in competing in the Race Across the West, he said, "It ought to be brutal and yet only 1/3 (the distance) of RAAM, which has always been a dream of mine. I really look forward to competing in RAW which has a finish line at my home in Taos."

All races and racers will receive a big send off in Oceanside, California. "Publisher and Funky Dude", [Bob Babbitt](#) is expected to deliver his flair as he hosts the start of the men's Solo Race (June 17, 2009) which will also feature a demonstration of the U.S. Navy Parachute Team, "[The Leap Frogs](#)."



Now in its 28th year, the Race Across America has become an American Institution. Every June, an increasingly larger number of cyclists from all around the USA, Canada, Europe, Australia and South America gather on the shores of the Pacific Ocean to race in the world's toughest bicycle race. To become an official finisher, solo male contestants must complete the 3,014* mile race course in less than 12 days, seniors and women are allowed nearly 13 days. For teams, the cut-off is 9 days. While solo contestants must qualify for RAAM, team members do not.

In Solo male RAAM, a competitor must race his bicycle approximately 340 miles a day if he is to contend for the podium. At this pace, sleep is rare; in fact, if you plan to win this division you better plan on sleeping about 90 minutes a day, but probably not all at once. To put that in perspective we refer to the only person on earth who has reached the top of Mt. Everest and won the Race Across America, Austrian adventurer, Wolfgang Fasching, who stated that, "*Everest is more dangerous, but RAAM is much harder*". So according to the only man to ever do both, Solo RAAM is much harder than climbing the highest mountain on earth!

In 2008, an 8-man relay team from Norway, the Byggkjøp / BMC Cycling Team set a new RAAM speed record by crossing America in less than 5 ½ days with an average speed exceeding 23 mph. In 2005, Lance Armstrong won the Tour de France with an average speed of 25.9 mph, completing 21 stages covering 2,242 miles over a 23-day period. RAAM contestants, Byggkjøp / BMC Cycling Team rode 3,014 miles in a single stage in 5 ½ days. So RAAM isn't only tough – it's fast too!

Every year RAAM grows. More and more people tune in to watch, discover and marvel at a true extreme challenge, cycling coast-to-coast in a single-stage race. We are pleased to invite you to be a part of this amazing experience. We have carefully developed sponsorship levels to maximize benefits and entitlements for each sponsorship budget. Many sponsorships now include a RAAM race entry and sponsors are encouraged to enter their own corporate team or sponsor an existing RAAM entry of their choosing.

* Exact distance may vary due to route changes.



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