

## Showcasing North America's Future Champions



### MEDIA KIT

- Stage 1 - Natural Bridge TT
- Stage 2 - Lynchburg Criterium
- Stage 3 - Bedford to Covington RR
- Stage 4 - Hot Springs to Waynesboro RR
- Stage 5 - Waynesboro to Staunton RR
- Stage 6 - Harrisonburg Criterium
- Stage 7 - Charlottesville/Albemarle RR

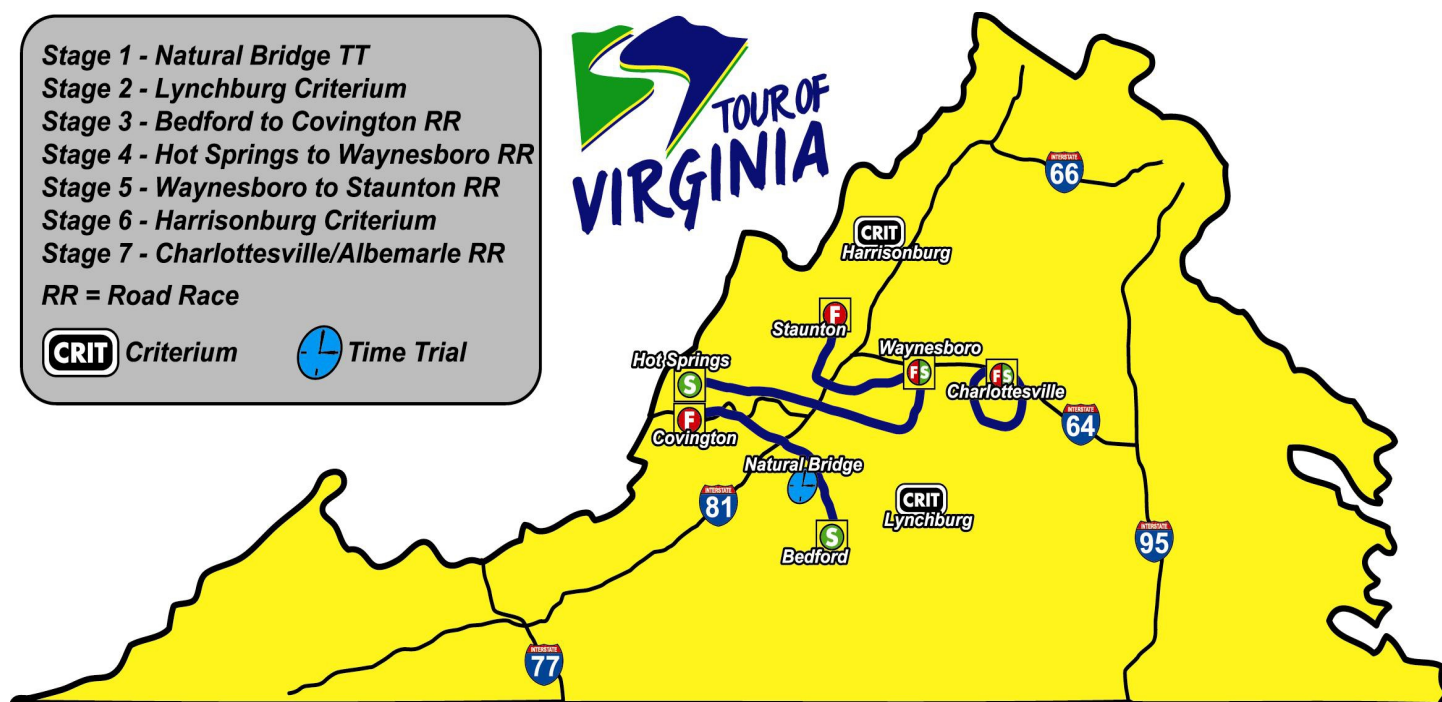
RR = Road Race



Criterium



Time Trial





*Showcasing North America's Future Champions*

## **Introduction:**

The 2007 Tour of Virginia is slated for April 24<sup>th</sup> – April 29<sup>th</sup>. Host cities will include the Virginia towns of Natural Bridge/Rockbridge County, Lynchburg, Bedford, Alleghany Highlands/Covington/Clifton Forge, Waynesboro, Staunton, Harrisonburg, and Charlottesville.

Now in its fifth year, the Tour of Virginia (formerly known as the Tour of Shenandoah) is a bicycle race with events for both men and women of all abilities and ages. The marquee event for professional/elite amateur men is a grueling six-day, seven-stage, stage-race that packs in all the excitement of competitive road racing and fully tests the athletes' skill and endurance.

The race highlights the stunningly beautiful Shenandoah Valley. Nestled between the Blue Ridge and Allegheny mountains of western Virginia, the Shenandoah Valley is one of America's best-kept secrets in cycling. The region is noted for its natural beauty, challenging terrain, and historical significance as a Civil War battleground. With winding roads, long mountain climbs, and a rural landscape dotted with charming, small towns, the Tour of Virginia really has the flavor of a European-style race right here in our own backyard. It's no wonder that many of the top U.S. professional cycling teams and cyclists from throughout North America will return again to Virginia this Spring to compete at this unique venue.

In addition to a gorgeous backdrop, the Tour of Virginia is a key race for up-and-coming racing cyclists. 2007 will be the first year that the race will be featured on the National Racing Calendar (the top tier of bike races in the U.S.), and this will attract major pro teams that haven't targeted the race in the past. However, organizers have not forgotten their motto of "Showcasing North America's Rising Young Stars." Rather than install a race-wide age cap, they have instituted a rule mandating that a team's lead rider be under the age of 25. This policy ensures that the Tour of Virginia continues to promote and foster the best young talent – America's future championship riders.



## Venue Cities/Courses:

### Stage 1 – April 24:

**Natural Bridge Time Trial.** New in 2007, the Natural Bridge Time Trial will open the proceedings in the form of a fast and intense 5-mile individual race against the clock. Expect to see speeds in excess of 30mph as the cyclists each stake their claim for the first yellow leader's jersey!

Local information: [www.naturalbridgeva.com](http://www.naturalbridgeva.com)

### Stage 2 – April 24:

**Lynchburg Criterium.** Later on the same day as the Natural Bridge Time Trial, racers will take to the start of the second stage, which will take place on a short (approximately 1 mile) closed circuit around downtown Lynchburg near Amazement Square. Spectators will love this race, especially watching riders struggle up the grueling 9<sup>th</sup> St. climb. The race distance will be 25 miles, and the racing should be very exciting as the time gaps should be relatively small and everyone will still have a good chance at obtaining the leader's jersey.

Local information: [www.lynchburgonline.com](http://www.lynchburgonline.com)

### Stage 3 – April 25:

**Bedford – Covington Road Race.** The second day of race features the longest stage of all: a 110-mile, point-to-point road race running from Bedford to Covington. Initially gently rolling, the route traces the James River westward, before entering the Alleghany Highlands at Warm Springs Mountain - a Category 1, seven-mile long serpentine climb that marks the first serious topographic challenge of the race. A short descent into the new finish venue of Covington will cap off a day of high drama and excitement.



*Showcasing North America's Future Champions*

Local information: [www.alleghanyhighlands.com](http://www.alleghanyhighlands.com) & [www.visitbedford.com](http://www.visitbedford.com)

#### **Stage 4 – April 26:**

**Douthat State Park – Waynesboro Road Race.** Thursday's Stage 4 is the "Queen Stage" of the Tour of Virginia, and any pretender to the overall victory will have to prove himself in this most difficult of all stages. Leaving the shores of a mountain lake at scenic Douthat State Park outside of Clifton Forge, the course threads the beautiful Maury River gorge before tackling the Blue Ridge twice: first at the Category 1 climb of Montebello, then descending into scenic Nelson County and crossing the viciously steep east slope of Reed's Gap, scene of much drama during the now-defunct Tour DuPont race of the 1990s. The course descends the final few miles to the City of Waynesboro, first sponsor and venue of the Tour of Shenandoah, and the only venue to host all 5 editions of the race.

Local information: [www.waynesboro.va.us](http://www.waynesboro.va.us)

#### **Stage 5 – April 27:**

**Waynesboro – Staunton.** Stage 5 on Friday departs Waynesboro for nearby Staunton, only 10 miles distant as the crow flies, but the riders will take the long, hard road there, sampling the rolling terrain of the central Shenandoah Valley over a succession of short, steep climbs on a 99-mile route. Historic downtown Staunton, birthplace of Woodrow Wilson, provides a new finish venue for this new stage.

Local information: [www.staunton.va.us](http://www.staunton.va.us)

#### **Stage 6 – April 28:**

**Harrisonburg Criterium.** Day five features another criterium (closed-circuit race). This time it's 35 miles around a flat 1-mile circuit in downtown Harrisonburg. Riders will be happy with the shorter distance and a chance to rest their legs a little bit, but the racing should be hot as riders who are placed lower on the overall classification will be trying their best to win the day.

Local information: [www.harrisonburgtourism.com](http://www.harrisonburgtourism.com)

## **Stage 7 – April 29:**

**Charlottesville – Albemarle Road Race.** Sunday's Stage 7 is a new course that starts and finishes in the new venue city of Charlottesville. The 100-mile route will take the riders past the University of Virginia – "Mr. Jefferson's University" - through scenic Albemarle County to the James River at Scottsville, and up past Thomas Jefferson's home at Monticello. The six-day journey will conclude with 3 laps of a spectator-friendly 3 mile finish circuit around Charlottesville's Downtown Mall. The rider that holds the leader's jersey going into this stage will be hoping for an uneventful day, while the riders nearest to him on the overall classification will be using their teams to the utmost - doing everything they can to gain an advantage out on the road that might see them take control of the race.

Local information: [www.charlottesvilletourism.org](http://www.charlottesvilletourism.org)





*Showcasing North America's Future Champions*

## Staff:

**Matthew (Matt) Buttermann, C.E.O./Event Director** – Matt's involvement in cycling spans 20 years and includes the roles of top-level racer, team director and race promoter. He started the Tour of Virginia in 2003 with the goal of creating a major, international sporting event that showcases the people and countryside of his native Virginia. He enjoys bringing together his education in liberal arts and business from the University of Virginia, work experience in journalism/media, and his passion for the sport of cycling, to implement his vision for the event as its Executive Director.

**Dave LaMay, Operations Director** – For more than 15 years, Dave's passion has been working with cycling and outdoor sports events. He has served in a variety of capacities, from race marshal to operations director. He has worked for several major events, including: Tour of Shenandoah, Tour de Trump, Tour DuPont, Junior World Cycling Championships (Road & Track), 1996 Olympic and Para-Olympic Games (Road & Track), Winter X-Games, Audi 24 Hours of Apsen, and 24 Hours of Adrenalin.

**Randy Collins, Competition Director** - A Lynchburg native, Randy has held a number of influential positions in the sport of cycling as a mechanic and soigneur ("caretaker") for some of the top U.S. pro cycling teams, as a business owner and distributor of high-end cycling equipment, and as a National Commissaire (referee) with USA Cycling. He brings his vast knowledge of local roads and strong relationships with local and State Police to the service of the Tour of Virginia.

**Beth Wrenn-Estes, Chief Referee** - The 2007 Tour of Virginia is honored to have Beth serve as its new Chief Referee. Beth served as the Director of Cycling Events for the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics, and boasts a wealth of officiating experience as a Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) International Commissaire. She has served as a Commissaire in every major cycling event in the U.S. for the past 25 years, including the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, the Coors Classic, Tour de Trump, Tour DuPont, and the 1986 World Cycling Championships and 1991 Junior World Championships, both held in Colorado Springs. She resides in Denver, CO and is the Executive Director of the American Cycling Association.



*Showcasing North America's Future Champions*

## **Athletes:**

### **Tom Danielson – Discovery Channel Cycling Team.**

Tour de Georgia Champ Vouches for Virginia

In 2005 one of the USA's brightest young stars, Tom Danielson, of Durango, Colorado, won the Tour de Georgia, racing for the mighty Discovery Channel cycling team. This was a landmark victory in his career. Yet there is another event in the East that is also close to Tom's heart, namely the Tour of Virginia (formerly the Tour of Shenandoah).

Danielson explains: "The Tour of Virginia is pretty well unique in the USA in that it gives the top young riders, under the age of 25 a chance to compete as the team leader. These are riders who have the talent but not yet the experience to be the number one rider. So this race is an exciting preview of what might be. I see it as a service to the sport in that it gives the rising stars some early experience of the pressures of being a team leader, and then it gives the team managers and the fans a view into the future as they can see the future team leaders competing against one another now. In Europe they have a race like this, it is called the Tour de L'Avenir, and it's a pretty major race. The race is watched closely by the managers of the top teams. That's how some of our top US names have been discovered in Europe."

Although only 28 years old, Danielson is already thinking about the future of cycling in the USA, and is starting early to do his part in making it go from strength to strength. On January 17, 2007, Danielson launched the Tom Danielson Junior Cup series. This is a 12-race series open to boys and girls in five age categories, all under 18. Participants accumulate points in the series as they vie for the title of Junior Cup Champion, and the leader wears a special jersey. The boy and girl winners in the 17-18 years category will win a college scholarship from Danielson.

"It is really important to me that a cyclist gets a good education. Your cycling career is winding down by the time you hit your mid 30s, and you've still got to start a fresh career. Having a college degree vastly improves your options. And that's something else I appreciate about the Tour of Virginia. They have a collegiate award there for the best college rider. What both I am doing, and what these guys at the Tour of Virginia are doing is creating stepping stones to help bring good young riders into the system and keep them there through the very difficult process of becoming a top pro."

"What these guys are doing, though is both high profile and unique. I think they will have a lot of success with that and I am sure we will soon start to see riders from Europe coming over to compete in their race, and it could become a pretty big deal internationally."



**Brent Bookwalter – USA Cycling National Team. Last year's Tour of Shenandoah overall winner.**

Brent started racing mountain bikes in Michigan at age 15. Friends and neighbors told him about the local racing scene and after a few races he was hooked. He raced mountain bikes exclusively until 2003, and then began dabbling in road racing. 2005 was Brent's first full year as a road – pro with Team Endeavor and he raced the Tour of Shenandoah for the first time that year. Brent went on to win the race in 2006 with the Priority Health Cycling Team. This last December, Brent graduated from Lees-McRae College in North Carolina with a degree in general Biology.

*What are your plans now that you've graduated?*

"My life the last two years was something of an uphill battle at times, what with splitting my time between studying and training, and then racing against professionals who could spend all of their time training. Now that I'm done with school I'm going to pursue professional bicycle racing full-time, and see how far I can take it. I love this sport and love the challenges. It will be great to be able to focus completely on the races, but that also means increased pressure on the racing."

*You're riding for the US National team this year – will you be returning to Tour of Virginia to defend your title?*

"I would love to return to the Tour of Virginia and go for the win again. I've got a place reserved in my heart for that race – it's just unmatched in terms of quality of courses and atmosphere, but at this point I'm not sure where I will be racing at that time of the year, because it is up to the team management. I'm racing on the USA Cycling Under-25 National Team this year and our squad is made up of 18 riders, which means that we will be split in two halves for most of the season. And with the Tour de Georgia run so close to the Tour of Virginia the team is opting to send one half of the squad to each race, so as not to wear us young guys out with back-to-back stage races! So it's still up in the air, and I may be selected for either race. The team is still determining the exact schedule for the year and at this moment I'm with the team in Utah doing some testing to determine each of our strengths."

*Winning is probably your most memorable moment, but what's the most memorable part of last year's Tour of Shenandoah course for you?*

"Although the massive, leg-breaking Vesuvius climb sticks out in my mind, as well as the blazing fast decent into Hot Springs, I think the most memorable part of the 2006 TOS for me was the roller coaster like trip through the second half of Stage Five as we neared Bedford. They may not be the biggest mountains or the steepest descents, but those roads are exhilarating! Up and down, twisting and turning – these roads left me feeling like I was world-class race car driver in a video game! The Shenandoah Valley is a perfect place to ride



your bike!"

*How does the Tour of Virginia fit into the American road racing scene?*

"The Tour of Shenandoah, now Tour of Virginia, has always been the best place for young riders to have their opportunity to shine. The race is such a great stepping-stone for young riders – a top quality race where they can compete and not get their heads ripped off by the older pros. And even with the growth that the race has experienced, such as this year becoming a National Racing Calendar event, they still look out for the younger riders by having the policy that a team leader must be under 25 years old."

**Dan Maggiacomo – ItalPasta/Atlas Cold Cycling Team (Canada)**

*What are your (teams') goals for the 2007 Tour of Virginia?*

"Goals: stage win, and solid overall. We came close last year with a 3rd on the hardest mountain stage with our rider Cameron Hughes and we'd love to have a stage there. This race has a lot of respect in Canada and success would cap off our spring season on a high."

*The race has grown a lot over the past few years, so much in fact that they needed a bigger name, changing it from the Tour of Shenandoah to the Tour of Virginia in 2007. Do you think that the 2007 edition of the Tour of Virginia will be the most challenging to date, particularly with the race's first-year inclusion on the National Racing Calendar and also with the closing of the French race Tour de L'Avenir to professional squads?*

"Biggest year ever, of course. This is how racing works. A good race gets good word of mouth among racers. Racers go a long way to ensure the success of an event. The Tour of Shenandoah (now Tour of Virginia) attained a great reputation because of two things: great courses and great atmosphere. The rest of it gets better every year, but it's hard to improve on those first two. The NRC will help this for US teams but for Canadian teams coming to this race it'll always be about the courses and atmosphere. I'm not sure the L'Avenir situation will have an impact just yet but it may be something to look out for in the future."

*The Tour of Virginia is billed as "Showcasing North America's Rising Stars" and though there is no age cap on entered athletes, there is a provision that a team's leader must be U25. How will you choose the leader for your team – will he be chosen before the start of the race, or will he be chosen in the early stages of the race? Is there a competition brewing within your team amongst the U25 riders to be selected as leader for this race?*

"Our leader will be Phil Abbott, one of 3 riders on our team that is under 25. Our team has been around for more than 20 years. We are established and it's not a development squad. Our sponsors get what they are looking for year in and year out. Having said that we always have quality young riders on the team, but they are always experienced, mature and capable of doing the job right."



*Showcasing North America's Future Champions*

*Looking at the race profile, what stages do you think will be the most decisive?*

*"The stage that will be toughest will be whatever stage has the Vesuvius climb!"*

*Any words on the quality of the courses and scenery at the Tour of Virginia?*

*"The courses are fantastic. The only thing we have that is similar is in Quebec, except it is still cold in Quebec that time of year! Truth-be-told, Canadian cyclists of all types (racers, tourists, recreation riders...) have a soft spot for the Appalachian Mountains and I imagine it is a real source of tourism dollars for Virginia. I've ridden all over the world and Virginia is one of the best places just to ride your bike."*