

## TERRY ROACH – Cycling Journey

Having cycling success in mini triathlons and short course triathlons and biathlons, I found that I would always pass people on the bike easily which resulted in placing well in all races. Since running caused pain, after back surgery, I switched to road cycling in 1989, riding organized fun rides, metric centuries and centuries. The MS150 Best Dam bike ride and Tour de Tucson gave me goals to continue to work on my fitness as I always tried to keep up with the fastest people. **My competitive nature drew me to racing that began with the Grand Canyon State games** in 1995, and the Valley of the Sun stage race as a beginning cyclist - Category 4 cyclist winning both events.

In 1996, under John Serra's tutelage, my first coach, I quickly climbed to be a Category 3 racer, which allowed me to race in time trials, road races and criterium's at the masters level, at National championships. State competition in all events gave me my first three State Championships. **My coach's prediction of my success at the national and world track cycling championships gave me motivation** to step out of the box and race on the velodrome beginning in 1996.

Riding a fixed gear bike with no brakes was terribly intimidating! Most weekends we would travel to San Diego or Burbank to gain experience on the track in both individual and mass start events. **As a newbie in the sport, John packed years of experience and information into my head in a short period of time** – I was able to integrate them because of my efficient movement skills. 1997 was the year I began to devote all my energies into cycling both on the road and the track.

In racing with the Pro women athletes who competed on the highest national and international levels, rather than just the master's age group, I gained a lot of valuable information and experience by making so many mistakes learning what NOT to do! **Racing with athletes who were better than me gave me the experience to take my skills to the highest level in the Masters category.** Experience is the best education along with a coach who truly knows his trade. Competing in Redlands Classic, a Pro 6 day stage race, was another lesson in perseverance and determination. I completed it, which is an achievement in its own, finishing overall in the top 25% of over 60 women, most of who were professional cyclists, half my age.

Raising two high school children who were active athletes, running my own business, and training 20 hours every week, there was little down time. We supported one another and made it all work.

I began concentrating on the track and velodrome-racing using the road races as training races to gain fitness and endurance. **My first World Master Championships, 1997, in Manchester England was on a 45-degree pitch velodrome and it scared the heck out of me!** I pedaled so hard in the warm ups for fear of falling off the track, that I exhausted myself! Competing in 4 events,

**I made mistakes and had mechanical failures in the two events that were my specialty, the 500-meter Time Trial and 2000 meter Individual pursuit, which cost me the championships.** Starting before the start machine released me in the 500 TT, I was off the track riding over the foam bumpers to get back on the track, yet lost first place by .4 sec with a horrible ride. In the 2K pursuits, I pulled my wheel out of the drop-outs to rest on the frame and the women I had beaten by 14 seconds, in a 2:45 min event, in the preliminaries, caught me on the first lap of 8 laps. I again had to settle for second place. In my last event, a mass start points race, a new wheel hub blew up and came apart causing me to crash out of the race. The good news was that I was at the back of the pack at the time, so I did not take anyone else out of the race.

I tried to redeem myself in a time trial after the event to see what kind of time I was capable of performing. I went on to break the 500-meter, 1000 meter and 2000 meter world records. **Losing the World championships gave me the needed motivation to train for the next year 1998, where I continued to set records every time I raced.** Focusing on the track completely, I raced on the Pro EDS track circuit that ultimately led to my best year and results on the Masters level. I was upgraded to a Category 1 racer after that successful year.

Thereafter, I continued to race in the Pro women's road race for training and concentrated on my track racing traveling to Los Angeles, San Diego, and Burbank to gain experience on different size velodromes. Most weeks, flying to the track in one day to train or race, and flying back that night, once a week was a way of life.

My commitment to racing, investing so much time, money and effort, I was meticulous about my nutrition and need for weekly massages to maximize my efforts, along with frequent visits to Dr. Deborah Heath to keep everything in alignment, especially after my crashes. **I attribute my body mechanics program as the reason for all of my success. God gave me the talent to be an athlete and the knowledge of my body to be able to optimize my efforts.**

**In many of the World Championships, I was the fastest woman, in all of the age groups in the 2K pursuit, even as a 50 year old.** Racing for White Mountain Road Club and Landis Cyclery, they supported me through my climb of success.

In 2000, with a friend encouraging me, I decided to compete in the **3K Individual Pursuit Olympic Trials.** I was able to get Janie Quigley, who was an Olympian in the Individual pursuit, to coach me, flying to San Diego to train. With three months preparation, **I posted a fabulous time placing sixth out of 15 women all of whom were almost half my age and were professional racers.**

After taking some time off to focus on my family and business, at 50 years old, I decided to get back into racing and began working with Shaun Wallace, a three-time Olympian from England, in the Individual Pursuit. **With my new coach's training methods, I did half the amount of training that I had done in the past, yet**

**achieved faster results.** Sleeping in an altitude tent that Shaun had developed and recommended, **I broke my own world record after a serious bike crash that punctured my lung and broke my ribs.**

**My three-level neck fusion, from a mountain bike accident in 2004, took me off the bike for three years. Moving in to a new category always seems to light the racing bug again! Shaun and I went to work in 2007 and we produced results again winning both the 500TT and 2K Individual pursuit, this time in Sydney, Australia.**

My last hurrah was to be racing at 60 years old, yet God had a different plan for me. **While on a training ride, I had a serious truck/bike accident that left me disabled with long-term damage. Had I not been fit at the time of the accident, I would have been paralyzed. I've been on a journey of rebuilding my life. My fitness and knowledge in how to move from my muscles has saved me and allowed me to get back to what I love to do.** Now, I love riding the bike for fitness and socializing, and am so thankful that I have an opportunity to continue the sport for a very long time!

There is NOTHING like the bike for exercise and enjoying the beauty that God has created!

**I am forever thankful for the amazing experience and journey, and for all of my coaches, who taught me different ways to get the job done and who completely believed in my potential and me. Everything is put into our lives for different reasons and seasons. I look forward to the next journey God has for me!**