

Womensports

The Arizona Republic

IN THE NEWS Terry Roach



Age: 45.
Hometown: Phoenix.
Accomplishment: Masters road cycling champion; silver medalist at 1997 Road Masters Nationals; two-time national champion at 1997 Track Masters Nationals.
What's up: Set world records in the Flying 200 and 2000-meter individual pursuit and won two silver medals at the World Masters Track Championships in Manchester, England.

Better late than never

Cyclist Roach rides for record

By Jim Gintonio
The Arizona Republic

In some races, the agony lasts up to three hours, so when Terry Roach locks herself onto her bicycle for this weekend's World Master Track Championships in Manchester, England, she'll be happy in the knowledge that the pain will last only a short while.

"Pain is just relative," said Roach, 45, who will be one of the favorites in her four events against the top track (velodrome) cyclists in the world.

Roach holds two national track records and is an accomplished road racer, as well. She picked up three medals at the recent Road Masters Nationals.

What makes the track racing interesting — besides the \$7,500 bikes having no brakes — is that Roach has been involved in this facet of the sport for only six months, and she's already regarded as one of the best in the world.

In Manchester, she'll be competing in 200-, 500- and 750-meter events on the banked wooden track, which will be the fastest on which she's raced. But it's in the Flying 200 where she thinks she has a chance to set a world record.

"It's a great event," she said. "You take a warm-up lap, another lap to build up speed, and then 200 meters from the finish line you take off flying."

That's easy. Stopping is tricky. "There's only two ways to stop," she said. "You pedal backwards, or you ride up on the bank to slow yourself down."

There is a third way, with the bike going one way and the rider another, but isn't talked about much.

"There's so much strategy involved with so many bikes on the track at one time," she said. "You try to get as high as you can and come down fast."

She gives her coach, John Serra of the Arizona Cycling Institute in Tucson, a lot of credit for her

Terry Roach's accomplishments

- National champion and record-holder in 500-meter time trial and 2000-meter individual pursuit in 1997 Track Masters Nationals
- Silver medalist, two fourth-place finishes in 1997 Road Masters Nationals
- Third-place 1997 Tucson Bicycle Classic
- Arizona state senior women's champion, 40K time trial, 1996
- Arizona state senior women's champion, Criterium, 1996

development.

"He watched me in a race one time, and he said I had the potential to be a world champion, and I just said, 'Yeah, right.' You know how that goes. But I changed everything and decided to try it."

The former high school cheerleader discovered that she did have a hidden talent and is on the verge of becoming a world champion.

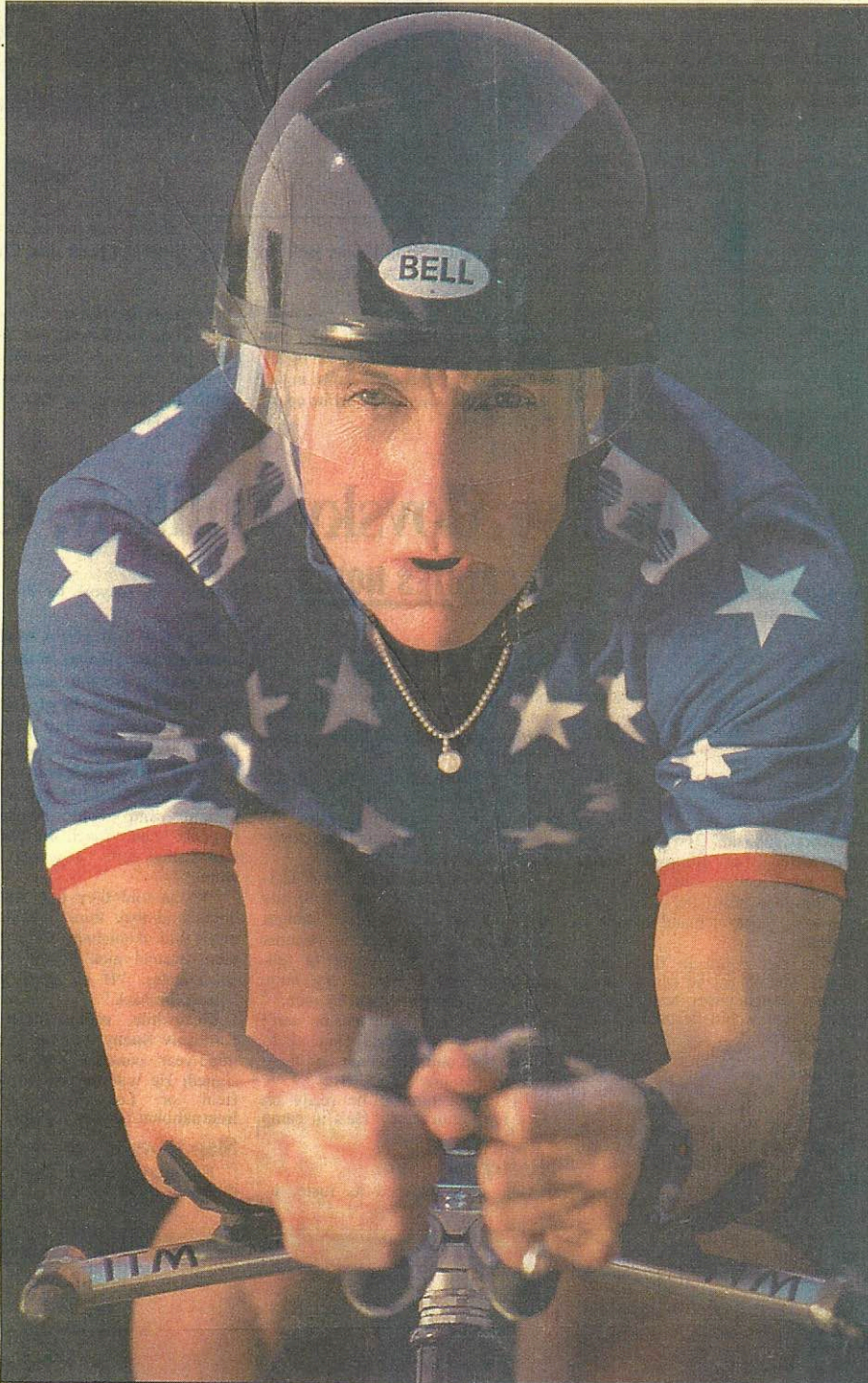
Getting here hasn't been easy. Besides being a late starter, she underwent back surgery in the late 1980s, went through a divorce and started her own business.

"Women can achieve anything they want to achieve," said Roach, an exercise physiologist and kinesiologist and president of Body Stabilization Training, specializing in therapy and sports conditioning.

Besides training almost every day of the week, Roach has been flying to San Diego on weekends with her coach and then driving to Encino, Calif., the past seven weekends to train on concrete velodrome tracks. There are no facilities in Arizona built for track racing.

Roach is one of the oldest track competitors at her level, and she is surprised that more road racers aren't involved.

"A lot of cyclists don't know how much this would help them," she said. "It's good for criterium training and helps you get a quick start."



Dave Cruz/The Arizona Republic

Despite being a late bloomer in cycling, Terry Roach is headed for the World Master Track Championships.