



Bulletin/Lyle Cox

Racers cruised along Cascade Lakes Highway Thursday in the Cascade Cycling Classic. Racing concludes today

Winning takes more than muscle

Support teams help racers cruise

By Mike Wilson
The Bulletin

Once the race starts, much of the work already is done for the likes of Sal Lilienthal and Dave Bolch.

Lilienthal, a mechanic for the Saturn cycling team, and Bolch, the team soigneur, labor in bike racing's background, striving to give their riders the greatest chance at glory in events such as the Cascade Cycling Classic.

The annual bicycle stage race ends its five-day run in Central Oregon today with an 87-mile road race.

The race starts at Cascade Middle School at 9 a.m. Riders are expected at the finish line on Colorado Avenue between 12:30 and 1 p.m.

A Saturn rider, 27-year-old Mark McCormack of North Easton, Mass., won Saturday's stage (see story, Page C-1).

Lilienthal and Bolch mostly earn their keep in the hours when the riders are out of their saddles.

After Friday night's race in downtown Bend and before Sat-

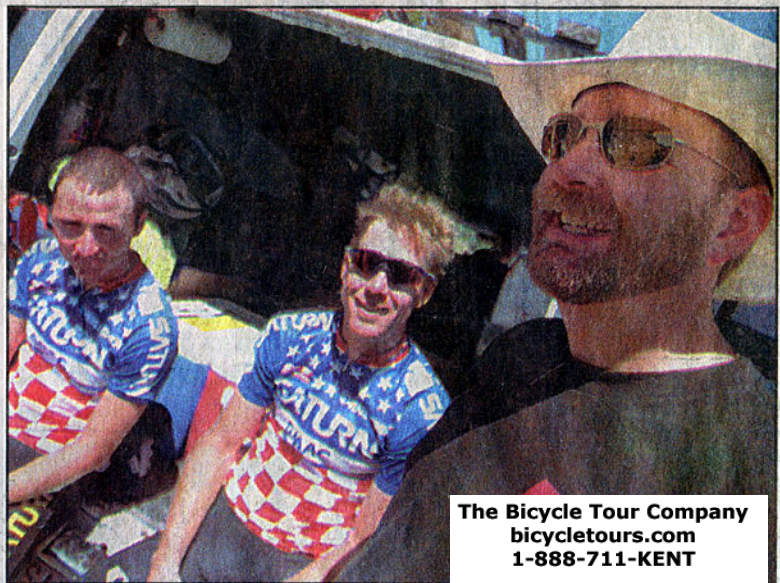
urday's event near Tumalo, Lilienthal fine-tuned the team's bikes for the hilly 63-mile contest. Bolch, meanwhile, mixed energy-replacement drinks for the riders' nourishment during Saturday's sun-baked stage.

"When you're here at this race, the office is beautiful. Because this," Bolch said Saturday afternoon, surveying Cascade peaks and a cloudless sky from Johnson Market Road near Tumalo State Park, "is my office."

The Cascade Classic is just one of dozens of stops Lilienthal, Bolch and other support personnel make every year on the domestic and international bike racing circuits.

"One of the best upsides of the job is the travel," said Lilienthal, a 30-year-old New Englander. "But because you travel so much, you really don't have a home life."

While driving from Massachusetts to Seattle for a race last weekend, Bolch noted, he saw Montana for the first time — at between 85 and 90 mph. He made the part of the trip from



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Dave Bolch, right, keeps Saturn bicycling team rolling

Milwaukee to Seattle in less than 2½ days.

During the January-to-October racing season, Bolch — whose job incorporates being masseur, first-aid dispenser and exercise physiologist with a few other duties — spends only a few days at a time at the home he and his wife make in Williamsburg, Va.

During certain periods, team personnel may be on the road for three weeks at a time.

"Being married, it's hard to be gone so much," Bolch said. "Where I live is almost not important for the job."

What is important is the lure the sport has on them.

"You get addicted," Lilienthal said.