Wattbike Announced as the First Sponsor of Le Tour – One Day Ahead

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- Geoff Thomas already put through his paces in Wattbike test

01 December: Wattbike, the innovative and award winning training bike manufacturer, has today been announced as the first official sponsor of Le Tour – One Day Ahead.

The premium charity cycling event, featuring former England footballer and leukaemia survivor Geoff Thomas, will see Geoff and twenty cyclists completing the Tour de France 2015 route just one day ahead of the professional peloton. The challenge marks ten years since Geoff first completed the Tour de France route in 2005, just months after going into remission from leukaemia. Together, the group will aim to raise £1 million for Cure Leukaemia.

As part of the agreement, Wattbike will provide the latest model training bike to each of the riders as they sign up to the challenge. This will ensure they are in the best possible shape come next summer to take on this monumental challenge. In addition Wattbike's renowned sports science team will conduct individual assessments of each rider at the start of their training, and then create personal tailored training plans for each rider. The riders will also enjoy expert guidance from Wattbike's world-renowned in house sports science expert Eddie Fletcher during their training.

Geoff Thomas had his initial assessment at Wattbike's Science Lab in Evesham last week and said, "I am delighted that Wattbike is supporting Le Tour – One Day Ahead. They have quickly established themselves as the best training bike on the market and I'm confident the equipment and expertise they are offering will prove vital for all the riders on the team. I know from the experience of riding the Tour before how crucial a good training plan can be, so I am very grateful for Wattbike's support."

John Wilson, Marketing Director and Co-founder, Wattbike, said: "We are so excited to be working on this fantastic project. We're confident we can make a significant difference to each rider's training so that they're in the best possible place to complete their challenge."

In 2003 Geoff was diagnosed with chronic myeloid leukaemia and was given less than three months to live. Following treatment from Cure Leukaemia Co-founder Professor Charlie Craddock, including a bone marrow transplant from his sister, Geoff has been in remission since January 2005.

The initial assessment that Geoff undertook last week left him in no doubt of the challenge in store for him and the riders over the coming months. Geoff's in depth test highlighted an issue with his pedaling technique which he will look to iron out during his training to make his power output more efficient. Wattbike also used the results of Geoff's test to put together a detailed personalised training plan for him. Geoff said, "The test last week showed that there is a lot of work to do! But this is exactly why Wattbike are onboard, to provide the expertise and equipment which will get us into the kind of shape which will see us right through to Paris."

Geoff is inviting riders to apply to be part of his peloton of just twenty riders who will join him for the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience life as a pro-cyclist, with full rolling road closures and support crew and vehicles, one day ahead of the actual Tour de France.

Entries for Le Tour – One Day Ahead are now open and to register for one of the final 15 places, or to find out more, visit: www.beforethetour.com

To enter London 2 Paris: Inspiring the Revolution, visit: www.L2Prevolution.com

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For more information about Cure Leukaemia please visit the websitewww.cureleukaemia.co.uk

For more information about the event organiser EDGE please visit the websitewww.findyouredge.co.uk

For more information about Wattbike please visit the website www.wattbike.com/uk/

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Notes

- Geoff Thomas's Playing Career – 1982 – 2002. Clubs represented: Rochdale, Crewe, Crystal Palace, Wolves, Nottingham Forest, Barnsley and Notts County.
- Geoff was capped nine times by England between 1990 and 1992.
- In 2005 Geoff won the BBC Sports Personality of the Year Helen Rollason Award after he raised £150,000 by cycling all 21 stages of the Tour De France, 2,200 miles in total.
- In 2008 Geoff published a biography, 'Riding Through The Storm.'

About Cure Leukaemia:

Founded in 2003 by patients and clinicians, Cure Leukaemia helps to bring pioneering drug and transplant treatments to blood cancer patients throughout the Midlands. The charity helps finance the world class Centre for Clinical Haematology at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, to fund life-saving clinical trials to treat patients with blood cancer who have exhausted standard treatment options. To date, Cure Leukaemia has helped to treat over 4000 patients by leveraging over £23m worth of revolutionary drugs and funding crucial research nurses to administer these trials.

Without the expert research nurses to ensure patients are constantly monitored and cared for; these trials would not run and patients would miss the opportunity to access potentially life-saving therapies. The aim of Cure Leukaemia is to raise money to fund more research nurses at centres across the Midlands and provide world-class treatment for its patients. Only by funding more nurses in more hospitals, can more leukaemia patients benefit from access to potentially life-saving treatment.

Currently, Cure Leukaemia has nurses at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, Sandwell and Dudley, Stoke, Worcester, Coventry, Warwickshire and Birmingham Children's Hospital.

Cure Leukaemia celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2013 by launching the Cure Leukaemia for Kids appeal, raised in excess of £125,000 from runners in BUPA Great Birmingham Run and established new corporate partnerships with Deloitte, The Binding Site, OGL Computer and Hotel Indigo.

In 2014, Cure Leukaemia announced new charity partnerships with Logomotif, Stirling Business Solutions Ltd and Elonex Outside Media, raised £50,000 from the inaugural Club Legends Cup at the LG Arena, launched the "Birmingham, let's cure leukaemia" campaign and announced a collaboration with the University of Birmingham for the Bupa Great Birmingham Run 2014.

10 facts about Cure Leukaemia:

1. Founded in 2003 to allow patients with blood cancer the chance to trial new potentially life saving drugs not yet available on the NHS.
2. Cure Leukaemia part funds the Centre for Clinical Haematology at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham, a world-class centre of excellence in the treatment of blood cancer.
3. The centre has developed the second largest adult stem cell transplant programme in the UK, hailed by Prime Minister David Cameron as an international centre of excellence in haematology.
4. The charity fund a network of specialist research nurses across the West Midlands, to offer potentially life saving new drugs and treatments to blood cancer patients who have come to the end of their treatment on the NHS.
5. The Cure Leukaemia for Kids campaign was launched in 2013 to celebrate Cure Leukaemia's 10th Anniversary Year, with the charity committing to funding specialist nurses at the Birmingham Children's Hospital.
6. Leukaemia is the most common form of childhood cancer, with most children diagnosed under the age of 5. Drugs trials will help increase survival rates of children with leukaemia.
7. A specialist research nurse costs £40,000 per year to fund.
8. For every £1000 donated, Cure Leukaemia can leverage £10,000 worth of free drugs, meaning any funds donated work 10 times as hard.
9. Over the past decade Professor Charlie Craddock and his teams have treated over 4,000 across the region.
10. Each year over 30,000 people are diagnosed with blood cancer in the U.K.

About Wattbike:

The Wattbike is the indoor bike of choice for elite athletes, the health and fitness sector and the home fitness market. Developed in association with British Cycling, the Wattbike remains the first and only indoor bike to be endorsed by cycling's premier national governing body.

The Wattbike's on-board performance monitor enables the accurate measurement of over 40 performance parameters. Combined with a fully customisable ride setup and the feel of riding a real bike, it provides the user with a highly effective and efficient power-based training solution.

Today, the Wattbike is used by the world's top cycling federations including Great Britain, Australia, United States and France, in addition to professional teams and elite athletes in all cycling and triathlon disciplines.

Other sports have also adopted the Wattbike as a cross-training tool and is used by many Premiership football clubs, Premiership Rugby, Rugby Football Union, Rugby Football League, Formula One drivers, England Hockey, GB Rowing, British Sailing, English Institute of Sport and UK Sport.

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