

US Open Fat Bike Beach Championship Returns March 16-18

The US Open Fat Bike Beach Championship in Wrightsville Beach has achieved national recognition as a Top-20 Festival & Event by the Southeast Tourism Society

WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH, NORTH CAROLINA, USA, February 22, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "I'm a mountain biker, cross-country, endurance, enduro, downhill, and occasional cyclocross racer. I've raced in all sorts of conditions," said Zoe Worsham, defending women's elite champion in the 2017 US Open Fat Bike Beach Championship. "Last year's race was difficult, exciting, exhausting, physically and mentally challenging all at the same time. It was only two-and-a-half hours, but it was as challenging as any six-hour race I've done."

Limited to only 100 racers, Worsham defends her title March 16-18, when the fourth annual US Open Fat Bike Beach Championship returns to Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina. Bikers from eight states, including cyclists from 20 cities and towns across North Carolina, have already signed up to compete.

"Fat bike racing, especially in the elite division, requires incredible conditioning and stamina," said Shawn Spencer, race chairman. "We're seeing CrossFit and triathletes use fat bikes as an alternative method to stay in shape. Pedaling for miles on a fat bike in soft sand at the beach is exuberantly painful."

"I was pleasantly surprised with so many positive comments and cheers from the men I passed during the race," said Worsham. "Over the years there have been times when I was blocked from passing or heard reasons for having a slow day instead of complimenting the female rider. This race is such an exception. It was really refreshing to hear the support from the male racers. To all the men supporting and cheering us ladies, thank you."



2017 Women's Elite Champion Zoe Worsham of Raleigh, NC – Courtesy Sally Butler



2017 US Open Fat Bike Beach Championship starting line – Courtesy Samantha Black

“Fat bike beach racing in the one-mile oval format is an exciting sport for both athletes and spectators,” said Spencer. “The number of entries, the fitness level of the athletes, and the crowd size on the beach has improved every year.” Spencer expects a sellout roster with late registrations going onto a waiting list.

Worsham, representing the Crank Arm Brewing Team in Raleigh, faces an exciting rematch with runner-up Philicia Marion of Mount Airy, North Carolina. Jesse Piersol of Downingtown, PA, the 2016 Women’s Elite Champion, will be another contender for the title.

Three years following the inaugural race, the US Open Fat Bike Beach Championship has achieved national recognition as a Top-20 Festival & Event by the Southeast Tourism Society. All activities and races are based at host hotel Blockade Runner Beach Resort. There is no admission charge for spectators.

The men’s competition will be equally fierce with a broad lineup of elite bikers. Possible contenders include 2015 champion Ben Brown of Wilmington, NC and 2016 champ Robert “Fear the Beard” Marion of Mount Airy, currently recovering from a bike injury.

“Many popular obstacles from last year including the sandbag minefield, keg jumps, and snake pit will be on the 2018 course,” said Spencer. “Of course, we’ll have some fresh surprises to challenge the bikers.”

New to the schedule this year is a children’s fat bike beach race followed by a skid-contest, both limited to bikers 12-years of age and younger. There is no registration fee for children’s activities.

Friday, March 16, racers will have an opportunity to walk and test-drive the soft and packed sands followed by an evening social and equipment discussions. Sunday will feature a laid-back group ride to the North end of Wrightsville Beach.

The start and finish lines for Saturday’s races will be located beachside at Blockade Runner Beach Resort.

The fourth annual US Open Fat Bike Beach Championship will benefit the Wrightsville Beach Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving public parks and amenities for residents and the island’s hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.

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Contact:

US Open Fat Bike Beach Championship
Chris Hidalgo, Race Director
Hidalgo.Christopher@gmail.com
Shawn Spencer, Event Chair
Shawn@BikeCycleShop.com
910-256-2545

Robert B Butler, Communications | PR

www.NCPressRelease.org

www.RBButler.com

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Robert B Butler

Butler Communications | PR

9194558345

email us here

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