

Rebecca Romero

"...live your dream"

Sponsors & Supporters Newsletter

Welcome to the first Rebecca Romero newsletter! This is a great opportunity for me to summarise what I've been doing since making the transition from rowing to cycling eight months ago, how I'm progressing and where I hope to end up.

This has also been a fantastic opportunity for me to sit back and reflect on what has for me literally been a life changing career move.

During the past few months I have been in a pretty heavy training block. It has also been the first block of training during which I've felt like I really have become a bike rider now! This is testament to the amount of learn-

ing and adaptation that I have had to go through to get to the point of being able to complete effective cycling training.

When I started cycling the collective opinion by people outside the sport was that it would be easy for me. With the fitness and ability I already had as an athlete, it would be easy for me to do such a simple sport. I knew it was in no way simple and in no way going to be easy. But even I've been surprised by the amount of new skills I have had to learn from the very beginning and the skills I've had to adapt or improve in some way.

Even so, it's been an enjoyable and uplifting challenge for me. I've still got a long way to go but these days I'm a really happy athlete and that counts for a lot!



British Time Trial Championships

At the beginning of September I competed in the British Time Trial Championships. The race covered a distance of twenty three miles over two laps of one particular road circuit. Racing on the road means there is the added issue of having to fight with traffic for an equal share of the tarmac.

On a time trial bike you race in an aerodynamic position tucked down low, practically laying on the handlebars with your brakes not quite to hand! So it's a bit of a scary place

when you're hurtling along at speed (sometimes faster than the traffic!) trying to take the shortest route on the road. Somehow you find that you just rise above it as your competitive instincts take hold and you battle along at maximal effort. Quite frankly, you think to yourself that if you do get knocked off, well at least you will be put out of your misery!

Because I had been put on the cycling performance plan without any cycle racing results, I felt like all eyes were on me and my performance was going to be scrutinized. My time trialing experience and technical ability was very limited so I went into the race feeling very nervous. I was up against two of the top time trialers in the country so I secretly hoped that I

might be able to scrape a bronze medal.

After the first lap I thought I had had it. I was suffering big time. I felt like I was completely off form and was having the worst ride ever. I even contemplated pulling out because I felt so bad. However, stopping is something I have never done and hope I never will. I battled on.

On the finish line I was a mess and I fell off the bike about 100m later. Luckily nobody saw how long it took for me to get back up and managed to peddle back to the headquarters. Back at headquarters though the results were coming through. I was then to learn that I had felt so bad during the race not because I was off form, but because I was so on form and had pushed myself to the limits. I had done the unexpected. I had won!



-----Stop Press 16/12/2006-----

• At the UCI Track World Cup in Moscow, Russia Rebecca was competing at her first cycling World Cup event and won the Silver Medal racing in the 3km Pursuit.

British Time Trial Championships

At the beginning of October I competed on the track for the first time in my first 3000m pursuit race. The pursuit is ultimately the discipline in which I hope to compete in to a high world class level. It is a race involving two riders starting at opposite sides of the track chasing each other for a distance of 3km, which equates to 12 laps of the track. Essentially it is an individual race against the clock to complete the distance as fast as possible and qualify for the finals races. Qualification for the final races for medals involves only the top four fastest riders. So there is not really the opportunity to check out how you're opponent is holding up whilst you are squeezing out every bit of speed that you can!

It was a totally new experience for me to compete within the track environment. I had to watch and learn about the formats and customs of track racing at the same time as competing. Although the stands weren't packed out, it was still a novelty to race with spectators present from start to finish. That meant there was no hiding and I became very worried I might fall flat



on my face in front of everybody!

One thing I also found very strange was not being able to warm up on the track or even do something important like a prac-

tice start! That's what was drilled in as normal practice for me in rowing. For the pursuit you warm up on the road bike then jump straight onto the track bike which is placed ready for you in the start gate. Nowadays I think nothing of it as I think I've finally settled into the way of things!

For my first pursuit race I was really pleased to not mess up but to actually do quite well! I rode faster than I thought I could and did so in a fairly respectable time. A silver medal behind the fastest pursuit rider in the country was not a bad result for my first go!

Some of my 2006 results:

British Time Trial Championships	Gold Medal
British Track Championships (3km Pursuit)	Silver Medal
UCI Track World Cup Moscow (3km Pursuit)	Silver Medal
North Hampshire RC 10	1st
Brighton Mitre CC 25	1st
Hillingdon CC 25	1st
Womens 8's Head (Rowing)	3rd
Chrono Champenois	10th

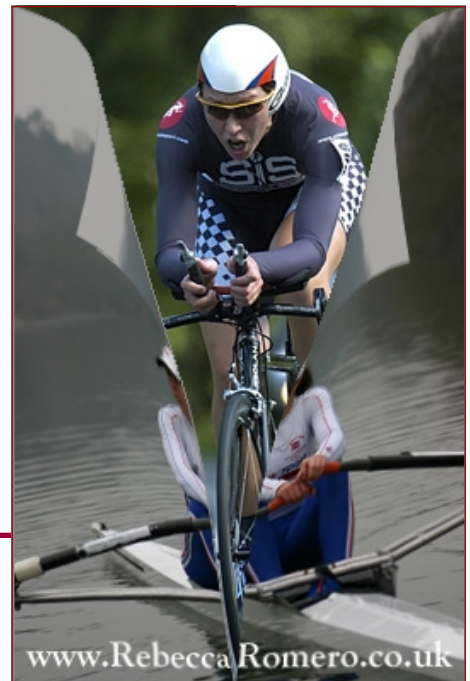
Next Year 2007!!!

This year has been a tough but very refreshing year for me. My decision to leave rowing was a difficult one, but one I felt sure was what I wanted to do. Then the opportunity to take up cycling came along and my athletic career took on a whole new lease of life. I have gone back to being a novice in a sport which is strange, but have managed to move through the ranks pretty quickly! I couldn't have hoped for a steeper learning curve or better performances than I have done this year. Within my first six months becoming a National Champion and racing the pursuit fast enough to warrant being sent to the World Cup is a big achievement.

I am currently on route to Moscow where I will be racing at the World Cup event in

the pursuit. It will be my first international cycling race so there will be a lot to learn and take in. After racing in Moscow I am going directly to a short warm weather training camp for a week's road training. I will then get a two day break over Christmas before getting back to hard training until February when I am due to race at the last World Cup event in Manchester. All being well I hope to be fast enough to qualify to ride at the World Championships in Majorca a month later.

I hope that my hard work and determination will pay off through 2007. Thank you for your support! I will keep you posted on my progress!



I would like to thank the following organisations and companies for their support in 2006



Hope you all have a Happy Christmas and a Happy and Successful 2007