

# Save Our Velodrome!

## GVVA Commonwealth Games Legacy Velodrome Committee Factsheet

### WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

West Shore Parks and Recreation Society proposes to bury the Juan de Fuca Velodrome beneath thousands of tons of dirt to construct an all-weather stadium for field sports.

### WHAT IS THE WEST SHORE PARKS AND RECREATION SOCIETY?

The West Shore Parks and Recreation Society is the authority that runs the Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre. It is made up of representatives from the five West Shore communities of View Royal, Highlands, Langford, Colwood and Metchosin.

### WHY ARE THEY DOING THIS?

They say they need more all-weather playing fields but this proposal replaces one all-weather field with another, so there is no net gain. Also they say the track is in disrepair and they don't want to invest any money in it.

### IS THE TRACK IN BAD SHAPE?

Absolutely not. The riding surface is in remarkably good condition after 14 years of use.

The track is nowhere near its 'expiry date' and could easily serve its purpose for another 14 years.

### WHY IS THE JUAN DE FUCA VELODROME IMPORTANT

The Juan de Fuca Velodrome is a legacy of the 1994 Commonwealth Games entrusted to the West Shore Communities by the people of British Columbia and Canada.

Only seven communities in Canada have velodromes tracks. By comparison, Australia has 15, eight in the city of Sydney alone. England has 16, Germany 26. And in Japan, where a form of track cycling is a popular public, there are 70 tracks.

Velodromes are essential to the development of the Olympic sport of bicycle track racing. It goes without saying that Canada will never develop the sport of track cycling without adequate facilities.

The Juan de Fuca velodrome is a valuable part of cycling infrastructure, not only for the capital regional district, but also for the country. Demolishing the track will kill track cycling on the Island and be a significant set back for the National Cycling Centre.

### IS THE TRACK ONLY FOR ELITE RIDERS?

Not at all. Track cycling offers a safe environment in which beginners, young and old, can learn bike handling skills and

techniques, while improving their cardio vascular conditioning in a non-percussive sport. Because of its size, shape and banking angles, the Juan de Fuca velodrome is the perfect track to learn on.

### WHY IS THE TRACK IMPORTANT TO THE NATIONAL CYCLING CENTER?

For the high performance athletes training at the Pacific Sport's National Cycling Centre, the 333-meter cement track is an ideal venue for motor-pacing, allowing athletes to reach speeds of 70 and 80 k/h.

Ryder Hesjedal, who competed with distinction in this year's renowned Giro d'Italia and Erinne Willock who placed 12th in this year's Tour de Laude, both currently train on this track.

Athletes from all cycling disciplines use the velodrome to motor-pace.

### WHAT ARE THE GVVA'S MAIN CONCERNS?

As the principle user of the velodrome the Greater Victoria Velodrome Association (GVVA) opposes the destruction of the velodrome. But we are equally concerned about the process being used by WSPRS to ram its proposal through. There has been no consultation and no planning. Municipalities are being asked to approve the idea in principle without estimates of construction and on-going costs and with no discussion of alternatives.

Of the five municipalities, only one, Metchosin, has for input from the cycling community. Not coincidentally, Metchosin is the only municipality not to approve it in principle.

### WHEN WAS THE VELODROME BUILT?

The velodrome was built for the 1994 Commonwealth Games and has been in continuous use since that time.

For 14 years, the facility has occupied a proud place in Victoria's cycling lineage that stretches back to the famous Torchie Peden, who, in the 1920s and 30s, was one of the most successful and highest paid athletes in the world in any sport.

From the day it opened, the Juan de Fuca velodrome has been the scene of many electrifying athletic performances, starting with the Tanya Dubnikoff's Gold, Curt Harnett's Silver and Brian Walton's Bronze at the 1994 Commonwealth Games.

World-class Canadian cyclists Lori-Ann Munzer and Curt Harnett hold track records at this track. International athletes who have raced in the Tour de France have raced on the Juan de Fuca track.

### DOES IT COST MUCH TO MAINTAIN THE VELODROME?

The velodrome has been a very low maintenance facility, over the years. The only costs associated with its upkeep are power-washing each year and painting the track lines every three or four years. Plywood panels around the outside of the track need to be replaced from time to time.

In fact, those involved with the construction of the track will recall it was designed with gentle banking to encourage recreational users.

The maintenance issues cited by West Shore Parks and Recreation are with the infield not the track.

### WHO USES THE TRACK?

The GVVA rents the track for three to four sessions a week from April to September. In addition we host approximately three race meets each summer that attract athletes from elsewhere.

Several times a week athletes from the National Cycling Centre train on the track

Triathlon clubs and organizations use the track each week.

### IS THE VELODROME USED TO CAPACITY?

No. Promotion of track racing as a community recreational activity has been inconsistent. Juan de Fuca has not included any reference to our learn-to-ride and learn-to-race clinics in the program of activities it publishes each year.

With a coordinated effort the number of users could be increased.

### IS A VELODROME CONSISTENT WITH THE PURPOSE OF THE RECREATION CENTRE?

Yes. In its mission statement the West Shore Parks and Recreation Society states that it is: "committed to providing diverse and accessible recreational opportunities that will contribute to the health and well being of the community as a whole."

The velodrome helps create that diversity of opportunity. It is part of what makes Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre and this region unique and it shouldn't be plowed under while it is still serving that purpose.

Municipal recreation centres need activities like track cycling, because many people are not attracted to team sports. They cannot claim to provide diverse opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity for people of all types and ages, unless individual sports are included in the mix. Cycling is essentially an individual sport.

**For more information, visit the GVVA website:**

**[www.GVVA.bc.ca](http://www.GVVA.bc.ca)**

