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## Celebration of Community – By Joe Wentzell

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The bicycle community has gotten a black eye for the wild doping scandals at the highest level of the sport lately, though these scandals haven't dampened my enthusiasm for the sport at all. For one, I've come to expect the unfortunate reality of professional sports these days and I mean ALL professional sports, not just cycling. Second, I believe the true ambassadors of cycling are found in our backyards, not on T.V.



A case in point is a local event called 'The Hell of Hunterdon' that occurred in March. The event is grossly misnamed because I floated home on cloud nine on that lovely spring day, buoyant and dismay by the camaraderie and intrinsic drive of the riders around me that morning. At the 'The Hell of Hunterdon,' there were no pros, no prize, no podium, no reason to cheat, and actually no race. Nonetheless, the great people around me rode hard, challenged themselves, took time to chat and connect with kindred spirits, and took pictures of some of the most glorious roads the area has to offer. What drove people to give up their Saturday and rode through the burn in their legs if it wasn't for money, fame or even ultimate fitness? Simple...we do it because we wanted to and we wanted to challenge ourselves together. sly

Lance Armstrong may have put cycling on the map for Americans, but it's backyard cyclists who keep the sport front and center. Let spring renew all things good in the sport we love. I urge you to get out, take part in the myriad ways our local community celebrates the bicycle. Support local events like the "Hell of Hunterdon" and join in on the conversation over a refreshing beer afterward.

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