

HALF THE ROAD

THE PASSION, PITFALLS & POWER OF WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL CYCLING

A documentary written and directed by Pro Cyclist, Author & ESPN Columnist Kathryn Bertine

106 / Color / 2013 / Exhibition Format



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“Women hold up half the sky”- Chinese Proverb

Synopsis:

Modern society has long believed that women hold up half the sky in terms of equality and progression. So when it comes to the sport of professional cycling, why aren't women receiving half the road?

Directed by pro cyclist Kathryn Bertine, *HALF THE ROAD: The Passion, Pitfalls & Power of Women's Professional Cycling* explores the world of women's professional cycling, focusing on both the love of sport and the pressing issues of inequality that modern-day female athletes face in male dominated sports. With footage from some of the world's best races to interviews with Olympians, World Champions, rookies, coaches, officials, doctors and family members, HALF THE ROAD offers a unique insight to the drive, dedication, and passion it takes for a female cyclist to thrive. Included as well are notable women who have achieved inroads in other endurance sports, such as Kathrine Switzer, the first woman to official register (as "K.V. Switzer") and run the all-male Boston Marathon in 1967; the iconic photo of her being attacked by a race official was listed by *Time-Life* as among its "100 Photographs that Changed the World."

Director's Bio:

Kathryn Bertine is a professional cyclist, writer and filmmaker. She is 2013 Caribbean Champion, three-time national champion of St. Kitts and Nevis (SKN) and professional cyclist. She has garnered one top 10 and six top 20 UCI finishes, and has competed at six world championships. A native of Bronxville, NY she lives and trains in Tucson, AZ with her husband, George Varhola. She holds a BA from Colgate University and an MFA from the University of Arizona. Athletics have been a constant in Bertine's life since childhood. She is a former Division I rower for Colgate University, a pro figure skater, and pro triathlete-- which eventually lead to the beginning of her road cycling career in 2007. Off the bike, she is a journalist and author of two sports memoirs (*All The Sundays Yet to Come*, Little Brown and *As Good As Gold*, ESPN Books), and wrote the *So You Wanna Be an Olympian?* column for ESPN and the *Riding with the Pros* column for espnW, where she also worked as senior editor in 2011. As an advocate for equality in women's sports, Bertine started the movement of Le Tour Entier with fellow athletes Emma Pooley, Marianne Vos & Chrissie Wellington in an effort to bring parity to women's professional road cycling, starting with the Tour de France. Her film, *HALF THE ROAD: The passion, pitfalls and power of women's professional cycling* is her first documentary. You can follow her on Twitter at @kathrynbertine and @halftheroad and @letourentier

Director's Statement:

My journey into the world of women's road cycling is a rather unorthodox one. In 2006, I was hired by ESPN to author an ESPN.com column called "So You Wanna Be an Olympian?" the basis of which was to see if I—a decently talented but by no means gifted athlete—could make it to the Beijing Olympics in just two years. I spent the first year trying "fringe" sports like modern pentathlon and team handball, but in 2007, I got on a road bike and fell in love. Though I spent the three years prior racing as a pro triathlete, the world of road racing was all new to me. I fell hard for cycling; figuratively and often literally. The initial part of this journey was published as a book in 2012, *As Good As Gold* (ESPN Books).

At the time, I didn't realize that was just the beginning...

During my quest for the Olympics, which took me from prestigious U.S. events to rural villages in Central America to bustling cities in Asia and to the narrow roads of Europe, I began to notice some interesting issues within women's cycling. Races were often shorter than the men's events, prize money was pitifully lower, the female pros had no base salary or any sort of union to protect their best interests, rarely were women's events linked to the major men's events, and the governing body of the sport treated the female racers like second-class citizens. Not to mention, the path toward Olympic qualification for third-world or less-than-wealthy nations was strewn with red tape and roadblocks that discouraged growth and prosperity for rising female cyclists. At best, present-day women's professional cycling was stuck at the same level of women's professional tennis in the 1970s. Quietly, I wondered "Why?"

Then the "Why?" got louder.

Fast forward to 2012. My goal of making it to the pro ranks of cycling was finally realized, and I embarked on my first year of racing for Team Colavita. Simultaneously, as a journalist, I was working with a leading women's sports website. Yet I often became discouraged by the media's tendency to publish repetitive pieces on big stars of mainstream sports, without simultaneously highlighting the unsung athletes of all sports, whose unique and compelling stories begged to be written. Not to mention, this was the 40th anniversary of Title IX. Yet not many news sources were willing to take a look at the harsh reality: Despite the advances of Title IX, there's still a long way to go for gender equality in sport.

By that point, the "Why?" was deafening.

I wondered if any other female pro cyclists might talk to me about their obstacles, their ambition, and their unconditional love for a sport that was often thankless, cruel, and unresponsive to change. What is the true joy of cycling, and how do we fix the wrongs? I've always considered "sport" a euphemism for "society"-- I believe by changing one, we affect the other. So I brought a \$99 flip camera to my races and started talking to my fellow competitors. Their stories, thoughts and opinions quickly convinced me I'd need three things: an education in documentaries, a leap of faith and a professional cameraman. I began this documentary with the assumption it was about women's professional cycling. A few months in, I realized the film was about equality and society, as told through the medium of cyclists. *Half The Road* is

my hope that someday the whole world will see sports not as “men’s” or “women’s” but as equal athletes on equal playing fields. - Kathryn Bertine

Featuring interviews with:

- 2012 Olympic Gold Medalists Kristin Armstrong (USA) & Marianne Vos (NED)
- Pro cycling standouts Ina Teutenberg (GER), Emma Pooley (GBR), Rochelle Gilmore (AUS), and the USA’s Evelyn Stevens, Amber Neben, Amber Pierce, Connie Carpenter, Alison Tetrick, Robin Farina, Nicky Wangsgard and many more discuss pressing issues in cycling.
- 4x Ironman World Champ Chrissie Wellington & 1967 Boston Marathon’s Kathrine Switzer share their gender-barrier breaking accomplishments
- 17th U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Richard Carmona on the physical & physiological power of female athletes.

FEATURED CYCLISTS:

- Kristin Armstrong (USA) *2x Olympic Gold Medalist*
- Marianne Vos (NED) *2x Olympic Gold Medalist*
- Emma Pooley (GBR) *2010 World Time Trial Champion*
- Evelyn Stevens (USA) *Current National Time Trial Champion, 2012 Olympian*
- Ina Teutenberg (GER)
- Amber Neben (USA) *2x Olympian*
- Robin Farina (USA)
- Addy Albershardt (USA)
- Dr. Nichole Wangsgard, PhD (USA)
- Connie Carpenter Phinney (USA) *First Women’s Cycling Olympic Gold Medalist, 1984*
- Amber Pierce (USA)
- Rochelle Gilmore (AUS)
- Myfanwy Galloway (AUS)
- Kathryn Bertine (SKN)
- Alison Tetrick (USA)
- Pia Sundstedt (FIN)
- Lauren Hall (USA)
- Emily Kachorek (USA)
- Alison Powers (USA)
- Melanie Colavito (USA)

- Flavia Oliveira (BRA)
- Ally Stacher (USA)
- Kristin McGrath (USA)
- Tina Pic (USA)- *6x National U.S Criterium Champion*
- Joanie Caron (CAN)
- Olivia Dillon (Ireland)
- Alisha Welsh (USA)
- Veronica Leal Balderas (MEX) *3x Mexican National Champion*
- Inga Thompson (USA) *3x Olympian, 4x U.S National Champion*
- Kristy Scrymgeour (AUS)
- John Profaci (USA)

ATHLETES, ACTIVISTS & TEAM DIRECTORS:

Chrissie Wellington (GBR)
Kathrine Switzer (USA)
Dr. Richard Carmona, MD (USA) Former United States Surgeon General
Doug Loveday, MS (USA)
Dave Towle (USA)
Michael Engleman (USA)



ASO announces women's race at 2014 Tour de France

By Neal Rogers

Published Feb. 1, 2014

Tour de France owners Amaury Sport Organisation announced Saturday that a women's race will take place at this year's Tour de France.

La Course by Le Tour de France will take place on July 27 on the Champs-Élysées in Paris, coinciding with the final stage of the 2014 Tour de France. A few hours before the men's peloton arrives in Paris, the world's elite women cyclists will race the circuit in the historic heart of the city before fighting out a final sprint at the finish line on the Champs-Élysées. The race will be broadcast live on France Télévisions and Eurosport International. Further details of the race and its format will be unveiled at an official launch in the spring.

The announcement of the event is a victory for Le Tour Entier, an organization of women racers who launched a campaign for a women's Tour de France last September, gaining nearly 100,000 online signatures. Le Tour Entier translated means "The Whole Tour." Their manifesto for women's cycling can be read [here](#).

Dutch star Marianne Vos, who took her seventh world cyclocross championship an hour after the announcement, is one of the founders of Le Tour Entier, along with pro cyclists Emma Pooley and Kathryn Bertine, and retired Ironman triathlon champion Chrissie Wellington.

"I am delighted that ASO has decided to organize a women's race this year, to accompany the Tour de France," Vos said. "I am very excited to be taking part, especially with the majestic finish on the Champs-Élysées. The launch of this race is a revolutionary development in our sport. The Tour is the pinnacle of professional cycling, and I have no doubt that La Course by Le Tour identifies a new era for women's cycling and will significantly contribute to the growth of road racing."

ASO, which also organizes women's races such as the Ladies Tour of Qatar and the Flèche Wallonne Femmes, said in a statement, "the desire to add this event is a logical step forward in a discipline that is increasing in maturity and recognition."

"Making a contribution to the development of all forms of cycling is a vocation for the Tour de France," said Yann Le Moenner, managing director of ASO. "This is even more so when it is about supporting a discipline that is clearly on the up and has been making its mark in professional sport for many years now. As the event par excellence that attracts enormous crowds and TV viewers, the Tour has decided to welcome a women's race during one of its outstanding stages."

Following his successful election as UCI President in September, Brian Cookson created a women's cycling commission, led by one of Cookson's vice presidents, Tracey Gaudry, the first woman to be appointed to such a high post within the UCI. Cookson applauded ASO's decision.

"I am delighted to see this exciting development for women's cycling," he said. "The UCI is committed to support the development of women's cycling, and following my election to the UCI presidency in 2013, we established a Women's Commission to focus our efforts here. The quality of professional women's road racing has long deserved a wider audience, and we are very happy that this initiative by ASO will bring the sport to many fans, new and old. Women's racing on the iconic parcours of the Champs-Élysées is a tremendous step forward, and we are pleased to welcome this addition to the UCI calendar."

http://edition.cnn.com/2013/07/25/sport/cycling-women-tour-de-france/index.html?hpt=isp_t2



'Half the road': Are women cycling's second-class citizens?

By James Masters July 25, 2013

(CNN) -- The wheels of change are in motion.

Last week, four top female athletes launched an online petition demanding that the Amaury Sports Organization, which runs the Tour de France, creates a women's edition of the race.

The petition has garnered 75,000 signatures and has provided the inspiration for a film, **'Half the Road'** which depicts the "passion, pitfalls and power of women's professional cycling."

It is a cause which has sparked a surge of popularity on social media with the petitioners taking on the sport's governing body -- the International Cycling Union -- and the ASO, in the fight against what it perceives as sexism.

Sick

"We're sick of talking," Kathryn Bertine, former champion cyclist turned filmmaker, told CNN.

"Women are treated like second-class citizens and valued nowhere near as highly as men.

"For me, the root of sexism is ignorance. If you look at society, whether it's sport or business or education, when you exclude women then that's half of the world you're ignoring."

The disparity in prize money is stark.

Italy's Giro Rosa, the longest race for women in 2013, lasts eight days with a distance of 778.5 kilometers and has a \$608 top prize. The winner of the Tour pockets \$595,000.

According to UCI rules, elite women are allowed to ride a maximum of 140 km in a day, compared to the maximum distances of 240 to 280 km for the top male cyclists.

Petition

Bertine launched the petition along with Dutch Olympic and World champion cyclist Marianne Vos, former time trial world champion Emma Pooley and four-time World Ironman Triathlon champion Chrissie Wellington.

The four women are frustrated at the lack of regulations surrounding a minimum wage and terms of employment for professional female riders as well as the paltry prize money and lack of races on the circuit.

Bertine is now taking the fight to the big screen with her documentary "Half the Road" scheduled to be screened later this year with the possibility of it being entered into the Sundance and Cannes Film Festivals.

Financed by two large donors who have invested \$10,000 each, the project relies on money given online by the general public via an international crowd funding site Indiegogo.

The number of people who have pledged financial support and signed the petition has surprised Bertine and has given her extra motivation in pursuing the project.

"People need to see these women," she added. "We can't convey it in print as well as we can in a documentary. We want to show the audience that these are real people.

"I'm in a position where I can read comments and see the effect. It invigorates me and gives me so much more encouragement as I'm making this now.

"This is not about us moaning or whining. It is about equality. It's not that difficult to achieve."

Manifesto men

Brian Cookson, who is standing against current UCI President Pat McQuaid in September's election, has outlined his vision for improving women's cycling in his manifesto.

Titled "Restoring trust, leading change," Cookson sets out his vision by promising changes to the UCI and the opportunities afforded to women.

"It is clear to me that equality should exist between young female riders and their male counterparts and the UCI must to do more to provide greater opportunities for female riders to progress," Cookson states in his manifesto.

"It's no secret that women's cycling is the poor relation of the men's sport, but in Britain we are starting to see the first signs of a recovery and although there is a long way to go, I'm very optimistic that the principles introduced are relevant to a wider, global audience via the UCI."

McQuaid, who is seeking a third term in office, has also listed a whole host of policies to improve women's cycling in [his manifesto](#) including a female commission and a new global elite race calendar.

"The UCI must bring a new focus on developing women's cycling," he wrote.

"Inequality in any sport is unacceptable. No distinction should be made between the achievements of men and women in cycling.

"It's not acceptable that women in cycling do not receive the same pay, prize money and conditions as men. It is past time for this inequality to be brought to an end."

But for the likes of Bertine, who is a trained journalist, it's time for action now.

She recalls how she was shocked by cycling's attitude to women after her switch from triathlon.

"The problem with the UCI is that it doesn't think it's sexist because they think it's tradition," she added.

"But that's very easy to change. I absolutely believe we'll see a woman at the top one day. It's bit too far off at the moment. We need it to happen sooner."

Outdated

The idea of a women's Tour is not a completely new one.

The Tour Feminin was held on occasions between 1984 and 2009 but struggled to make any impression following poor sponsorship, unpaid prize money and a legal wrangle over the name.

Britain's Pooley, a former time trial world champion and an Olympic silver medalist, was the last winner of the race in 2009 and is adamant women should be given the opportunity to have their own version of the Tour.

"It's the biggest race in the world," Pooley told CNN. It's a matter of principle, why shouldn't we race?

"It's outdated and old fashioned to think women can't do it -- professional sport is there to inspire.

"So many women watch the Tour de France and they should have the chance to be able to be inspired.

"It's a marketing game, it's about sponsorship and money and I know that. But the sponsors and authorities should see the dollar signs because there's a huge growing market and it's growing quickly."

Winner of the last edition of the La Grande Boucle Féminine -- considered to be the closest equivalent to the men's Tour -- in 2009, Pooley believes a women's Tour would capture the imagination of cycling fans across the globe.

"It's a real opportunity," added Pooley. "Look how many people watch the women at the Olympics and enjoyed it.

"I've raced at the Tour of Flanders and Fleche Wallonne and they've been great. The crowd are going crazy at the side of the road and they absolute love it.

"There's no reason why that can't happen with the Tour de France."

Trailblazers

Tennis affords women equal pay at grand slam tournaments, which had much to do with Billie-Jean King founding the Women's Tennis Association 40 years ago.

"We look back at tennis and what Billie-Jean did and then look at how women were allowed to run in marathons," added Wellington.

"How foolish does it seem now that women weren't allowed to run in marathons?"

"It's all about taking small incremental steps and reaching the highest level. We want to galvanize change at grass roots level.

"It's not all about elite sport; it's about increasing participation and providing role models for young girls and women.

"Unless you create then you won't drive the demand or generate public interest. It's a circular process.

"I would suggest that the Olympics show that there's a demand. People want to watch women on bikes."

Olympics

One of those women who caught the public's imagination during the 2012 Games was double Olympic gold medalist Laura Trott.

"I would like to see it for sure," said the 21-year-old Trott, who is competing in the Prudential RideLondon Grand Prix and starting the Prudential RideLondon FreeCycle world record attempt.

"But I don't think it should be run alongside the men's race.

"Having it run over the same distance as the men won't work. Only 20 girls will finish and I don't believe it will be as exciting.

"There aren't enough riders with top ability and the field will get too stretched."

Opposition

For the likes of Pooley, Wellington, Bertine and Vos, it is not just the current generation they are fighting for.

It's about the future -- the young girls who grow up riding their bikes and ask why they're not allowed to compete in the Tour.

"The Tour is the greatest race on earth," added Wellington.

"Why should a parent have to tell their little girl that she won't be allowed to ride in the Tour because she's not a man?"

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/cycling/2013/07/17/tour-de-france-women-petition-for-change/2530107/>



Women want their own race in Tour de France

Xander Zellner, USA TODAY Sports *July 18, 2013*

For 100 years, the Tour de France has been the most prestigious bicycle race in the world. In an average year, nearly 30 countries are represented.

After a century of races, the Tour de France carries on its tradition of only allowing men to compete. Kathryn Bertine, an American cyclist, journalist and filmmaker, recently launched an online petition on Change.org directed toward Christian Prudhomme, the Tour director, hoping to change that.

Her petition asks that women be allowed to compete in the 2014 race.

After five days, the petition – which was also written by Olympic cyclists Marianne Vos and Emma Pooley and Ironman champion Chrissie Wellington – has garnered more than 28,000 signatures, partly because of Bertine promoting the petition on her website and Twitter page.

"I've personally had a business plan for initiating this change since 2009, and since then I've been bonding with like-minded women who want to see a change, so now I think we're in the position to make this happen," Bertine said. "We're excited to see the petition taking off, but we're not at all shocked. It's something I think the world would and should be behind."

Bertine said that the intent of the petition is not to have women compete against men, but to have a separate professional women's field of the same name and distance on the same days as the men's race.

"Everybody's saying the Tour de France is turning 100, but all female cyclists are saying that the *Men's* Tour de France is turning 100 and we still haven't been invited yet."

Bertine said other women have tried to push for equality in cycling, but she doesn't believe that there's a valid reason why they shouldn't be included in the Tour de France.

"We think that it's sexism and discrimination, whether it's intentional or not is another avenue to explore. But we do think they certainly haven't tried to help."

When asked about the petition Tuesday, Prudhomme told the *Associated Press*, "We are not saying anything at the moment."

USA Cycling released a statement that said it encourages and supports equality in the sport, which is reflected in its national championships. "A stand-alone women's Tour de France would be a great

platform to showcase the top talent in women's cycling, but we also appreciate there will be major logistical, financial and broadcasting challenges and ramifications in having a women's race parallel the men's event," the statement said.

In 1984 the *Tour de France Féminin* was created, but the race "lacked parity, media coverage, and sponsorship," according to Bertine's petition. The race ultimately changed its name to the *Grand Boucle* and was discontinued after 2009.

"We're going to do everything that we need to do to make sure we end this tradition of sexism in sports. We will do whatever is necessary so that our voices are heard," Bertine said.

The 2013 Tour de France has been underway since June 29 and ends Sunday