



SPORTS / EXERCISE / FITNESS

Mountain Bike Chiropractor

Steve Kelly, managing editor

Lance Lollar was having fun! He was flying down a trail on his mountain bike at 40 mph, "pushing the edge," as he liked to say, and feeling the exhilaration that reckless abandon delivers. He was training on the rugged slopes of the Trinity Mountains near his home in Redding, California, a course that climbs for 20 miles on dirt roads and trails, rising 6,000 feet before joining the Whiskeytown downhill course.

This was not a recreational ride. Lance was in training for the September 1990 Mountain Bike World Championships. He felt confident he could better last year's 14th place finish.

And why not? The 29-year-old chiropractor/athlete, competing in only his first year as a professional mountain bike racer, had finished in 9th place in the 1990 national rankings. This success was surprising, considering he had only started racing mountain bikes for fun back in 1987. Then came the breakthrough: Lance shocked a world class field of riders by winning the Shasta Classic; he'd attracted the attention of sponsors, receiving endorsement contracts that provided him with a \$2,000 bike and accessory racing gear.

Now as he raced downhill, he abandoned all thoughts of the upcoming race and all other extraneous matters. But suddenly, Lance felt the terror of being completely out of control. He found himself hurtling through space -- seemingly in slow motion -- no longer on his bike; free-falling through the air, and the ground coming up very fast.

He didn't recall much of anything, afterward; just the sound of his helmet impacting the hill.

The front wheel of his bike had fallen off!

Coincidentally, Lance had only months previously told a reporter, "I've backed off a little on the downhills because I'm getting leery of breaking both bike and body."

Lance's injury was diagnosed as a fracture of the C-3 vertebra, more commonly called "breaking your neck."

People commiserated with Lance: "Tough break," they'd say; or, "Too bad, you were doing so well ... guess you'll have to give up the bike racing."

But the 5'8" 142-pound Lollar, though not a giant in stature, has giant "heart" and courage; he's not the type to concede defeat. Lance knew his injury needed chiropractic care. He sought the help of another Redding chiropractor, Dr. Aaron Anderson, to begin his rehabilitation.

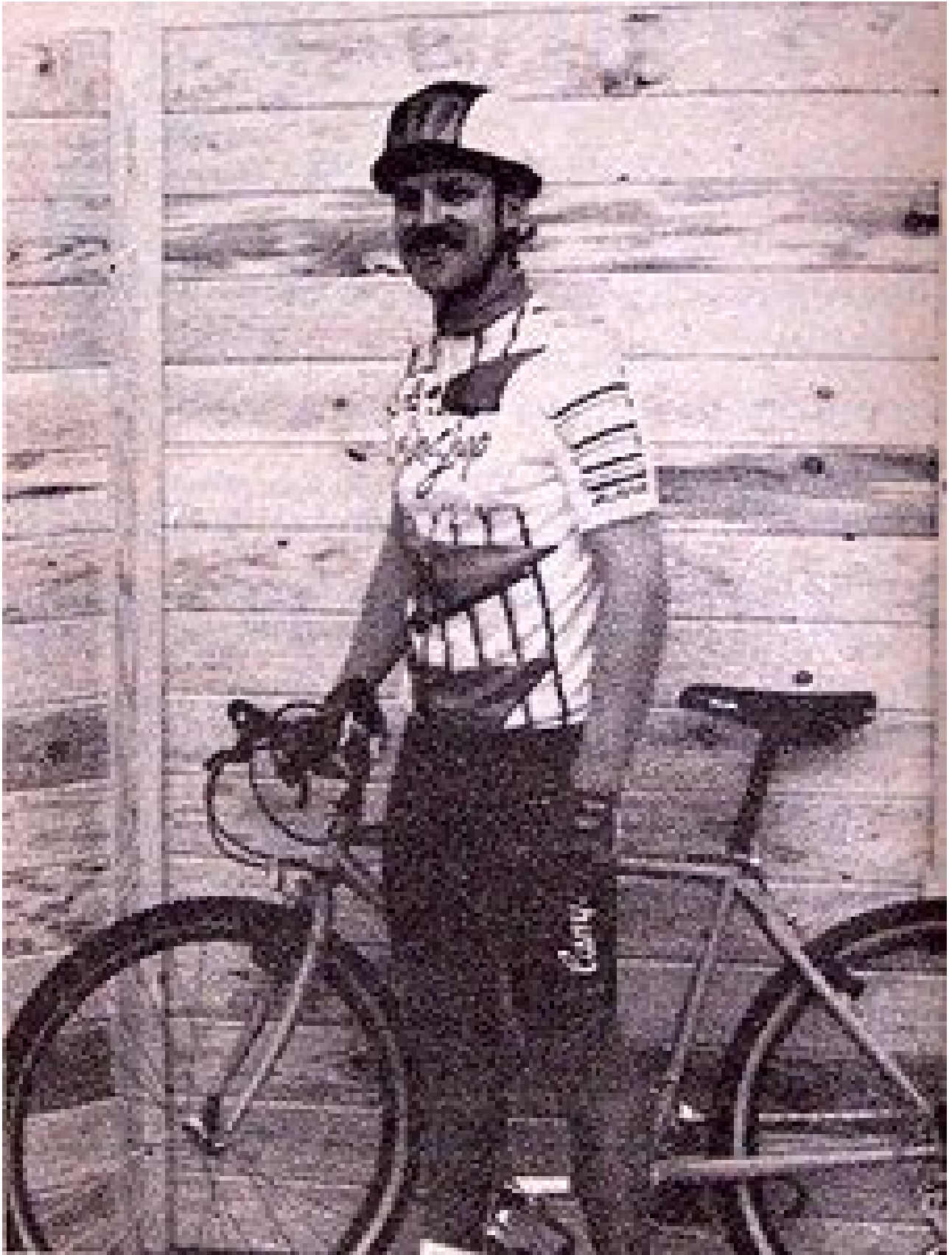
When I last spoke to Dr. Lollar he was very optimistic about continuing his quest to beat the world's best mountain bikers.

"My goal is to get into the top five of the national rankings, which would guarantee me a spot in next years World Championships," he said. He continued, "I plan on going to Europe in May for the World Cup Series, and hope to compete in Italy in September." "My motivation comes from the desire to be the best at something," he explained. "I want to see how fit I can get while I'm still young", he concluded.

I couldn't help but smile. Here was a guy who'd just broken his neck, telling me about his therapy, and in the same breath excitedly talking about his racing schedule and goals. It made me think of the old Gene Autry song, "Back in the Saddle Again."

We at "DC" wish Dr. Lollar the greatest success in his dual careers as a chiropractor/bike racer. "DC" sends its best to Sue, his wife and to daughter Hannah.

With a guy like Dr. Lollar, I get the feeling he'll recover just fine.



Dr. Lance Lollar plans to compete in Europe this summer.

