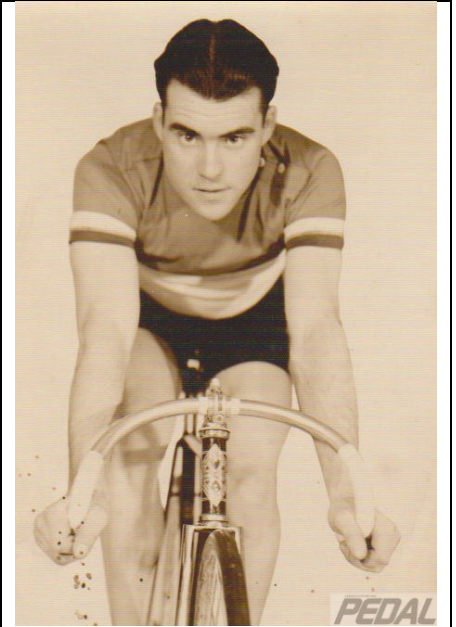


ALBERT SCHELSTRAETE- COULIER

INDUCTED 2017



The Canadian Cycling Hall of Fame is pleased to welcome Albert Schelstraete-Coulier as an inductee for 2017 in the Builder category for his lifetime of devotion to the development and promotion of cycling in Canada.

At the national level Albert served as President of the Canadian Wheelman's Association (the predecessor national governing body for cycling in Canada to the Canadian Cycling Association – now called Cycling Canada) from 1952 to 1957 then again from 1972 to 1974. At that same time he served as Canada's representative to the Pan American Cycling Federation (COPACI) and led the Canadian cycling delegation at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich.

He had an amateur and professional career which included being named the outstanding Canadian cyclist in 1940. His later racing days included several medal winning performances at masters racing events across North American and Europe including gold medal performances at World Masters Championships and World Seniors Games.

At the local level Albert spent a lifetime organizing and running races both on the road and on the track. He founded the Norfolk Cycling Club in 1939 and it still exists today as the Silver Spokes Cycling Club

With all of the above accomplishments you would wonder what else he found time to be involved in and that begins another part of the story. He was the only Canadian designer, builder and race promoter of velodromes from 1948 to 1975 and was the key contributor to six-day bike racing for that period and more.

In the history of six-day bicycle racing in Canada there is one person who has transcended the decades from the Golden Era of the 1930's to the first decade of the 21st century. A person who has been a six-day racer, trainer, coach, promoter, velodrome architect and builder, veteran racer and bicycle builder. An individual that has been the keeper of the 'six-day racing spirit' for eight decades, that person is Albert Schelstraete-Coulier.

Six-day racing was a true Depression era phenomenon as off duty hockey rinks were transformed into velodromes with the installation of board tracks. Upon this oval track, two and three man racing teams competed with one man from each team required to be on the track at all times. All times meant just that – 24 hours a day for six days ending at Saturday midnight.

In 1939 Albert assisted the completion of a portable velodrome in Delhi, a 200 meter outdoor wooden track with seating for 1000 people in the grandstands. The first race on that track attracted big city star riders but it was Albert and his partner Rene Cyr who took the honors which lead to him turning professional in 1940 and racing with legends like Hall of Famer Torchy Peden.

He went on to build numerous permanent velodromes, temporary tracks and portable tracks that were used in competitions throughout Canada and the United States. Among the velodromes built were the ones used for the Winnipeg 1967 Pan American Games, the 1974 World Championship track at the University of Montreal campus. He was also the supervisor of the track built within the velodrome for the Montreal 1976 Olympic Games. Anyone who has been on the boards at the Forest City Velodrome has ridden one of his tracks.

As a race promoter he took his portable track, first used in 1948, to many cities including; Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Toronto, Quebec and Los Angeles. In many cases he was both the track provider and race event promoter.

In 1996 Albert completed construction of his Apollo Monster Bike which is a 15 person machine that he built to encourage community-based fund raising that embodies physical activity, team spirit and a great way to create public awareness and support for worthy causes. The bike has 15 high-tech bicycle frames with adjustable seats attached to a sturdy drive train that drives the heavy duty machine that has strong brakes and turn signals. Its inaugural ride was the Tillsonburg Cancer Society's Ride Against Cancer on April 28, 1996.

For these significant contributions Albert Schelstraete-Coulier is now an honoured member of the Canadian Cycling Hall of Fame. Please welcome Albert's son Bob to accept the induction award.