



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Cascade Bicycle Club's 24th annual event this year becomes:
Group Health Seattle to Portland Bicycle Classic (STP)**

First-ever title sponsorship of largest multi-day cycling event in the Northwest

SEATTLE – This summer the Cascade Bicycle Club, the nation's largest bicycle club, will host the Group Health Seattle to Portland Bicycle Classic (STP) with first-ever title sponsor Group Health Cooperative, a leading regional health care system and active partner in promoting fitness and healthy lifestyles.

The Group Health STP begins on Saturday, July 12, 2003 at 4:45 a.m. at the University of Washington in Seattle and ends at Holladay Park in Portland, Oregon – a distance of 206 miles. Up to 8,000 riders will participate in the two-day event, with an estimated 16,000 supporters expected at the finish line festival.

"This partnership is a winner for us," said Cheryl Scott, President and CEO of Group Health. "As a premier Northwest event, STP is a great way for people of all ages to get in shape, have fun, and lead more active, healthy lifestyles."

Approximately 18 percent of STP riders, who range in age from 8 to 81 and hail from around the world, finish the event in one day. The remainder finish in two, spending a night in campgrounds, private homes, churches, and motels. Food and rest stops are provided along the route, with educational and entertainment activities at the finish line festival.

Group Health will provide first aid stations and dozens of patrolling first aid riders. Cascade Bicycle Club offers training seminars and training rides for STP riders, supplemented this year by Group Health presentations on sports medicine and health.

"Cascade Bicycle Club is thrilled to partner with an organization like Group Health, which, like us, places a priority on education and community outreach," said Chuck Ayers, Cascade Bicycle Club Executive Director. "By integrating the Cooperative's health, fitness, and training expertise with our bicycle education and advocacy efforts, we can work together to provide the best experience yet for STP riders and the community throughout

the year,” said David Douglas, events director. Other STP event sponsors include: REI, Whole Foods Market, NewsRadio 710 KIRO, Clif Bar, KIRO 7 TV, and Millstone Coffee.



riders crossing the 2002 STP finish line at Cathedral Park; This year's finish line will be at Holladay Park.

STP is the major fundraiser for Cascade Bicycle Club, supporting community activities, recreational rides, and government affairs efforts aimed at promoting bicycle education, safety, and advocacy.

Group Health has a history of health prevention, research, and advocacy. The organization has played a role in making bicycle helmets synonymous with bike safety, through research led by Group Health's head of Preventive Care, Dr. Robert S. Thompson. Thompson is part of The Cochrane Collaboration, an international group of experts who review and compile research on helmet safety and head injuries.

The first STP was held in 1979 as a U.S. Cycling Federation-sanctioned time trial from Seattle City Hall to Portland City Hall. 187 riders participated (70 finished), including former U.S. Senator Slade Gorton. Since then, STP has been held as a recreational event.

For more information about Group Health STP, visit www.seattletoportland.com.

About Group Health Cooperative

Group Health is the nation's second-largest consumer-governed health care system, a nationally recognized health care leader with expertise in disease management, online health support, research, and coordinated care. Headquartered in Seattle, this nonprofit organization serves nearly 600,000 members in Washington and Idaho, providing both medical care and coverage.

About Cascade Bicycle Club

Cascade Bicycle Club is the nation's largest bicycle club with over 4,200 members in Greater Seattle. Cascade produces eight annual events, including three marquee events: *Seattle International Bicycle Expo*, *Bike to Work Day* and *Seattle To Portland Bicycle Classic*. CBC promotes bicycling for transportation, recreation and health - providing over 1,000 recreational rides annually. Cascade is a non-profit organization, directed by a board of nine elected volunteer directors and seven professional staff. The Cascade Bicycle Club Education Foundation, a 501(c3) organization, promotes bicycling safety and skills throughout Washington State.

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