

# Lowlands Group: Returns to tour of America's Dairyland with title sponsorship of three races and increases the stakes in its Lion Prime 'Race Within the Race'

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**MILWAUKEE, Wis.** – June 13, 2023– Lowlands Group, a longtime supporter of cycling in Wisconsin, announced its participation in the upcoming 14th annual *Kwik Trip* Tour of America's Dairyland (ToAD) as a series sponsor and title sponsor for three of the most popular races. The series includes the Central Bay View Classic in Milwaukee's Bay View neighborhood, the historic Café Hollander Otto Wenz Downer Classic presented by IS Corp in Milwaukee's Historic Downer Avenue neighborhood, and the Café Hollander Tosa Village Classic presented by Buckatabon in Wauwatosa. The U.S.'s largest multi-day bike racing series which has taken place in various formats for over 40 years runs June 15–25. Lowlands Group has supported the Tour of America's Dairyland series since its inception in 2009.

## **Lowlands Lion Prime Granfinale Weekend June 22-25**

Eleven days of racing comes down to the final four days in Milwaukee and Lowlands Group, Central Standard Craft Distillery, and Three Sixty Design Build have partnered to increase the stakes by challenging racers to compete in the Lowlands Lion Prime series-wide Sprint Competition with \$10,000 in cash prizes and what has become the coveted Lowlands Lion Prime Jersey. (Prime is pronounced "Preem.")

"These bike races bring a really unique energy to our neighborhoods. People come from all over to watch the pros race, and the rest of the community sort of rallies to

celebrate that,” said Eric Wager, Lowlands Group CEO. “There are watch parties, and food and drink vendors in the street. Really, it’s more like a big festival with a bike race happening in the middle of it, which is pretty cool to see. And teaming up with Central Standard and Three Sixty has given us the ability to ramp up the Lowlands Lion Prime, and help create an epic final weekend to the series for the racers.”

This annual sprint competition acts as a “race within the race,” adding another layer of competition to these already challenging criteriums. Halfway through each of the races in the series, a sprint lap is announced. Riders battle for the finish line as the top three of that sprint lap accrue points. At the end of the series, the points are totaled and the racers with the most points get paid prime prizes of \$10,000, with the pro men and/or women winners getting \$4,000 each, smaller purses for the other categories, as well as the Lowlands Lion Prime Winners Jersey, which has become one of the most coveted jerseys in the series. The stakes are raised even higher this year with the Lion Prime Granfinale Weekend as points multiply in the final days of the race. Double the points in Bay View and Shorewood, triple the points at Downer, and quadruple the points on the final day at the Café Hollander Tosa Village Classic.

“It really could be anyone’s game coming into the Granfinale Weekend. With a total of \$10K on the line, riders will race harder to the end, which makes it even more exciting for everyone,” added Wagner.

Tour of America’s Dairyland has featured some of the best racers in the country such as Olympic Gold, Silver and Bronze medalist Jennifer Valente, cyclocross national champion Curtis White and 14-time US Cyclocross National Champion Katie Compton, in addition to fan-favorites and Wisconsin natives, Skylar and Samantha Schneider – or “the Schneider Sisters”. Skylar and Samantha have made a name nationally and return home for this competitive series. In 2021, Skylar took home first in each of the Milwaukee area legs of the series.

In recent years the race has also grown in international appeal and last year’s champion, German cyclist Florenz Knauer, will return to defend his title this year as well as British UCI Women’s Continental Pro cyclist Harriet Owen, among others.

Other professional cyclists have included Matt Busche (USAC Pro Road Winner), Rahsaan Bahati (multi-time US National Crit Champion), Brent Emery (former U.S. Olympian), Katie Compton (14-time U.S. Cyclocross National Champion), Dan

Holloway (U.S. Olympic track team), Coryn Rivera (holder of 71 U.S. National titles in road, track, cyclocross and MTB), and Ayesha McGowan (American professional road cyclist) among others.

Lowlands Group's passion for cycling comes from a love for European all-day café culture and the urban spirit of riding between cafés. Over the years they've supported numerous races, series, and bike teams, including Hollander Benelux Racing. The group also sponsors the Lowlands Lion Prime Sprint Competition along with Central Standard Craft Distillery and Three Sixty.

"Lowlands continues to smash it out of the park with their amazing support of the Kwik Trip Tour of America's Dairyland, title sponsoring not just one or two, but three of our most popular venues," said Bill Koch, Tour of America's Dairyland Executive Director. "And then add to that the Lowlands Lion Prime with a prize of \$10,000 this year? Crazy? We call that genius!"

The group's full plans for the event include:

### **Centraal Bay View Classic**

2306 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee

Thursday, June 22, from 10:50 a.m. to 8:15 p.m.

The Centraal Bay View Classic is a crowd and competitor favorite. Spectators can watch ToAD's pro men and women swoop by through quick turns and sprint-worthy straightaways and elbow their way for a spot at Centraal's outdoor bar patio sandwiched between the start/finish line, main stage, and the epic hairpin on Kinnickinnic and Lincoln. The whole neighborhood shows up for this festival of cycling, with street vendors, watch parties, and a must attend kids bike race and community hour from 5:50 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

### **Café Hollander Otto Wenz Downer Classic Presented by IS Corp**

2608 N. Downer Ave., Milwaukee

Saturday, June 24, from 11:05 a.m. to 8:15 p.m.

The festival surrounding Café Hollander is extended to the street in a full-block takeover with the Hollander Radler Bar presented by Stiegl. Spectators are invited

to grab a beer and burger, as well as front row seats to the winner's circle for this historic race, with a special featured Community

Hour from 6 p.m. – 7 p.m. for a neighborhood kids race and the Dairyland Mile, a short and fast running event organized by Infinity Running.

The Otto Wenz Café Hollander Downer Classic presented by IS Corp is the granddaddy of criterium races. Not just for ToAD, but across the country and even the globe. Started in 1969, the Downer Classic has hosted many famous faces for almost 50 years and promises to be one of the highlights of cycling in Wisconsin this summer. With a flat three and one-half corner course, mega crowds and lots to see, this is a must-attend event.

### **Café Hollander Tosa Village Classic Presented by Buckatabon**

7677 W. State St., Wauwatosa

Sunday, June 25, from 12:35 p.m. to 8:15 p.m.

Café Hollander and Buckatabon restaurants team up as the title sponsors for the final race of the series, with a new course through the Village of Wauwatosa. Spectators are invited to grab a beer and some frites and watch the pros swoop by through "Frank and Larry's Turn 1" Bier Garden and sprint-worthy straightaways past Café Hollander's outdoor bar patio for an epic evening criterium of ToAD's pros.

The ToAD Kids Race in Wauwatosa has been one of (if not THE) largest free kids bike races in the country. The Café Hollander Tosa Village Classic Kids Race hopes to continue this legacy with kids 12 and under getting to race down State Street with thousands of people cheering them on. The event will take place between the women's and men's professional race series.

### **Full Schedule of Events**

Day 1, Thursday, June 15th: Janesville Town Square Gran Prix

Day 2, Friday, June 16th: East Troy Cycling Classic

Day 3, Saturday, June 17th: Giro D' Grafton

Day 4, Sunday, June 18th: Manitowoc Maritime Bay Classic

Day 5, Monday, June 19th: Tour De Pere

Day 6, Tuesday, June 20th: West Allis Cheese Wheel Classic

Day 7, Wednesday, June 21st: Mount Pleasant Momentum

Day 8, Thursday, June 22nd: Centraal Bay View Classic

Day 9, Friday, June 23rd: Shorewood Criterium Cycling Classic presented by Draft & Vessel

Day 10, Saturday, June 24th: Café Hollander Otto Wenz Downer Classic presented by IS Corp

Day 11, Sunday, June 25th: Café Hollander Tosa Village Classic presented by Buckatabon (series finale)

For more information about the race and events, visit <https://www.tourofamericasdairyland.com>.

### **About the Lowlands Group**

Lowlands Group owns and operates eight restaurants in Wisconsin including Buckatabon Tavern & Supper Club, Café Benelux, Centraal Grand Café & Tappery, as well as Café Hollanders located on Downer Avenue, the Village in Wauwatosa, Hilldale in Madison, Mequon and Brookfield. Its European-inspired grand cafés feature from-scratch cooking and an impressive selection of Belgian beers. The company prides itself in its passion for cycling, bringing neighborhoods together and giving back to the community. More information can be found at [lowlandsgroup.com](http://lowlandsgroup.com).

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The group also operates the Lowlands Brewing Collaborative; a celebration of beer culture that brings the world's best brewers together to create unique beers available exclusively at the Lowlands Grand Cafés. Learn more at [lowlandsbrewing.com](http://lowlandsbrewing.com).