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CONTACTS:

Kim Detwiler
VP, Director of Corporate Communications
Univest Corporation
215-721-8396 detwilerk@univest.net

Joe McDermott
Media Director
Univest Grand Prix
484-860-2289 jysmcd@ptd.net

Univest Grand Prix Now a 2.2 UCI America Tour Stage Race

Team Time Trial in Allentown opens Eighth Race of the USA Cycling Pro Tour

Allentown, Pa. – The Univest Grand Prix, North America’s prestigious UCI America Tour road race, expands for 2009 with the addition of a team time trial stage in Allentown, Pennsylvania on Friday, September 11. The Univest Grand Prix will now become a two-day UCI 2.2 (Pro-Am stage race) consisting of the opening TTT and followed by the famed Univest Grand Prix road race with start and finish in Souderton, Pennsylvania.

The Univest Grand Prix also now encompasses three Pennsylvania counties – Montgomery, Bucks and Lehigh -- with the Univest Criterium in Doylestown on Sunday capping one of the most exciting and entertaining weekends of world-class cycling on the continent.

“The UCI and USA Cycling really worked with us to make this late-season expansion happen,” said race promoter John Eustice, president of Sparta Cycling. “We think this dynamic new format will prove to be very exciting for both spectators at the races and television viewers who can watch the races live on WFMZ Channel 69 and Universal Sports.”

The Allentown stage -- which will run from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. -- serves as the opening round of the three-day race weekend in eastern Pennsylvania. Teams will compete over two laps of a tough and technical 3.8 mile loop that takes them through Allentown’s Center City commercial district, its scenic residential neighborhoods and nationally renowned park system. The racers then must negotiate a short and steep uphill chicane before a final, 500-meter sprint to the line.

“The Univest Grand Prix has been a quality event for many years,” said Sean Petty, Chief Operating Officer for USA Cycling. “The expansion of the race is a credit to John Eustice, Univest’s support and the City of Allentown, especially in these tough economic times.”

Racers will move from Allentown to the now-historic Univest Grand Prix on Saturday, September 12, a grueling 100-mile race that offers more than 6,000 feet of climbing, beginning with a 60-mile opening loop through Montgomery County's rolling hills and ending with 10-laps of the spectator-friendly Souderton finishing circuit.

"With so many races facing cancellation or cutbacks this year, it's great to see the Univest Grand Prix expanding. It has been one of the best one-day races in America for a long time," said Jonas Carney, performance director for Kelly Benefits Strategies team, a perennial contender at the Univest event. "The addition of a team time trial will make it an even more exciting event and it will no longer be possible to contest the overall victory without having a really strong team."

Racing continues on Sunday, September 13 with the always fast and tactical Univest Grand Prix Doylestown Criterium, which involves 50-miles of high-speed competition around the perimeter of the popular Doylestown Arts Festival in the heart of Bucks County.

WFMZ Channel 69, Allentown, and Universal Sports will broadcast the Allentown and Souderton races live from start to finish and Comcast SportsNet will also provide regional post-event coverage. The Allentown and Souderton races will feature a jumbo television at the finish line to allow spectators to follow the action throughout the course.

"In Bucks and Montgomery counties, the race has helped unite 17 communities while celebrating the beauty of the region and the excitement of a professional cycling event," said Philip C. Jackson, market president for Univest National Bank and Trust Co. "We're looking forward to working with the Boys & Girls Club in Allentown, and the residents and businesses throughout the Lehigh Valley to make what has become the region's premier pro cycling event a huge success for our community."

Mayor Ed Pawlowski added his thoughts on how the race highlights the best of his city.

"The City of Allentown is proud to host the opening stage of the Univest Grand Prix and thrilled with the opportunity to showcase our city as dynamic and attractive place to live and work," the mayor said. "We welcome the opportunity to offer this major international sporting event for our residents and our visitors."

"Allentown is a world-class cycling center thanks to its proximity to the Valley Preferred Cycling Center, a corps of top-tier pro and amateur cyclists who make their homes here and an enthusiastic and knowledgeable fan base. It deserves a world-class road race," said Eustice, thanking Mayor Pawlowski and city officials for their strong support of the new race.

The Allentown Classic will include a "City Culture Fair" with exhibits from a variety of the city's museums and entertainment venues, including Allentown Symphony Hall, the Allentown Art Museum, America On Wheels, the Lehigh County Historical Society, Civic Theater and other non-profit organizations.

While the Univest Grand Prix has grown tremendously in its 12-year history, it has kept its mission in tact. The goal of the Univest Grand Prix is to develop and enhance a sense of community and this year is no different.

“The Univest Grand Prix has traditionally served as a gateway to the highest levels of the professional racing world for young riders from around the world. When we see our ‘graduates’ performing in the Tour de France, from Tom Boonen (2nd as an amateur in 1999) to Will Frischkorn whose first-ever pro win was at the Univest, we remain certain the event is moving in the right direction,” Eustice said.

In addition to the intense cycling competition, many community efforts are in development. Univest will donate a bike rack to each of the host communities to encourage cycling as a recreational and healthful activity that helps build stronger communities year-round. Each host will decide where to place the racks.

Organizers are also reaching out to nearby schools, the Boys and Girls Clubs and other youth organizations with educational programs and involvement opportunities to encourage youngsters to ride bikes, become fit and stay healthy.

The popular Cyclosporitif 100K recreational ride will return on Saturday, Sept. 12, giving hundreds of participants the opportunity to challenge themselves on the racecourse of the Univest Grand Prix. The Cyclosporitif will benefit the Penn Foundation, a non-profit that provides comprehensive behavioral healthcare to persons in need of hope, healing, and compassion throughout Bucks and Montgomery counties.

During the professional race on Saturday, spectators in Souderton can enjoy a Family Fun Zone from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Univest Plaza, which includes children’s activities, photo opportunities with the Berenstain Bears, community displays, giveaways, regional foods and more. A high school sprint and children’s sprints will also be part of the schedule while the pro cyclists are racing out in the countryside. Spectators in Lansdale will be treated to children’s sprints on Main Street at 10:00 a.m. and a community festival hosted by the North Penn Boys and Girls Club from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Lansdale activities will take place at Main Street and Susquehanna Avenue in the municipal lot adjacent to the Boys and Girls Club.

The community events continue on Sunday in Doylestown with children’s races at 10:30 a.m. followed by the start of the professional race at 11:00 a.m. This year marks the sixth anniversary of the Univest Grand Prix Doylestown Criterium, which provides a second day of fast-paced, circuit-style racing, a much different event than the Classic road race held on Saturday. In addition to the professional race, the Doylestown Business and Community Alliance will once again hold the Doylestown Arts Festival in conjunction with the Univest Grand Prix. The race route will showcase the festival by providing spectators and attendees an opportunity to watch the race while enjoying the work of local artists.

About the Univest Grand Prix:

Patterned after the great classic races of Europe, the Univest Grand Prix showcases the beauty of 18 municipalities. From its inception, the cycling event was developed to provide opportunities for young athletes to advance, while also uniting the towns throughout Bucks and Montgomery counties for a community celebration. The pro event is presented by: Univest Corporation of Pennsylvania, Leidy's Premium Pork Products, WFMZ-69, Comcast Sportsnet and Doylestown Hospital. For more information visit www.univestgrandprix.com.

About Univest Corporation

Headquartered in Souderton, Pa., [Univest Corporation of Pennsylvania](http://www.univest.net) (www.univest.net) and its subsidiaries serve the financial needs of residents, businesses, and nonprofit organizations in Bucks, Chester, Montgomery and Lehigh counties. [Univest National Bank and Trust Co.](#), member FDIC and Equal Housing Lender, offers customers 32 [financial service centers](#), [12 retirement financial services centers](#), and [38 ATM locations](#) throughout the region, and is the parent company of [Univest Capital, Inc.](#), a small ticket commercial finance business; [Univest Insurance, Inc.](#), an independent insurance agency headquartered in Lansdale, Pa., which serves commercial and personal customers; and [Univest Investments, Inc.](#), Member FINRA and SIPC, a full-service broker-dealer and investment advisory firm. For more information on Univest Corporation of Pennsylvania and its subsidiaries, please visit www.univest.net.

About Sparta Cycling:

Sparta Cycling provides race promotion services to deliver world class events that meet the needs of sponsors, teams and riders, spectators and supporting communities. For more information, please visit www.spartacycling.com.

About the USA Cycling Professional Tour:

Recognized by the United States Olympic Committee and the Union Cycliste Internationale, USA Cycling is the official governing body for all disciplines of competitive cycling in the United States, including road, track, mountain bike, BMX, and cyclo-cross. Created in 2006 to support the growth of professional cycling in the United States, the USA Cycling Professional Tour is a men's-only, season-long calendar that determines the best professional rider and team on American soil. With ten races on the 2009 edition, the USA Cycling Professional Tour attracts the best pro cyclists and teams from around the world to compete in internationally-sanctioned events from coast to coast. The calendar is comprised of seven UCI-sanctioned races and three USA Cycling Professional National Championships (criterium, time trial and road race). At the end of the season, the overall Pro Tour standings determine an individual and a team champion who are considered the best and most consistent performers in international-caliber race in the U.S.

For more information on the USA Cycling Professional Tour, visit www.usacycling.org/protour.
