



Press Release

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New Zealand-based Cycling Team MitoQ-NZ Cycling Project Brings Kiwi Spirit to DuPage County for Intelligentsia Cup

Ever the underdogs, the team aims to conquer the podium with their young talent in 2023.

OAK BROOK, IL — One may not immediately associate Chicagoland and New Zealand, especially when it comes to sporting events, but a team called MitoQ-NZ Cycling Project, a group of determined and passionate cyclists hailing from New Zealand, has a deep affection for Intelligentsia Cup and they aim to win this year.

How did the Kiwis end up in Chicago? It all started back in 2014 with a chance encounter between cycling team founder James Canny and Intelligentsia Coffee co-founder Doug Zell. Canny was asked to take a “speaker from a hotel conference” out on a ride, that rider happened to be Zell. The two hit it off and stayed connected, unbeknownst to Canny at the time of Zell’s background and that their paths would cross again through cycling.

That summer, Canny brought his cycling team to the United States for three months. A phone call later, an invitation from Zell brought them to Chicago, where Intelligentsia Coffee was sponsoring an event for the second consecutive year — Intelligentsia Cup cycling series. Since then, Canny’s commitment to the annual race has grown, fostering a nearly decade-long dedication to the event, and sincere appreciation for its vibrant host communities.

The MitoQ-NZ Cycling Team combines unique strengths and skills to create a formidable squad. With a mix of seasoned professionals and promising development riders, the team showcases the blend of experience and emerging talent that defines their approach to the sport. Every team rider registered for Intelligentsia Cup participates in the entirety of the series — all 10 consecutive days of racing — which not only demonstrates their dedication but also serves as excellent physical and mental training, reminiscent of the rigors of the Tour de France.

One of the remarkable aspects of the team is the range of ages among their riders. From a 16-year-old exceptional talent to a 42-year-old veteran, each rider brings their own perspective to the squad. The oldest rider's wealth of experience and wisdom complements the youthful energy and potential of the majority of the team's composition falling within the 18 to 21 age range. This composition reflects the team's commitment to nurturing young talent and their growth in the sport, creating a dynamic environment for development and success.

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Press Release

"Each year, we ensure our presence at Intelligentsia Cup, turning down other international events and tours, if necessary," said Canny. "Intelligentsia is one of the best annual stages for riders to showcase their resilience and passion. The highest we've placed at Intelligentsia Cup was third in 2019. We hope 2023 will be the year we overcome all obstacles to be number one. And if we do, we know there will be a lot of people cheering for us, because these are the best spectators in the world."

The team's love for the event stems from the remarkable people they encounter, the electrifying atmosphere, and the overwhelming support they receive, making Intelligentsia Cup an unparalleled experience in their global racing endeavors.

MitoQ-NZ Cycling Project is currently preparing for its eighth appearance at Intelligentsia Cup. The team understands that sports are not just about competition. By cultivating an environment of growth and development, both on and off the bike, they aim to empower each team member to reach their full potential as athletes and as individuals.

Three of the 10 days of racing for Intelligentsia Cup will take place in DuPage County: the Ray Whalen Builders Tour of Lake Ellyn on July 22 (Glen Ellyn), Winfield's Criterium and Summerfest on July 23 (Winfield), and Lombard Cycling Classic on July 25 (Lombard). The DuPage Sports Commission is the local organizer for the Lombard Cycling Classic and will welcome MitoQ-NZ Cycling Project to Chicagoland several days prior to the series' start.

"Sports can connect, transcend, and move people in unison," said DuPage Sports Commission Director of Sports Igor Bakovic. "MitoQ-NZ Cycling Project's commitment to holistic development, values, and unity aligns perfectly with our vision for sports tourism in the region. We believe in the power of sports to bring people together, establish greater opportunities, and create memorable experiences."

MitoQ-NZ Cycling Project's presence at Intelligentsia Cup resonates not only within the cycling community but also within the broader sports tourism landscape in DuPage. Their participation highlights the thriving sports tourism industry in the region, showcasing DuPage's commitment to high-level events, premiere hospitality, and cultural exchange through sports.

"We simply love coming here," exclaimed Canny. "As a professional team that has raced internationally for 15 years, I can confidently say that Intelligentsia Cup is an outstanding event. It embodies the spirit of sportsmanship, community, and the unwavering love and support for the sport."

To stay updated on MitoQ-NZ Cycling Project's progress and learn more about their philosophy and values, follow them on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) (@nzcyclingproject), or [Twitter](#) (@MitoQ_NZCP). For more information on the Lombard Cycling Classic, visit [Discover DuPage/Lombard Cycling Classic](#).

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Press Release

About the Lombard Cycling Classic

The Lombard Cycling Classic was established in 2019 by the DuPage Sports Commission in partnership with the Village of Lombard – becoming the third race stop in DuPage County in the Intelligentsia Cup cycling series. The [Intelligentsia Cup](#) series remains the largest competitive road cycling event in America, with 10 consecutive days of racing throughout Chicagoland. The Lombard Cycling Classic offers some of the best viewing options when it comes to seeing the cycling competition and making a fun day of it. With racing taking place in Downtown Lombard on St. Charles Road, restaurants, bars, boutiques, and other specialty stores aren't only the backdrop to the event, they are within the actual course itself. Visitors can claim a spot near the vendor expo, a seat at a rooftop bar, or a table at one of the multiple outdoor restaurant seating locations. Festivities include the Family Fun Ride at 6:15pm — a favorite with more than 200 participants last year. All riders must bring their own bicycle and wear a helmet during the family event.

About the DuPage Sports Commission

Created by the not-for-profit organization DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau (DCVB), the DuPage Sports Commission (DSC) was founded in 2019 to harness the power of sports tourism on behalf of the County's 38 communities and one million residents. The DSC is uniquely positioned to advocate for and actively impact the health of DuPage communities through strategic growth as an amateur, youth, and professional sporting destination. For more information, visit www.DuPageSportsCommission.com.

About MitoQ-NZ Cycling Project

MitoQ – NZ Cycling Project, established in 2009, is New Zealand's longest running elite cycling team with 15 years of sending talented NZ riders abroad to race in Europe, Asia, and North America. During that time, they have nurtured the talent of multiple Olympic and World Champions/medalists along the way. The team boasts one of the world's most diverse racing programs including UCI Road Races, UCI MTB World Cups, Criteriums, Gravel, Track, and Cyclocross. MitoQ-NZ Cycling Project is a for-profit entity, providing a safe, sustainable pathway for young NZ talent to enter the professional ranks. The team is set up as an incorporated society with an emphasis on riders progressing their cycling careers while also supporting their education off the bike.