

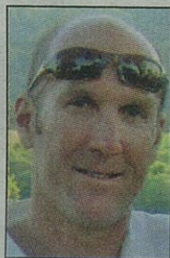
Daily Post

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Cyclist dies suddenly

BY IAN S. PORT
Daily Post Staff Writer

Hundreds of cyclists are expected to turn out tomorrow for a memorial ride to honor bike racer and computer genius Chris Hipp, who tragically died at age 47 while riding his bike up Sand Hill Road in Menlo Park.



HIPP

Hipp was riding with a large group when, at about 6:30 a.m. Tuesday, the

Memorial ride for tech genius, racer tomorrow

agile cyclist grew short of breath, fell back in the pack of riders, and suffered an unknown medical emergency, said a close friend, Sassan Golafshan. He said a driver saw Hipp fall over while riding in the 2800 block of Sand Hill, but that Hipp was dead when an ambulance arrived. The spot

is now marked by a memorial that includes Hipp's riding jersey.

The Redwood City resident was far more than a fast cyclist. Hipp invented blade servers, an ultra-efficient technology allowing high-performance computing for graphics and video editing with very little power usage. At the time of his death, he was hoping to invent another revolutionary computer technology, said his partner of 15 years, Lorraine Sneed.

"It's just too soon," Sneed told the Post yesterday. "He had so much [See HIPP, page 29]

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more to give and so much more to offer the world. He was just blossoming as a person at age 47."

Sneed said Hipp was taking blood thinners, but she doesn't know for sure what could have killed him. Autopsy results won't be released for weeks, she said.

"It's natural causes ... I have my guesses, but I just don't know for sure," Sneed said.

Lance Armstrong: 'He was a great man'

Golafshan said he and Hipp often went on training rides together, and that Hipp was remarkably nonchalant about his performance as a bike racer. He said Hipp, who raced at the professional level, would often beat riders half his age.

"If you go back and look at the records, this guy used to beat Lance Armstrong when he was a little kid," Golafshan told the Post. "He was very humble about it. He would always just play it down."

Armstrong offered his condolences to Hipp's friends and family via Twitter after hearing the news Tuesday: "Just heard the news. I'm stunned. ... He was a great man. We'll miss him. RIP Chris Hipp."

Hipp's many friends also enjoyed his creative, down-to-earth personality. Golafshan described Hipp as "47 going on 16 ... he was the boy who refused to grow up and ironically his talents on the bike pretty much gave him that right."

Sneed said her partner was widely admired for his insistence on living as he chose.

"He structured his life around the things he loved," she said. "He was unique, which is why people liked him."

Was tech innovator despite lack of training

Sneed said she met Hipp in 1994 on a bike ride, and found that they shared a love of both cycling and computers. She said Hipp became interested in technology in the 1980s while working as a graphic artist. He came up with revolutionary technological ad-



THIS MEMORIAL to Chris Hipp was placed near the spot where he died on the 2800 block of Sand Hill Road in Menlo Park. Post photo by Ian S. Port.

vances despite having no formal training in computer science or engineering, she said.

The couple lived together in Redwood City, and Hipp's only other living relative is his younger brother Michael, who lives in Houston.

Golafshan, who owns Form Fitness in Palo Alto, said he was at first expecting perhaps 50 or 75 riders to come to Hipp's memorial ride tomorrow. But he said the response has been so large that "that number is going to be dwarfed." He's opening Form Fitness at 445 Bryant St. for riders at 9 a.m. to use the facilities.