

good spin

encouragement for the cycling soul

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Race Mechanics

Wrenches, Wenches and Trenches

23 “...Bring me your bike with an attitude of entitlement, and I’ll put my greasy fingers all over your new white bar tape.” Merlyn Townley, Race Mechanic



Mechanics ought to get Podium girls too

If the bike doesn't *work*, you can't ride it. The meaning of *work* becomes more highly defined the more elite you become in the racing world. Simple mechanisms that drive movement become high-tech proving grounds for aerodynamics, lightness, and safety. One of the most important persons in your world is your mechanic. If you take this for granted, you'll number yourself with those people who think they don't need anyone to succeed, and that is a great myth. Racers define our community, sponsors fund it, but it's the mechanics that keep it running smoothly.

On a pro team, this is the person who works the longest hours, probably knows the most about you, and usually says the least. I've ridden their last minute improvisations that a rocket scientist would envy. Chances are the mechanic will be the first to reach you in a racing accident. I've been a fallen woman in a ditch pulled out by the caring team wrench and put on a stretcher. I've experienced them tending my wounds miles from any hospital, then making my bike sing again. I've seen them wash blood off top tubes. When a comrade took a fatal spill, the neutral support mechanic covered the bike with a blanket away from public scrutiny. I've watched them squirm in anxiety from the team car while watching their riders battle it out and whoop the loudest when their rider crossed the finish line first. I've witnessed them weeping with fatigue and stagger without praise.

This person is not the one you take for granted; on the road especially, this person IS your mama, the behind-the-scenes nurturer who puts life in your wheels.

Prayer for Race Mechanics

"Bless all his skills, O LORD, and be pleased with the work of his hands..." ²⁴Deuteronomy 33:11

We confess we need others to keep life moving. We are thankful for the bicycle artisans who regularly sacrifice in their lifestyles on the road with us. We pray for the provision of this unrepresented guild. We ask for timely assistance and awareness to give them praise.

Ponder What can I do to help my mechanic? Have I been appreciative for all their hard work? **Affirm** I say thank you when appropriate. **Watch** your mechanic light up when you bring them...anything clean.

²³Conversations with Merlyn Townley, who has helped me out of many a diva's conundrum with bicycle repair. This statement was made to a cyclist with an attitude of entitlement when the mechanic was doing him a *favor* and was in no way officially working for that rider's team.

²⁴*The Bible*, New International Version, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by [International Bible Society](#)

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