

# Maddog Unleashed

## Shows to the West, Demos to the East, Nothing In Between

*I pictured myself in a Denver bar that night, with all the gang . . . — Jack Kerouac, On the Road*



**BY PATRICK O'GRADY**

So, Interbike plans a two-day Outdoor Demo in Rhode Island this fall. Oh, goody. A guy could get whiplash out here in flyover country, watching top-shelf events zip from one side of the country to the other like meth-addled bats. All we get is the guano.

Take the presidential primaries—please. All through January it was New Hampshire this and Nevada that, but nary a word about poor old Colorado, which is lumped into the Super Tuesday dogpile on Feb. 5.

This may be because Colorado is the national equivalent of the crazy uncle in the attic. The country has looked askance at us for decades, with Dick Lamm saying the elderly had “a duty to die and get out of the way,” preachy auto salesman Will Perkins trying to outlaw gayness, and the political-comedy team of Tom Tancredo and Marilyn Musgrave occasionally goose-stepping into the national spotlight.

We even spurned the Winter Olympics—the only time a selected venue has done so. The official line was that Coloradans didn't want to pay the tab, but the truth is we were afraid that any contact between Soviet athletes and Boulder trustafarians could spawn a vegan, alcoholic super-commie.

**The Winter of Our Content.** But come 2010, Colorado will finally get a big winter-sports event when SnowSports Industries America moves its SnowSports trade show to Denver after 35 years in Las Vegas.

“The SIA board considered many locations for relocating the show, and Denver met the needs of our association and the snow-sports industry perfectly—we're looking forward to the move in 2010,” said SIA board chairman Mike Carey.

Seems the bike crowd is growing restless, too. After way too many years in Sin City, Interbike has begun shopping around, reportedly eyeing Anaheim, Salt Lake City—and even Denver.

**Horace Greeley Never Flew United.** Anaheim probably has the biggest dog in this fight, though if I lived on the East Coast, my idea of a good time would not be making a pilgrimage to the Magic Kingdom. And the less said about Salt Lake City, the better.

So why not Denver? Interbike and SnowSports seem comparable. Interbike draws about 23,000 visitors; so does SnowSports. Interbike sold 313,000 of net square feet of exhibit space last year; SnowSports did 353,000. Each show hosted about a thousand brands.

The biggest sticking points are likely to be Denver International Airport, which I believe has a Kansas ZIP code, and finding accommodations whose names do not include numerals. This fall's Democratic National Convention should be instructive. If Denver can handle all those welfare chiselers in their Cadillacs, Interbike shouldn't have any problems.

**Oh, Colorado's Calling Me.** Some of us in flyover country might like it if Interbike came to see us for a change. There are hotel rooms and restaurants within walking distance of the Colorado Convention Center, a no-smoking policy statewide, and miles of bike paths, which means attendees could slip out for a bracing ride before or after enduring the rigors of the show. And anyone who can't picture Interbike without gambling can always spend an evening in Black Hawk or Central City.

Oh, you probably won't be able to see Celine Dion here. But she's equally unlikely to turn up in Mickeyville or SLC. And anyway, who needs her, with a pair of headliners like Tom and Marilyn?