

## What Happens in Vegas Stays in Vegas: Report from Interbike 2006

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That's the motto for the city that hosted the 2006 Interbike Trade Show. Fortunately, for the members of IPMBA, what happened at Interbike this year will not stay in Vegas. If you have never had the pleasure of attending the largest bicycle trade show in North America, let me set the stage for you. The show is held in the convention center at the Venetian Hotel and Casino. The Venetian has an indoor canal, complete with gondola rides, running along a shopping area that gives every appearance of being outdoors. The convention center is no less impressive, not so much for its grand accompaniments, but for its grand size. I believe the World Series, Super Bowl, NBA Championship, Stanley Cup, and a stage of the Tour de France could occur simultaneously in the room.

As I walked into the show for the first time, I was awestruck by how many vendors were in one room. Once that wore off, and I regained control of my jaw, I was taken aback by the extreme design of the vendor booths. Luckily, I had talked with a few people who had experienced Interbike before, or else I may have never recovered! I had also teamed up with a friend from IPMBA who had been to the show in previous years and was able to assist me. The first item on the agenda was to walk the floor. Using the map – and you definitely need a map – we walked the floor just looking at the products and getting the lay of the land. I made note of the location of vendors and products that I wanted to contact for various reasons. Once we finished walking the floor, I checked the time and was shocked to find the day was over; it was six o'clock. Any plans to schmooze would have to wait until tomorrow.

As the sun came up on day two, we headed back to the show. The plan was to spend the last two days talking with vendors, looking at products, opening lines of communication, and building on existing relationships. I talked with every vendor at the show who currently supports IPMBA programs, including Cycle Source Group, Kuji Helmets, Ironman Gloves, Pro Gold, Fuji, Maxxis Tires, Endura, Oakley, WTB, Brave Soldier, Swagman, Kryptonite, Terry Precision Cycling and Zoic. I talked with vendors from Park Tools, Pedro's, and others to get IPMBA in their vocabulary.

As the sun went down on day three, I left Interbike with many contacts and some interesting products. There was everything from "Bonk" paint protection film to Zoic cycling shorts, from a locking seatpost to new tire designs. Keep an eye out as we bring you product reviews from some of the items introduced at the show throughout the year. As for all the things we did after Interbike closed its doors each night, well, you know what they say: "What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas."

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