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Connecticut State Police Divers Pedal Underwater for Charity at 'Big E'; Troopers on Target to Pedal 2,000 Miles on Stationary Bike in 3,000-Gallon Water Tank

WEST SPRINGFIELD, Mass., Sep 27, 2004 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- The Connecticut State Police Dive Team is making a huge splash at this year's Eastern States Fair ("Big E"). In an unusual feat, the officers are pedaling the equivalent of an entire Tour de France race on a Schwinn(R)Fitness stationary bike submerged in a 3,000 gallon tank of water.

It may sound novel, but it's all for two good causes: one, to raise money for the Connecticut Children's Medical Center; and two, to stimulate fairgoers' interest about the Connecticut State Police Divers and the valuable role they play in local rescues.

"Our divers need to be in great shape, so we thought this would be an excellent way for people to see firsthand how we operate underwater, and at the same time raise funds for charity," said Trooper First Class David Brundage, Team Dive Master, who helped coordinate the event.

Midway through the fair, the team's 15 police divers had logged more than 1,000 miles and are on target to exceed last year's 2,000-mile accomplishment by the end of the 17-day "Big E" fair. That's about the same distance as the entire Tour de France bicycle road race, in four fewer days.

Each member of the team rides in two-hour shifts in full dive gear, including face masks and scuba suits. Observers can find the police divers in their tank behind the Connecticut Building. State police troopers and members of the Connecticut Children's Medical Center will be on hand to accept pledges for each mile pedaled as well as answer questions about both organizations.

"Although our equipment is made for less humid conditions, we're glad to see our stationary bike endure under this usage," said Buzz Truitt, vice president of SchwinnFitness products for Nautilus, the company that makes and markets Schwinn products.

Nautilus and a Connecticut retailer, Omni Fitness Equipment, donated the bike that is submerged in the nearly 3,000-gallon tank. With its corrosion-resistant, zinc-galvanized, powder-coated, commercial-grade welded steel frame, the SchwinnFitness bike is clearly up for the peculiar challenge. It also has quick and easy seat and handlebar adjustments, so the police divers can rapidly adjust the piece of equipment to suit each diver.

For more information about the Connecticut State Police Divers' underwater adventure, people can stop by the tank at the "Big E," which operates through October 3.

The Schwinn name has been associated with quality bicycles for 110 years, with the first Schwinn stationary bicycle entering the market in 1965. Today, the SchwinnFitness line of stationary bicycles is part of The Nautilus Group, which makes and markets about 150,000 units annually for the club and home markets. More information is at www.schwinnfitness.com.

About The Nautilus Group

Headquartered in Vancouver, Wash., The Nautilus Group, Inc. (NYSE: NLS) helps people achieve a fit and healthy lifestyle through proper exercise, rest and nutrition. With a brand portfolio that includes Nautilus, Bowflex, SchwinnFitness, StairMaster and Triline, The Nautilus Group manufactures and markets a complete line of innovative health and fitness products through direct, commercial and retail channels. The company was formed in 1986 and had 2003 revenues of about \$500 million. It has nearly 1,100 employees and operations in Washington, Colorado, Oklahoma, Texas, Illinois, Virginia, Switzerland, Germany, United Kingdom, Italy and other locations around the world. More information is at www.nautilusgroup.com.

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