

# After a near-fatal crash, cyclist is on road to recovery

Spent five weeks in hospital following accident last year



The road back to cycling excellence has been an uphill grind for Olympic-medal hopeful Leah Goldstein.

Following a near-fatal crash, Goldstein, 37, who is racing in Wednesday's Tour de Gastown, has spent the last year recovering from an accident that doctors said should have ended her cycling career.

"It was death. It was horrendous," said Goldstein, of the high-speed, multi-rider crash, which occurred in July 2005 at a race in Bend, Ore.

Goldstein slid face-first along the pavement. She was

knocked unconscious and lost most of her teeth. Her lips were burned from her face and she was scarred from head to toe.

She also dislocated her arm and broke her shoulder, ribs and pelvis.

After five weeks in the hospital, she was released. Goldstein, a former world champion kickboxer, spent the next two-and-a-half months in a wheelchair.

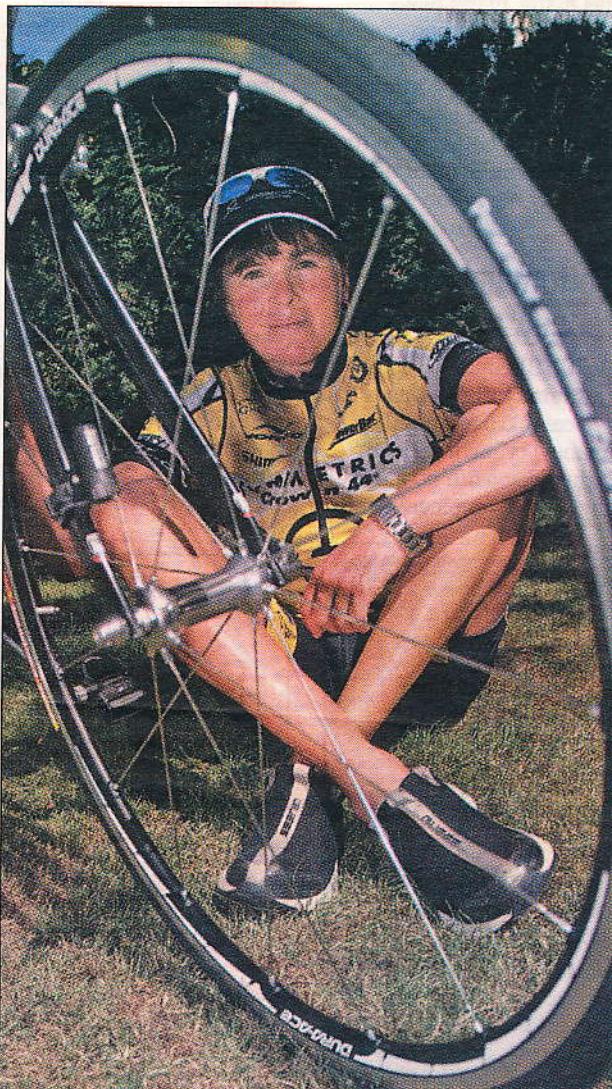
She resumed riding in December and started training in February.

Goldstein, who began bike racing while training commandos at a security base in Israel, estimates she's at 90 per cent of her peak performance.

Despite not being in top form, Goldstein already has a number of first place finishes, including the B.C. Criterium Championship on July 10.

## Olympic dreams

► Goldstein is hoping to represent Israel at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.



After a near-fatal crash that left her cycling career in question, Vancouver cyclist Leah Goldstein has battled back, racing as part of Symmetrics Cycling in Wednesday's Tour de Gastown.