**[EZ Speech Writers No. 15093]**

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Remarks by John Healy on the occasion of his receiving a student athlete award from the National Interscholastic Cycling Association.

**[TURN TO PERSON INTRODUCTING YOU.]**

**THANK YOU [NAME OF ABOVE PERSON] . . .**

**[TURN BACK TO AUDIENCE.] I WANT YOU ALL TO KNOW HOW THRILLED AND GRATEFUL I AM TO RECEIVE THIS [OFFICIAL NAME OF] AWARD. AND I ESPECIALLY WANT TO THANK MY MOM, [MOTHER’S FIRST NAME] HEALY, FOR ALL THE LOVE AND SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT SHE’S GIVEN ME FROM THE TIME I FIRST STARTED COMPETITIVE CYCLING BACK IN [YEAR]: [TURN TO YOUR MOTHER FOR A MOMENT.] WITHOUT YOU, MOM, AND ALL THE OTHER WONDERFUL PEOPLE IN MY LIFE WHO’VE HELPED ME IN MY ATHLETIC ENDEAVORS, I WOULDN’T BE STANDING HERE RIGHT NOW TO RECEIVE THIS AWARD. I AM DEEPLY GRATEFUL TO ALL OF YOU.**

**THIS AWARD MEANS THE WORLD TO ME, NOT JUST BECAUSE OF THE ACHIEVEMENT IT REPRESENTS, BUT BECAUSE COMPETITIVE CYCLING HAS TRULY CHANGED MY LIFE. IT’S MADE ME NOT ONLY A BETTER AND STRONGER ATHLETE, IT’S MADE ME A BETTER AND STRONGER PERSON, TOO. IT’S GIVEN ME MORE CONFIDENCE IN MYSELF AND TAUGHT ME THAT I CAN ACHIEVE EVEN THE LOFTIEST GOALS I MIGHT SET FOR MYSELF. AND IT’S ALSO TAUGHT ME TO BE MORE HUMBLE ABOUT MY ACCOMPLISHMENTS, BECAUSE I’VE COME TO REALIZE THAT THERE’S ALWAYS SOMEONE OUT THERE WHO’S BETTER, FASTER, AND STRONGER THAN I AM, AND THAT SETS THE BAR HIGHER FOR ME AND ENCOURAGES ME TO STRIVE EVER HARDER.**

**THROUGH RACING, I’VE LEARNED TO CONQUER FEAR, WHICH IS PRESENT AT THE STARTING LINE OF EVERY RACE. AND AT THE SAME TIME, RACING HAS ALSO HELPED ME BECOME A MORE SOCIABLE PERSON BY BEING PART OF A TEAM AND A MEMBER OF A TIGHT-KNIT COMMUNITY OF CYCLISTS. STANDING UP THERE ON THE WINNERS’ PODIUM WITH MY TEAMATES AFTER A RACE OR A MEET IS JUST THE GREATEST FEELING IN THE WORLD — ABSOLUTELY THE GREATEST!**

**YOU KNOW, I REALLY NEVER SAW MYSELF AS ANY KIND OF MENTOR TO YOUNGER ATHLETES, BUT NOW I FIND MYSELF HELPING AND ADVISING A LOT OF YOUNGER KIDS JUST STARTING OUT IN THE WORLD OF CYCLING. AND THIS CHANCE TO SHARE AND HELP OTHERS IS ALSO A WONDERFUL AND REWARDING FEELING FOR ME, ANOTHER GIFT THAT COMPETITIVE CYCLING HAS GIVEN ME.**

**MARK TWAIN, THE GREAT AMERICAN WRITER AND HUMORIST, ONCE SAID, *“LEARN TO RIDE A BICYCLE, AND YOU WILL NEVER REGRET IT . . . IF YOU LIVE!”* WELL . . . I LEARNED TO RIDE A BICYCLE, AND I HAVEN’T REGRETTED IT FOR ONE, SINGLE SECOND FROM THE MOMENT THE TRAINING WHEELS CAME OFF MY FIRST BIKE AS A YOUNGSTER. [OPTIONAL:] AND I MUST ADMIT, AS BOB WEIR OF THE GRATEFUL DEAD ONCE PUT IT: *“BICYCLES ARE ALMOST AS GOOD AS GUITARS FOR MEETING GIRLS!”***

**SO THANK YOU AGAIN FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART FOR THIS AWARD. I WILL CHERISH IT FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE.**

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