



## Taylor

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### Historic and Contemporary Black Bike Racers

Throughout bike history, racers of African descent have graced the world's velodromes and road races. Although not as well-represented in professional bike racing as other sports, they have made significant contributions. There is also a long history of Black bike teams across the U.S. that date back to Major Taylor's era. Here are just a few historic and modern Black racers.



**Ali Neffati:** Became the first African to compete in the Tour de France -- although he was technically from Arab descent. There has never been a Black African to compete in the Tour, although Ethiopian natives Neffati was a native from Tunisia and that nation's champion. Of the 140 cyclists who started the race, he was not one of the 25 who finished. He began participating in racing circuits in 1908 before being asked to participate in the 1913 Tour de France. He went on to compete in a number of competitions until his retirement in 1930.

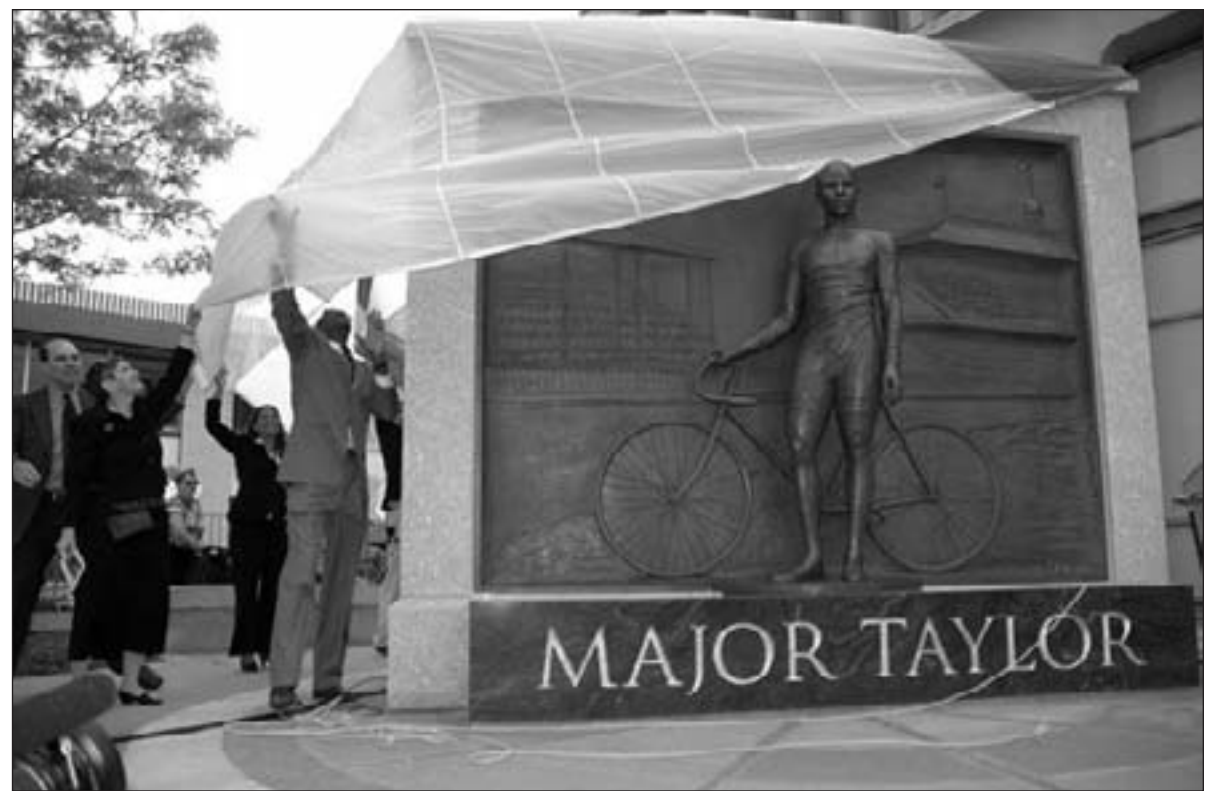
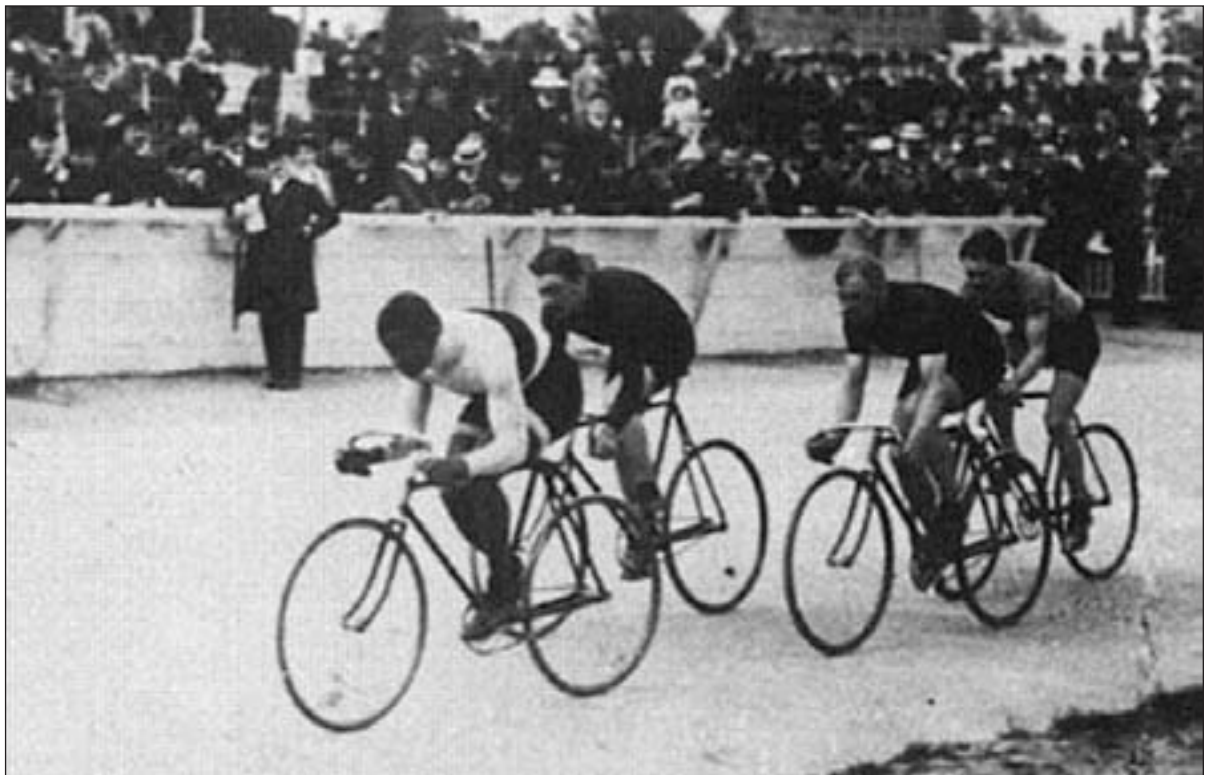
**Gregory Bauge:** French racer who has won a number of European, French national and world championships. In 2009 and 2010, Bauge finished first in Sprint Track at the World Champions in Poland and Denmark. In the 2009 World

Championships, Bauge made an amazing recovery after he was bumped by competitor Kevin Sireau, who himself crashed. Bauge began cycling at the age of 9 after finding soccer to be much too cold. Watch Bauge on The Skanner's YouTube Channel.

**Rashaan Bahati:** Races with the SKLZ-Pista Palace cycling team and has won the 2008 USPRO National Criterium Championships. Bahati has never finished outside second place in any of the races he's finished. He runs the Bahati Foundation, which supports underserved youth. It is rumored that a television show will follow his efforts to coach Compton, Calif. youth into cycling.

**Erik Saunders:** As of 2004, Saunders was team captain of the Ofoto Lombardi's Cycling Team, based in San Francisco, Calif. He's competed and won in dozens of races across America and in Europe. After taking several years off, Saunders broke his collar bone in October of 2010 and according to his website, set his "master pro career" back, a career he was trying to rekindle.

**Justin Williams:** Despite his young age, 20-year-old Williams has been grabbing up victories in a number of regional circuits, with a first place at the Under 23 National Criterium Championships and won third place at the 2010 USA Cycling U23 Road Nationals.



## We honor Black History month and the many accomplishments of African Americans.



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