



BRIAN GRIFFITH

Knapps Cycling Team

“As a kid I was always riding my bike. I lived a couple miles from my closest friends, and the only way we ever got to hang out was to ride to each other's house. Despite all this riding, I was still a short, chunky little kid and not very athletic. Things stayed that way until my first year at Rutgers when I grew 6 inches, discovered running, and lost 25 pounds.

“In dental school, I kept on running, although about half the distance, and started regular lifting. Over the course of one year, I went from a skinny 145-pound-kid to 210 pounds of solid muscle. Just a little change of body type! I continued doing both activities until I hit 30, when running just became untenable due to sore ankles and feet. Needing something to keep the bulk down – cycling! It didn't take long before I was

dropping the recreational riders. I enjoyed competing in running road races, so maybe bike racing would work...

“Starting with ‘Citizens’ racing, I did a few short road races, finishing in the top-5 every race. So I took the plunge and got my license. In my first criterium in Pottstown, PA, I took a flyer on lap 2 and soloed for the win. I'm still not sure what those guys were thinking, but I was thinking it was pretty cool. Little did I realize it wouldn't always be that easy. The first season I was able to get a few decent finishes and a bit of experience, although no more victories. In season 2, I managed to get in enough breaks to upgrade to Cat-3. I raced everything: crits, RRs, and TTs, but was soon finding that I sprint like a young girl (with apologies to young girls everywhere) and could not go fast enough to compete with the big boys at the line and it was a LOT harder getting away. Those things didn't matter in time trials, and I soon found my true love in cycling.

“In 1993, I did 75 races and was suffering from some serious burnout. Adding in a new marriage, 6 kids, and a business to run, I figured I needed a little time off from the bike. A “little time off” turned into 15 years.

“In 2008 I injured my shoulder in the gym and needing a little exercise, dusted off the old Specialized for some casual riding... and it didn't take long to rediscover the passion I had for riding and the first time I spotted a rider ahead of me on Route 29 and chased him down I started to think about racing again.

“Those few TTs I did in 2009 were an eye-opener. Only the good guys kept racing and I was shocked at how fast everyone was. In my first one, I got passed by my minute-man at mile 5. That didn't sit well so I was determined to try to be a little more competitive in 2010 and trained hard that winter.

“At Sandy Hook in 2010 I was sure I was going to win. Curt Hurst beat me by 9 seconds. At Readington, I was pretty confident again. He got me again by 2 seconds. I couldn't believe it. The silver medal I got at the Hook still hangs on my car's mirror and makes me want to never feel that way again. I spent the rest of 2010 learning what it takes to not just ride well but to actually win races. That year I won a bunch of TTs, the NJITT, and the 2010 Time Trial Cup title.

“In 2011, I knew Dana Fallon was moving up to 55+ and that he was determined to beat me – fastest dentist in NJ was on the line. I started working with a coach, Ken Lundgren, and was ready to go in April. That season was the most grueling competition I have ever experienced. Every week we were separated by a handful of seconds. Every week one of us set a 55+ course record. It might have been entertaining to anyone watching but for me the competition took on a life of its own. By July, I was just about ready to give racing up again. Fortunately, my coach and teammates kept me focused enough to win the last race of the season at Blueberry and clinch the 2011 Time Trial Cup title!

“Presently, I continue to train with Ken and Elite Endurance in preparation for 2012. I ride for Knapps Cyclery and try desperately to keep it all in perspective.”

Height: 5'11"

December weight: 185-188

Racing weight: 179

Date of birth: April 9th, 1955

Childhood heroes: “Sargent Saunders [Vic Morrow] on the TV series *Combat*, and the mountain men of the early 1800's.”

Hobbies and interests: “Fly-fishing and travel.”

Favorite movies: “Anything escapist – *Lord of the Rings*. I love that dark comedy, *Fargo*. And I enjoy sword and sandal epics like *Gladiator*.”

Musical tastes: “I have to admit that music just does not ‘click’ in my brain. It's just background noise.”

Favorite TV show: “*Lost, Two and a Half Men, House*.”

Favorite meal: “Thanksgiving dinner.”

Favorite breakfast cereal: “Cheerios.”

Favorite pre-race meal: “Dry cheerios, banana, strong coffee.”

Favorite ice cream flavor: “Mocha Almond Fudge.”

Childhood dream: “To be a mountain man.”

Favorite vacation spot: “Western Montana.”

Pre-race feeling: “Seeing my focus get more and more tunnel-like. That... and nausea.”

Early racing memory: “With one lap to go at my first crit, thinking I was actually going to win it.” ☺

Funny racing memory: “In some crit, we were all riding together, going along pretty fast, when some guy comes from the back and passes the field, the whole time ringing one of those handlebar bells like he was riding on the boardwalk.”

Greatest racing moment: “Winning the 2010 NJ Individual Time Trial Championships.”

Most painful moment: “Telling my kids I was splitting up with their mom.”

Worst injury from racing: “At the 1989 Chambersburg Road Race, I was in a break of about ten. We had two minutes on the field and there were only four miles to go. Someone clipped my front wheel and I went over the bars, onto my head. Split the hard shell in half, broke my left arm – which required two surgeries – a lot of road rash, and a big-time concussion. I still cannot remember anything from the next 36 hours.”

Closest racing friends: “The ‘Elder Statesmen of Knapps’ – Mark Curran, Bill Sasiela, and Toby Hanna.”

Funniest racer: “Mark Curran. The dude has me spewing coffee out my nose on a semi-regular basis.”

Favorite race: “Somerset Circuit TT.”

Embarrassing racing memory: “In one of the State Road Race Championships, we were getting close to the finish, and the pack was all together. With one mile to go, everyone started playing games to set up for the sprint. Ishmael Reyes and I took off and got a good jump on everyone. I dropped him and with all my teammates cheering at the finish, I was sure I had the win. I sat up five yards from the line and Paul O’Neill pipped me by a few inches!”

Toughest competitor: “Easy – Dana Fallon of Liberty Cycle.”

Favorite athletes to watch: “Professional basketball players. They are so fast and fluid, everything I am not.”

Qualities you admire most in people: “Loyalty and honesty.”

What you love most about riding your bicycle: “That feeling when you’re just riding hard, not racing, down a road like Route 29, the complete focus on nothing other than just riding fast – it is one of the best things in life, very Zen-like.”

PALMARES

2011

- 1st New Jersey TT Cup
- 1st Sandy Hook TT
- 1st Cape May TT
- 1st April Carlisle 40 km TT
- 1st Long Beach Island TT
- 1st May Carlisle 40k TT
- 1st Somerset Circuit TT (55+ course record!)

- 1st Upper Freehold TT
- 1st Jersey Shore TT
- 1st Blueberry TT
- 1st Route 29 10-mile TT
- 1st Route 29 35k TT
- 1st Route 29 35k TTT
- 2nd New Jersey Individual TT State Championships
- 2nd Kingwood TT
- 2nd Readington TT
- 3rd High Point Hill Climb TT
- 3rd Flanders TT

2010

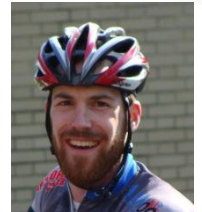
- 1st NJBA TT Cup
- 1st New Jersey Individual TT State Championships
- 1st Cape May TT
- 1st Somerset Circuit TT (55+ course record)
- 1st Jersey Shore TT
- 1st Pedricktown TT
- 1st Upper Freehold TT
- 1st Kingwood TT
- 1st Blueberry TT
- 1st Long Meadow TT
- 1st Route 29 10-mile TT
- 2nd Sandy Hook TT
- 2nd Readington TT
- 2nd Route 29 35k TT
- 5th Flanders TT



Kenneth Lundgren is a professional cycling coach and bike fit specialist for Elite Endurance Training Systems, a coaching service that offers training programs for cyclists and triathletes of all levels.

Ken, who is one of the area's top trialists, races for the Northeastern Hardware Cycling Team, one of New England's strongest elite squads. In the last year, he won 7 time trials. He's also won the overall in the Time Trial Cup in the last two years. Northeastern Hardware has won the Garden State Cup for six consecutive years and looks to make it seven straight next year.

Ken can be reached at (201) 951-4732 or Coach@EliteEndurance.com.



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