



**Sweaty She Monday (7/6/09):
“Holy Hincapie” – The Pros and Cons of White Spandex and
Other Fitness Apparel**

By Susan Farago

Weekly Sweaty She postings can be found on “Sweaty She” on Facebook.com.

Well it’s that time of the year again – time to spend 3 weeks glued to the TV watching the Tour de France. Kicked off on the 4th of July, today marks the third day of cheering for 190+ men in various team colors of spandex as they perform spectacular racing, amazing accelerations and survive hair raising crashes.

Thanks to a friend of mine (whose initials are KC but will remain unnamed to protect her “innocence” – ha!) I now have one more thing to pay attention to during The Tour: Team Columbia High Road wearing white bike shorts. KC was recounting the TV footage of the team and exclaimed “Holy Hincapie!” when they panned to George Hincapie in all his white spandex glory. Thanks to the “hides nothing” quality of white spandex, George was showing more than just his cycling prowess. A LOT MORE. And according to KC’s account, I think there are now multiple reasons why the commentators refer to him as “Big” George Hincapie.

This makes me think about other athletic apparel I have seen people wear. I recently saw a woman at the health club wearing shorts from the “Juicy” line of fitness apparel now owned by Liz Claiborne. Why a woman would want to have the words “JUICY” splashed across her entire rear end is beyond me. Even if I were 19 again (which seems to be the majority demographic), I wouldn’t do it. But you could talk me in to wearing something like, “THIS ASS CAN KICK YOUR ASS” or “WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT?”

The other type of athletic apparel I find amazing are sports bras. Most sports bras fall into one of two categories: compression or encapsulation. Compression works by mashing your bust line to your ribcage so you don’t move. When successfully applied, compression works really well to keep you in place. However over-compression can result in the “uniboob” look, a cleavage line that runs right up to under your neck, and difficulty breathing. Encapsulation attempts to surround each breast and suspend them in a “limited movement” state. While it is possible for 2-4% of the female population to achieve this ideal state of restriction while maintaining a feminine shape, it almost never works for the rest of us. The result is an independently moving bust line (left side independent from the right side AND bust line independent from the rest of the body) and the wearer ends up looking something like a Viking opera singer. Given the two options – I’ll take the uniboob look.

As for The Tour and Big George, I look forward to seeing the guys ride their hearts out over the next 3 weeks, and I’ll do my best to focus on the riding...despite Big George.

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