



Open racing series driven by the e-sports trend – Eurobike to crown its champions in Frankfurt with virtual races across the fair grounds

With Virtual Hero, Eurobike Caters to E-Cycling Fans

Frankfurt – For the first time in 2024, Eurobike will pick its own champions and open the way for an action-packed combination of in-person fair attendance and virtual sport. At the same time, the trade fair is expanding its program towards the growing sporting market for e-cycling. During their visit to the leading bicycle trade fair, cycling fans will hop in the saddle and compete on racing bikes that are connected with smart technology and the virtual cycling arena. Stepping on the pedals on the fair stage, they will make their avatar go faster on a virtual race track across the fair grounds. The goal is to qualify for the finals of the first Virtual Hero series, in which a women's and men's champion will be chosen at Eurobike on July 6 and 7, 2024.

Eurobike and Frahm Sporting/Cycle Cafe are organizing Virtual Hero as a new form of interaction between trade fair audiences, virtual and real-life cycling. It's the first time such a format has purposefully brought together both the real-life and virtual community, connecting them in an e-cycling series where the competition takes place on a real stage. "As a trade fair, we participate in the booming trend of e-cycling and are significantly increasing the performance aspect at our globally leading cycling event," says fairnamic Managing Director Stefan Reisinger. "With the racing series, we are focusing on sportier, younger target groups and see Virtual Hero as part of a rapidly growing area in our program." The global e-cycling market is experiencing a dynamic development and is expected to be worth USD 306.4 million by 2029 (QYResearch) or USD 376.4 million in 2032 (Business Research Insights) – 7.1 percent average growth per year.

The Virtual Hero event is open for beginners, amateur athletes and anyone ambitious enough, but not for athletes with an international racing license and professional status. "We want to make the amazing world of e-sports and e-cycling

tangible and to show at trade fairs that virtual cycling is real fun for everyone," says Fiona Schröder, Project Manager for Frahm Sporting.

Introducing wider audiences to e-sports

Virtual Hero is a new format combining sport, competition, technology and fun – there has been nothing like it at bicycle fairs until now. The series of events (February 21 in Frankfurt, March 15-17 Cyclingworld, Düsseldorf, April 13-14 VeloBerlin, Berlin, July 3-7 Eurobike, Frankfurt) gives the audience the opportunity to sign up for short, exciting virtual bike races on the trade fair stage and to qualify for the Virtual Hero finals. "It is explicitly an open format with the aim of getting a much broader audience to experience virtual cycling as an attractive, fun and healthy form of sport," says Thorsten Frahm, Managing Director of the project partner Cycle Cafe. Together with Eurobike, Cycle Cafe is the organizer of the series.

Open tournament series to sweat away and cheer on

Following the success of the trial event at the Massif Games Convention in Frankfurt, the organizers of Virtual Hero will hold the further qualifying tournaments on a transparent basis. At Cyclingworld in Düsseldorf, VeloBerlin and Eurobike, visitors will register at the Cycle Cafe booth for free participation in the races. There will be men's and women's races, with four contestants each, who will be connected to smart bike trainers. The audience will watch the competition on a fast 3.2km track through virtual Singapore. The tournaments will produce winners who will thus qualify as the four finalists vying to clinch the title of Eurobike Champion. The grand final will take place on a virtual track across the outdoor area of the Frankfurt fair. The contestants will then take the stage in Frankfurt to compete for four 850-meter laps in the virtually recreated real setting of Eurobike. "The competition will be held in front of the Eurobike audience and at the same time at the peak of the cycling season – during the Tour de France," says Fiona Schröder. The men's final is set for July 6, and the women's final for July 7.

About Eurobike:

Eurobike is the central platform of the cycling and future mobility universe. Together with visionaries from politics, business, society and the mobility industry, it creates space for communication, new ideas, change of perspective, and strong

partnerships for innovative mobility solutions and new business models. With Eurobike, the booming and rapidly changing bicycle and future mobility industries have found a common platform. It sets new standards and identifies key topics in the areas of sports, leisure, health and mobility, makes continuous progress and brings the global community together live. The 32nd Eurobike will take place on the grounds of Messe Frankfurt from Wednesday, July 3 to Sunday, July 7, 2024. For more information, go to: www.eurobike.com.

About fairnamic GmbH:

With the founding of fairnamic GmbH, the trade fair companies Frankfurt and Friedrichshafen are sealing a partnership focusing on innovative mobility. The market position in the future markets of bicycles, e-bikes, micromobility and general aviation is strengthened by pooling expertise and market knowledge, global positioning, brand strength and speed. The joint venture focuses on the Eurobike and AERO brands and their satellites. The objective is to expand and further develop the two flagship trade fairs. For more information, go to: www.fairnamic.com