

April 4, 2017



**14<sup>th</sup> Annual Whiskey Off-Road Dedicated to Zapata “Zap” Espinoza**  
*Recognizing one of the most identifiable voices in the early history of mountain biking*

(TUCSON, ARIZ.) April 4, 2017 – Today Epic Rides announced 1995 Mountain Bike Hall of Fame inductee Zapata “Zap” Espinoza as the dedication recipient for the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Whiskey Off-Road mountain bike event-taking place in Prescott, Ariz. on April 28-30, 2017.

Although Espinoza is currently the editor-in-chief of Road Bike Action magazine, from 1986 to 1993, he was editor of Mountain Bike Action (MBA), the most influential mountain bike publication of its time. Espinoza was known mostly for his outspoken demeanor, never shy to share his opinion no matter how controversial it may have been. His bold writing was backed up by an equally bold and individual appearance, which still gives him instant recognition with the public.

In the days when Espinoza served as editor of MBA, the sport of mountain biking was still in its infancy, as was mountain bike technology. As a result, many high performance mountain bikes and components in the early 1990s were not thoroughly tested for durability before winding up on a consumer's bike. Espinoza felt a responsibility to informing and protecting the reader of MBA by putting as many products through its paces as possible.

“Our job was to purposefully steer towards bumps and rocks to see how bikes and components performed,” said Espinoza. “Our goal was to break stuff, because we didn't want the consumer to end up being the crash test dummy.”

This journalistic responsibility came with complications though, as the products Espinoza was testing came from brands who purchased advertising with the magazine. But Espinoza didn't concern himself with this sometimes-awkward position.

“In the end, the reader was our customer, not the people who placed ads with us.”

Although Espinoza and his MBA colleagues were sometimes criticized for publishing negative reviews, losing potential ad revenue from brands whose products failed, Espinoza was always clear to point out they were critical reviews, not negative. Espinoza tested products as objectively as possible, and although the magazine would sometimes lose advertisers, he was steadfast in being outspoken to fulfill his responsibility to the reader.

“We are honored to dedicate this year's Whiskey Off-Road to Zap, one of the cornerstones of mountain bike journalism,” said Todd Sadow, president and co-founder of Epic Rides. “And we're also excited to hear that Zap will be making a return to mountain biking by participating in the Whiskey. We can't wait to see him out there with his signature smile.”

Epic Rides invites the public to join in a toast and celebration of Zap Espinoza on Saturday, April 29 at 8p at the Barley Hound (234 S Cortez St) in downtown Prescott.

For full Zapata Espinoza interview, visit [www.epicrides.com/whiskey](http://www.epicrides.com/whiskey).

For more information on the Whiskey Off-Road, visit [epicrides.com](http://epicrides.com) or follow @epicrides and @whiskeyoffroad on Facebook, and search #epicrides, #whiskeyoffroad and #offroadseries on Instagram and Twitter.

For media inquires, contact Todd Sadow, Epic Rides president at [tsadow@epicrides.com](mailto:tsadow@epicrides.com) or (520) 623-1584

### **About Epic Rides**

Founded in 1999, Epic Rides has become world famous for producing events that celebrate the many positive aspects of mountain biking. Events such as the 24 Hours in the Old Pueblo presented by Tucson Medical Center, Tour of the White Mountains, Grand Junction Off-Road, Whiskey Off-Road and the Carson City Off-Road are popular with participants because they offer challenging, fun riding and emphasize the joy and camaraderie inherent in the sport.

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