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## Navigators and Lipton ready for action



The Navigators Insurance and TEAm Lipton squads bucked the tradition of warm-weather, coastal resort locations for their training camp in 2007, opting instead for the dry desert plateau of New Mexico. Setting up shop in Albuquerque, Navigators directeur sportif Ed Beamon, whose company also manages TEAm Lipton, told *Cyclingnews'* Mark Zalewski that the location had a number of attractive qualities.



"The big attraction was what they are doing with their cycling community in general," explained Beamon. "They have this veloport and they also have so many good features for training. For the guys going to Cali they have had two weeks at 5,000-10,000 feet. We also had great support from the medical community, to help get the tests done at the start of the season."



The Navigators cruising in New Mexico  
Photo ©: Casey Gibson



"And honestly, I don't like real warm camps! I don't expect to be racing in hot weather the first few months! It wasn't ideal the first few days, but the air is so dry you can get out there in 30 degree weather - not like back east where the wet weather makes you damp and miserable."



The first priority for a training camp, aside from handing out the new equipment, is aquatinting the new riders - whether they be new to the team, or new to professional cycling as a whole. "The first thing you find out is how well the personalities are going to mesh - that's why you do a camp in the first place," said Beamon. "And we have a bunch of new guys on the team, and a few guys new to the professional side of the sport. And it was great - everyone synched up from the beginning."



A face that is not new to the team is Vasilli Davidenko. But no, he is not putting retirement off for another year. Instead, he has changed hats to become the assistant directeur sportif. And from the start, Davidenko noticed the difference in job descriptions. "It was pretty busy! Before I was just doing my job by going out and training. Now immediately, with two teams, I was really busy. I hope that during the season it will be a little better. But I am looking forward to California, my first race as team director."



For Davidenko, having ridden for the team just six months ago, the switch to an authoritative role could be tricky. (Imagine having to tell Oleg he has a curfew!) But Vasilli is not too worried about this. "We have many new guys, so to them I'm not the ex-rider. They look to me as a director. For the old guys it will be a little bit strange, but in the past years I was always the older guy and giving them advice. I've done all these races



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Cyclingnews diarist Glen  
Chadwick  
Photo ©: San Diego Low  
Speed Wind Tunnel

so I think I'll have good respect from all the guys."

As for the preview of what is to come from the team, Beamon was predictably optimistic. "I'm happy with the fitness level of the guys that need to be fit in the early part of the season." But in particular, he is happy with the foreign riders that are returning for their second season racing the U.S. circuit. "The guys coming here for the first time last year didn't know the American races as well, but Lagutin is going well right now and he is motivated. His condition right now is light years ahead of where he was in all of 2006!"

Following the camp the team took five riders, Glen Chadwick, Ben Day, Viktor Rapinski, Sergey Lagutin and Phil Zaczjek down to San Diego for testing in the low speed wind tunnel, followed by pre-Tour of California stage scouting. "We will look at certain stages, like the time trial and stages five and six," said Davidenko. "We came here direct from San Diego where the guys did the wind tunnel. It's really important for the new guys to see the stages and to get ready mentally."

Davidenko was also preparing himself, in the form of driving the team car behind the riders. "I've spent the entire weekend driving behind the guys, so I think I am ready."

### The better looking half

The ladies of TEAm Lipton are once again led by American road and time trial champion Kristin Armstrong. But this year, they will be seeing new colours on her - at least in the time trials, when she will sport her world champion's jersey. While Armstrong was present at the camp, and was seen rolling with the team on the bike, she was not actually pedaling. During the off-season she underwent knee surgery, and only recently returned to the bike.



The TEAm Lipton girls  
Photo ©: Casey Gibson

"I had Arthroscopic surgery to clean some thickened tissue," said Armstrong. "I started out having pain at the end of December and it got to the point where I couldn't pedal my bike. I didn't have six months to sit around and wait, and when they went in they found a lot of stuff, so it was the right call."

"It's getting better - I'm four weeks out of surgery and I took a big step this weekend. I was doing indoor rides, but I was able to do a two hour ride on the road. They didn't expect it until six weeks after, and it was four."

Even though Armstrong was unable to ride at her team camp (except coasting on the bike for the team photos) she was happy to get to know her new teammates - and even a little anxious. "The biggest concern for me was that we got along so well last year... you don't have to have the strongest team on paper to win, you need to be able to work together as a team."



Kristin Armstrong leads  
Photo ©: Casey Gibson

Four new riders joined the team in the off-season: Lauren Franges, Brenda Lyons and Kim Geist from Victory Brewing, along with a new professional Nicole Evans. "Lauren has raced with us on the national team and she is going to add a lot to the team," said Armstrong. "Brenda is newer to the sport but a great sprinter. Kim Geist is a younger rider but grew up track racing and I see her developing into a really strong engine. We have a new girl that I spotted at Cascade last year, Nicole Evans. I went up to her there and she was a collegiate runner. At camp you can tell she was very new, but learning a lot."

A highlight for the team this season is a trip to Europe for a stage race and a world cup. "The team is going to Germany to race Thüringen Rundfahrt der Frauen and a

world cup as TEAm Lipton," said Armstrong.

Ed Beamon was impressed by the ladies of Lipton, particularly the off-season acquisitions. "They look good. A few new riders on that team as well. Nicole Evans out of Utah looks to be a talent, Brenda Lyons is also showing some results from hard work and I think she will have some leadership abilities and Lauren Franges is also talented and adds good depth to the team."

When asked if the ladies were dropping the hammer on the boys for sign sprints, Beamon chuckled, "We kept it low key. We spent the first couple of days training as one big group, with time to socialize together too, to build the comradery between the two teams."

[The full team rosters for Navigators and TEAm Lipton are available at the [Cyclingnews teams database](#).]

## Photography

For a thumbnail gallery of these images, [click here](#)

*Images by Casey Gibson*

[The Navigators cruising along](#) on the quiet roads of New Mexico.

[Glen Chadwick and Ben Day](#) lead the group.

["I don't like real warm camps!"](#) said team director Ed Beamon. Judging by riders' expressions, some of them may disagree.

[High plains drifters](#) - the Navigators ride across the dry desert plateau of New Mexico.

[Hilton Clarke and David O'Loughlin](#) lead the team back to town.

[Navigators and Lipton](#) leading the Saturday morning ride.

[Kristin Armstrong leads](#) in the rainbow colours.

[The TEAm Lipton girls](#) get some sun in Albuquerque.

[The full Navigators squad](#) with Irish Champion David O'Loughlin in the centre.

[A full house for the presentation](#) of Navigators and TEAm Lipton.

[This lot must be worth a tidy sum...](#) the Navigators team issue Colnago C50 frames are ready for building.

*Images by San Diego Low Speed Wind Tunnel*

[Ben Day perfecting his position](#) in the San Diego low speed wind tunnel.

[Ben Day takes his turn](#) in the wind tunnel.

[Cyclingnews diarist Glen Chadwick](#) catches the wind in San Diego.

[Chadwick adopts a very narrow position](#) for maximum aerodynamics.

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