BEKING

BACK TO BIKE

BEKING 2026: the Women Crit returns for a second edition

Eighteen riders will take part in the Women Crit in Monaco on 29 November. Elena Cecchini and Demi Vollering share their perspectives on the growth of women's cycling, the values of BEKING and the importance of giving something back.

Women's cycling will once again take centre stage at BEKING, with 18 riders set to line up for the Women Crit on 29 November in Monaco. The women's line-up will feature **Tiffany Cromwell, Urška Žigart, Elena Cecchini, Gladys Verhulst-Wild, Soraya Paladin, Vittoria Guazzini, Barbara Guarischi, Sofia Bertizzolo, Demi Vollering, Chiara Consonni, Irma Siri, Constance Valentin, Rachele Barbieri, Pauline Ferrand-Prévot, Martina Alzini, Martina Fidanza, Sara Fiorin** and **Eleonora Gasparrini.**

Among them is Elena Cecchini, who has been part of BEKING since its very first edition and played an important role in the development of the women's criterium. Having witnessed the event evolve over the years, she reflects on what makes it special and on the progress of women's cycling. ""*I've been part of BEKING since the beginning. In the early days, the focus was already on riding with children, which has always been at the heart of the event. The idea of having a women's criterium was something I had in mind for a long time. Thanks to Claudia's vision and determination, we now have one, which is a great milestone for BEKING. Last year's edition was a great success and allowed us to support the* ***Amy Pieters Foundation****. This year, we'll be contributing to another important cause. It's a really rewarding feeling*," says **Cecchini**.

Women's cycling has made significant progress in recent years, with growing audiences, greater professional opportunities and increasing visibility. For **Demi Vollering,** one of the most important developments has been the connection with fans, while media coverage remains an area with room for improvement. "*I've seen women's cycling change significantly in terms of the attention it receives from fans. Many more people now come to watch us race, and most races are broadcast live. However, there is still work to be done: some exciting races are only shown on TV for the final 30 kilometres, which is a shame because fans miss important parts of the action. Television coverage is also important because young girls can then see us and become interested in cycling, which will help the peloton to grow. Finally, women's cycling shouldn't simply copy men's; we should continue to preserve what makes it unique.*" explains **Vollering.**

Cecchini also highlights the impact of greater investment in women's sport, which has helped teams become more professional and athletes access the tools they need to perform at their best. Her advice to younger riders is to give their all while maintaining a healthy balance between cycling and life outside the sport.

More than racing: giving something back

For both riders, BEKING represents an opportunity to step beyond the usual demands of professional competition and use sport to create connections and support a wider cause. *"As an athlete, it's nice to be able to give something back. Throughout the year, our focus is so often on results and professionalism that I believe it is crucial to leverage our position to support meaningful causes wherever possible. I love being part of BEKING and being involved in events that bring people together for a good cause."* says **Vollering**.

For **Cecchini**, BEKING also offers a rare opportunity for the cycling community in Monaco to come together outside the racing season. "*We spend a lot of time here in Monaco, but during the season everyone is busy with their own training and racing schedules, so it can be difficult to meet. BEKING*

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is that one moment in the year when we can get together, enjoy each other's company and ride our bikes without the pressure of competition. We stay connected, share our passion and come together for a good cause. It's a really nice opportunity."

Lessons that go beyond the bike

The values promoted by BEKING also extend to younger generations. For **Vollering**, cycling can be a powerful way to develop skills and confidence that remain valuable throughout life. "*Cycling can teach young people a lot: teamwork, leadership and how to speak up. Training also teaches you how to keep going when things get difficult. Sometimes you feel exhausted, but you still have to push through. Once you've done it, the feeling is great, and it helps you become stronger and better. It's the same in life: things are not always easy, but sometimes you have to keep going to make things happen. Cycling gives you confidence for the bigger picture of life.*"

Cecchini highlights another important lesson: '*Respect is one of the most valuable things we can learn from cycling, particularly when it comes to sharing the road.*' *Motorists, pedestrians and cyclists all have a responsibility to look after one another, particularly the more vulnerable among us. It's something we should always keep in mind, both on and off the bike.*"

Through stories like these, BEKING shows how cycling can make a difference bringing people together, inspiring younger generations and creating opportunities to give something back.

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