**MARSHALL “MAJOR” TAYLOR**

Born on November 26, 1878 in rural Indiana just outside of Indianapolis

Nicknamed “Major” in 1892 because he wore a soldier’s uniform while performing cycling stunts as a youth as he worked at an Indianapolis bike shop

Won his first race at the age of 13

Blacks were banned from amateur bike racing in the U.S. in 1894

Blacks formed their own cycling clubs and races much like the old Negro baseball league

Taylor became the first African American champion of the United States but had to abandon his quest to become the national champion because promoters in the South refused his entrance to key races

Taylor held seven world cycling records in 1898

Became the first African American World Champion athlete on August 10, 1899 as he won the world 1 mile sprint championship in Montreal, Canada

September 1900 Major won the American sprint championship

From 1902 – 1904 he competed as a superstar in Europe, Australia, New Zealand and the United States

In 1910 Major retired from racing at the age of 32

Major died on June 21, 1932 in a Chicago charity ward

“Life is too short for a man to hold bitterness in his heart”

Marshall “Major” Taylor