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VIRTUAL REALITY CYCLE VIDEOS LET INDOOR CYCLISTS RACE EACH OTHER

 SPORT & FITNESS

VeloReality's indoor training equipment now enables avid cyclists to train beside each other in a virtual reality ride, without braving the off-season weather.

Exercise bikes may be great for those looking to train in bad weather, but the experience has a number of significant drawbacks for the avid cyclist. Gone are the rolling hills of a scenic touring route, and also absent are any cycling companions to lend a sense of camaraderie and competition. Looking to address this, VeloReality's training software simulates rides through famous scenic cycle tracks and roads via responsive HD videos. Indoor training cyclists can connect their training bikes to the software during the off-season and experience real resistance, admiring the views, which change in correspondence to the bike's actual speed. Now, the latest incarnation of their VRide product — **VRide Multi** — connects riders to an online network, which enables them to find other cyclists also undertaking a VR ride, and join them on the course.

To start, cyclists simply plug in the VeloReality USB hard drive to their bike, and load up the VRide Multi map of Europe showing all current users. They can then choose from any of the training courses they have purchased — each course covers approximately 40km and costs EUR 9.95 — and fast forward the cinema quality video to the current position of their new teammate or competitor. The riders then cycle alongside each other, adding friendly competition to the otherwise lonely pursuit of indoor cycling.

We have already seen companies offering a range of visual stimulation and responsive equipment to motivate users — such as **BitGym's** vibration based exercise platform — but VRide Multi is the first to enable remote interaction between users, injecting a welcome element of comradery to off-

season training. It is currently in Beta and welcoming cycling enthusiasts to test the system. It is compatible with a growing number of indoor bikes including VeloReality's own LYNX trainer. Are there other ways to connect athletes to each other remotely, for stimulation during training?

26th February 2015

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