

# Tour de California riders use Auburn bike manufacturer

By Blair Anthony Robertson, Sacramento Bee

Jim Felt's career as a design guru and geek who owns an international bicycle manufacturing company may have begun with a run he never finished, a lunch he didn't hold down and the best \$100 he ever lost.

In the mid-70s and still in his 20s, Felt was a hotshot motorcycle mechanic, designer and former racer who spent more time partying than taking care of himself. One day, a friend who was into physical fitness bet Felt \$100 he couldn't run a mile.

"I was cocky and I told him, 'I'll take your money any day,' " Felt recalled recently, shaking his head and laughing. "I started to run with him and I don't think I made it half a mile. I bonked. I was throwing up. I was schooled.

"It hit me so hard that I decided then and there I was going to learn how to run."

He started with short runs, gasping and coughing along the way. But he got better, the outings longer. Eventually, he started riding a road bike so he could get involved in a new sport called triathlon. By then, the 5-foot-9 Felt had gone from 190 pounds to 145.

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