



# Michelle Paiement

My father, Pierre, was one of the longest standing members of the *Beaconsfield Cycling Club* and also one of the founding members of the *VCOM racing team*, an extremely successful cycling team with many provincially and nationally ranked members.

He was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2005. I know that cancer doesn't discriminate but for my dad it was a slap in the face. Lung Cancer??? He was an athlete, a cyclist and cross country skier for over 30 years. How could this be? I remember how I sobbed when I got the call. How would he get through this? He had ½ of one of his lung removed in November 2005. We learned that it had spread to some of his lymph nodes, so he had to undergo chemo. In the summer of 2006, he was cancer free! Those around him rejoiced but my dad continued to grow more and more depressed. He faced many other physical



complications which further aggravated his situation. He could not come to terms with no longer being able to cycle or ski the way he used to. He was unable to work without feeling exhausted. What my dad could "do" was how he defined himself. It was "who" he was. He always set the bar so high! He lived from day to day in fear, in fear of the cancer returning. In August of 2007, he ended the mental anguish and tragically took his own life. People may judge and say 'well he didn't die of Cancer'. I disagree, *for some*, cancer attacks more than just your body. It attacks you mentally, emotionally, it strains relationships and friendships, and sometimes that's even harder to cure....**I am doing this in honor of my dad, for him and for those who are fighting the fight!**

## About Michelle

I'm the proud mom of two boys who are aged 8 and 11! A fitness professional with 20 years in the industry! AND a competitive cyclist with 3 years (and counting) experience.

## My Cycling Journey:

As a young teenager, I followed in my father's footsteps. Much to my dad's disappointment, teenage years offered other things to explore, so I stopped riding. In 2004, I rekindled my passion for cycling! Finding fellow cyclists to ride with was not a problem. My dad and all his racing buddies were happy to take me under their wings and help me out with advice, training tips and encouragement. In 2006, I joined my dad's racing team and wore the VCOM colors with pride! I had a great 1<sup>st</sup> season finishing on a few podiums. But nothing will ever compare my 2007 season. I dominated the Master Women's field and to top it all off, I won the Canadian National Masters Road Race. The best part of 2007, was that my dad was there to see me accomplish my goals. He was there to see me sprint across the line at the nationals championships! He was proud of me! And I know he would be proud of me for taking on this challenge and thrilled at the chance for me to **Ride with Lance**.

**Please join me in helping raise money to support the *Cedars Cancer Institute* and the *Cancer Care Mission* of the MUHC so that they may continue to provide cancer patients of all ages with the best care for *life*.**

*Together, the Best Care for Life*



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