

# Hood tries again with memorial fund in mind

BY HILARY DECENT

For The Sun

Marine veteran and Guinness World Record chaser George Hood will be back in the saddle today as he takes part in a 60-hour training spin cycle marathon to raise money for a local fallen soldier's family.

Hood's ride marks the start of a campaign to raise money for the Gunnar Hotchkin Memorial Fund and will culminate with his re-attempt Oct. 21 at the Guinness World Record at Urban Tri Gear in Burr Ridge. Hotchkin was a local soldier killed by a roadside bomb in June while serving in Afghanistan.



Gunnar Hotchkin

In April Hood spin cycled for 175 hours at Aurora Marketplace, raising almost \$16,000 for the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund and the Fox Valley United Way. He had planned to ride for 300 hours, breaking the record, which stands at 200 hours.

"I know I can't save the world, but perhaps I can help one family

at a time," said Hood, who is a certified personal trainer at X-Sport Fitness in Naperville. "I sometimes feel guilty when I commit to such a cause as this and then a week later read about a Marine in Wheaton who was killed in much the same way as Gunnar was, but I'm just doing the right thing with really no expectations other than perhaps a legacy for my three sons to look up to when I'm long gone. I only wish I would've had such a hero growing up."

The ride will take place at the Eggspereience Café on 75th Street beginning at 6 a.m. today. If Hood is successful, it will end at 7 p.m. Friday. At 6 p.m. the restaurant will open its doors to the public and host a benefit fundraiser.

Tickets, which include food and drink, will be available at the door priced at \$20 for adults and \$12 for children younger than 12.

"I'm genuinely excited to host a world record holder in my restaurant that will honor and raise money



Aurora resident George Hood did break the Guinness World Record for the longest time spent riding a stationary spin bicycle on May 11, 2008, at the Fry YMCA in Naperville. However, he never made the published book. | SUN FILE

for a fallen soldier and his family," Eggspereience owner John Sakoufakis said. "I've never done anything like this. George's commitment to

helping others is extraordinary."

The event will be streamed live at [www.ustream.tv/channel/hood-s-60-hour-ride-at-the-egg](http://www.ustream.tv/channel/hood-s-60-hour-ride-at-the-egg). Checks

can be made payable to the Gunnar Hotchkin Memorial Fund and sent to 840 E. Ogden Ave., Westmont, IL 60559.