

## Erica Clevenger

“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.” -  
Winston Churchill

Name: Erica Clevenger  
D.O.B.: May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1994  
Birth city and state: Northridge, CA  
Current City: Tucson, AZ  
Height: 5'4  
Specialty: All-rounder  
Previous sports: Triathlon, Tennis, Track  
Years racing: 3  
Colleges attended: The University of Arizona, Colorado School of Mines  
Degree: B.S. Chemical Engineering  
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Erica recently moved to Golden, CO to start working on her PhD in environmental engineering at Colorado School of Mines. She is working towards alleviating water stress around the world through her research in advanced water treatment techniques. She has held prestigious internships at Intel, and Lawrence Livermore National Labs throughout her rise into the professional ranks of endurance sports.

Erica started training for triathlon in 2012, and after finding success there, made the switch to road in late 2016. A successful Tour of the Gila and a win at collegiate road nationals propelled Erica to the next level and she rode the rest of the 2017 season with Visit Dallas DNA before joining Twenty20 Pro Cycling in 2018.

While Erica has personal goals in the sport, ultimately, she would like to be a part of a greater change in cycling culture to make it more inclusive. Erica believes that this ties in well with her engineering goals because with more people out riding bikes, roads can be made safer for cyclists and this can help alleviate many of the environmental and socioeconomic problems that are associated with cars-air pollution, traffic, obesity, etc.

### Career Highlights

- 2018 Stage 3 San Dimas 1<sup>st</sup>
- 2018 Valley of the Sun Road Race 4<sup>th</sup>
- 2017 Collegiate Cycling Road Race National Champion
- 2017 USA CRITS Series Best Young Rider
- 2017 John Sterner Scholarship Recipient (USA Cycling)
- 2016 Collegiate Triathlon National Champion



**What inspired you to become a bike racer?**

Growing up I'd always wanted to play a team sport. The strategy and team dynamics involved in bike racing drew me in from triathlon.

**Who is an inspiration to you in your life, both on and off the bike?**

I love seeing anyone work hard and achieve their goals. I think often about my grandma who came to the U.S. with a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade education; unable to read (in any language) or speak English. She worked as a seamstress and sent money back to her family in Mexico, eventually saving up enough to buy her own sewing machine. From there she eventually she started her own business that is still around today and she reads the bible daily.

**Favorite meal when training?**

Kodiak cakes

**The best thing about being a bike racer is?**

Getting to connect with so many awesome people that I would never have met otherwise. Female pro cyclists and the people out supporting women's pro cycling are absolutely rad!

**What is your biggest accomplishment on the bike?**

Winning the road race at collegiate cycling nationals was a pretty cool experience. I had some great competition and I was proud of my result given that I was finishing my engineering degree simultaneously.

**Favorite place you've raced your bike and why?**

Adelaide, Australia. I kicked off the 2018 season with the Santos Women's tour; my first race on Twenty20 Pro Cycling. Not only was it an excellently organized event in an amazing location but it was meaningful to share the experience with my new teammates who are now close friends!

**Favorite cross training or off-season activity?**

Trail running is my favorite; especially the gnarly technical stuff. My triathlon teammates dubbed me "off-road Erica."

**Best tip for a new bike racer?**

Just get out there and ride. Cultivate a love for the sport in yourself and in others.

**What are one or two things that you do daily that are the key to your success?**

I try to listen to my body. If I can't focus on school and need to go for a ride-I do it. If I can't focus on my ride because my mind is on school I might scrap the workout for that day. If I'm hungry I eat and if I'm tired I try to rest.

**If you weren't bike racing what would you be?**

Athletically I'd want to be a triathlete again or maybe an endurance mountain biker. Career-wise I would be exactly where I am now-working on my PhD in environmental engineering/trying to directly impact important problems in the world.



**If you could spend 10 days anywhere, where would it be?**

I went Alaska with my family this year and got a brief tour of Denali National Park. I'd really love to have a real adventure there!

**Favorite things to do off the bike:**

1. barbeques with friends
2. watch movies
3. play tennis
4. drinking wine with my parents
5. playing with my puppy Indy

**Top 5 warmup/pre-race songs on your iPod:**

A few favorites in no particular order:

1. Gold on the Ceiling- The Black Keys
2. You're Gonna Go Far Kid- The Offspring
3. Jungle- XAmbassadors & Jamie N. Commons
4. Lose yourself-Eminem
5. Can't Hold Us- Macklemore and Ryan Lewis

**Favorite things to eat.**

1. frozen mangos
2. grilled veggies
3. greek yogurt with blueberries and granola
4. cookie dough
5. breakfast burritos

**Tell us something about yourself that people may not know:**

A few years ago, when I was still a triathlete, I was following the Tour of California and watched as a relatively unknown Latvian guy took an unexpected win and the GC in the 4<sup>th</sup> stage. Being from California, I planned a visit on the day that the guys finished on Mt. Baldy and rode up ahead of them to watch with my Dad and his team. This guy, Toms Skujins, wasn't expected to be able to hold onto the GC against all the big teams but it was still exciting, and my boyfriend and I cheered him on as he climbed. He said "thanks guys" as he passed, and we thought that was super cool.

Later, we started talking about how "Skujins" was a cute name for a pet and we ended up getting a cat and naming him Skujins. At that point, I never thought that I'd be a bike racer myself (nevermind a pro!) Fast forward 3 years; Skujins is now a decorated rider and I am only 1 or 2 friends removed from actually knowing the guy. Not sure if he's somehow gotten wind that someone named their cat after him but let's just say it's not something I go advertising around my pro cycling friends...

