

# What mad pursuit!

A unique “sporting” event, the annual Plate Race has been a fixture of the summer Meetings & Courses program at the Laboratory since about 1983. What is a Plate Race? University of Oregon cell biologist and CSHL summer course instructor Dr. Bruce Bowerman describes it as follows: “It is a relay race in which each team member has to run one lap while carrying a stack of twenty 150mm stinky, used yeast plates (a petri dish containing a solid nutrient on which is grown yeast or bacteria). After completing the lap, each racer has to transfer the stack to the next team member, without dropping them. If you drop them, you have to go back to the beginning, get a new stack and start over!”

The race takes place on Bungtown Road in the heart of the CSHL campus and rapidly loops uphill in front of the Nichols building, and then downhill again, in a roughly 200m course. It’s really a symbol of the powerful, collaborative and enthusiastic learning experience that participants have in taking advanced summer courses at CSHL. So cheers to this year’s winning team, from the Gene Expression Course! With apologies to Francis Crick: What mad pursuit!

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