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16 January 2013

ESSEX COUNTY VELO REPORT TO THE GLOUCESTER PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AND CITY COUNCIL

Summary

Over fourteen years, the Gran Prix of Gloucester cyclocross race has grown from a single day, local event attracting fewer than 200 participants to an internationally recognized two-day event drawing more than 1,100 national and international competitors. Within the cycling world, Gloucester is known as one of the best produced, most professional and beautiful races in the country. This recognition is not only apparent through the growth of the race itself, but in the media coverage and depth of athletes who attend. The Gran Prix of Gloucester has been recognized by publications such as Outside Magazine, VeloNews, Bike and the Boston Globe as not only an outstanding participatory event, but as a spectacular spectator venue as well.

An event of this scope has an obvious positive financial and social impact on the City. We feel the Gran Prix of Gloucester is an important draw for the City and we continue to believe we have acted as responsible and ethical civic partners. It's our hope we can continue to collaborate with the City to produce this event.

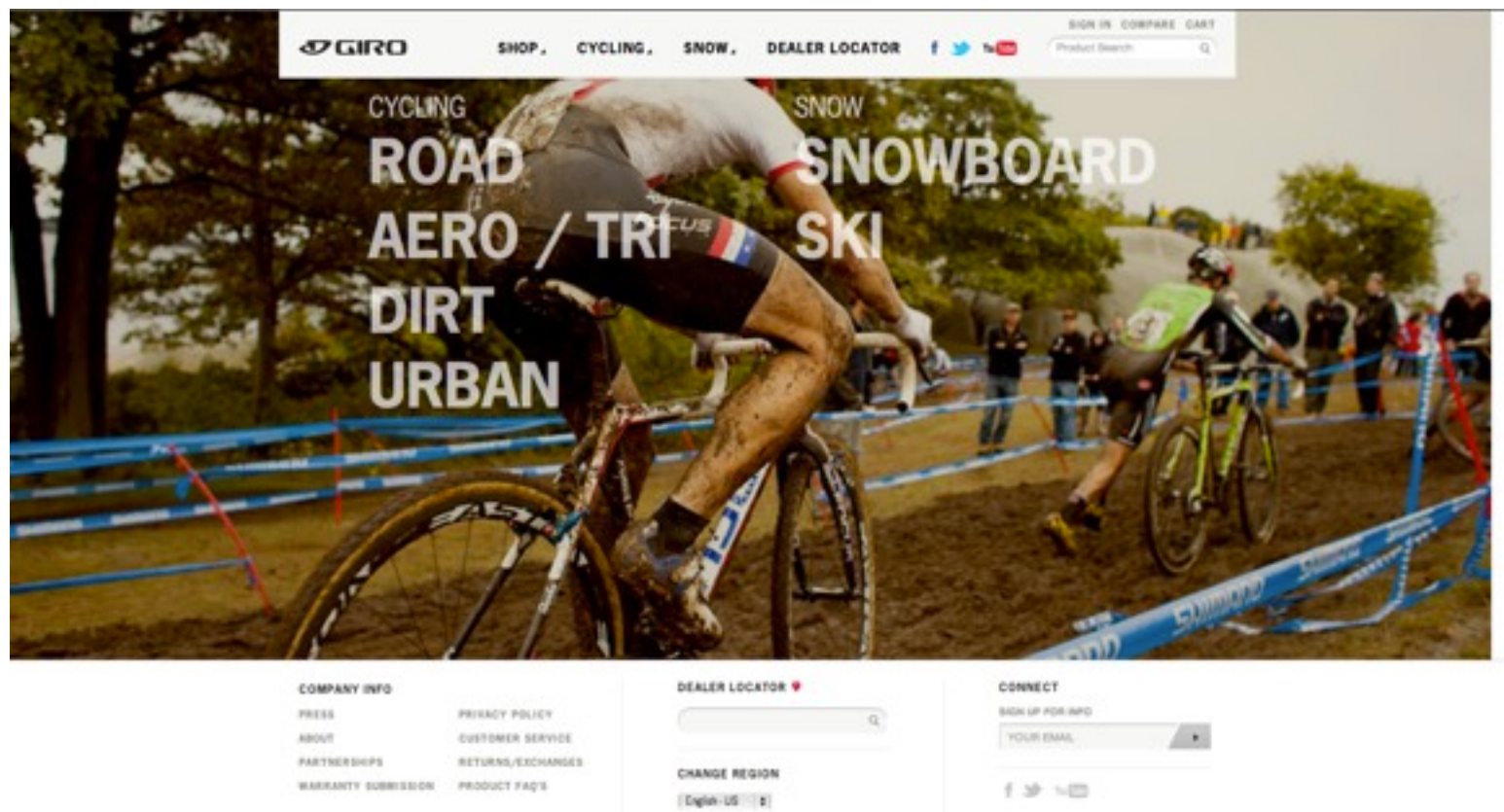


Figure 1 - Main image of giro.com on 16 January 2013 featuring the Gran Prix of Gloucester. Giro, based in Scotts Valley, CA, is a worldwide leader in high-performance protective gear and accessories for action sports and active lifestyles.



Figure 2 - Image by Ryan Kelly used in Outside Magazine in April 2012. Outside is an American magazine focused on the outdoors. Outside launched the career of Jon Krakauer, Sebastian Junger, and other freelance travel and adventure writers.

Communication Issues

The November 7, 2012 meeting of the Gloucester Planning & Development Committee highlighted some gaps in communication between different groups within the City and our organization.

Contention by Councilors Verga and Ciolino that the City Council has been receiving complaints about the race for four years, was surprising to both the race promoter and Parks Department Director. Each year, Essex County Velo, the non-profit promotor of the race, goes through the City's permitting process and communicates directly with the Parks Department regarding site specific items. We have developed an outstanding working relationship with Mr. Mark Cole and his team. At the November meeting, we submitted a letter to the council, a letter which our organization received on City letterhead, commending Essex County Velo's efforts regarding post-event course repair.

It was therefore surprising to learn that some in the City Council felt our efforts to restore the park was lacking.

Our organization has the upmost respect for the jewel that is Stage Fort Park and the citizens that utilize the park. As particular issues have been identified, we have attempted to remediate concerns in earnest.

Work Done as of 16 January 2013

Dates and descriptions taken from invoices or correspondence received by our organization from Wolf Hill.

4, 6, 9 October 2012 - Rake out entire course, Used power rake with bobcat. Hand rake baseball field, seed all areas.
Cost: \$4230

26 October 2012 - Spread loam and more grass seed to a few more areas per Mark Cole, assistant DPW Director.
Cost: \$1599

27 December 2012 - Hay bales were set in place December 15th on the hill between the Lucy Brown Davis pathway and the playground. Email from Wolf Hill indicates a cost of \$241.78.

Point-by-Point Address of Mr Roark's Photographic Evidence to P&D Committee 7 November 2013

The majority of our time at the November meeting was spent reviewing photographs presented by Mr. George Roark, a resident of Gloucester. Fourteen color photos, taken on several dates in October of 2012 were presented to the Council as evidence. Descriptions are taken from the minutes. Comments for each photo are below.

#1 dated 10/21/12 shows the top of the embankment at the playground that was used as a run up. He commented there is no protection there.

#2 dated 10/21/12 shows the embankment that they come up and shows the erosion.

#3 is the bottom of the embankment on the Lucy Davis pathway and shows the dirt coming down onto the pathway.

#4 dated 10/11/12 shows the dirt almost as high as the wall which he stated was never taken care of and claimed it was currently in the same condition.

This section has been used for the last three years as a course feature (called a run-up in cyclocross parlance). The first two years this feature was used, growth of the cover crop grew back significantly on its own. No work was needed for this section to recover. With the amount of rain during the 2012 event, this section did not grow back and needs to be addressed. As of this writing, the hill has been dressed to avoid any erosion. Likely plan of action for the spring is to replenish the cover crop by planting winter rye to stabilize the area.

The soil which has fallen onto the Lucy Brown Davis Pathway will be cleaned up during the same time that the above repairs are made. The pile is approximately 3 meters by 1 meter in area, with a varying height.

#5 dated 10/21/12 shows the Lucy Davis pathway. He expressed the opinion that the topsoil has been eroded over the 14 years this event has been run. There are all stones on top of it. It has never been fixed. The event had 1,622 bicycles go over the path, and those bicyclists did multiple laps per race.

While Mr. Roark's numbers sound daunting, they are not proof that damage exists on the path due to the bicycle racing. Firstly, as an engineered gravel path, there is/was no topsoil. Of the path degradation concerns noted in various studies regarding the impact of (mountain) biking on trails: muddiness, displacement, erosion, compaction; most of these attributes (muddiness, displacement and erosion), do not apply. Compaction might be the only issue since the path is level, solid and not muddy. Mr. Roark's contention that "It is not good for walking" outstanding, there is very little evidence of damage attributed to the path by bicycles.

It would be interesting to calculate the number of footfalls on pedestrian traffic over 365 days a year over several years on that path.

Regardless, Essex County Velo is prepared to help restore the path for the enjoyment of all parties. We propose a re-grading and smoothing of the Lucy Davis pathway as well as the addition of stone dust. Wolf Hill thinks this will improve the path for all parties. We've received a quote from Wolf Hill and will work directly with the Parks Department in its implementation

#6 dated 10/21/12 taken at the Sam Parisi ball field shows the grass growing on top of the rocks there.

Investigation of the park on January 9 shows a vastly different situation. Grass has grown in nicely. There are several areas that we are aware of that need further repair. However, we've found that the majority of the damage that Mr. Roark presented has been healed. Though the race track through the field looks different than the unused areas, we performed measurements to determine what the impact is. When speaking with our landscaper, he showed how bumpy the ground in the ball field is, even in places where the race course has never been routed.

We have identified a few ruts in the outfield that require attention. However, our measurements show, that the majority of the track is as smooth as the unused portions of the field.

For data, please see Addendum A at the end of this report.

#7 dated 10/11/12 shows a field going down to the garden park. Mr. Roark claimed there has been nothing done with this land. The ruts are there and not resolved. It has been only seeded.

#8 dated 10/21/12 shows the condition of the ballpark behind the bench in the in-field.

Investigation of the park on January 9 shows a vastly different situation. Grass has grown in nicely. The impact is minimal. We did however notice a rut behind the ball field backstop that is about a 5 yards long and several inches wide. There are also some smaller ruts in that were discovered. We will instruct Wolf Hill to repair.

#9 dated 10/21/12 is by Cressy's Beach. Nothing was done to the path. Councilor Verga stated based on his trip he also saw that there had been no remediation of the conditions there. He saw the grass cut.

Unable to determine how this area of the park has healed due to damage incurred during winter storm. Rocks from the beach are strewn all over the grass between the volleyball court and Cressy's Beach.

#10 dated 10/24/12 shows a boulder behind the Visitor's Center on that road. This boulder was moved by a machine or a person. There are a lot of scrape marks on it. Another boulder was moved to make a path for the cycling race.

The boulder in question is not a natural element of the park. Rather, it's a vehicle deterrent in place to protect the park. Each year, several rocks are moved by the Parks Department as requested by our organization. These provide access to areas of the race course. We also move rocks across the street from the course to open up an entrance for vehicles and emergency response to access the parking lot. There is no actionable item here.

#11 dated 10/11/12 shows the cut made through the bushes; which Mr. Roark suggested someone from the event staff or the DPW did this to make another pathway for the cyclists.

No trees or bushes were removed. What was removed with permission of the Park, was some cover crop (aka: weeds). As in the case above with respect to the run-up from the Lucy Davis Pathway to the area near the playground, this cover usually recovers on its own. A review of the area on January 9 has shown significant growth. As of this writing, we believe no additional mitigation is necessary. However, we'll monitor and reassess in the spring,

#12 dated 10/21/12 shows sand dragged up off of Half Moon Beach. This event used the beach for part of their course and built a ramp.

Wolf Hill will work on removing the sand from the area in question.

#13 dated 10/21/12 is near Cressy's Beach showing erosion and no remediation.

Please see comment for photo #9 above.

#14 dated 10/11/12 shows the land between the Gloucester Civic Garden Club which has a statute and the Gloucester Garden Club plot; at the widest point it is 15 feet wide. The race used it to go down the Lucy Davis path. He stated the work has not been done.

Investigation of the park on January 9 shows a vastly different situation. Grass has grown in nicely. The overall impact is minimal. There are a few ruts remaining and we will work with Wolf Hill to repair. Recognizing the sensitivity of residents to this area, the bike race, if allowed to occur in the future, will not use this section for its course.

New Photographic Evidence



Photo 1 - Panoramic photos taken atop Tablet Rock showing the park shortly after the event on 1 October 2012 and several weeks later on 14 December 2012.

For additional photos, see Addendum B

Proposed Work for Spring 2013

The following items were discussed with Wolf Hill after a site visit to the park on December 14, 2012, and shared with Mark Cole of the Parks Department via email.

1. Additional grass seed on the hill behind the baseball field backstop, repair ruts. Loam as needed.
2. Inspect baseball outfield for any ruts or unevenness - repair as necessary.
3. Grade Lucy Davis Walkway with stone dust and remove pile of dirt at the base of the wall.
4. Rake, seed and stabilize the area on the hillside above the Lucy Davis Walkway.
5. Re-seed areas near the tennis court gardens and the apple orchard. Repair few remaining ruts.

Economic Benefits of the GP Gloucester

To help examine impact the race has on the City of Gloucester, Gary David, PhD, Chair, Department of Sociology, Bentley University (g david@bentley.edu) was contacted for his background in social science research. Professor David and his staff created a survey of Gran Prix of Gloucester participants. The poll was managed by Prof David and members of his staff at Bentley. All data collection was also handled by Prof David.

Below is a snapshot of the findings.

- There were 1146 unique participants on either Saturday or Sunday of the event (with many participants racing both days). As of October 27th, 271 participants responded to the survey, a response rate of 27%.
- A total of 229 respondents indicated that they brought someone with them to the venue. Given there were 271 total respondents, 85% of participants were accompanied by others.
- 40% of GP Gloucester poll respondents indicated that they used accommodations other than their home prior to the race.
- The money spent on accommodations is in the range of \$101-200 (19%) and \$201-300 (20%)
- The number one category of spending in the city of Gloucester was on Dining.
- The average amount spent by respondents on dining was in the neighborhood of \$66.
- Majority of participants in the Gran Prix of Gloucester fall within the 30-39 and 40-49 age range (a combined 60% of participants)
- The mean income level for respondents was in the \$75,000-99,000 range. The mean individual income for MA residents = \$85,897 (US Census)

Recently, the Race Director contacted several motels and inns in Gloucester. Below are some of the email responses.

"We do see a positive increase in business because of the event. The work to restore the park after your event was terrific and within a very short time there was little sign of the race. We hope you return to Gloucester" - Wingaersheek Motel

"I usually sell out of my rooms. The rest of the accommodations do well also.... The Grand Prix is extremely beneficial to me" - Harborview Inn

"Great event & I always have several participants stay. They are great guests and I look forward to the event each year" - Eagle House Motel

"We rented to a corporate team from California, the International Italian Champion, and various riders with families from New York, Connecticut, Vermont and Pennsylvania. We love the Gran Prix. Keep it up" - The Julietta House

"The Vista does see a number of race participants as guests and we love the business"! - Vista Motel

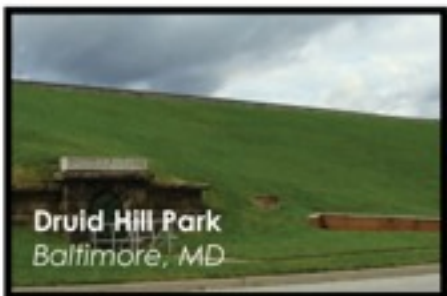
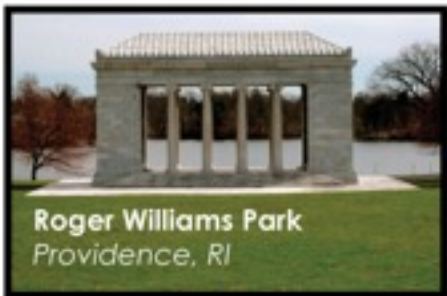
Finally, it should be noted the financial impact of the event for what is spent on materials, host accommodations, and other infrastructure with Gloucester-based businesses. In 2012, the GP of Gloucester spent the following for Gloucester based-businesses and on City expenses:

<u>City</u>		
Gloucester Police	\$	44.00
	\$	726.00
	\$	1,840.00
	\$	2,610.00
City of Gloucester Park Fees	\$	200.00
	\$	2,000.00
	\$	2,200.00
Total City Fees	\$	4,810.00

Local Businesses		
	Wolf Hill	
		\$ 241.78
		\$ 1,599.00
		\$ 241.78
		<u>\$ 4,230.00</u>
		\$ 6,312.56
	Cape Ann Marina	\$ 416.33
		<u>\$ 933.83</u>
		\$ 1,350.16
	Beauport Ambulance	\$ 1,822.00
	Gloucester Rental Center	\$ 70.00
	The Shed	\$ 1,100.00
	The Building Center	\$ 212.71
	The Event Company	\$ 350.94
		<u>\$ 1,002.81</u>
		\$ 1,353.75
	Carroll Steele	\$ 610.00
	Gloucester Homeport Storage	\$ 2,040.00
	<u>Food</u>	
	Captains Lodge	\$ 309.39
	The Causeway	\$ 193.71
	Cape Ann Brewing Pub	\$ 300.00
	Mike's Place	<u>\$ 128.20</u>
		\$ 931.30
Total		\$ 15,802.48

Total Gran Prix of Gloucester spends in Gloucester: **\$20,612.48** (\$4810 + \$15802.48)

Other Cyclocross Venues



This past week (January 4-8, 2013), the US National Championships were held at Badger Prairie Park in Madison, WI for the second consecutive year: over four days, thousands of competitors during severe weather conditions.

Open Space Use

There's a sentiment by some Gloucester residents that this event should not be allowed to dominate the park for 2 or 3 days every year. The Gran Prix of Gloucester is not unique. Every year, city streets and public parks are closed or have restricted access to host events. The Boston Marathon, Head of the Charles Regatta, even Gloucester cross-country meets, restrict non-participants. The inconvenience to park visitors is short and is part of a larger picture. Events that bring people into Gloucester are good for both the local economy and the City's prestige. In its 14 year history, the Gran Prix knows of not one incident of public disturbance or episode which required police intervention. It is asserted by the Gran Prix of Gloucester that its participants and spectators hold a high level of respect and appreciation for the city and the park.

Closing

When considering any park activity, there are certainly impacts that happen, but the question is, are those impacts acceptable, and are they reasonable and appropriate in relation to the big picture of the specific park and the Park Department's mission and management policies. One reason the park exists is for recreation. There is an impact of providing recreation. It is appropriate.

Recreational activities have an impact on the facility. This is clearly true of field sports like football and soccer, and even golf, which are played upon unsustainable grass fields which require weekly, or even daily, maintenance as long as they exist. Playgrounds, sand boxes, flower beds, swim beaches, and trails require repair and maintenance as long as they exist. An extreme example is swimming pools, which require maintenance literally 24/7. These maintenance and repair needs are clearly acceptable to the government and public - even though they cost a huge amount month after month. We understand it is necessary, and worth it. Then why is temporary damage to Stage Fort Park not reasonable and acceptable once a year? Who bears the maintenance costs for the sports fields? The participants or event organizers? For the above cases, no. In the case of cyclocross, the event organizers have taken ownership of the repairs to the park.

We respectfully ask that the City Council please let the tradition of world class cyclocross continue in Stage Fort Park.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Chris McKernan, Michele Harrison, Patrick Cochran, Michele Smith and Mountain Bike Hall of Fame Inductee Peter Webber who helped with the content in this report.

ADDENDUM A

EFFECTS OF THE GRAN PRIX OF GLOUCESTER ON THE SAM PARISI BASEBALL FIELD

Introduction

It's the contention of Mr. Roark and Mr. Dow, in evidence presented to the Gloucester City Council Planning & Development Committee meeting of 17 November 2012, that the Gran Prix of Gloucester has damaged the Sam Parisi Baseball Field irreparably. In past assessments describing the effect of events on the ball field surface, subjective terms were used. This report attempts to identify more clearly the impact of the event by measuring changes in surface gradation. In this way, we can better understand the condition of the field and how the race affects it.

Objective

Quantify "smoothness" of the Sam Parisi Baseball Field and the effects of the Gran Prix of Gloucester

Method

Moving an accelerometer across a rough, grassy surface to measure surface imperfections.

Test Set-up

An iPhone 4S was mounted to a measuring wheel using a RAM Mounting Systems RAP-274-I-AP9U EZ ON/OFF Handlebar Mount.

SignalScope for iPhone OS devices is a real-time analysis toolset by Faber Acoustical, suitable for use in areas such as acoustics, audio, electronics, and vibration. SignalScope includes an FFT-based spectrum analyzer and an oscilloscope.

For these measurements, SignalScope was configured in the oscilloscope mode. Input signals were acquired from the built-in accelerometer in the X-axis (positive direction to the right of the screen).

Data acquisition using the accelerometer plotted g-forces on the Y-axis versus time on the X-axis. Measurements were made in 5-second increments (the upper limit of the software). At a walking speed, this amounted to a linear measurement of approximately 22' linear distance.

Though there is some level of noise inherent in the iPhone accelerometer, the apparatus combined with the SignalScope software is sufficient for the purposes of this report in determining gradations of a few inches in the ballfield topsoil.

Measurements & Results

Measurement areas fell into two categories: areas of the ball park which,

1) Saw use in the 2012 edition of the Gran Prix of Gloucester

2) Have never been used in any edition of the Gran Prix of Gloucester

In areas unused by the Gran Prix, measurements were made in three directions:

1 - parallel to the foul ball line

2 - at a 45° angle from the baseline towards center field

3 - perpendicular to the foul ball line



Figure A - overview of the ballpark showing test areas. Areas 1 & 2 have never been used by GP Gloucester. Areas 3, 4 and 5 have been used by GP Gloucester in 2012 and other years.

In areas used during the 2012 edition of the Gran Prix of Gloucester, measurements were made perpendicular to the race course path to measure the maximum change in surface gradation.

The areas we measured that are unused by the race are located 20' towards the outfield on the 1st and 3rd base lines. The race has always kept the course in the outfield and these areas have never been included in Gran Prix race courses. (see Figure A showing areas 1 and 2).

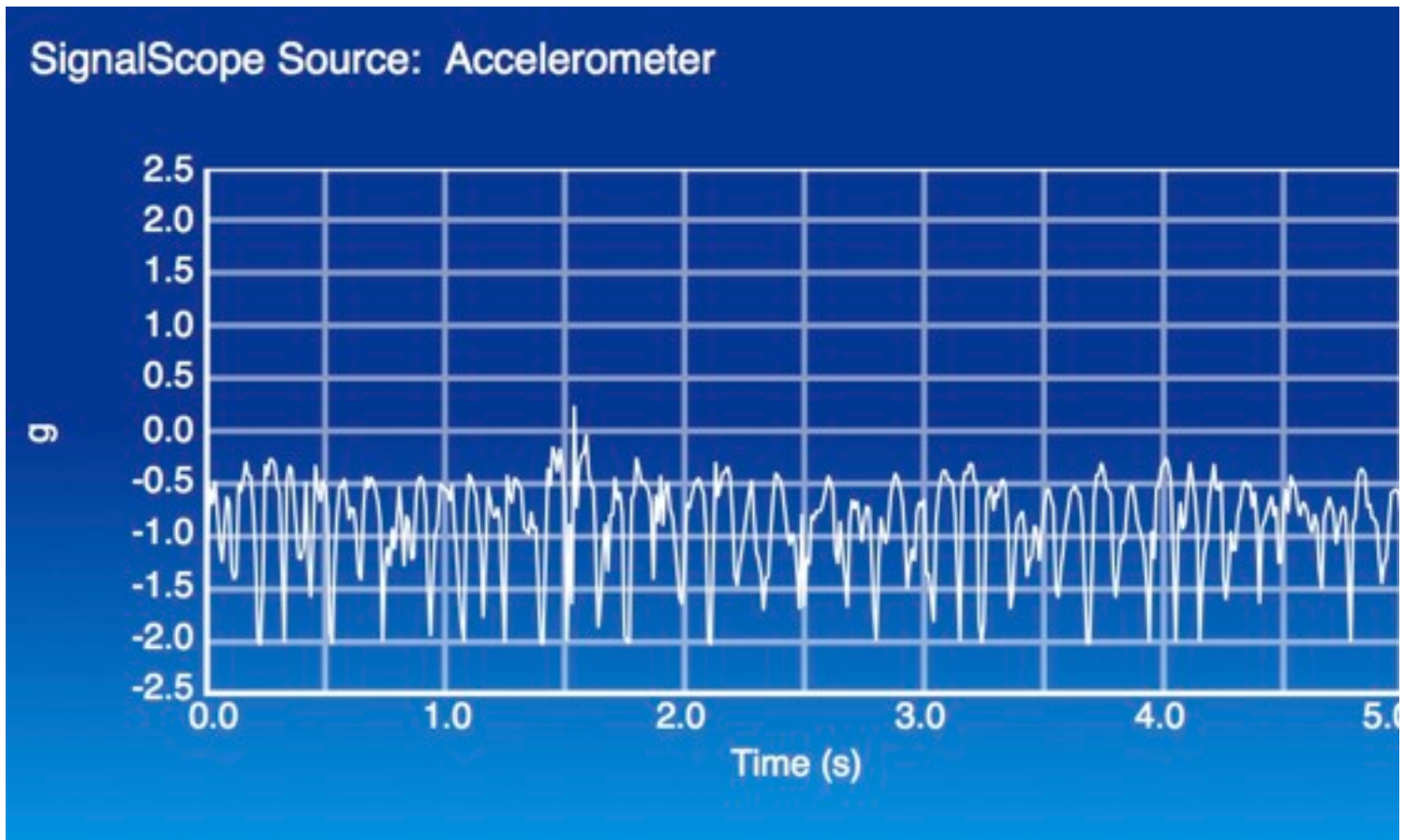


Figure B - Measurements in Area 1 made 20' away from first base running parallel with the foul ball line

The measurement in Area 1 that runs parallel with the foul ball line (Figure B) shows roughly a 2g swing in the Y-axis. This is not level ground. At approximately 1.5s there's a slight deflection from the norm of 0.5g. However, there were no visual indications of ruts.

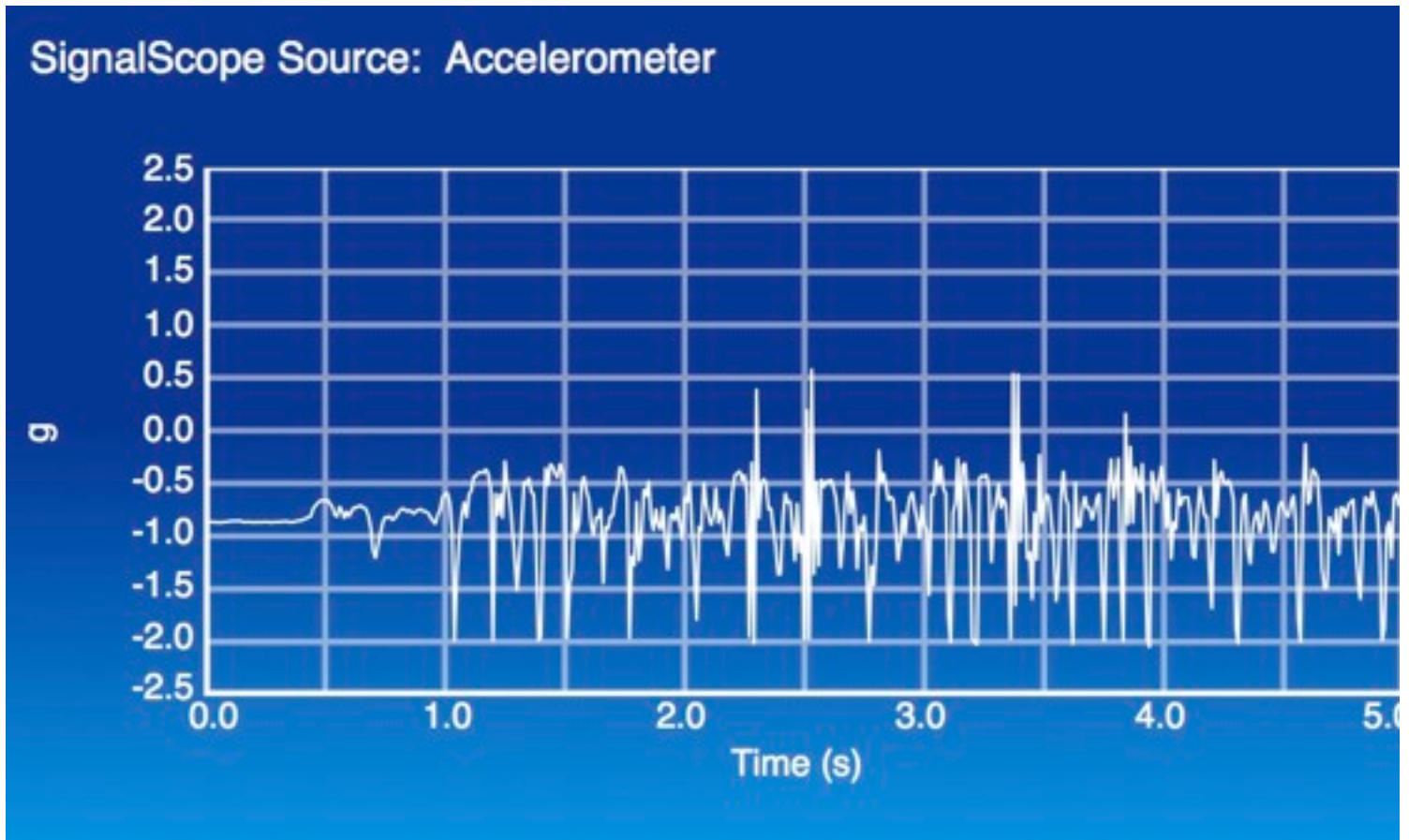


Figure C - Measurements in Area 1 made 20' away from first base running 45° with the foul ball line

In Figure C, the measurement was taken at a roughly 45° angle from first base going towards center field. Much like the previous figure, the majority of data falls within the 2g range. However, there are several peaks deviating from the norm by an additional 1g. (2.25s, 2.5s, 3.4s) These are imperfections in the surface not related to the bike race, though they can certainly be felt whilst walking or running.

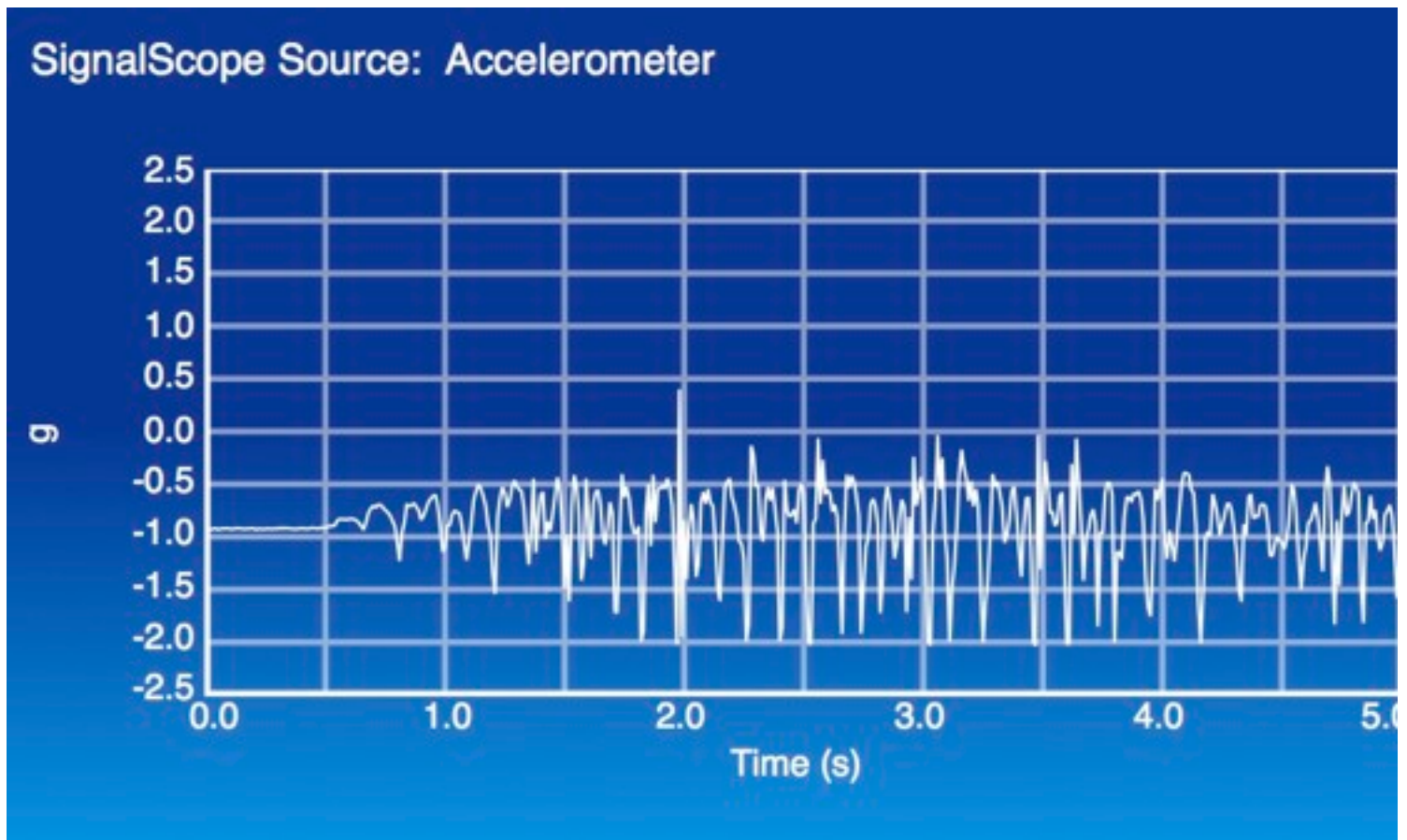


Figure D - Measurements in Area 1 made 20' away from first base running perpendicular to the foul ball line

The final measurement line for Area 1 shown in Figure D shows a 2g swing. There's a deviation at 2.0s by 1g but otherwise there are no significant ruts.

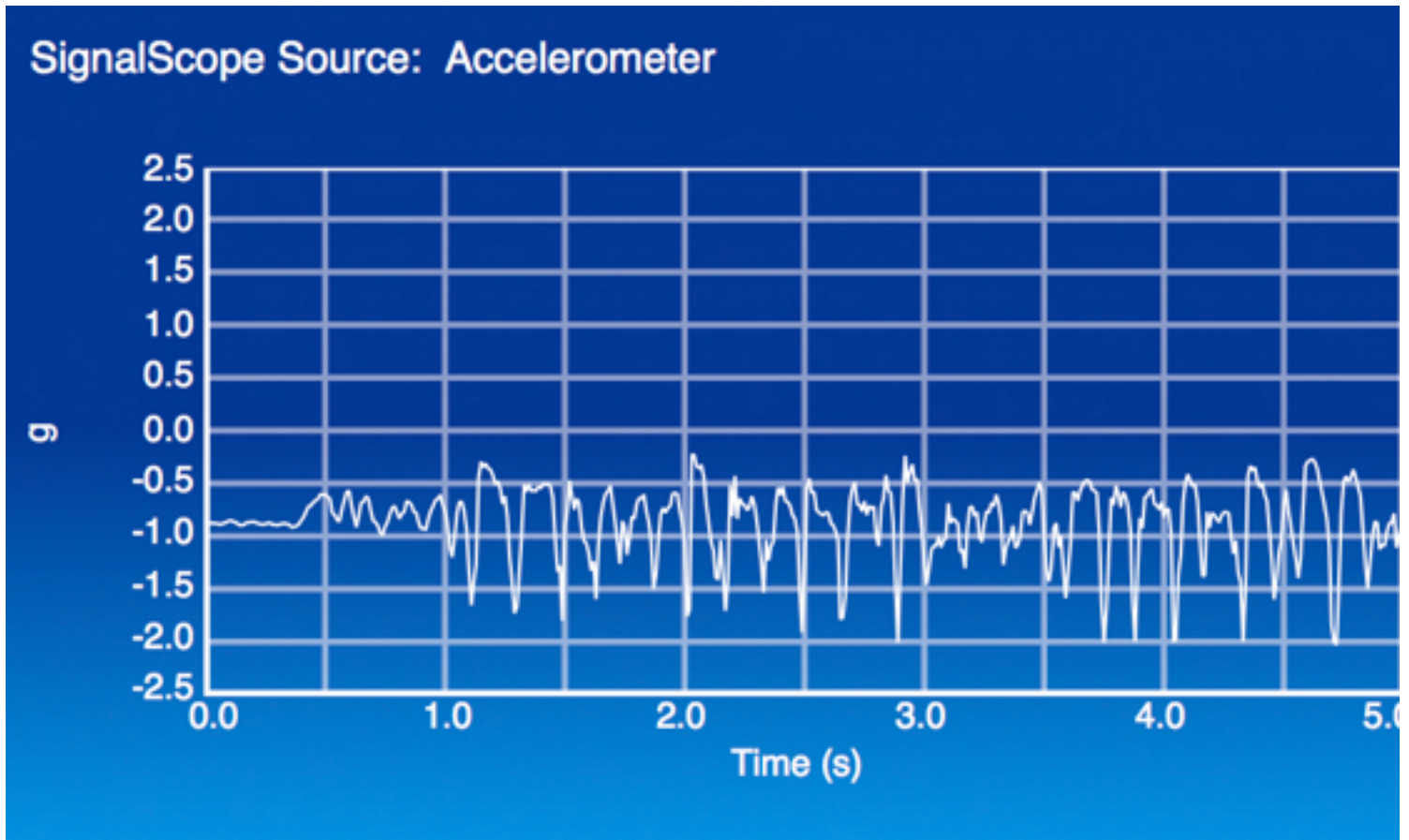


Figure E - Measurements in Area 2 made 20' away from third base running parallel with the foul ball line

Area 2 lies 20' away from the 3rd base infield edge. As in Area 1, the measurement running parallel with the foul ball line has an approximately 2g swing (Figure E). This is indicative of a linear section that shows no significant ruts.

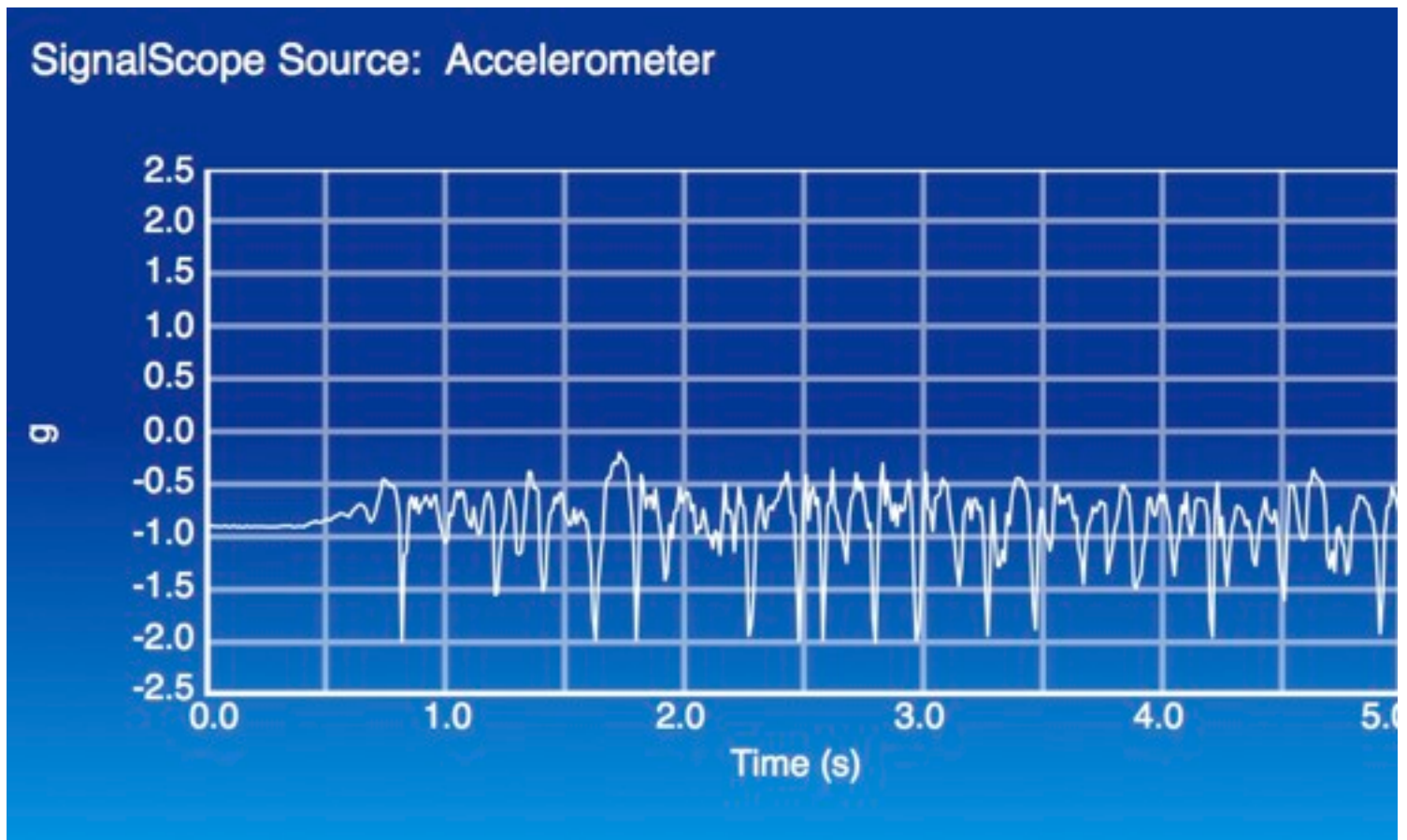


Figure F - Measurements in Area 2 made 20' away from third base running 45° with the foul ball line

In the 45° direction in Area 2 (Figure F) there are no significant bumps or ruts (all data is within the 2g swing of the norm).

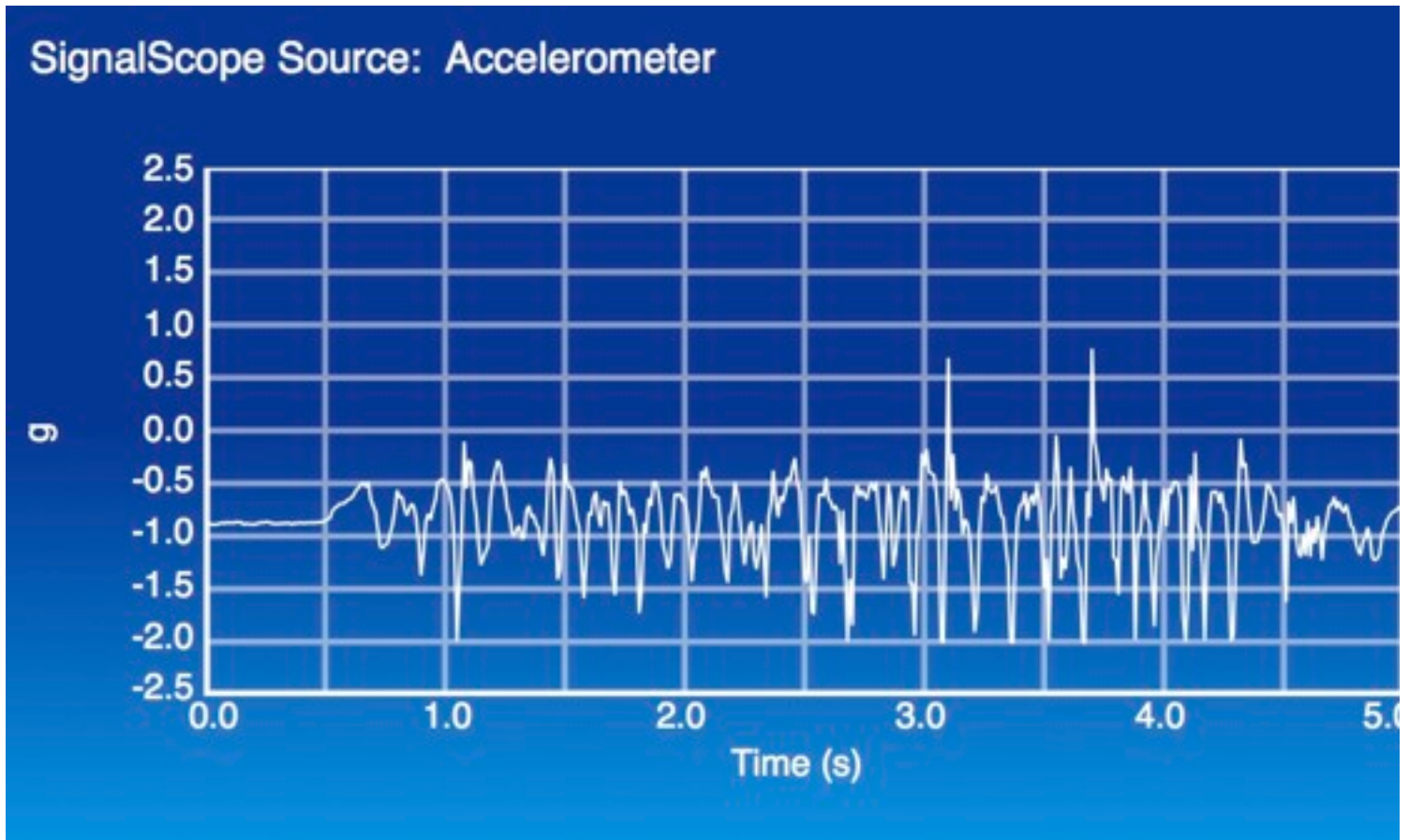


Figure G - Measurements in Area 2 made 20' away from third base running perpendicular to the foul ball line

For the measurement perpendicular to the third base foul line (Figure G), we see two indications of areas with swings greater than +1 g at 3.1 s and 3.7 s. These are imperfections in the ground that can certainly be felt whilst walking or running. A ball player running towards a ball in play could notice these imperfections. This is an area that has never been used by the Gran Prix of Gloucester as part of the race course, nor have any activities directly related to the event occurred on that area.

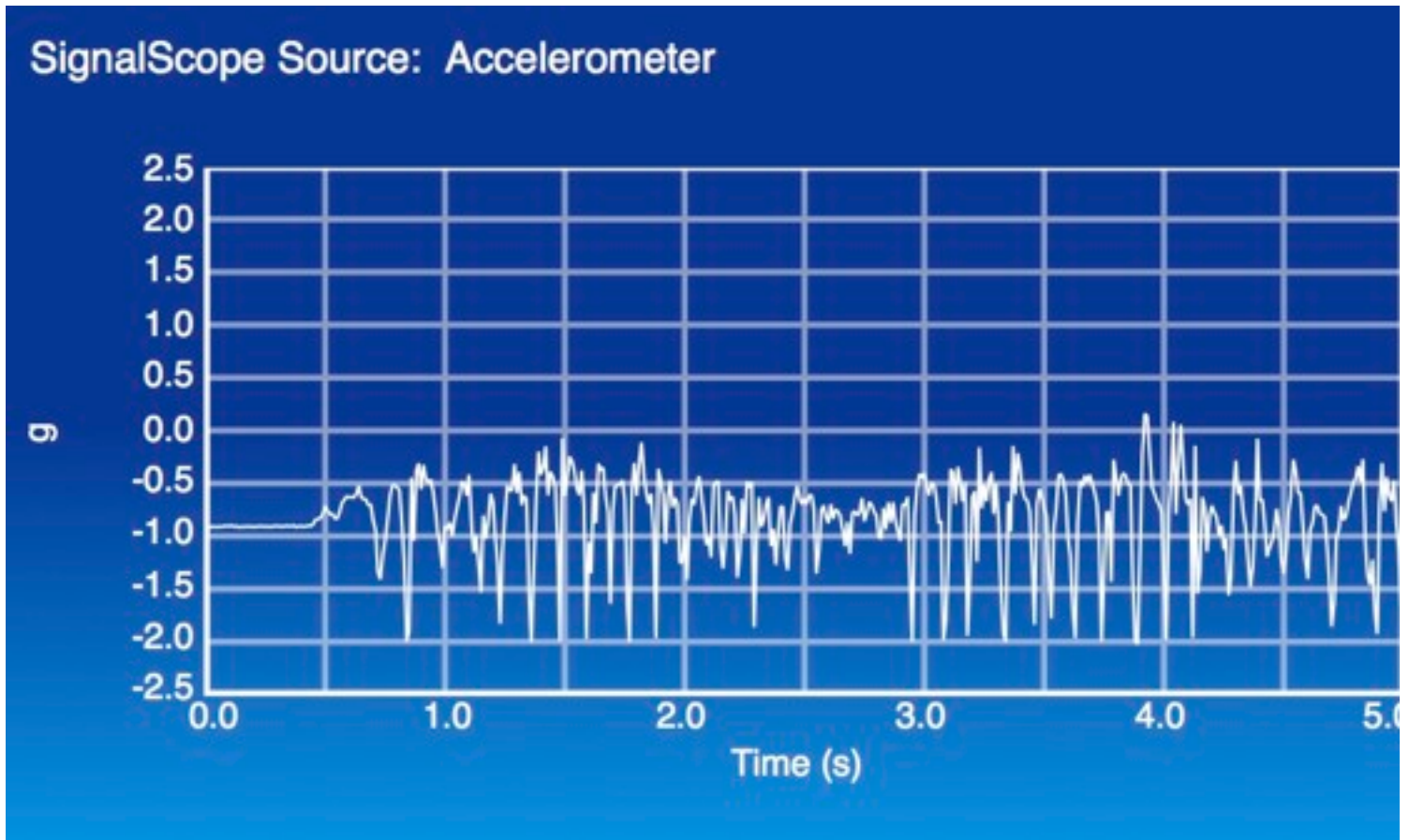


Figure H - Measurements in Area 3 made 20' away from third base running perpendicular to the foul ball line

Area 3 lies in center field in a line direct from the near the center field tree and home plate. Data is shown in Figure H. Though there is visual evidence of the race, measurements show that the bumpiness of the terrain is approximately equal (1.5-2.0g swing) to other the sections of the ball park with imperfections where the race has never traversed. There is a data point at approximately 4s on the X-axis that shows a slight deviation greater than 2g. This area should be reinvestigated in the spring.

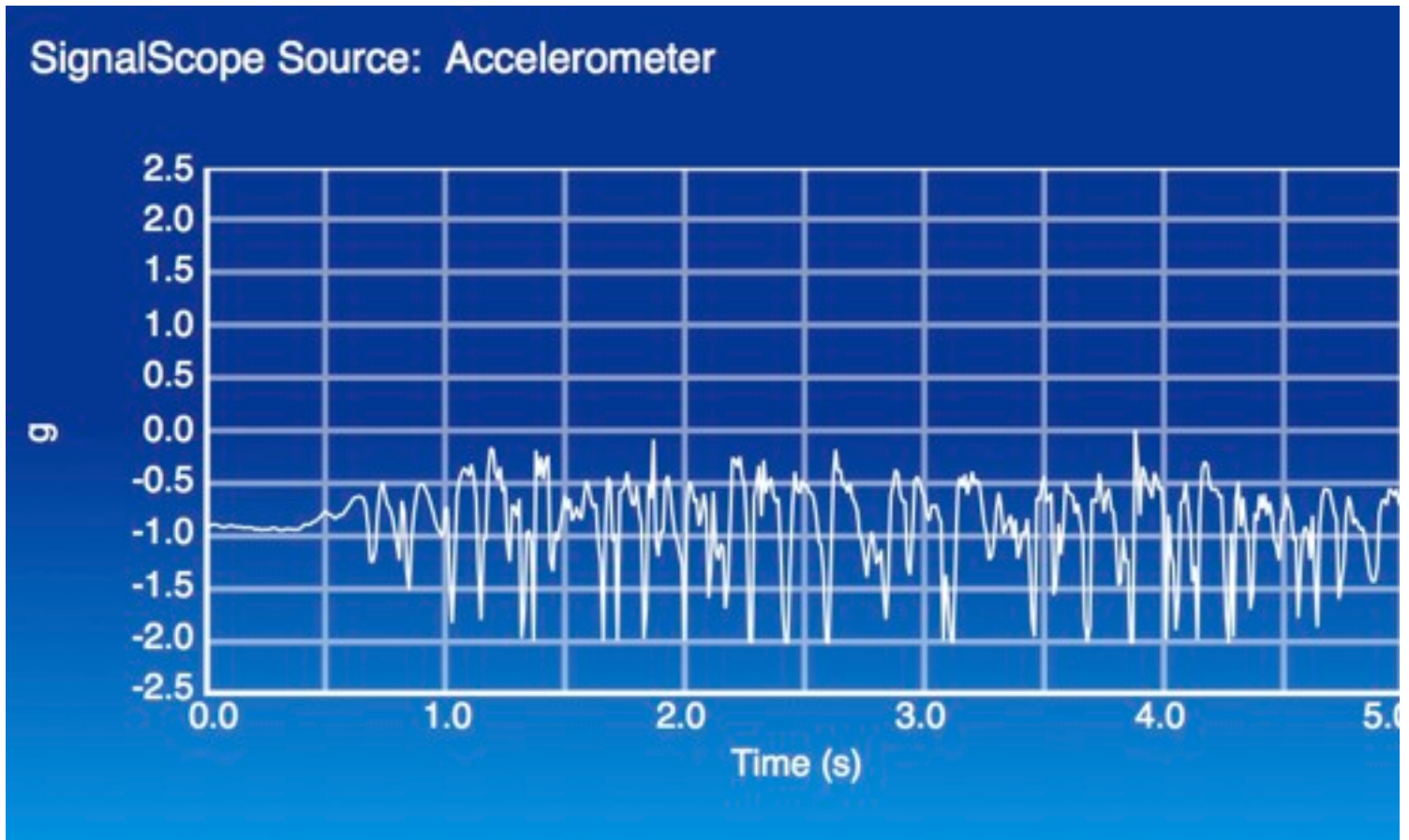


Figure H - Measurements in Area 2 made 20' away from third base running perpendicular to the foul ball line

Area 4 is an area where the course turned in an "S" shape. The line of measurement was such that the measuring device traversed two sections of the course as shown by the photograph. We found that despite the visual appearance, there was no appreciable difference in bumpiness. As the landscaper described, the newly repaired sections have blades of grass that are significantly shorter than the surrounding area and are also significantly greener. So while the area stands out visually, practically there's no discernible difference in bumpiness.



Photo A - Section of the park where the course was S-shaped. The appearance was obvious however, measurements show the disturbance was not significant.

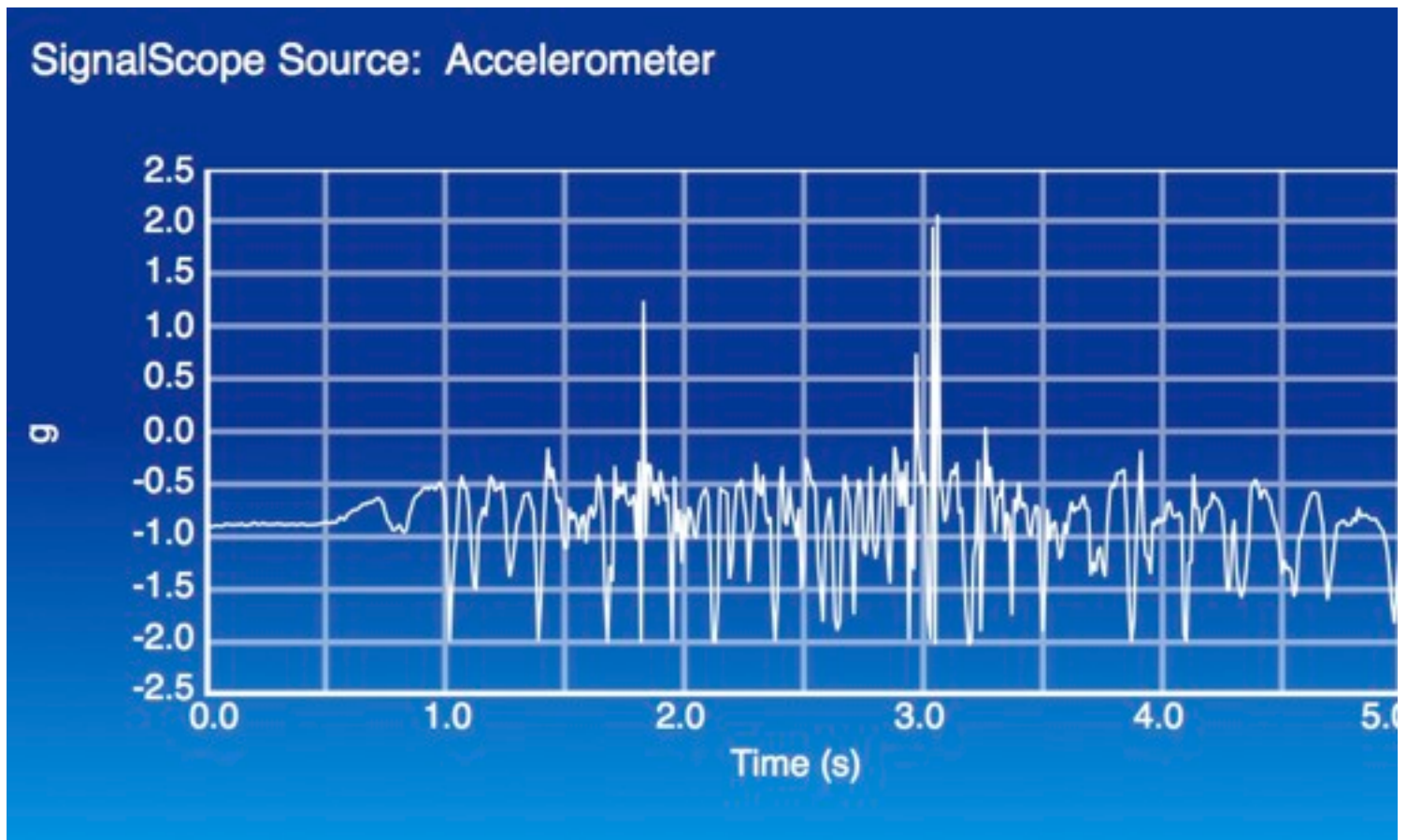


Figure 1 - Measurements in Area 5 approximately 25 yards away from the outfield fence towards third base

Area 5 is another section we've identified as needing additional repair. Approximately 25 yards from the outfield fence towards third base, our measurements show two significant deviations from the norm. (1.7s/2g and 3.0s/3g.)

Conclusion

We found that there were some ruts (areas where additional repair is necessary) from the 2012 race. Essex County Velo will work with the Director of the DPW to ensure that these sections of the park are repaired satisfactorily.

However, the majority of the ball field that was used by the race is no worse than other portions of the field which have never been used by the event.

While the race course is still visible on the ball field, the majority of the "damage" is visual. There's no reason to believe that those sections will not heal completely in the spring, in time for baseball season.

ADDENDUM B

NEW PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE, JANUARY 2013



Addendum Photo 1: Area of hillside behind the ball field backstop. The majority of the path has grown with the addition of new seed. However there are a few ruts which require work. In the foreground, the rut is about 5 meters long and several inches wide.



Addendum Photo 2: Close-up of an area in left field of the Sam Parisi ball field. Several ruts remain and will be repaired. Note that the newer grass is shorter and brighter green than the surrounding area. For the most part, this is visual in appearance but the ground smoothness differs little from areas unused by the race.



Addendum Photo 3: Area used on by the race to connect a path adjacent to the playground to a lower elevation near the picnic tables by the Visitor's Center.



Addendum Photo 4: Shows the run-up section connecting the Lucy B Davis Pathway to the playground.



Addendum Photo 5: The Lucy Brown Davis Pathway is a man-made gravel path. No evidence of damage due to bicycles is present. The race organizers have offered to improve the quality of the path as outlined in the accompanying report.



Addendum Photo 6: Area by the Rose Garden. Much of the grass has come back, though some ruts remain and will be repaired. Future editions of the Gran Prix of Gloucester will not use this section of the park.



Addendum Photo 7: View of the Sam Parisi Baseball Field from atop the adjacent hillside. The majority of the path used by the race is growing fresh grass. The ruts that do remain will be repaired before the start of baseball season.



Addendum Photo 8: Area between Cressy's beach and the volleyball court shows recent damage by December storms.



Addendum Photo 9: Lower Field across from the Cupboard shows an area with ruts. These will be repaired by the race organizers.



Addendum Photo 10: Right field in the Sam Parisi Baseball Field showing new grass growth.