

My name is Brandon Rockers. I'm a Black, 24-year-old resident of Fort Collins for 2 years now. I'm submitting my recommendation for Mr. Bethea to be introduced into the Mountain Bike Hall of Fame Nomination. Please read below:

*To exist as a Black man is to exist in the margins of society--sentenced to a fate of abiding by the unspoken rules of survival therein. Daring to challenge these rules and their governing paradigm is something that We can only dream of as it represents a departure from an already tenuous chance of survival into the unknown. For James, this departure was not an afterthought but rather a calling. At a young age, James was using his bike to expand his perspective and push boundaries. Never did he allow his vision to narrow or the constraints of society to push back so as to hinder his progression and influence within the mountain biking community--even 30 years later. Although it is still a staunch reality that many of Us stick out "like a black guy at a mountain bike race", there has been an absolute shift from a sense of ostracization to a feeling of pride and representation within Our community. Riding the same trails and competing in the same races as James is an honor and a privilege that I refuse to take for granted. We are experiencing a golden age of cycling led by people of color whose foundation is undeniably owed to athletes such as James Bethea. I unabashedly hold this belief. My only regret is that I could never recreate that Nukeproof ad of the bike hoisted over his shoulder while gallantly glaring into the camera. Thanks to James, however, I am instead inspired to stare down the path of my own legacy.*

Thank you for your support. Please let me know how else I can help,

Brandon Rockers