


Wheel People

Newsletter of The Charles River Wheelmen

On the roads of New England since 1966

Volume XXV, Number 12 - December, 2001

A Word to the Wise

by Rosalie Blum

The CRW Board of Directors has been notified that many riders are trying to overcome this year's drought by "watering" the vegetation at starting locations for our rides. Unfortunately, any environmental benefits are greatly outweighed by the serious offense this causes our hosts - to the extent that if it continues we will be banned from using these sites. We understand that sometimes the lines for the "handy house" are longer than people would like, especially when turnout exceeds expectations (as occurred at the fall century) and male riders may prefer to take advantage of their convenient anatomy rather than wait, but it's just not acceptable. For our part, we plan to increase the number of rest rooms at major events, both at the start locations and along the route. Please be considerate of those who welcome us onto their property and use only designated facilities. Thank you.

Annual Holiday Party

Our Christmas season party will be held from 6 to 11 PM on Friday, December 14 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 100 Pine Hill Road, Bedford. From route 128 take the 4/225 exit west through Bedford Center. Where 62 and 4/225 split, turn right onto 4/225. At the next split just ahead, stay to the right on route 4. Pine Hill Road is about 3/4 mile ahead on the right. The church is near the top of the hill on the right.

The 2002 ride calendar will be available for ride leader sign-up and for planning purposes. Volunteers are needed for basic tasks like buying food, helping with decorations and, of course, cleanup. Contact Don Blake at 781-275-7878 to volunteer. Last year's pot luck format produced many delectable treats. Here's your chance to unmask yourself as successor to Julia Child! Bring food

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CRW Advocacy Grant

by Tod Rodger

Last year, when CRW decided to end its 100% affiliation with the League of American Bicyclists (LAB), we reduced the membership fee accordingly. However, believing that advocacy for bicyclists should remain a part of our charter, we retained five dollars in the membership fee so we can make an annual advocacy grant to an organization that is actively promoting better and safer cycling conditions in our area.

In our first year, we requested proposals from MassBike, Rails to Trails, and LAB. The first two responded with proposals on how CRW could help them make a difference in our area, and the board selected MassBike

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Cycling Videos

by Connie Farb

In the past, CRW has maintained a small collection of cycling videos, available to the membership to borrow. One problem with this arrangement was the difficulty keeping track of who had which video and sending them from borrower to borrower. To address this problem but still have cycling videos available to CRW members, we are going to try out a new idea. The CRW board decided to purchase several new cycling videos and donate them to the MinuteMan library network. The videos, which say "Donated by the Charles River Wheelmen" on them, were given to the Cambridge Public Library but are available to anyone in the MinuteMan library network (almost all local towns other than Boston). Boston library users can also access the videos through inter-library network loans. The videos will be available to all library users, not just CRW members, but we don't anticipate big problems with excess demand. We will periodically check and see how often the videos have been checked out to get an idea of how high the level of interest is.

In addition to the four videos CRW currently has, we are going to donate these three newly purchased videos. They should all be available for borrowing through your local library:

2001 Tour de France - Lance's third triumph.

1989 Tour De France - the thrilling tour finish where Greg LeMond trailed Laurent Fignon by 50 seconds going into the final time trial in Paris.

Spinervals 1.0 - No Slackers Allowed! - 45 minute video for a directed workout on the trainer.

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The Charles River Wheelmen is a group of active adult bicyclists which sponsors a year-round program to promote the enjoyment of cycling. During the regular season - early Spring to late Fall - at least two ride loops are available every Sunday, designed to be ridden at your own pace. The Sunday rides, are arrowed in advance, and maps or cue sheets are generally provided. There are also rides each Saturday and during the week. Our Winter rides program, The Second Season, is more informal; the route and pace are decided by those who show up. We also hold social events and related activities.



CRW members receive *WheelPeople*, the Club's newsletter. CRW is also an associated club of the League of American Bicyclists. Address correspondence to:

The Charles River Wheelmen - 19 Chase Avenue - West Newton, MA 02465

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

	Term Expires	
Don Blake	2003	781-275-7878
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Steve Kolek	2002	781-674-1090
Tod Rodger	2003	978-456-8654
Bob Sawyer	2001	781-275-6533
Ann-Marie Starck	2002	508-877-0178
Bill Widnall	2001	781-862-2846

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Social Committee Chair	Rita Long	781-899-9177

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Vice President of Rides	Jim Sullivan	781-245-1772
Saturday Rides	Connie Farb	617-497-0641
	Cheryl Young	617-625-6362
Sunday Rides	Tod Rodger	978-456-8654
Winter Rides	Eric Ferioli	781-235-4762
Intro Rides	Fred Kresse	781-444-1775
Century Committee	Melinda Lyon	978-887-5755
Wednesday Fitness and Masters Ride	Dave McElwaine	781-821-8643
Wednesday Wheelers	Dick Arsenaault	781-272-1771
Wednesday Ice Cream Ride	Gabor Demjen	781-237-0602
	Eric Evans	617-527-0517
Thursday Fitness Rides	Peter Mason	781-646-5106
Friday Rides	Steve and Kate Mashl	978-244-0286
Saturday Fitness Rides	Dave McElwaine	781-821-8643
	Mark Dionne	617-965-5558
Sunday Fitness Rides	Carl Howerton	781-837-9777

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Editorial Policy



We welcome contributions to this newsletter, but reserve the right to edit articles in any way that we deem appropriate.

We will make every effort to preserve both the style and intent of the author, but we may rewrite an article to fit available space, to clarify ambiguities in the text, and to correct factual errors.

Articles and other materials which appear in *WheelPeople*, unless specifically identified as editorial policy, represent the opinion of the author, and do not represent the opinions of the editors, coordinators, officers, or board of directors of The Charles River Wheelmen, Inc.



How To Send Us Your Article

Articles and letters must be received by the 5th of the month to be included in the next issue of *WheelPeople*.

Mail handwritten or typewritten documents or articles on floppy disk to Jack Donohue, 26 Fox Run Road, Bedford, MA 01730. *Note: floppy disks will not be returned.*

Documents produced on computer may be sent electronically via Internet to Jack at JDONOHUE@world.std.com. Your document must be in "text" mode.

Articles submitted to *WheelPeople* may also be published on the CRW web site unless the author instructs otherwise.

Insurance

If ride leaders or others have questions about insurance, contact Don Blake at (781) 275-7878. Please do *not* contact the insurance company.

Advertising Rates

Half Page	\$65.00	Third Page	\$45.00
Quarter Page	\$35.00	Eighth Page	\$20.00
For more information please contact Marty Weinstock at 617-491-6523 or 617-331-9299			

CRW BOARD MEETING



November 6, 2001

In Attendance: Barry Nelson, Don Blake, Rosalie Blum, Tod Rodger, Jack Donohue, Connie Farb, Anne Marie Starck, Bob Sawyer, Bill Widnall, Don Foster, Cindy Sragg
The meeting commenced at 7:30 p.m.

Membership: 976 active memberships, 1173 members, 32 expired members, 8 new members, 119 renewals.

Treasurer's Report (Don Blake): Fall Century wrap-up indicated that \$3,165.44 was brought in. The cost of water bottles was not reflected in the Fall Century numbers. Jack Donohue pointed out that the cost of the bottles should be shown as an equal disbursement between the Fall and Spring centuries.

Awards Banquet: 55 people have signed up for the annual banquet to date. Don Blake said that we can always expect a few last minutes sign-ups as well as a couple of walk-ins.

Rides Committee (Tod Rodger): We have 11 Sunday rides scheduled for 2002 already. Jim Sullivan will be bringing the ride board to the banquet so that people can sign up.

Awards: On Thursday evening at the banquet, we will be giving ALL ride leaders hats (not just NEW ride leaders), and NEW ride leaders will be getting an orange ride leader T-shirt in addition to a hat.

Ken Hablow has produced award certificate and plaques. Connie Farb will pick them up from him and bring them to the banquet if Ken is unable to come himself.

Bill Widnall's comments/corrections to the draft meeting minutes last month were not picked up. Any corrections to the meeting minutes - along with any other corrections to the draft copy of Wheelpeople - are to be sent to Dave Cooper.

Other Business: Jack Donohue said a report by George Eckert is forthcoming regarding the conference he and Bob Sawyer attended in October. Bob Sawyer reported that the conference drew 170 people from a wide range of agencies and the general population: Mass Highway Department, the Federal Highway Department, hospital and medical community, local and state police, the Department of Public Works, and ordinary citizens concerned with road and bicycle safety.

The Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition (MassBike) will be holding its annual meeting on November 27 at the Cambridge Brewing Company in Kendall Square. They have asked for our \$5,000 grant check to be presented at this meeting - this will be great publicity for our club! Barry Nelson will go to the event and will present MassBike with a real check but for photograph/publicity purposes, Ken Hablow will be asked to produce a symbolic "big check" with our club name prominently displayed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m. The next Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 4, 2001 at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cindy Sragg
Secretary

Board meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 in the Hancock United Church of Christ, 1912 Mass. Ave., Lexington Center.

The Lights Went Out

After a run of many years, Jacek wanted his fans to know that he will NOT be leading the Christmas Lights ride this year. Thank, Jacek, for starting and carrying on another CRW tradition.

Advocacy - Continued from page 1

to receive our first annual grant of \$5,000 to launch a program to improve communication and collaboration between the bicycling community and police organizations. At the end of the year we hope to have a report from MassBike on specific results from this program and how CRW's grant helped make this program successful.

Although CRW members are no longer automatically enrolled as LAB members, we encourage everyone to investigate the advocacy organizations above (www.MassBike.org, www.railtrails.org, www.bikeleague.org) and consider joining them to help promote better and safer bicycling.

If you would like to comment on this program or suggest other advocacy organizations to consider in future years, please talk with me or any member of the CRW Board.

Holiday Party - Continued from page 1

based on the starting letter in your last name from the following categories:

A-L: Appetizers & Salads

M-S: Main Courses

T-Z: Desserts

This is a great opportunity to socialize with your riding buddies and see what they look like without Lycra, not to mention getting first dibs on the choice dates for leading rides.

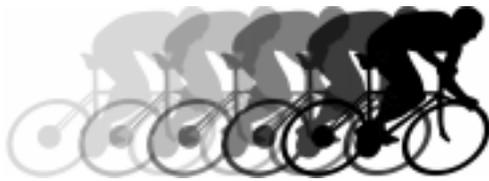
ST. THOMAS U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS VACATION RENTAL

Ideal for thawing out in the winter, or working on your tan anytime!

One bedroom condo (w/additional queen size hide-a-bed in living room) located at Mahogany Run Golf Course. 400 feet up on hill overlooking Peterborg Peninsula and Hans Lollik Island. Quiet and secluded with awesome 180 degree ocean view.

Five minutes from world renowned beach at Magens Bay (Slick Willy & Hillary's favorite). Golf course open to public. Easy access by car to other beaches, resorts, tennis clubs, snorkeling, sailing, jet skis, windsurfing, deep sea fishing, sailing, swilling rum, shopping and ferries to St. John or the British Virgin Islands (Tortola, Jost vanDyke, Virgin Gorda, etc.)

For info & photo tour see "Blue Moon" under "Vacation Rentals" at www.suzannemabe.com. For more photos/info, availability & CRW discount, call Mike Byrne (978) 443-8999 or e-mail raddad47@aol.com



December 2001

Recurring Rides Calendar

These rides are held every week unless indicated

Wednesday Wheelers

Times: 10:00 AM

Description: A group that enjoys exploring a variety of scenic routes, mostly in the western suburbs but also to the north or south. Occasionally we do an urban exploration. We always include a lunch stop, either during or at the end of the ride. In the winter we may substitute other activities, such as cross-country skiing. We stay together, following the leader for the day, while being careful not to drop anyone. On a rural ride of average hilliness, the pace is 15 to 17 mph on the flats, but slows considerably on the hills, so we wind up with a rolling average of about 13 mph. In fairness to the group, we require that prospective riders be capable of maintaining this pace.

Routes: Locations vary. Distances are typically between 30 and 40 miles.

Start: Location Varies

Directions: The ride coordinator sends ride announcements and ride reports by weekly e-mail. For more information, including the next ride start location, call or e-mail the ride coordinator Dick Arsenault 781-272-1771 day or early evening.

Saturday Morning Fitness Ride at Nahanton Park**

Times: 8:30 SHARP!

Description: You will ride scenic rolling roads through Needham, Dover, Sherborn, and Medfield. These rides will be set up to run with

or without a leader so be ready to go on time. At 8:30 we're gone. This ride runs all year 'round.

Routes: Arrowed routes of 19, 28 and 42 miles. Cue sheet available.

Leaders: Dave McElwaine (781-821-8643) or Mark Dionne (617-965-5558)

Start: Nahanton Park, Newton.

Directions: Take the Highland St. exit off Rt. 128 toward Needham, take a left at the light onto Hunting Rd, at the next light make another left onto Kendrick St. The park is on your left immediately AFTER crossing the river. Ride leaves from the main parking lot.

** CRW's Fitness Rides Program is designed to assist intermediate and advanced riders to improve their skills and learn cooperative paceline riding techniques.



December Rides Calendar

The rides calendar was not available at time of publication. For information on December rides, consult the web site (<http://www.crw.org/>) or call Eric Ferioli at 781-235-4762.

CRW TRIPS

Norsk to New Hampshire January 5, 2002

"Show and go", all abilities welcome, cross country ski trip to Norsk Cross Country ski area in New London, NH on Saturday, January 5, 2002. Norsk is about 1-1/2 hours from Boston. The trip will be joint CRW/AMC. We will meet at 9:45 to buy tickets at the group rate, assuming enough people come. Look for me in the "Charles River Wheelmen" baseball cap inside the touring center. We will break up into various ability groups so hopefully people can ski with others at the same level, but nothing is guaranteed. There is a warming hut that is a good destination for lunch. The hut has snacks, but bringing lunch is rec-

ommended. More info on Norsk is at www.skinorsk.com. Leader: Rita Long, 781-899-9177 between 7:30 and 10:00 pm, e-mail RitaLong@mediaone.net.

Eighth Annual Bikers on Skis

February 15-18, 2002

Try your hand at gliding instead of rolling. This cross country skiing weekend at a comfortable B&B in the Northern White Mountains, features gourmet food and a hot tub to soothe aching muscles apres ski. We'll visit ski touring centers at Bretton Woods and the Balsams, and try some back country skiing in the Zealand Falls area. Skiers of all abilities welcome. Downhill skiers can join us and ski Bretton Woods. If there's no snow bring your hiking boots and/or mountain bike — we will

not be stopped. The trip spans the three day President's Day weekend. Cost of \$200 for the weekend includes three nights lodging, three breakfasts, two dinners.

To register send the a check for the full amount made out to Charles River Wheelmen and a stamped self-addressed envelope or e-mail address by January 15 to:

Bikers on Skis
c/o Jack Donohue
26 Fox Run Road
Bedford, MA 01730-1104

Registration fee non-refundable after this date unless we can find someone to take your place.

For more information, you can contact the leaders:

Jack Donohue and Susan Grieb
(781) 275-3991 (before 9pm)
jdonohue@world.std.com

“Moving Together”

Massachusetts Bicycle and Pedestrian Conference

October 24 & 25, 2001 • Worcester, Massachusetts

by George Eckert

(Ed: George attendance at this conference was partially reimbursed by CRW. This is his report on the conference)

October 24 Sessions

“Greenway & Trail Issues: Overview of State Greenway Plans”

Jennifer Howard: The Mass. Department of Environmental Management is Working on a Long-Term Plan for trails development within the state. Currently there are 7 major hiking trails that pass through the state. These primarily run north and south. Less than half the land which the trails cross is protected. Two important parts of the DEM's vision is to 1) Create a major east to west trail 2) Connect links between existing trails.

Danny O'Brien: Multiple use Trails and conflict reduction. Danny stressed good engineering as the basis for a good trail. Some features to accommodate many users include installation of tall 17' wide pre-cast concrete tunnels rather than corrugated pipes. Trailhead area in Ayer is unusual for MA: 60 Car parking, Kiosk, Rest Rooms, Commuter Rail Connection.

Chris Williams. Management of Trails is often assigned to DEM. Chris began on the Cape Cod Rail Trail about 5 years after its completion. At that time there was one supervisor along with 2 staff to maintain CCRT. Now there is none. Towns and volunteers have picked up a great deal of the slack, however, major pruning, rehabbing pavement and other significant projects require greater financial and labor inputs. Chris stressed the importance of DESIGN in accommodating all users/activities. Rules are important. Education is important. All MA trails are open to properly equipped commuters 24 hours per day. Towns have begun installing additional signs at crossing.

Challenges: Root Barriers are expensive to install. Significant Pruning should be done correctly on a 5-year basis. Erosion of de-

bris onto trail comes from private/unofficial crossings and Entrances.

“A Law Enforcement Perspective on Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety”

Trooper Ross Panacopoulos (MA Dept. of State Police) and Sgt. Don Dupray (Hamilton, MA Police)

Both gentlemen specialize in Accident (Crash) Investigations as well as Crash Reconstruction. In 1999 6 bicyclists suffered fatal crashes and 1030 cyclists reported injuries. Estimates suggest that over 10300 bicyclists were actually injured. Injuries peaked in 1991 and 1993, and had decreased significantly by 1999, however, even 1 fatality is still too many.

In a Crash, who is at Fault? Statistics record that in 66% of Crashes with Automobiles, Bicyclists failed to yield or improperly crossed a road/intersection. The important question is this: Are these statistics biased against a victim who is a) on a bicycle b) injured c) unconscious? This is a distinct possibility. However, the statistic emphasized the need for bicyclists to follow the rules of the road, and to use good judgement to protect their own safety.

Injury Statistics:

Highest in August, followed by June and then July

Highest rate of Injuries Reported on Thursday

Injury by gender: Male 80%, Female 20%

16% of Fatally Injured Cyclists had Blood Alcohol >0.10%

Highest injury rate between 6:00PM and 10:00 PM

51% of injuries age 5-19

49% of injuries age 20 and up.

The officers provided a video illustrating stopping distances, visibility, reaction time, and increase of reaction time from a daytime average of 1.5 seconds to between 2.5 and 4.0 seconds at night. When combined with the average automobile

headlight being focused 160 feet in front of car and biased down and to the right this compromised the safety of all road users after dark. Important issues to consider: In order to increase your visibility and drivers' reaction time (margin for error) use proper lighting starting at dusk.

October 25 Sessions

“Making Multimodal Connections”

Discussed in great detail the Boston Waterfront and the requirements that it be accessible. The wharves, docks and ramps near the NE aquarium have been renovated to comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). In the same motion, these ramps are perfectly suited to bicycles. All commuter boats/ferries which use the Boston hub carry bicycles as well as pedestrians.

The “T” has a good “Bikes on the T” program. Commuter Rail carries bikes during non-peak trains. Subways carry bikes between 10:00AM and 2:00 PM, then after 7:30 PM. While this seems restrictive, it is interesting to note that this is identical to Washington DC's very successful program. Although some routes may seem empty and able to accept bikes from 9:00 to 3:00, the logistics of explaining to the public that the rules on a different line don't apply becomes very complex. We're still not clear if you can switch to a different line to complete a trip begun at 1:50 PM, for example.

Bus Routes are very interesting. The “Cross Town” Busses are equipped with bike racks, which are proven to work very well. Other bus routes may add racks as the fleet is replaced. A logistical snag comes into the mix because busses are assigned to a particular garage and may be dispatched to any route served from that garage. In order to provide bike on bus service every bus from the garage must have a bike rack. Imagine the disappointment of waiting for

Bicycle Conference - Continued on page 6

the last bus on the route only to find that it doesn't have a rack! Although, that's probably the same as the disappointment of finding that 2 bikes are already on the rack of the last bus home. Apparently a single garage services all cross-town routes. But as the fleet is replaced we have a great opportunity to have the "T" order the busses with factory-installed bike racks.

The best way to get the "T" to expand the Bike program is to use it frequently, thank your driver or conductor for a great ride, and let them know you would use the program even more if it was expanded.

"Evaluating the Effectiveness of Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Programs"

This was an interesting seminar regarding safety and traffic statistics. In a nutshell, be very wary of any presented as justifica-

tion for a roadway change. Very often a change results in change in traffic volume which may actually decrease safety. In other instances, no follow-up study is performed to insure that the change was effective. Ask a lot of questions about methodology. The presenter indicated that in 1999, 6 bicyclists were killed in crashes. The statistician will say that the figure is better or worse than other years. But they usually don't tell the rest of the story, which may be that people are riding more or less than other years, or that they don't know what your own personal exposure is. As Mark Twain suggested, there are lies, damn lies, and statistics. No matter how you analyze the statistics, ONE BICYCLIST FATALITY, IS ONE TOO MANY.

"Moving Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans Forward"

This seminar was hosted by Josh Lehman, Massachusetts State Bicycle Coordinator.

Josh is a great supporter of bicycling, and really wants to help us make our communities more liveable. This includes considering things like sidewalks and shoulders on roads. It also includes concepts like making sure we build our new train stations to connect to the community: paths, parks, local streets. Isn't it odd when they build a new train station, and the only way you can get there is by driving a car? Or if you can ride your bike there, how do you feel if there's no good place to park it? These things are easy to do, it is just difficult, sometimes to get the bureaucracy to realize what can be accomplished for so little work and so little money.

Summary

Great conference! In 2002, we need to get the state highway bureaucrats there, and fill up the remainder of the conference with Bicyclists to illustrate the many instances where, despite a State Bicycle Plan, they still get too many things wrong.

Bikes Belong Gives \$50,000 to League of American Bicyclists to Support National Bike Summit® and National Bike Month

Bikes Belong Coalition is providing a grant of \$50,000 to the League of American Bicyclists to support the League's 2002 National Bike Summit® and its National Bike Month promotional campaign. Gary Sojquist, Bikes Belong board member, announced the grant at the Interbike/Bicycle Retailer & Industry News Awards Dinner on October 1 in Las Vegas.

The League will use the grant to support its National Bike Summit®, to be held in Washington, DC March 6-8, 2002, and for press and public relations efforts to promote cycling during the League's National Bike Month. The League's Executive Director Elissa Margolin said, "We are very grateful to Bikes Belong and its member companies for their support. The involvement of the industry is crucial in the 2002 Summit as we gear up for reauthorization of TEA-21, the legislation that provides federal funding for bicycle facilities in the United States. We are also looking forward to turning up the volume on our promo-

tional efforts during National Bike Month."

The National Bike Month promotional campaign will focus on some of the wide range of lifestyle benefits bicycling has for both the individual cyclist and the community at large, including improved health and fitness, the reduction of air pollution, and reducing traffic.

At the 2002 National Bike Summit®, the League will convene all of the major advocacy organizations, including the Bikes Belong Coalition. The reauthorization of TEA-21 and a national Safe Routes to School program are important items on the Summit's agenda.



Street Smarts

Well, we've got another published author in our midst, and another book on bicycling that might be a worthy stocking stuffer for your favorite gearhead.

Rubel Bikemaps has published "Bicycling Street Smarts," an updated and revised version of John Allen's "Street Smarts," originally published by Rodale Inc. This compact 46-page booklet describes the nuts and bolts of safe and legal on-road cycling including lane-positioning, navigating intersections, expert control of brakes and steering, emergency maneuvers, and dealing with difficult situations. By learning correct on-road riding techniques and mastering control of the bicycle, any cyclist from beginner to expert will enjoy increased confidence and safety while riding any road.

"Bicycling Street Smarts" is available at local bike shops, or to order by mail, send \$4.95 plus \$1 p&h to Rubel BikeMaps, PO Box 401035, Cambridge, MA 02140. Or visit their website at www.bikemaps.com.



Choosing a Long-Distance Bike

by Lon Haldeman

Haldeman is director of the Race Across America, two-time winner of RAAM, and has lead over 50 transcontinental tours.

"Which bicycle would you like to be on for the last half of a double century?" "What kind of bike should I buy for long distance cycling?" I am often asked by riders preparing for our cross country PAC Tours. These riders are just as interested in good equipment as are RAAM riders.

Unfortunately I haven't found a recipe that precisely matches each bike to its rider. There are lots of bike calculations for sizing, frame material strength and overall weight. Too bad these numbers don't always explain why some bikes ride better than others. Or why two similar riders don't like the same bike.

During the past twenty years I have ridden an assortment of frame designs across the country. I have done PAC Tour with several hundred people who have chosen a variety of bikes for long distance cycling. Most of my opinions have come from these "seat of the pants" road tests and discussions with similar cyclists.

For the purpose of this article I will define "long distance" as any event over 100 miles. In other words, "which bicycle would you like to be on for the last half of a double century" - distance somewhere after you are tired and sore and still have a long way to go.

The Ride: How many times have you heard someone says "it rides great because it's really stiff." Does that same bike feel as great at the end of a double century? Some people like stiff bikes all the time. Some people like gel saddle covers all the time. I think the bicycle should disappear underneath you. Don't confuse wanting a comfortable bike with wanting an inefficient bike. Aerobars, a good saddle and proper fit all improve comfort while maintaining efficiency. If all you can think about is getting off your bike at the end of a ride, you probably aren't comfortable or having much fun either.

Frame Materials: What's better for a long-distance bike: titanium, carbon fiber, aluminum, steel? A better question would be "what is the best way to use these materials for a long-distance bike?" The frame

design in combination with the material will affect how the bike rides. I have ridden many different frame materials on RAAM and couldn't tell the difference on a dark night. All these bikes were built to be comfortable but also light and strong, so they actually rode pretty much the same. There are many off the shelf frames that are good long-distance bikes. If you are thinking of a new frame, if possible arrange a road test or trade bikes with someone at the end of a long ride. After 100 miles decide what you like or don't like.

Pete Penseyre's 1986 RAAM bike was a carbon Raleigh frame designed after a touring frame with 72 degree head and seat tube angles. So was Susan Notorangelo's 1989 RAAM record bike which had paper thin steel tubing. Pete's and my 1987 cross country tandem frame was built with aluminum and carbon tubing. All these frames were as light as possible and would be considered flexible by most riders. However they were comfortable, efficient frames that you liked to ride day after day without being pounded by road shock.

I prefer frame designs that have a stable geometry. My TREK "Y-Foil" has a racing feel yet is very stable at all speeds. If I were designing a custom steel bike I would duplicate the Trek's front end handling. I also like bikes with chain stay lengths closer to 17 inches than 16 inches. With more room the chain line is better when cross shifting three chain rings. The extra chain stay clearance also helps fenders fit better if you ever have to install mudguards for PBP again - let's hope not!

Several suspension systems have been

successful on road bikes. These designs absorb road shock and improve comfort for long distances. The Allsop SoftRide, Air Friday and Titan Flex all incorporate a cantilevered beam which suspends the rider 12 to 24 inches from the rest of the rigid frame. The beam is made from carbon fiber or titanium which dampens vibration from the rider.

Although these suspensions might feel mushy at first, I adapted quickly to the smoother ride. The TREK "Y-Foil" molds their beam directly into the frame. It is the least flexible beam but still softer than a diamond steel frame. Each of these designs has worked to reduce weight while maintaining strength. Many of the new suspension seat posts or front forks could also be added to your current frame. These suspensions are worth considering for your future long-distance bike.

Weight: Weight equals drag so obviously lighter is better. My rule of thumb is that

Choosing a Bike - Continued on page 8

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Little Jack's Corner

- by Jack Donohue



I had a recent experience riding under the influence.

Now, I must confess, I used to do this a fair amount in the old days. For example, this

was a necessary part of the legendary Beer and Steamers ride. And whenever we toured in Ireland, a pint of Guinness at lunch was de rigeur. Though I did have subsequent complaints from Mrs. D. when my average speed subsequently dropped to about 5 mph. But I've cleaned up my act considerably and now the beer is always apres ride.

I have not been without considerable temptation in this area. My company has a Friday afternoon happy hour with live music and good beer. When it comes to freebies, I have no self control. Put me in

front of a buffet and it can get downright ugly. I realized that confronted with an free supply of Samuel Adams, I would be like a moth to a flame. So, I've always left the merrymakers on Fridays and soldiered on home.

But one Friday, we had a special occasion. Our company, which got bought by a much larger company who I shall call Big Blue, had nonetheless maintained their autonomy up until now. But they finally got absorbed by the corporation losing their uniqueness, hence the party. So I decided to go down and have a beer before riding home. There is a subtle transition that occurs from "stop in and have a beer" to "boogie till the break of day." One beer led to another, and I was precariously close to making that transition.

I did however realize that I had to make my way home sometime and I had no lights. Besides, they were going to close down about six anyway. So I quaffed my last beer and mounted my faithful bike. It was a

rather pleasant experience, actually. I was quite relaxed. Instead of my usual worrying about being run over by SUVs my primary concern was staying on the road. This I managed to do pretty well, except for a close encounter with a mailbox.

After a few miles, I was convinced that the ride was indeed clearing my head.

One of the consequences of imbibing combined with old age is the frequent necessity to answer nature's call. I can usually make a twelve mile commute without a pit stop, and I came pretty close this time, but there were a couple of extra pints of beer on board and it became clear that a stop was required. After stumbling around in the bushes a bit, I came to the realization that I was perhaps not quite as clear-headed as I had supposed.

But I made it the rest of the way without incident, and decided from now on my mantra would be "bike, then beer, bike, then beer."

Choosing a Bike - Continued from page 7

a bike should weight no more than 12% of the rider. That means a 200 lb. rider = 24 lb. bike or 150 lb. rider = 18 lb. bike. If you are a heavy rider you will have no problem finding lots of bikes to choose from. Buy the lightest you can afford. If you are a light rider you might develop a anxiety complex about how much your 20 pound bike is slowing you down. Don't worry about it. If your bike is under 20 lbs and you get dropped on a hill, it's not because of the bike.

Components: After working as a PAC Tour mechanic for 15 years on some very nice bikes, I realized all bikes break. The difference is how easily can they be repaired. For a long-distance bike, consider whether you can fix it yourself on the road. If you are riding Paris-Brest-Paris and are standing under a streetlight in the middle of France with a jammed STI shift lever, can you fix it? Fortunately there are lots of good components on bikes under \$1000 that work well and can be fixed by human hands.

Every distance rider should be able to:

- Change and patch a tire and tube
- Install new brake or shift cables

- Change a spoke and true a wheel
- Repair a broken chain
- Realize and fix a problem before you are stranded

If you are not a mechanic, have your bike shop explain the basic adjustments you can make on the road.

More expensive parts are generally lighter and better machined than lesser priced parts. Shimano Ultegra parts work well for the price. Ultegra parts are also interchangeable with less expensive Shimano parts which are plentiful on department store mountain bikes. Most Mom and Pop bike shops will have similar parts which will work if you are stranded. Again, buy the best you can afford but having a working knowledge of how a part works can improve the performance of all components.

When selecting the gearing remember to bring lower gears than you think you will need. If the route is hilly you will need bigger downhill gears too. The flatter the route the tighter your range of usable gears. A triple crank set allows you to get lower gears with less weight than a larger freewheel.

Wheels: When I bought my first long-dis-

tance bike the salesman suggested I might need a second set of wheels for racing. I wondered why anyone would need spare wheels. Twenty years later my garage is packed full of wheels, each for a different purpose - most of them obsolete with the ever changing technology of new components.

A good set of wheels can make a junk frame ride better. Since most distance events are ridden at low power outputs, many riders can use fairly light but durable equipment. If you are using spoked wheels make sure they are built by someone who understands bicycle wheels and has a good touch with a spoke wrench. The beauty of spoked wheels is that they can be repaired on the road. Even 200 pound riders should be able to travel across the country on 32 spoke wheels with minimum maintenance.

The next wheel upgrade would be a set with deep section rims and minimal spokes. Campy, Mavic and Rolf all make wheels with 12 - 16 spokes which are light and fast. If the design has spoke nipples inside the rim, it is a long process to change a spoke. You have to remove the

Choosing a Bike - Continued on next page

October Mileage Totals

1	5	2	2	6	3
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Name	Miles	M	C	K
Melinda Lyon	13525	8	8	7
Pamela Blalock	10740	7	7	7
John Bayley	9185	7	7	5
Robin Schulman	9018	6	4	6
Tod Rodger	8607	8	6	5
Bruce Ingle	8108	7	3	2
Jack Donohue	8061	-	-	2
Irving Kurki	6961	9	6	2
John MacFarlane	5981	2	1	-
Bruce Gelin	4948	6	3	1
David Wean	4787	7	-	-
Gabor Demjen	4727	5	-	-
Bill Widnall	4522	8	8	-
Dick Arsenault	4478	4	1	-
Bob Sawyer	4470	2	-	-
Joe Repole	4365	-	-	-
Joe Marcal	3851	4	-	-
Doug Cohen	3662	1	-	-

Name	Miles	M	C	K
Marc Baskin	3610	8	1	-
Cynthia Snow	3517	5	2	-
Ed Hoffer	3274	-	-	-
Peter Knox	3069	1	-	-
Gerald Goode	2363	-	-	-
Jim Broughton	2069	-	-	-
John Allen	1923	1	-	-
John Kane	1539	-	-	-
Dave VanAmeyden	1475	5	2	-
Elisse Ghitelman	1039	-	-	-
Cynthia Zabin	992	-	-	-
Phyllis Mays	904	-	-	-
Tracy Ingle	820	-	-	-
John Loring	804	2	-	-
Jeff Luxenberg	797	-	-	-
John Springfield	796	1	1	-
George Caplan	745	-	-	-
Harry Wolf	699	-	-	-

Name	Miles	M	C	K
Ed Trumbull	588	-	-	-
Rosalie Blum	400	-	-	-
Emily Wean	247	-	-	-
Jared Luxenberg	213	-	-	-
Jacob Allen	156	-	-	-
Julia Wean	119	-	-	-
Sara Luxenberg	62	-	-	-
Katie Caplan	47	-	-	-

Mileage Table Explained

Miles are year-to-date totals. The M column indicates the number of months the rider reported completing a metric century. The C column shows the number of months with a hundred mile century, and the K column is the number of months with 1000 or more miles.

Report mileage by the fifth of each month to: Ed Trumbull, 19 Chase Avenue, West Newton, MA 02465 (617) 332-8546.

Choosing a Bike - Continued from page 8

tire and rim tape to true the wheel. Most of these companies pride themselves that their superior designs don't break spokes. I've seen them all break spokes and have wondered how to fix them on the side of the road. I prefer the designs with spoke nipples exposed that can be fixed with common bike tools.

Spinergy wheels with their bladed spokes have become more reliable the past four years. The early models broke because of glue and hub failures. I haven't seen one break recently. The hub bearings still go out of adjustment but can be fixed with a cone wrench. If you have a set that lasts the first 1,000 miles, they seem to be fine for the next 20,000 miles.

I feel a long-distance bike should be treated as a tool toward results.

Lightweight, durability, comfort and efficiency for you should be considered when shopping for your new bike. Buy the best bike for your budget...then learn to use it...learn to fix it...and keep training.

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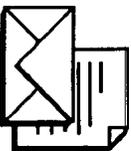
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