

# Bicycle Paper

www.bicyclepaper.com MARCH '98

## The Joy (and Mud) of Spring Riding

Idaho perspective on spring mountain biking

BY STUART BRYSON

When riding your human hamster wheel (i.e. wind trainer) and holding down the couch no longer hold their appeal and your mountain bike beckons you to ride, but it is nasty outside, don't give up hope. Northwest spring riding can be at least entertaining and character-building — and perhaps even fun — if you follow a few simple rules. The obstacles to successful spring riding are daunting but surmountable.

See "Spring" on Page 5

## Bicyclists Invade State Capitol

Officials hear bicycling's concerns

BY DAVID MCNAMARA

Even if the government operated the way we were taught it did in high school, it would still remain a mystery to most of us. Some news for you optimistic idealists: it doesn't.

Instead, the political world has worked hard to weave a web of secrecy (save for bills hastily proposed just prior to election time). It has fought a persuasive campaign to convince us of their bureaucratic and wasteful habits that defy simple reason. Last week I found out how, for the most part, true this is.

See "Lobbying" on Page 3

## Bicycle Expo Season Continues

Next show March 14-15 in Portland

February saw the Greater Seattle Bicycle Expo prove itself to be a premier event once again. In its tenth year, the show attracted 11,500 who came to see the newest in cycling from the event's 152 exhibitors.

The hottest attractions this year were again the Redline BMX demonstrations as well as the Perpetual Motion Cycles' Trials exhibition. Dave Shaw, the event's producer and promoter, also stated that the folding and separable bikes panel proved to be very popular, adding that R+E Cycles' innovative new bike that can be assembled as either a single, a tandem or a tandem with child seat was "One of the coolest bikes I've ever seen."

See "Expo Season" on Page 7



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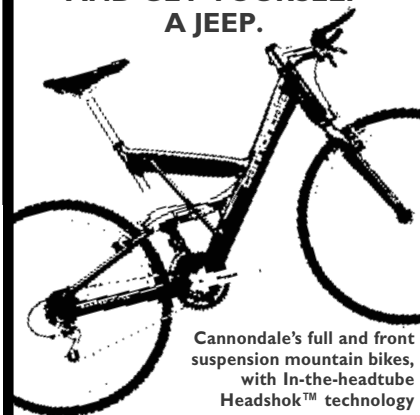
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# Bicycle Paper

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## ADVOCACY

### "Lobbying" from page 1"

In a meeting room just across the hall from Senator Pat Thibaudeau's office there was posted a sign which read "If you make a mess or spill coffee, Please call 7012 immediately. Thank you." Can politicians really not wipe up their own coffee spills? Or is there a designated Coffee Spill and Mess Removal Committee? And on the fourth floor of the O'Brien Building, three pages sat playing cards. First I thought "Nice work, where can I get an application?" This first impulse was quickly followed by "Wait, can anyone make sense of this?"

Enter NowBike.  
To their very deserved credit, NowBike, for their annual Bicycle Lobby Day on February 20, efficiently decoded the puzzle known as Olympia. Beyond that, though, they covered even the simple things that could have easily been overlooked.

First, they sent out postcards to everyone on their mailing list announcing it. (Sure is nice to know when it is, isn't it?) Next, they post or fax an information packet which not only meticulously directs you to your destination by car, train or carpool, but also gives you a briefing of the day's events and the issues to be discussed. (Okay, now we know where we're going, what we're going to do and why we're there.)

When you arrive, you're greeted by friendly volunteers who offer you a name badge and cup of coffee (regular or decaf, or even tea). (Who's who and signs of caffeine withdrawal are solved.) All that remains is the how.

Allow me to be perfectly clear here: I had never been to Olympia before, was only minimally informed of the day's issues and had never met any of the attendees in person. What happened was: I got to the meeting place with absolutely no difficulty, found tables of pamphlets and books explaining the issues and proposed legislature and was all but adopted by the NowBike team from my district (which, consequently, I learned with their assistance).

Barb Culp, Matt Hayes, Lizzy Hughes and Scarlet Tang accepted me as the tail of their comet without blinking, and the how was executed: off to lobby we went, meeting with Representative Frank Chopp and the assistants to Senator Pat Thibaudeau and Representative Edward Murray. But remember that big rub-

ber seal known as bureaucracy? Well, maybe you idealists have cause for optimism.

Either Rep. Frank Chopp is a very "good" politician (i.e., "Yes, I completely agree with anything you say,") or there really does exist, after years of it being considered just a myth, a good politician.

Chopp not only listened patiently to my fellow lobbyists' presentations, but he candidly reported to us what was going on from the inside, responding that "Dealing with people down here, they have no concept of bicycles or alternative transportation." And while everyone is celebrating the fact that House Bill ESHB 2439 — better known as the Cooper Jones Act — passed 98-0 on February 16, Chopp brought us back to reality: "There's a lot of support for safety and that sort of thing. The funding...is the problem."

A problem it is. As Senator Lisa Brown said, there is a "No fee, no tax philosophy." So, in the end, ESHB 2439 is what they call a "Hero Bill": a bill passed but not allotted any budget. Every bill, apparently, has a fine print disclaimer that says it's "stamped null and void without funding." All the same, Chopp stated that he's "hopeful, because it is a common sense sort of thing."

Despite the budget being \$450 million below the 601 ceiling, funding from the government is doubtful. This has led the bill's sponsor, Representative Duane Sommers, to seek alternative means of funding from the \$100,000 he is hoping to get from the transportation budget. He is currently pursuing the following possibilities:

- Increasing fines for bicycle traffic infractions by 25%, which would go towards funding
- Obtaining donations from bicycle clubs
- Collecting \$25 from automobile license exam fees
- Adding a 1% tax on the sales of bicycles

The 1% bicycle tax has been the primary cause for resistance for the bill, with many Republicans holding firm to their pledge of no new taxes. Even in light of this, Senator Eugene Prince said "I personally believe the bill would have passed even with the 1% tax. There are only four or five people against it, but unfortunately leadership listens to them." Senator Lisa Brown added that she has not heard any objections to the tax from bike dealers.

Also discussed during the lobbying was growth management, ferry terminal management and planning, bike path proposals and rail trail preservation.

NowBike's battle is uphill, indeed. Even one of the volunteers said "This is a chore for me; I do it for the biking." Have their efforts paid off? Well, Rep. Chopp thinks so, conceding that "Things have gotten better in the last couple years."

Contact NowBike at (206) 224-9252 or [nowbike@accessone.com](mailto:nowbike@accessone.com).

## Letter to Editor

Hi!  
Just a short note to thank you for your "Three Rings Bad" article. No author was cited.

I have sent a copy to Cascade Bike Club. I had one extremely good ride with them and got badly yelled at before another. I left and haven't reconnected yet.

I continue to ride by myself and with other groups but I need and want to join some of their rides.

Granted CBC is *huge* and not hurting for members. However the article made some extremely good points which I hope may help CBC review how novices are welcomed.

Thanks  
Cathy Geier, Seattle, WA

*We apologize again for neglecting to accredit the article in question to Maynard Hershon. We are glad that you enjoyed the piece, and hope you will find Maynard's sequel to it equally enjoyable, printed in this issue.*

- Editor

## Corrections

We apologize for neglecting to credit two of our most regular contributors, Marianne McCoy and Maynard Hershon, in last month's issue. Marianne had the cover photo and Maynard, as usual, penned the inside back cover article "Three Rings Bad."

JUMP ON IT.

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# Tips on Spring Mountain Biking



PHOTO BY STUART DRYSON.

## "Spring Mountain Biking" from page 1

The first key to successful MTB riding in nasty weather is to carefully evaluate your ride and have backup routes planned. In most northwest towns, the spring riding is limited to lower elevations because of the snow line and wet trails higher up. I am fortunate enough to live in the Boise front, where there are several connecting lower trails and fire-roads. This is nice because a lot of the lower trails are great riding and dry out quickly on a sunny day. This makes for easier rides, but remember that winter and spring is time to play. There will be plenty of grueling climbs during the summer.

There is a simple rule that will keep the cycle-karma deities and other trail-users appeased. If your tires are skidding or digging up the trail, turn around and find another place to ride. Or go have some co-coa and think about riding. The Boise rule-of-thumb is "If you have mud on your tires, stay off the trails." If you are not a knobby-tired knuckle head, I think it is more reasonable to say: "If you have a lot of mud on your tires, stay off the trails, but if you have some mud on your tires, ride very cautiously."



**Paul Fleming on a short and scenic ride up to Table Rock, which can be accessed by trail, fire road and pavement.**

Other areas of the northwest have better trails for nasty weather. Where there is

a lot of tough undergrowth and an extensive root system, as in many Puget Sound areas, riding conditions are usually muddy and slogging is an everyday experience. At the other extreme, riding in the same conditions in Boise's foothills causes extensive damage. So it is important to evaluate carefully where and how you ride. Most areas are somewhere on this continuum of fragility and hardness. When in doubt about where you can safely ride, consult the expertise of a local shop. It is especially important to use good trail etiquette when it is even slightly wet. Trails are fragile and our continued use of them depends on riders riding responsibly. Be especially careful while riding on private land. Whether it is right or wrong, the fact is that landowners are the gatekeepers to many miles of trails, and tweaking their jowls will only hinder cyclists in their quest for access.

A little caution goes a long way when trail conditions are less than ideal. Feather those brakes and slow down so you don't slide. Don't blaze trails around puddles or snow, or the trail will just get wider. Instead ride or hike carefully through the muck. Remember, being wet and cold is part of spring riding! Embrace the experience.

If you are riding with a group, always make sure no one can blame you for the route that was picked if it turns into a muddy disaster. You may even need to vote to avoid this dilemma. Because if you end up hiking in knee deep mud, it is a certainty that one of the first comments you will hear is "Whose bright ideas was this?" Woe to the cursed rider who chose the nasty route!

When you ride in spring weather, you will undoubtedly return home wet and slimy. So hook up your garden hose, or bring some money for your local car wash. A couple bucks

## The Boise, Idaho foothills offer good spring riding on drier trails and fire roads, as well as a good view of the city.

can leave several bikes spotless in short order. However, it can also leave your bike with no grease in the hubs, so careful where you point that thing! And remember, "touchless" drive-through car washes are not advisable even for the most hard-core spring riders.

If the trails are just too nasty for a mountain bike ride, resorting to a paved ride is always an option. However, before going to that length, there are alternatives to be considered. One is riding on dirt and fire roads. If this is too boring for you, do like the Europeans and try it on a road bike (especially if you have a friend who will lend you theirs). Dodging puddles and doing motorcross turns on slick tires is a whole new world of fun.

Another option is to get off your bike altogether and do some winter cross training. For about the price of a movie, you can rent cross-country skis and head for the hills. Another of my favorite off-season training activities is running. A word of caution, though, before you strap on those running shoes: while running is great cross-training for cycling, the opposite is not necessarily true. If you are fit from cycling and you jump into a hard run, you will find you had muscles you never knew existed. If you are fit from other sports, you may hurt yourself before you get tired.

There are a few other rules to remember while recreating in inclement spring conditions:

- Gore-tex is your friend.
- If you have no booties, plastic baggies over your socks will keep your feet from freezing.
- When you feel particularly miserable, ask yourself: "Am I hard-core... or am I stupid?" For some reason this seems to help.

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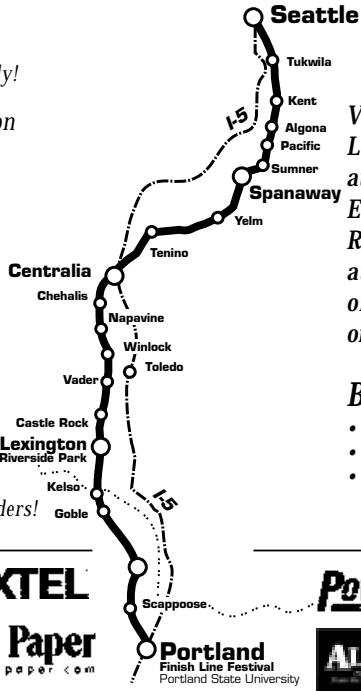
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## REGIONAL NEWS

### Rasta Relay Race and Mountain Bike Raffle to Benefit Multiple Sclerosis

The second annual Rasta Relay Race and Mountain Bike Raffle will take place April 5 at Schweitzer Mountain. The event features slalom skiing, Nordic skiing and slalom mountain biking in the snow, with live reggae music after the relay. The event has been put together by the combined efforts of Alpine Designs MTB, Schweitzer Mountain Resort and The Inland Northwest Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, and is open to all ages. All proceeds from the fundraiser will help to assist persons with Multiple Sclerosis and their families and efforts to find a cure. Call (800) 263-9373 for information.

### First Annual "Pedal the Pinchot" scheduled for Aug 15

There will be an annual fund-raising event for the Clifford Pinchot National Forest from 7 am to 6 pm on August 15. Promoted by the National Forest Foundation, the event hopes to raise more than \$100,000 in its first year, the proceeds of which will go towards restoration projects on the forest. Potential projects include historical site rehabilitation, scenic overlook restoration, campground enhancement, Bear Mountain Overlook improvements and watershed restoration.

There will be three road and two mountain bike routes, ranging from 24 to 114 miles in length, with trails for all skill levels. The event will begin and end in Cougar, WA, and is \$30 for pre-registrants (\$40 day of). (360) 891-5151 for more information.



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### STP Receives KEPA Award

The Seattle to Portland Bicycle Classic was the recipient of the Third Annual King County Event Producers Award (KEPA III) for best large sporting event. STP edged out the Seattle Marathon and the Seafair Hydroplane Races, who were the runners up for the \$250,000 plus budget category.

STP Director Steve Daviess commented that "This award would not have been possible without the dedicated volunteers and the supportive communities that have put STP and teh Northwest on the national cycling map year after year." In its 19th year, STP will continue to accept registrants until its 10,000 entry limit is reached. The ride takes place July 11-12. To find out more, call the Cascade Bicycle Club's Hotline at (206) 522-BIKE, or go to the STP website at [www.cascade.org/stp](http://www.cascade.org/stp).

### "Expo" from page 1

This may have contributed to R+E's buzz at the show, earning them the People's Choice award for the event. The two other awards given out went to Bicycle Collectors of Washington for Class Act and Most Creative to Crank Brothers for their product SpeedLever.

If you missed this year's Bike Expo and still need to catch up on products and news, check out the 11th Annual Portland Bike Show March 14 and 15. Call (206) 248-8430 for more information.

### Survey Winner Picked

We at *Bicycle Paper* are very pleased to announce that Kirk Thompson of Olympia is the winner of two registration passes for this year's STP ride. Congratulations to Kirk, and we would like to extend our thanks to everyone who participated in the survey: we very much appreciate your responses.

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## Welcome to the March, April and May Northwest bicycle calendar

Because of requests made during the recent Greater Seattle Bicycle Expo, *Bicycle Paper* will change its calendar format to list events for the current month plus a preview of the two upcoming months.

All events are listed chronologically within their respective sections: **Events** (clinics, exhibitions, lectures, etc), **Offroad** (competition and rides featuring single-track and other off-road riding), **Rides & Tours** (often 15 to 200 mile rides on roads for any type of bicycle), **Series Races** (competition repeated on three or more weekends), **Single Races** (bicycle competition), and **Track Races** (competition in the velodrome).

If you are an event promoter or organizer and your event is not listed, please write, call, fax or e-mail information to us and we will gladly list it. Please send your event information in the same style and format as seen here. Further, any changes should be handled the same way.

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### Events

**Mar 21: Bicycling Repair (Basic).** Beaverton, OR. Basic tune-up class for beginners: flat tires, derailleur adjustments, brake check. 7-9pm. \$8 (\$15 out-of-district). Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District, 15655 SW Milikan Blvd., Beaverton, OR, 97006. 503-644-5595.

**Mar 24-25: 11th Annual Portland Bike Show.** Portland, OR. Bicycle manufacturers show open to consumers. Bill Bradley, 11041 28 SW, Seattle, WA, 98146. 206-248-8430 or (fax) 206-244-0913.

**Mar 28: Bicycling Repair (Intermediate).** Beaverton, OR. Hands on class to repair wheel hubs, headset & bottom bracket adjustment, & derailleur tune-up. 7-9pm. \$8 (\$12 out-of-district). Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District, 15655 SW Milikan Blvd., Beaverton, OR, 97006. 503-644-5595.

**Mar 28: Mountain Bike Boot Camp.** 10am-2pm. Subjects: trailside tool kit, maintenance and etiquette. Drills on balance, riding positions, gears, brakes, lines, corners, climbing, descending & obstacles. Limited space. \$20/\$10 non-members/members. Hotline: 425-827-4493. http://www.dirtnw.com/btbc. Lfrances@aol.com Leonard Frances, Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club, 425-822-4055 or 425-889-3212.

**Mar 29: 10th Annual Seattle Area Old Bike Swap Meet and Show.** Kent, WA. Antique/Classic Bicycles at the Kent National Guard Armory, 24410 Military Rd., Kent, WA 8am to 1pm. Ron Summer & Jerry Germeau, (Ron) 206-364-0922 or (Jerry) 206-524-4878.

**Apr 18: Mountain Bike Boot Camp.** 10am-2pm. Subjects: trailside tool kit, maintenance and etiquette. Drills on balance, riding positions, gears, brakes, lines, corners, climbing, descending & obstacles. Limited space. \$20/\$10 non-members/members. Hotline: 425-827-4493. http://www.dirtnw.com/btbc. Lfrances@aol.com Leonard Frances, Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club, 425-822-4055 or 425-889-3212.

**Apr 25: Gallatin Valley Bicycle Club Bike Swap.** Gallatin Valley, MT. John Yannington @ 406-586-6264.

**Apr 26: Third Annual Aurora Cycle Tandem and Recumbent Fair.** Seattle, WA. Hands-on informational open house. Ride tandems and recumbents, learn techniques, talk to manufacturer's reps. and other enthusiasts. Noon to 5 p.m. www.greggsocycles.com. Rex McDowell, Gregg's Aurora Cycle, 7401 Aurora Ave. N., Seattle, WA, 206-762-6689 or (fax) 206-781-8270.

**May 20: Mountain Bike Boot Camp.** 5:30-9pm. Subjects: trailside tool kit, maintenance and etiquette. Drills on balance, riding positions, gears, brakes, lines, corners, climbing, descending & obstacles. Limited space. \$20/\$10 non-members/members. Hotline: 425-827-4493. http://www.dirtnw.com/btbc. Lfrances@aol.com Leonard Frances, Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club, 425-822-4055 or 425-889-3212.

**May 22-25: 13th Annual Northwest Tandem Rally.** Spokane, WA. Many rides, events, bike expo, banquet and a great time. \$56 per tandem team. Please contact Betty Lind at (509) 747-4352, 106 W 24th, Spokane, WA 99203 for application and information. E-mail: rlie@tea.com.

### Off Road

**Mar 7: Redrock Desert Rampage.** St. George, UT. Beautiful spring race at Utah's version of Palm Springs. Part of Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series. Email rogo@micron.net or www.wildrockies.com Ron Dillon, Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series, P.O. Box 7075, Boise, ID, 83707. 208-342-3910 or 208-368-9626.

**Mar 13-15: 1998 Specialized Cactus Cup.** Scottsdale, AZ. Stage Race & Festival at McDowell Mtn. Regional Park. All categories. More fun than a barrel of monkeys. Bryan, Specialized, 408-779-6229.

**Mar 29: The Barkling Spider bash.** Nampa, ID. A great early-season, low elevation, gentle climb, desert-race. Post race swim at nearby Given's Hot Springs. Located in sight from Glacier National Park. Part of Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series. Email rogo@micron.net or www.wildrockies.com Ron Dillon, Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series, P.O. Box 7075,

Boise, ID, 83707. 208-342-3910 or 208-368-9626.

**Apr 4: Vegas Rocks.** Las Vegas, NV. Rolling, fun desert, course located only minutes from the Vegas strip. Part of Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series. Email rogo@micron.net or www.wildrockies.com Ron Dillon, Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series, P.O. Box 7075, Boise, ID, 83707. 208-342-3910 or 208-368-9626.

**Apr 4: Daylight Savings.** Beaverton, OR. 12 miles along Leaf Erickson Trail. Head & tail lights required. \$6. Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District, 15655 SW Milikan Blvd., Beaverton, OR, 97006. 503-644-5595.

**Apr 6: Spring Point Series Race #1.** Bonney Lake, WA. 5:30pm. \$12 (\$7 under 18). www.dirtnw.com Doug Cartwright, Kelley Creek Brewing Co., 20123 Old Buckley Highway, Bonney Lake, WA, 98390. 253-862-5969.

**Apr 11-12: Burnt Bridge International Classic.** Shawanigan Lake, Victoria, B.C. Cross-country, downhill, kids races, xc running event. www.pro-competition.com or Email: procomp@pacificcoast.com Claire Bonin, 250-656-7995.

**Apr 11-12: Seattle Rocks Festival.** Seattle, WA. Seattle International Raceway hosts its first ever cross country and dual slalom mountain bike competition. Part of Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series. Email rogo@micron.net or www.wildrockies.com Ron Dillon, Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series, P.O. Box 7075, Boise, ID, 83707. 208-342-3910 or 208-368-9626.

**Apr 11: South Beach Boogie.** Delta, UT. Fun in the sun near Utah's Great Salt Lake. Part of Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series. Email rogo@micron.net or www.wildrockies.com Ron Dillon, Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series, P.O. Box 7075, Boise, ID, 83707. 208-342-3910 or 208-368-9626.

**Apr 15: Spring Point Series Race #2.** Bonney Lake, WA. 5:30pm. \$12 (\$7 under 18). www.dirtnw.com. Doug Cartwright, Kelley Creek Brewing Co., 20123 Old Buckley Highway, Bonney Lake, WA, 98390. 253-862-5969.

**Apr 17: Finley Hills Challenge.** Kennewick, WA. A scenic well organized spring race. Race along the spectacular Columbus Gorge vista. Part of Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series. Email rogo@micron.net or www.wildrockies.com Ron Dillon, Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series, P.O. Box 7075, Boise, ID, 83707. 208-342-3910 or 208-368-9626.

**Apr 18: Finley Hills Challenge.** Kennewick, WA. NORBA XC mountain bike race. Wild Rockies Series event. www.wildrockies.com Ron Dillon, P.O. Box 7075, Boise, ID, 83707. 208-342-3910.

**Apr 19: 13th Annual Mudslinger Classic Mountain Bike Race.** Conavilis, OR. Jim Fischer, 5549 SW Redtop Pl., Conavilis, OR, 97333. 541-754-3752 or (fax) 541-766-8403.

**Apr 22: Spring Point Series Race #3.** Bonney Lake, WA. 5:30pm. \$12 (\$7 under 18). www.dirtnw.com. Doug Cartwright, Kelley Creek Brewing Co., 20123 Old Buckley Highway, Bonney Lake, WA, 98390. 253-862-5969.

**Apr 25-26: Lake Chelan Mt. Bike festival.** Lake Chelan, WA. Downhill, Cross Country, Kids Race. \$20-\$30. WIM Series Points. E-mail: cisco@roundandround.com or www.roundandround.com Round & Round Productions, 2704 S. Stone, Spokane, WA, 99223. 509-535-4757 or (fax) 509-533-9354.

**Apr 25: The Big K MTB Festival.** Big K Ranch, OR. NORBA off-road, excellent single track, excellent facilities. \$20 pre-race, \$25 day of. E-mail: frameman@msci.net. Mitch, Cycles LaMoure Races, 613 S.E. Jackson, Roseburg, OR, 97470. 541-957-1020.

**Apr 26: 7th Annual Bear Trax & Beeswax.** Tahuya State Forest, Belfair, WA. Mountain bike race. NORBA/IMBA event. Doug Miller, Single Track Mind Cycling Club, 1648 S. 246th Pl., Des Moines, WA, 98198. 206-564-1422 or 206-824-8104.

**Apr 29: Spring Point Series Race #4.** Bonney Lake, WA. 5:30pm. \$12 (\$7 under 18). www.dirtnw.com. Doug Cartwright, Kelley Creek Brewing Co., 20123 Old Buckley Highway, Bonney Lake, WA, 98390. 253-862-5969.

**May 2-3: Coeur d'Alene Challenge.** Coeur d'Alene, ID. Deep woods, and a great course on a beautiful, scenic trail system in Farragut State Park. Part of Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series. Email rogo@micron.net or www.wildrockies.com Ron Dillon, Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series, P.O. Box 7075, Boise, ID, 83707. 208-342-3910 or 208-368-9626.

**May 2: Showdown at Five Mile Pass.** Lahi, UT. Experience the west at another fun race near Salt Lake City. Part of Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series. Email rogo@micron.net or



A group of riders at the MS Mountain Bike Madness Ride. This year's ride is May 9.

www.wildrockies.com Ron Dillon, Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series, P.O. Box 7075, Boise, ID, 83707. 208-342-3910 or 208-368-9626.

**May 3: Spring Thaw Mountain Bike Challenge.** Ashland, OR. NORBA Race. 25 mile racer through the Ashland Watershed. Race and event web site: www.id.mind.net/~gumbly/. Russ Rickert, P.O. Box 903, Ashland, OR, 97520. 541-482-8704.

**May 3: 6th Annual Padden Mountain Paddle.** Lake Padden Recreation Area, Bellingham, WA. Mark Peterson, Kulshan Cycles, 360-738-0679.

**May 3: Billings Mountain Bike Series #1.** Billings, MT. The Bike Shop @ 406-652-1202.

**May 6: Spring Point Series Race #5.** Bonney Lake, WA. 5:30pm. \$12 (\$7 under 18). www.dirtnw.com. Doug Cartwright, Kelley Creek Brewing Co., 20123 Old Buckley Highway, Bonney Lake, WA, 98390. 253-862-5969.

**May 9: MS Mountain Bike Madness Ride.** Choose from an all ages and abilities 50km route or a challenging 70km route perfect for experienced off-road cyclists. Jenny Foss, MS Society, 192 Nickerson St., Ste. 100, Seattle, WA, 98109. 800-800-7047.

**May 9: Bike Zion XC Race.** Zion National Park, UT. Zion Ponderosa Resort offers an enjoyable getaway. Part of Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series. Email rogo@micron.net or www.wildrockies.com Ron Dillon, Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series, P.O. Box 7075, Boise, ID, 83707. 208-342-3910 or 208-368-9626.

**May 13: Spring Point Series Race #6.** Bonney Lake, WA. 5:30pm. \$12 (\$7 under 18). www.dirtnw.com. Doug Cartwright, Kelley Creek Brewing Co., 20123 Old Buckley Highway, Bonney Lake, WA, 98390. 253-862-5969.

**May 16-17: Winthrop Boneshaker MTB Bash.** Winthrop, WA. Downhill, Hill Climb, Cross Country, Kids Race. \$20-\$30. WIM Series Points. E-mail: cisco@roundandround.com or www.roundandround.com Round & Round Productions, 2704 S. Stone, Spokane, WA, 99223. 509-535-4757 or (fax) 509-533-9354.

**May 16-17: Idaho City Excellent Adventure.** Idaho City, ID. One of Idaho's oldest mountain bike races in one of Idaho's oldest towns. Part of Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series. Email rogo@micron.net or www.wildrockies.com Ron Dillon, Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series, P.O. Box 7075, Boise, ID, 83707. 208-342-3910 or 208-368-9626.

**May 17: 2nd Annual GT Tahuya Spring Classic.** Belfair, WA. New Classes, 90% single track, Cross Country Event. Information also at Old Town Bicycle (253) 858-8040. Craig, Kamakaze Mountain Bike Club, 12309 104th Street KPN, Gig Harbor, WA, 98329. 206-857-3002.

**May 20: Spring Point Series Race #7.** Bonney Lake, WA. 5:30pm. \$12 (\$7 under 18). www.dirtnw.com. Doug Cartwright, Kelley Creek Brewing Co., 20123 Old Buckley Highway, Bonney Lake, WA, 98390. 253-862-5969.

**May 23-24: Bortertown Challenge.** Wendover, NV. High desert trails wind through the pinion pines and high mountain peaks. Part of Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series. Email rogo@micron.net or www.wildrockies.com Ron Dillon, Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series, P.O. Box 7075, Boise, ID, 83707. 208-342-3910 or 208-368-9626.

**May 24: Hutch's Hustle.** Bend, OR. Sally Russell, 442 NW State St., Bend, OR, 97701. 541-389-3295 or (fax) 541-389-7372.

**May 24: Summerland Action Riders.** Summerland, B.C. Mass start, point to point, 60+ riders. Single track challenging race, 20km & 45km route options. BC Cup series status. \$25. Ron Haman, Action Quest, P.O. Box 214, Summerland, B.C., V2M 1Z0. 250-494-5469 or (fax) 250-494-9446.

**May 30-31: LaGrange Classic.** Weaverville, CA. In the heart of redwood country. This established race will please any rider with its challenging trails on cool terrain. Part of Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series. Email rogo@micron.net or www.wildrockies.com Ron Dillon, Wild Rockies Mountain Bike Series, P.O. Box 7075, Boise, ID, 83707. 208-342-3910 or 208-368-9626.

**May 30: Blue Mountain Mountain Bike Race.** Missoula, MT. Jason @ 406-543-3331.

### Rides & Tours

**Mar 14: McClintchy Mile.** Monroe, WA. 25, 40, 50 & 70 mile loops beginning at Monroe HS. \$12/\$15 prerog/day of ride.

Includes snacks, maps & Dan Henry arrows. First 300 riders receive McClintchy Mile water bottles. Barb Trenchi, B.I.K.E.S. of Everett, P.O. Box 5242, Everett, WA, 98206. 425-348-7410.

**Mar 15-21: Wheeling Hawaii.** Hawaii. 256-mile adventure starts in Kailua Kona, with nights in Volcano Village, Punaluu, Hilo, Honokaa, & Hana, then back to Kona. E-mail: tintka@aol.com Brit-Simone Sutter, Tim Kneeland & Associates, Inc., 200 Lake Washington Boulevard, Suite 101, Seattle, WA, 98122-6540. 800-433-0528 or fax: 206-322-4509.

**Mar 21: Spring Equinox.** Beaverton, OR. 20 miles, through Beaverton & Tualatin Hills Nature Park. 10am-1pm. \$6. Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District, 15655 SW Milikan Blvd., Beaverton, OR, 97006. 503-644-5595.

**Apr 19: Daffodil Classic.** Oring, WA. 20, 50, 70, 100 mile routes. \$12/\$15 individual, \$30/\$35 family (before April 7/day of). T-shirts \$13/\$15, limited quantities. Includes SAG map, souvenir, snacks, marked course. TWBC, Janice Jensen @ (253) 759-2800.

**Apr 20-Jun 6: Southern Cross Bicycle Classic.** Anaheim, CA to Orlando, FL. 48 days, 3195 miles from Disneyland to Walt Disney World Resort. Pay-to-go (\$3800) and fundraising options. 27 carefully selected destinations. Tim Kneeland, TK&A, Inc., 200 Lake Washington Blvd., Ste. 101, Seattle, WA, 98122-6540. 800-433-0528 or www.kneeland.com/timtk/a/.

**Apr 26: Pedal for the Past.** Bremerton, WA. 2pm. Kitsap County Historical Society's family fun tour of historicBremerton. \$15 per family in advance, \$25 day of ride. E-mail: kchsm@telebyte.net. Museum is at 280 4th Street. Nadean Ross, Kitsap County Historical Society, P.O. Box 903, Bremerton, WA, 98337. 360-415-9294 or (Nadean) 360-892-6369.

**Apr 26: Lilac Rotary Annual Surprise Bicycle Ride.** Spokane, WA. A family fun ride 15/50/100 mile courses. E-mail: wholcom@ron-ramp.10R.com Bill Holcomb, Lilac Rotary Century Surprise, 1517 W. Grace, Spokane, WA, 99205. (fax) 509-467-4710.

**Apr 26: Sunnyside Anniversary Ride & Bike-A-Ro Breakfast.** Bend, OR. Help us celebrate our 26th year with this 25 mile ride. Ride free, breakfast \$5. Susan Bonacker, Sunnyside Sports, 930 NW Newport Ave., Bend, OR, 97701. 541-382-8018 or (fax) 541-382-3079.

**May 2: Vancouver Bicycle Club's Ride Around Clark County.** Clark County, WA. 6:30-9:45 am start. \$4.95 & 100 miles. Pre-registration postmarked by 4/40/98 \$12 w/o t-shirt, \$22 w/it. Day of ride \$17 w/o t-shirt, Kathy Fisher, The Vancouver Bicycle Club, 360-892-8765.

**May 2: 4th Annual Scenic Tour of the Kootenai River.** Libby, MT. STORR Northwest Montana tour boasts waterfalls, wildlife and few cars! 3 hrs from Spokane. Benefits Habitat for Humanity. Limit: 200 riders. E-mail: greggie@libby.org Susie Rice, 1020 Idaho, Libby, MT, 59923. 406-293-2441.

**May 3: Monster Cookie Metric Century.** Salem, OR. A metric century (62 miles) through flat farmland from Salem to Champoeg State Park for lunch & back. Fully supported. Email dparrow@teleport.com. Doug Parrow, Salem Bicycle Club, P.O. Box 2224, Salem, OR, 97308. 503-588-8613.

**May 8-9: San Juan Islands.** San Juan Islands, WA. 6 days. Cycling Highlights: La Conner Loopey, Orcas Island; San Juan Island. Designated: all abilities. Departs weekly May-October. Price: \$1,464. Call for free brochure. www.singletrackadventures.com Martha L. Travis, Bicycle Adventures, P.O. Box 11219, Olympia, WA, 98508. 800-443-6060 or 360-786-0869.

**May 3: Green River Headwaters Century.** Enumclaw High School, WA. 20, 60 or 100 miles. prerog \$12 (tandem \$20); day of \$15 (\$30). Great scenery, plenty of rest stops, food and fun. Tom Shirley, Green River Bicycle Club, P.O. Box 1209, Auburn, WA, 98007-1209. 360-897-8026.

**May 3: Camano Climb 98.** Camano Island, WA. 2nd annual 50 & 35 mile ride around Camano Island, beautiful scenery, food stops. Enjoy Stanwood Mayfest. \$20 pre-registar, \$25 day of ride. E-mail: boskos4@whidbey.net Steve Boskows, Stanwood Camano Bikes, 8500 Cedarhome Dr., Stanwood, WA, 98292. 360-629-4571 or Don Javay: 360-629-6415.

**May 10: The Rhody Tour Metric and Half-Metric Century.** Port Townsend, WA. 32, 44, 64 miles. Two food/water stops. SAG, route is marked with pavement markings plus map. \$15, proceeds to provide helmets for kids. E-mail: jimcc@olympus.net David McCulloch, Port Townsend Bicycle

# CALENDAR

Calendar sponsored by



Association, P.O. Box 649, Port Townsend, WA, 98368. 360-385-3912.

**May 17-19: Tour of Swan River Valley.** Missoula, MT. Greg Siple @ 406-542-2607.

**May 17: The Santa Fe Century (13th year).** Santa Fe, NM. Willard Chikcott, 885 Camino Del Este, Santa Fe, NM, 87501. 505-982-1282.

**May 22-25: 13th Annual Northwest Tandem Rally.** Spokane, WA. Many rides, events, bike expo, banquet and a great time. \$56 per tandem team. Please contact Betty Ledlin at (509) 747-4352, 106 W 24th, Spokane, WA 99203 for application and information. E-mail: rlee@lea.com

**May 23-30: WomanTours-Zion/Bryce.** Utah. Cedar City, UT to Zion/Bryce. A women only road tour. 7 days. \$1390. Includes Im-to-lm, van support and all meals. Gloria Smith, WomanTours, P.O. Box 931, Driggs, ID, 83422. 208-354-8804 or 800-247-1444.

**May 25-30: Silver Loop Tour '98.** Colorado. Ride the famous San Juan Skyway of southwestern Colorado! 55 mile days. No sag support. \$200 (single/shared) to \$500 (couple/private). Email: gay@mca.com Gary Keane, 2200 S. University, Denver, CO, 80210. 303-733-3736 x304.

**May 29: Puget Sound Bike to Work Day.** Puget Sound area. We promote this annual event with a friend of co-worker and help promote clean air! Jan Paige, Cascade Bicycle Club, P.O. Box 312999, Seattle, WA, 98103. 206-522-BIKE.

**May 7-Sep 10: Alpenrose Track Series.** near Portland. Mike Murray, 503-661-5874.

**May 18-Aug 24: Masters PIR Series.** Portland International Speedway, OR. Candi Murray, 503-667-6220.

## Single Race

**Mar 1: Tour de Dung.** Dungeness Recreation Area, WA. Bill Rowland, Pettit Oil Cycling, 520 W. 16th St., Port Angeles, WA, 98362. 360-457-8069 or Fax: 360-681-3869.

**Mar 7: Banana Belt Series.** Portland. CH Productions, 503-236-4712.

**Mar 7: Ice Break Time Trial.** Auburn, WA. Wanda Howlett, 253-639-2021.

**Mar 8: Windy Two Man Time Trial.** Boise, ID. Kuna Mora Rd., 25 miles. USCF event. Mike Cooley, Boise Cycling Club, 208-343-3782.

**Mar 8: Tour de Dung.** Dungeness Recreation Area, WA. Bill Rowland, Pettit Oil Cycling, 520 W. 16th St., Port Angeles, WA, 98362. 360-457-8069 or Fax: 360-681-3869.

**Mar 14: Chinook RAD Road Race Series.** Richland, WA. USCF Road Race (Circuit), 10.5 mile loop. www.geocities.com/colosseum/1119 John Limbaugh, P.O. Box 132, Richland, WA, 99352. 509-585-0783.

**Mar 14: Banana Belt Series.** Portland. CH Productions, 503-236-4712.

**Mar 15: Tour de Dung.** Dungeness Recreation Area, WA. Bill Rowland, Pettit Oil Cycling, 520 W. 16th St., Port Angeles, WA, 98362. 360-457-8069 or Fax: 360-681-3869.

**Mar 21: Chinook RAD Road Race Series.** Richland, WA. USCF Road Race (Circuit), 10.5 mile loop. www.geocities.com/colosseum/1119 John Limbaugh, P.O. Box 132, Richland, WA, 99352. 509-585-0783.

**Mar 21: Collegiate Critterium.** Spokane, WA. Flat Road Race 30-40 miles. E-mail: pegasus@eznet.com Alex Renner, 418 E. Pacific Ave., Suite #2, Spokane, WA, 99202-1456. e-mail: pegasus@eznet.com.

**Mar 21: Southern Oregon Time Trials #1.** Ashland, OR. Ed Garfield, 541-772-1393.

**Mar 21-Apr 4: Southern Oregon Time Trials.** Ashland, OR. Ed Garfield, 541-772-1393.

**Mar 22: Race of the Frozen Flatlands.** Spokane, WA. Flat Road Race 30-40 miles. E-mail: pegasus@eznet.com Alex Renner, 418 E. Pacific Ave., Suite #2, Spokane, WA, 99202-1456. e-mail: pegasus@eznet.com.

**Mar 22: Slammer Road Race.** Boise, ID. Pleasant Valley/Hubbard Rd 35 miles. USCF event. Mike Cooley, Boise Cycling Club, 208-343-3782.

**Mar 22: Piece of Cake.** Woodland, WA. David Aufer, 503-246-1100.

**Mar 28: Chinook RAD Road Race Series.** Richland, WA. USCF Road Race (Circuit), 10.5 mile loop. www.geocities.com/colosseum/1119 John Limbaugh, P.O. Box 132, Richland, WA, 99352. 509-585-0783.

**Mar 28: Southern Oregon Time Trials #2.** Ashland, OR. Ed Garfield, 541-772-1393.

**Mar 29: Snohomish Road Race.** Snohomish, WA. 10 mile loop on rural roads. Rolling hills, no major climbs. All CATS. \$18/\$20 prerag/day of race. E-mail: LDDOU@SCN.ORG David Douglas, Pazzo Promotions, 4207 SW Hill St., Seattle, WA, 98116. 206-932-5921.

**Mar 29: Emmett-Roubaix Road Race.** Boise, ID. 40 miles. USCF event. Mike Cooley, Boise Cycling Club, 208-343-3782.

**Apr 4: Southern Oregon Time Trials #3.** Ashland, OR. Ed Garfield, 541-772-1393.

**Apr 4: Volunteer Park Critterium.** Seattle, WA. The longest running bike race in the Seattle area returns again as the spring opener for local road racing. Sponsored by Gregg's cycles. Races will begin at 8am with the New Rider heat. Men's Cat 1.2-Pro at 1pm; Women's Cat 1-3 begins at noon. Contact Dan Norton at (206) 323-3308.

**Apr 5: Vashon Island Circuit Race.** Vashon Island, WA. A U shaped 3 mile loop with 1/2 mile climb. All CATS + Collegiate. \$18/\$20 prerag/day of race. E-mail: LDDOU@SCN.ORG David Douglas, Pazzo Promotions, 4207 SW Hill St., Seattle, WA, 98116. 206-932-5921.

**Apr 5: Black's Creek Road Race.** Boise, ID. USCF event. Mike Cooley, Boise Cycling Club, 208-343-3782.

**Apr 11: Mason Lake Road Race.** Shelton, WA. 13 mile loop around Mason Lake provides a good early season course. No major climbs, but many little rollers and twisty turns. 10am. \$20. David Douglas, Pazzo Promotions, 4207 SW Hill St., Seattle, WA, 98116. 206-932-5921.

**Apr 11: King of the Valley Road Race.** Salem, OR. Scott Goldstein, 541-343-4833.

**Apr 11: Rocky Mountain Roubaix.** Missoula, MT. Dale Bickell @ 406-543-6920.

**Apr 18-19: Collegiate Race.** Bozeman, MT. NCAA only. John Yarrington @ 406-586-6264.

**Apr 19: Ridge to River Relay.** Wenatchee, WA. Multisport relay race. 2000 participants. 35 miles. Includes Nordic & alpine skiing, running, cycling, kayak/canoe, portage. Teams, pairs, & solo. E-mail: sue@r2r.org Susan Fresse, Ridge to River Relay Association, 656 North Miller St., P.O. Box 3961, Wenatchee, WA, 98807. 509-662-8799.

**Apr 19: Perma Road Race.** Missoula, MT. Open Road Bikes, Dan @ 406-549-BIKE.

**Apr 25: Seward Park Spring Classic.** Seattle, WA. Raintrop 0.8 mile course with 200 yard hill. All CATS + free kids race. \$13/\$15 prerag/day of race. E-mail: LDDOU@SCN.ORG David Douglas, Pazzo Promotions, 4207 SW Hill St., Seattle, WA, 98116. 206-932-5921.

**Apr 26: Bellingham Critterium.** Bellingham, WA. Bob Lemon, 360-733-6440.

**Apr 26: Walla Walla Road Race.** Walla Walla, WA. Steve Rapp, 509-527-8724.

**Apr 26: Montana Velo Road Race.** Missoula, MT. Jeff Caton @ 406-543-6177.

**May 1-3: Columbia Plateau Stage Race.** Eastern Oregon. 3 point-to-point road stages, one time trial. Road stages

together make one big loop. Mark Schwyhart, 4425 SE Woodward, Portland, OR, 97206. 503-231-0236 or 503-227-7956.

**May 8: PIR Series.** Portland International Speedway, OR. Jeff Mitchem, 503-777-2362.

**May 10: Manito Critterium.** Manito Park, Spokane, WA. Round & Round Productions, 2704 S. Stone, Spokane, WA, 99223. 509-535-4757 or (fax) 509-533-9354.

**May 12: PIR Series.** Portland International Speedway, OR. Jeff Mitchem, 503-777-2362.

**May 16: Driver Valley Road Race.** Oakland, OR. 22 miles, 2 hills. U.S.C.F. race. All categories. \$15 prerace, \$20 day of race. E-mail: frameman@mcsi.net Mitch, Cycles LaMoure Races, 613 S.E. Jackson, Roseburg, OR, 97470. 541-957-1020.

**May 16: Beaverton Jr. Road.** Beaverton, OR. Matt Guinn, (503) 257-6244.

**May 17: Beaverton Critterium.** Beaverton, OR. Matt Guinn, (503) 257-6244.

**May 18: Masters PIR.** Portland International Speedway, OR. Candi Murray, 503-667-6220.

**May 19: PIR Series.** Portland International Speedway, OR. Jeff Mitchem, 503-777-2362.

**May 23-25: Best of the West Junior Olympic Stage Race.** Oregon. Largest Junior Stage Race in the U.S. All junior age divisions offered. www.id.mind.net/~gumbly/bestwest/ or E-mail: DBandy@mindnet Dana Bandy, P.O. Box 903, Ashland, OR, 97520. 541-488-2453 or (fax) 541-488-0011.

**May 23-25: 7th Annual Twin Rivers Cycling Classic.** Lewiston, ID/Clarkston, WA. One of the premier stage races in the western U.S. \$10,000 prime list. Enter early. E-mail: cycle@valley-internet.net or www.syn477.chem.wsu.edu/~lawson/trcc.html Pete Beall, cycle@valley-internet.net, (from web site).

**May 26: PIR Series.** Portland International Speedway, OR. Jeff Mitchem, 503-777-2362.

**May 30: Memorial Track.** near Portland. Ron Magnus, (503) 244-9399.

## Series Races

**Mar 1-15: Tour de Dung.** Dungeness Recreation Area, WA. 3/1, 3/8, & 3/15. \$18/\$20 (early bird/regular). Bill Rowland, Pettit Oil Cycling, 520 W. 16th St., Port Angeles, WA, 98362. 360-457-8069 or Fax: 360-681-3869.

**Mar 14-28: Chinook RAD Road Race Series.** Richland, WA. USCF Road Race (Circuit), 10.5 mile loop. www.geocities.com/colosseum/1119 John Limbaugh, P.O. Box 132, Richland, WA, 99352. 509-585-0783.

**Apr 7-Sep 1: Badlands Twilight Series.** Spokane, WA. 6pm every Tuesday night. E-mail: pegasus@eznet.com Alex Renner, 418 E. Pacific Ave., Suite #2, Spokane, WA, 99202-1456. e-mail: pegasus@eznet.com.

**Apr 8-May 20: Kelley Creek Mountain Bike Races.** Bonney Lake, WA. Every Wednesday, 5:30pm. \$12 (\$15 under 18). www.dirtw.com. Doug Cartwright, Kelley Creek Brewing Co., 20123 Old Buckley Highway, Bonney Lake, WA, 98390. 253-862-9969.

**Apr 9-Aug 27: Seward Park Thursday Night Series.** Seattle, WA. Raintrop 0.8 mile course with 200 yard hill. 3 training races each night. Starts 5:30pm. \$8 day of race only. E-mail: LDDOU@SCN.ORG David Douglas, Pazzo Promotions, 4207 SW Hill St., Seattle, WA, 98116. 206-932-5921.

**Apr 21-Sep 1: SIR Road Race Series.** Kent, WA. Tuesdays at 7pm. Tracy Jolly, 206-322-0072.

**May 5-Sep 8: PIR Series.** Portland International Speedway, OR. Jeff Mitchem, 503-777-2362.

## Track Races

**May 7: Alpenrose Track Series.** near Portland. Mike Murray, 503-661-5874.

**May 14: Alpenrose Track Series.** near Portland. Mike Murray, 503-661-5874.

**May 21: Alpenrose Track Series.** near Portland. Mike Murray, 503-661-5874.

**May 28: Alpenrose Track Series.** near Portland. Mike Murray, 503-661-5874.

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# A Nation of Loners

BY MAYNARD HERSHON

Last month I wrote about weekend bike club rides, those that are open to everyone. I said: A club is defined by its treatment of new and "slower" riders. I believed that when I wrote it, but now I believe it more than ever.

In January, I visited friends in New Zealand. The cycling scene there is like ours but smaller, in proportion to the population.

I rode with two Kiwi bike clubs, one in the Auckland area, the other in New Zealand's wine country, Hawkes Bay, on the east coast of the North Island. Both clubs reminded me of the British club I rode with, Coventry Road Club, more than they reminded me of U.S. clubs.

I stayed with my Auckland friend Peter Atkinson during my visit. He's the president of the Manukau City Veterans Cycling Club. Both times I've visited N.Z., I've been there in January at the time of their annual general meeting, club officer election day.

The MCVCC has a clubhouse in Alfriston, a picturesque small town south of Auckland. Sunday mornings, members arrive at the clubhouse, have a cuppa tea and a chat and separate into three groups for the ride: the fast guys, the medium group and the new and/or more leisurely riders.

Peter, who is strong enough to hang with the fast ride, rode with the new riders. He made sure they stayed together, that they learned something about group cycling and that everyone had a good time.

After post-ride tea, at the elections, one of the jobs to be filled was that of a "shepherd" who would start with the fast guys, then hang back and stay with dropped riders.

He or she would try to keep those riders together so they, too, would have a "group" experience — instead of the lonely return ride we've all endured.

The club wants everyone to have a good time. No one was ignored; no one was simply "too slow." No member or officer felt that the effort of helping new riders was wasted. Newcomers would become better cyclists in time, would join the club in time, if they enjoyed the riding. It was cool. The club, by the way, is growing steadily.

A few days later, Peter and I put our bikes in his car and drove across the North Island to Hawkes Bay. We stayed at a B&B outside a smallish town called Napier. When we stopped at a bike shop, The Hub, the owner told us about the local club and the activities available there.

In Napier, on Thursday evening you can ride a training criterium, a tough hill climb or a time trial, rotating by the week. On Saturday you can ride a road race. These are all intra-club events; there's no need for a racing license. Show up and ride.

Peter and I watched the hill climb and showed up Saturday afternoon for the road race. We appeared in a car and must have been conspicuous, because the Hawkes Bay Ramblers club president introduced himself to us, as did the ex-president, the club founder.

The former president noted that we were without bikes. "We have spares," he said. "Would you like to ride?" I was blown away,



never having been offered a bike to race, especially by a guy I'd met 15 minutes earlier. We said no thanks, but we were impressed.

By the way, one of the young men in the club, a fast guy by reputation, did not race that Saturday. He had tea duty, producing tea and coffee and several kinds of biscuits (cookies) for the riders post-race. The tea tasted great, as did the cookies, even if you hadn't raced.

On Sunday, we learned, there are three training rides. We chose the largest one. About 40 riders turned out in front of another Napier bike shop. The ride leader spoke to the assembled cyclists, telling us the intended route and pointing out that there were two

guests present, an Auckland and a Yank.

"Make 'em feel at home," he said.

And they did. We did a glorious hilly ride in the Hawkes Bay countryside, sometimes fast, sometimes slower. At regular intervals, the fast guys at the front would wait for the rest of us.

We did not stop mid-ride for tea as clubs in England commonly do, but the same feeling was there, that of friendship and support rather than competition. You had no feeling that "fast" was synonymous with "cool."

My experiences in England and N.Z., plus stories I've heard about Canadian cycling, lead me to believe that we've become (or always were) a nation of loners. We look out for number one.

We see others as threats, not potential friends. Hey, who needs friends? Who's got time?

Correct me by mail if you think I'm wrong, but first: Think about your own club rides...

Why, that stranger on the Trek may be fast. He'll make us (oh no!) look slower than we fear we are. Why be civil? Why introduce him to other riders? Why watch out for him in case he doesn't know the ride route? Check out his socks anyway. Dweeb. Good riddance.

Ride here, and you think that's the way of the world. Ride elsewhere and realize you were wrong.

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