

Bicycle Paper

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WINTER '99

Odyssey 2000 departing!

Bags are packed and they're ready to roll around the world

AMY POFFENBARGER

There must be something really special about pedaling a bike, especially if it's your mode of choice for traveling around the world. For 250 people who are days away from embarking upon the 20,000-mile Odyssey 2000® trip, travelling by bicycle is the only way to go.

(See "Odyssey" on page 5)

InterBike

A bike shop owner's view

JOHN GALLAGHER

When the English poet John Donne was dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, he kept in his room a plaster mask of his face. This mask, more traditionally made at death, was made to remind him of the transitory nature of life. In the same way, when I pack for Interbike, the largest bicycle-industry trade show in the world, I always bring a Bridgestone t-shirt.

(See "InterBike" on page 7)

It's that time of year again...

Bike shops give their top recommendations for cycling gifts this year

AMANDA GARRICK

What products do bike shops recommend this Christmas season? We asked around to see which products are making their customers' Christmas lists this year. From stocking stuffers to hi-tech equipment, here's a peek into this winter's hottest gift items for the casual to competitive cyclist.

(See "Christmas" on page 8)



TRAVEL

Northwest riders attend Paris-Brest-Paris

Kent Peterson and 21 other members of the Seattle International Randonneurs set out for Paris this August to compete in the Paris-Brest-Paris ride. This three day ride took members anywhere from 70 to 87 hours to complete, much of that time spent stopping at cafes, pubs, villages, and other places along the way. For most riders, the point was simply to finish the ride. The experiences they logged along the way being far more important than their finishing time. One of SIR's riders, Kent Peterson, shares some of these experiences with us in excerpts from his Paris-Brest-Paris memoirs.

...It's the small hours of the morning and there are very few cars on the road. But even in the middle of the night, there are French farmers and villagers waiting by the road side, encouraging us as we pass. "Bon Courage!" they call and "Bon Route!". The Anciens of PBP had told me about this but hearing about it and living it are two very different things...

...In the dark it's hard to tell the nationality of riders, but certain rules of thumb are true more often than not. Americans are on the techno bikes with awesome lights. The French are riding older

bikes at a consistent pace and they tend to have feeble lights. The Brits have mud guards, big Carradice saddle bags and dynamo-powered lights. Another safe bet is that if a bike is odd, it's pilot is a Brit. Many of the recumbents, the fixed gear bikes, and the trikes have British riders...

...Even the French dogs are different than American dogs. In general, they do not bark as we pass and they never give chase. The only dogs that bark are the ones locked behind gates. If a French dog is out, you may safely assume it is a civilized dog...

...Back at Sizon, I go into a market and get my favorite snack: a liter of milk and a chocolate bar. I'm also looking over the ice cream snacks and the lady who runs the market sees me looking and points to a particular ice cream bar. "C'est bon!" she says. I take her review seriously and buy the ice cream bar. As I'm checking out a German rider is behind me in line. "You American," he says, "with your chocolate and your milk. I will have my beer!" And sure enough, he's buying two giant bottles of beer. Whatever fuels your ride.

Kent Peterson's memoirs from the PBP can be viewed in full at <http://www.halcyon.com/peterson/pbpstory.html>



Northwest cyclist Kent Peterson riding in France on the Paris-Brest-Paris.

PHOTO BY KENT PETERSON

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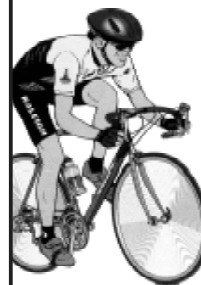
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REGIONAL REPORTS

And they meet again...

Armstrong makes surprise visit to LeMond's Portland talk

MORGAN COLEMAN

"Cycling is in the media now and everybody talks about it now. But if it wasn't for this pioneer I'd be left to tell the story like he did. We can now ride in on his coat tails. We owe a lot to this guy." -Lance Armstrong

It was more than the steady flow of accolades that embarrassed Greg LeMond. No one could blame him for having a loss of words after receiving a crash visit from Lance Armstrong at River City Bicycles in Portland. What was supposed to be a casual talk to a small group of cyclists turned out to be a night where the only Americans to have ever won the Tour de France shared stories to an unflinching audience.

For LeMond, Armstrong's visit couldn't have come more on cue. Just after LeMond remarked how perfect, yet similar Armstrong's win was in comparison to his own victories, he heard the taps on the window pane in front of him, announcing that the very man he was speaking of was there. The two hadn't spoken since the race, LeMond didn't even know Armstrong was in town.

"That, to me, was the sweetest revenge. All these people who could have had Lance if they would have only halfway believed him, and at a very good price too! Watching him in the Prologue - it was like my first time trial when I took the yellow jersey. It was like all those nightmares, all those years, and all those critiques and criticisms. These are what go through your mind," said an emotional LeMond. "It fires you up. It makes you want to show these guys what you're made of."

Both riders understand the depths to which an illness can sink an athlete. But perhaps what is more vital is that both Armstrong and LeMond know and savor a successful comeback. To them, victory has more significance than out-climbing other riders, it stands as personal triumph.

"When you're young with your whole career ahead of you, you're invincible. After my hunting accident, which was a near death experience and a very difficult recovery, I had a very different perspective on life. I always had a grounded manner in which I was going to control my career in terms of ethics, but it [the accident] changed my priorities."

I still remember the bike shop owner saying "Hey, listen



Lance Armstrong and Greg LeMond were happy to see one another at the "Meet Greg LeMond Day" event at River City Cycles in Portland last month.

kid. Don't even think about it. Racing is not for you. It's too tough, too hard, don't even do it."

The man who introduced LeMond Tuesday night, Maynard Hershon (Bicycle Paper columnist and author of *Half-Wheel Hell*) phrased LeMond's affect on American racing perfectly:

"He played on a world size stage. At the same time he was and always will be our guy - one of us. He's one of us and our first genuine Eurostar. . . Until Lance Armstrong arrived with his own style and his own drama, LeMond was the only bike rider Joe Sixpack had ever heard of, ever cheered for."

Armstrong, couldn't stay very long for the talk. Between meetings and motivational lectures he gave the only time he could spare. "Tomorrow I'm here for Nike," Armstrong told LeMond, "but right now I'm here for you."

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Letter to the Editor

MIKE SILVERS

Regarding Gordon Black's opinion in your fall '99 edition, concerning the Washington State Ferries and the lack of proper bike storage - no one has the right to criticize the Department of Transportation. Their architects and engineers had plenty to do, designing the Tacoma, Wenatchee, and Puyallup ferries. Remember, each ship is over 12,500 tons of steel, has more than 100 miles of electrical wire, approximately 1,100,000 square feet of painted surface, and lots of light sockets.

If anyone has a complaint of any kind it should be directed at Cascade Bicycle Club. Long before the Jumbo Mark II Ferries were bid and won by Todd Pacific Shipyard Co., I personally told their membership and governmental affairs people at their Bike Expo that there were three new ferries being built. This was two years before the ships were bid and a year before they were built.

At the Bike Expo in spring '98 I talked with more people in Cascade Bicycle Club's committees. The response was the same as before. Stationary trainers, lots of wheel spinning, but nobody moving. I even went so far as to explain that the original Jumbo's, the Walla Walla, and Spokane (also built by Todd Shipyard) were almost 30 years old and

due for major overhauls. That would be the best time to push for proper bike racks.

The Issaquah class boats built by Marine Power and Equipment Co. are now over 20 years old and most are experiencing major car deck corrosion. Deck replacement takes a lot of time and requires a lot of work. It would be the perfect time to put bike racks on board.

Most of the bigger ferries could be modified to carry anywhere from 25 to 40 bikes in proper racks very easily with maybe the loss of space of one pick-up and camper as a minimum and/or a truck trailer rig at a maximum.

To say that any Washington State Ferries people have been uncooperative and unwilling to listen simply isn't true. They had a deadline and more changes would have meant missing the deadlines for service, meaning more road rage on the ferry docks, and longer lines.

I have worked on numerous ferry repair and three new ship construction jobs for Washington State Ferries. I have dealt with everybody from the project engineer to the inspector that signs off on the final paint. All have proven to be very knowledgeable, completely professional, and more than willing to put extra time and effort into a job to insure successful completion.

At present Washington State Ferries

operates at least one ship that is approaching 70 years old. Several others have considerable numbers of crossings. All this points to replacement and more opportunity if cyclists seize it.

Also, the millennium class of ferries is

under consideration by W.S.F. There are four ships that will need bike racks. If cyclists get organized and make intelligent proposals in a timely manner, it can get done.

Cascade Bicycle Club's phone number is 206-522-BIKE.



Book Review

BY SHEILA BRICKER

Joe Kurmaskie's first book, *Metal Cowboy*, (*Breakaway Books*, \$23.00) is fashioned from loose, flowing prose, the kind that invites adjectives like "witty" and "insightful." But heart-warming, feel-good travel narratives are easy to find. It's more unusual to read one that fosters a deeper understanding of the overall experience and transcends mere outrageousness.

These 40 "Tales From the Road Less Pedaled" jump around- from childhood sailing trips, to crossing the Rocky mountains, to spending a season on the island of Aruba - and each tale focuses on developing a conversational yet intimate manner with the reader.

Most of the stories feature a quirky man or woman, somehow alienated by society, who is living life on their own terms,

determined to follow their heart. Elvis impersonators, a double lower leg amputee, a flamboyant Italian barber, some overprotective geese, and a bomb-builder turned zealous rockhound are merely a sampling of the characters Kurmaskie meets on the road.

However, Kurmaskie doesn't rely on extremes to keep his book engaging. He tackles difficult subjects and displays a remarkable aptitude for compassion and contemplation. He connects with parents who have lost their children to accidents and disease, assists a man suffering from AIDS, and struggles to make peace with both loggers and environmentalists.

Overall, he understands many readers crave a vicarious experience, one that satisfies their sense of adventure and enhances their understanding of people. His stories are full of optimism, zaniness, and insight - a winning combination that will take readers on a delightful ride.



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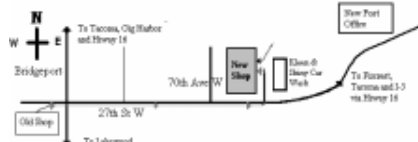


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FEATURES

"Odyssey" from page 1

George Mallory told the world that he wanted to climb Mt. Everest "because it was there." Odyssey 2000® riders seem to have a similar philosophy about their excursion and have come up with several valid *raison d'être*s to play hooky from the real world for a whole year.

"Because vacationing is never enough," says Donna Mass of Bainbridge Island.

"Everyday it will be an Ohmygod," an enthusiastic, Jim Trout of Seattle says.

Trout's been waiting for this trip to start since 1993; he was the third person to sign up in fact. "It's like a dream," he says. "Everyday we'll be somewhere completely new. Tim Kneeland's trips are a blast, and I can hardly wait to go."

Tim Kneeland, founder of the Seattle based bicycle touring company, Tim Kneeland & Associates, is also excited about this trip. His dream in the making for over six years, Odyssey 2000® is about to become rock solid reality. On January 1, 2000, he and his 250 plus companions will open the Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena, California en masse and proceed to crisscross their two-wheelers (built by Raleigh USA in Kent) in an organized orbit across the planet.

Adventuring bicyclists will congregate in California from around the world, not just from local Seattle bicycle clubs. There are folks travelling from Canada, England, France, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Slovenia, and Wales who are going to join their American companions, from 32 states, for this event.

Bob from Mequon, Wisconsin says he's looking forward to seeing the world at 20 miles an hour. Bruce from Golden, Colorado wants to "explore the big ball we're all standing on."

Bruce from Bellevue, Washington says when he returns in January 2001, he'll be a manly man like Hans and Frans: "I'll speed by little girlie men spinning their baby gears, be first into camp, drink beer, talk sports, and compare thighs."

Mass signed up for the tour on December 31, 1998. Curiosity piqued, Mass was encouraged by her husband and children to take a chance and take the tour.

"I'm probably the least experienced bicycle person on this thing!" Mass says. "I've only ever had one flat tire in my life," she explains, as proof of her inexperience as a cyclist and sheer lack of miles under her legs. But the time factor doesn't bother her, she says. Aerobically fit for 17 years, Mass is in good shape. She took TK&A's Wheeling Washington® trip and found the organization impressive, gaining personal trust with Tim Kneeland and his crew.

Used to incorporating a little adventure into her life, Mass and her husband have hiked around Mt. Rainier and gone sky diving. "This trip is the kind of thing we always do, just bigger," she says.

Mass, who has a career in sales when she isn't bicycling says, "I really like the idea of being with all of those people." And she's curious to know how she's going to transition back into the real world by the end of the trip.

This 366-day trip exemplifies an amazing feat of planning too. Planning which has now been reduced to mere minutes of final preparations, somewhat frantically no doubt. TK&A are just about ready to get their greatest accomplishment on the road. Routes are mapped, bikes are built, and the rolling lockers are standing by.

Bicycling 20,000 miles sounds incredibly daunting to most people. Travelling with 250 people for a whole year sounds almost as confining as living at the Amundsen-Scott South Pole Research Station; at least there are only 40 other people you'd have to live with there. But on bicycles you're never stranded (usually), and on the Odyssey 2000® trip everything is taken care of; the TK&A team has thought of everything and has covered all the bases. Flat tires will be fixed and riders will have hot meals at the start and end of every day. There will always be clean water, hot showers, sanitary toilets, safe sleeping accommodations, and somebody to talk to.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM KNEELAND & ASSOCIATES

Odyssey riders after a training ride...

Only the US Army could have pulled off the trip better than TK&A. But Kneeland has military experience, too, which explains a lot about his choice, and success, of his career. His company, and its competent team, has the experience necessary to see it through. Well known, annual TK&A tours include the Courage Classic, Coast to Coast Bicycle Classic, Southern Cross Bicycle Classic, West Coast International Bicycle Classic, Wheeling Hawaii, and Wheeling Washington.

The only details left to fill are those of the riders themselves; getting vaccinations, paying 12 months of mortgage payments, and preparing 1999 income tax returns. Aside from any pre-trip last minute anxiety about the trip, no doubt, the bicyclists are getting psyched.

Some folks are retirees, or retiring on this trip. Others are taking sabbaticals, leaves of absence, or just taking off for a year. Trout's using the Odyssey 2000® as a way of sampling the world.

"There is so much to see and do," Trout says. "Seeing the world this way will help me decide where I'd like to go back to in the future to explore more thoroughly."

The average age of the rider on this trip is 49. Will these folks become best friends, or hate each other's guts when this trip is over? Will there be any wedding announcements come 2001? Probably a little bit of everything Kneeland says. One thing's for sure though, strong friendships will form and the Odyssey 2000® will be an experience of a lifetime.

Although it's a little late to be joining the party this year, there are plans in the works for two more Odyssey around-the-world-tours for 2003 and 2006. Or, you may be able to volunteer your efforts for the cause this year. Who knows, you could accompany the tour for a few months or for the entire year. If interested, call TK&A at (206) 322-4102, 1-800-433-0528 or by e-mail at TimTKA@aol.com.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM KNEELAND & ASSOCIATES

One leg of the Odyssey 2000 journey will involve touring Hawaii.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM KNEELAND & ASSOCIATES

Portable storage lockers, shower tents and sinks will accompany the Odyssey 2000 riders around the world.

REGIONAL REPORTS AND RESULTS

Spoke & Sprocket New Location

Spoke and Sprocket is moving to a larger store just five blocks from its old location. "The new store is a vast improvement over our old space," Jim Couch, shop owner stated. "Customer response has been overwhelmingly positive to the move. We wanted to stay in the same area to not inconvenience our customers." Spoke & sprocket will be celebrating the new location with a grand opening party and ribbon cutting Friday, November 26 from 10am until 8pm. Spoke & Sprocket is now located at 2621 70th Ave W, Suite D. University Place, WA 98466, just west of Tacoma. They can be reached at (253) 564-1422.



The Claw fits nicely into your SUV... PHOTO COURTESY OF SWAGMAN

Swagman Releases the "Claw"

Swagman Racs introduces the "Claw" fork mount which secures the front fork of a bicycle to the "Clawbar" which can be set in the rear of a van or SUV. Up to three "Claws" can be attached to the "Clawbar" enabling transport of three bikes inside your vehicle. Swagman says the design "allows for a simple, effective solution that allows your bikes to arrive clean and safe." For more information you can go to the Swagman website at www.swagman.net or call 1-800-469-7924.

Sugoi Expands Plant

Clothing maker Sugoi is adding 25,000 square feet to its plant. The new space will be a separate building dedicated strictly to distribution. This new distribution site will allow Sugoi to increase production while maintaining a 95% on-time delivery rate. Six new sales representatives have also been hired to keep up with growing sales in Europe.



An Invitation to Nonprofit Organizations to take part in the STP

The Seattle to Portland Bicycle Classic Organizing Committee invites nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations to participate in the STP Pedal for Purpose program. Instituted during the 20th Anniversary STP in 1999, the program allows and encourages registered riders to raise money through pledges for charity.

Participating nonprofit organizations may use the STP logo in their advertising. All advertising literature will state that fundraising by the rider is strictly voluntary and not a requirement to do the ride. Organizations may jointly or individually offer cash, gift certificates, or prizes as incentives for riders to raise funds.

Organizations desiring to be considered for participation shall apply in writing to the Cascade Bicycle Club, P.O. 31299, Seattle WA 98103-1299, Attention: Ellis H. Cores.

MS150 Tour Raises Record \$200,000

The 15th annual MS150 Bike Tour raised over 200,000 dollars for the Oregon Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, more than the event has ever raised in years past. Proceeds will provide services for the 5,200 people in Oregon and Clark County, Washington affected by MS and for research. The 1999 tour, "Over the River and Through the Woods," took place on Saturday, July 31, and Sunday, August 1, with 462 cyclists participating in the event. The MS150 Tour 2000 is scheduled for August 5 and 6. For more information about participating in next year's event as a team or an individual, please contact Jennifer Hurd at jhurd@orcnmss.org or at (503) 223-9511.

RAW Rides for Food Banks

Participants in Cascade Bicycle Club's first time event RAW (Ride Around Washington) rode across the state in six days to raise money for food banks in five different counties along State Route 20. Food banks in Concrete, Twisp, Republic, Colville, and Lone were each given 117 dollars, money raised by the 138 RAW riders. Registration for RAW 2000 opens at the Seattle International Bicycle Expo next February 15-16-17 and after that at bike shops or online.

Trail Decision

The USDA Forest Service will soon have to decide whether to close the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River Trail to bicycles. IMBA and The Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club (BBTC) have been working to keep this trail near Seattle open to bicyclists as it is the only "true" trail in the North Bend Ranger District that has ever been open to bikes. The trail is a singletack which crosses creeks and passes through old forest land. The Washington Trails Association, a hiking group, has been trying to close the trail for bicyclists. Comments can be written to North Bend Ranger District, 42404 SE North Bend Way, North Bend, WA 98045.

ED Study and Cycling

Dr. John A. Taylor III with the Department of Urology at the Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York is conducting a questionnaire-based study to more clearly define the increased risk of erectile dysfunction for cyclists in comparison to other athletes. If a relationship does exist between cycling and increased cases of erectile dysfunction then he hopes to determine the factors of the problem (seat tube angle, length of rides, etc). If you would like to help Dr. Taylor in his study of ED, questionnaires can be filled out at www.cyclingsurvey.com.

Race Results

Oregon State Champs

September 17, 18, 19 1999, at Mt. Hood Skibowl
Downhill Fat Tire Farm

Beginner

M 13-18: 1. Dylan Robinson; 2. Phil Delisle;
M 19-27: 1. William Trice; M 28+: 1. Brian Delisle,
2. Tony Moss, 3. Kore Kill, 4. Yancy Savage,
5. Carl Robinson;
Women: 1. Julie Reilly, 2. Anna Schneider

Sport

M 13-18: 1. Danny Swan, 2. Josh Pratt, 3. Lew Swan,
4. Bryan Kieffer, 5. Jacob Warman;
M 19-27: 1. Brian Worthington, 2. Mike Paulino,
3. Mark Laverman, 4. Marty Graf, 5. Bret Chafee,
6. Joshua Kemp, 7. Meug Lee, 8. Todd Lanstrum,
9. Phillip Hurst, 10. Jayson Laney; M 28+: 1. Jeff Smeltzer,
2. Robert Salatino, 3. Mark Emry, 4. Todd Olson,
5. Vince Rogers, 6. Tim Smith, 7. Roy Layton,
8. Ken Trowbridge, 9. Keith Witt, 10. Mike Rinnon;
Women: 1. Brittany Griffith, 2. Carrie Cleeton, 3. Summer
West, 4. Tiffany Ayers;
Hardtail-Mens Sport/Beg: 1. James Debatty,
2. Jamison Unger, 3. Gordon Lockie, 4. Bryan Dowling

Expert

M 13-18: 1. Peter Lauer, 2. Richard Mukai, 3. Brett Luelling,
4. Justin Graybeal, 5. Erik Stenson, 6. Pat Mahony,
7. Victor Tranelis, 8. Cory Tepper, 9. Jesse Kieffer,
10. Tom Foch; M 19-27: 1. Josh Bachtal, 2. Butch Wells,
3. Damien Smith, 4. Derek Oliver, 5. David Richmond,
6. Kevin Ryan, 7. Erik Erickson, 8. Carey Hopkins,
9. Jason Sikes, 10. Courtney Wahlberg;
M 28+: 1. William Kieffer, 2. Jeff Broadwell,
3. Timothy Murnane, 4. Mike Edward, 5. Arnold Mukai
Pro
M Elite: 1. Jason Sigfrid, 2. Jim Johnston, 3. Casey Northern,
4. Travis Govin, 5. Darrell Young;
W Elite/Exp: 1. Kristina Ricotta, 2. Lynn Ott, 3. Simone Smith

Oregon State Champs

September 17, 18, 19 1999, at Mt. Hood Skibowl

Dual Slalom Arrow Racing

M 13-18: 1. Peter Lauer, 2. Cory Tepper, 3. Erik Stenson, 4.
Justin Graybeal

Men Pro/Exp: 1. Darrell Young, 2. Brian Worthington, 3.
Travis Govin, 4. Casey Northern

Men Sport/Beg: 1. Nathan Tulley, 2. Cedar Nyes, 3. David
Richmond, 4. Robert Salatino

Women: 1. Kristina Ricotta

1999 Cooper Jones Twilight Series

The Badlands Cycling Club in Spokane

USCF "A" Group; Categories Pro, 1, 2, 3

1. Michael Emde 2. Cody Hall 3. Jason Schmiep

USCF "B" Group; Categories 4, 5, and Master

1. Bob Fisher 2. Steve Pybus 3. Perry Folker

USCF Womens Category

1. Maria Emde 2. Cindy Hahn 3. Laura Felicitati

1999 UCI World Masters

Track Championships

Manchester, England (Manchester Velodrome)

Women 20-24: Renee Duprel, Bellevue: 1st-sprints, 3rd-
500 meter time trial, 2nd-Olympic Sprint; Julie Gregg,
Seattle: 2nd-sprints, 2nd-2,000 meter time trial, 3rd-points
race, 2nd-Olympic Sprint; Karen Kalota, Hobart: 4th-2,000
meter time trial; Shannon Hathaway, Issaquah: 4th-points
race; Stan Rayray, Federal Way: 1st-500 meter time trial,
2nd-Olympic Sprint, 4th-sprints.

Women 25-29: Annette Hanson, Kirkland: 1st-2000 meter
time trial, 1st-sprints.

Men 35-39: Ken Sinclair, Hobart: 1st-Olympic Sprint.

Men 40-44: Will Ferryhough, Bellevue: 4th-sprints.

Men 45-49: Woody Cox, Redmond: 1st-Olympic Sprint,
3rd-3,000 meter time trial, 3rd-750 time trial, 4th-sprints.

Men 50-54: Stan Gregg, Kirkland: 1st-500 time trial, 1st-
Olympic Sprint, 5th-sprints.

Oregon State Champs

September 17, 18, 19 1999, at Mt. Hood Ski Bowl

Cross Country Cannondale

Beginner

M 13-18: 1. Ben Sherwood, 2. Jared Lathrop, 3. Ryan
Russell, 4. David Rasmussen, 5. Stephen Billington;

M 28-44: 1. Mike Meier, 2. Thane Hubbard, 3. Greg Radtich,
4. James Williams, 5. Sam Porter, 6. Anthony Pennington,
7. Joe Plohi, 8. Paul Hardin, 9. Bruce Pedersen; M 45+:

1. Ron Prouty, 2. Stephen Gettler, M Clydesdale: 1. Mike Twist,
2. Darren Smith, 3. Dan Kuhn; W 19+: 1. Ellen Ulrich,
2. Morgan Gunn, 3. Kimberly Fawcett

Jr. Olympic

M 13-14: 1. Brian Kelly, 2. Tom Peterson, 3. Ryan Rown,
4. Jeremy Patton, 5. Elliott Sherburne, 6. Mark Kuhn,
7. John Cronise; M 15-16: 1. Joe Griffith, 2. Tyler Green,
3. Sasha Kandakov, 4. Ben Peterson, 5. Sean Roberston,
6. Steven Kuhn, 7. Mike Brown; M 17-18: 1. Rob Dengel,
2. Adam Amato, 3. Justin Prouty, 4. Ben Lancaster,
5. Keith Obilana

Sport

M 13-18: 1. Spencer Paxson, 2. Tobias Haefner,
3. Luke Pennington, 4. Joey Dengel, 5. Ben Mckinney,
6. Marty Cahill; M 19-27: 1. Jamie Falvner, 2. Dusty Miller,
3. Jesse Selman, 4. John Raskaustias; M 28-34: 1. Mike
Rohlik, 2. Mark Rasmussen, 3. Tero Pitkanen, 4. Tracy
Graves; M 35-44: 1. Sean Olmstead, 2. David Watkins,
3. Virgil Long, 4. Damien Dupree, 5. Fred Paxson,
6. Russ Staples, 7. Satoru Igarashi, 8. Antonio Sanchez,
9. Mike Colasur, 10. Daniel Roberts; M 45+:

1. Pete Pollard, 2. Mike Doran, 3. Greg Pennell, 4. Daryl Aloia;
M Clydesdale: 1. Benjamin Ernst, 2. Brad Tymchuk;
W 19+: 1. Robyn Fuchs

Expert

M 13-18: 1. Andy Vosberg, 2. Joshua Vanschoonove,
3. John Griffith, 4. Erik Peterson, 5. Eli Scarborough-Wo;
M 19-27: 1. Jeremy Vanschoonove, 2. Barry Wicks,
3. Travis Hunt, 4. Derl Miller, 5. Greg Miller, 6. Brian
Cimmiyotti, 7. Greg Arians, 8. David Easterson, 9. Charles
Abel; M 35-44: 1. Paul Thomasberg, 2. Rich Cramer,
3. Phillip Coughlin, 4. David Ulrich; M 45+:

1. Kim Birgh-Pitkanen

Pro

M Elite: 1. Carl Decker, 2. Jason Jablonski; W Elite/Exp:
1. Alice Pennington



FEATURES

"InterBike" from page 1

Bridgestone, one of the coolest bike brands ever, stopped selling bikes in the US in 1994, and the people who worked for the company, or sold their bikes in shops, maintain friendships kept alive through email, phone calls, and meetings at Interbike. Ah, the transitory nature of the bike business.

When you read the trade show reports, you see pictures of cool, new products ensconced in attractive show booths. What you don't see are the products no one seems to want to buy, or the businesses that look good on the outside, but are badly in need of a good show to stay in business. I'd like to take you on a slightly different tour of the Sands Convention Center in Las Vegas. Welcome to Interbike 1999, sort of.

Campagnolo's got a new booth. The big word about Campy this year is that both Record and Chorus will be available with ten-speed drivetrains. Campy's 2000 catalog doesn't even show the ten-speed components, and I wonder if Campy rushed the new parts to market because they felt they needed something more exciting for their booth. After all, this is the first time since 1990 that Campy has not been able to put the Tour de France winner's bike on display, since Lance's Trek was Shimano-equipped.

A lot of companies added cyclocross bikes to their lines this year. I'm not sure what I think about this. I mean, Trek's and Specialized's entry into the cross market adds some credibility to the sport, but I also remember the way people at these same companies dismissed cross bikes as a future offering during the last decade. What a difference a few international podium appearances make.

The mountain bike segment was a little subdued at Interbike. Downhill bikes were

not attracting the same attention they were even last year. Mountain bike sales in general were down this last year. I've seen hard-core off-roaders, like my friend Dieter, begin to discover the joys of pavement, and that may be why road bike sales were up the last two years.

One of the areas that continue to get a lot of attention is in disc brakes. Once a light enough and dependable enough system is developed, you'll see discs on more mountain bikes and tandems. If you ride off-road on the east side of the Cascades, this probably isn't as big a deal, but on the "wet side" of the range, discs would be great.

I also want to tell you about the Risitgo. It's a bicycle that features both crank arms pointing in the same direction. You ride a



Risitgo by standing on the pedals when they are at the one o'clock position. When the cranks reach the bottom you sit on the saddle which is attached to a pivot, which turns the crank while the pedals return around the back.

The Risitgo (rise-sit-go) has been around



Show guests watch as Lance Armstrong talks about his recent Tour de France win.

PHOTO COURTESY OF INTERBIKE

for several years. For two years the Risitgo booth was big enough to allow riding. I jumped at the chance, since my show policy is to ride all, um, how should we say, unusual, bikes (Although I draw the line at the electric bikes offered by several companies this year. Those are, after all, not bikes). However, the Risitgo bikes look unchanged since I first saw them, and I don't know any shops that have ordered them.


The Risitgo is my symbol for the fringe products at Interbike. Some of them are not very well thought out. Some are trying to create a fad. (Freestyle tricycles for instance.) Some have a poor solution to a problem getting lots of press lately, like many of the new saddle designs this year. This year I saw a bike that allows a rider to travel forward by pedaling backwards or forwards. There may be some physiologic benefit to this, but I don't think I'm ready for it.

I spend my time at Interbike visiting with

vendors and distributors; catching up with people I've been buying parts from for the last thirteen years. I meet with friends who live elsewhere but who have stayed in the industry. I see what's new. I look for new components I can recommend to my clients (In fact I'm thinking of going back to sew-ups just so I can ride some all-carbon wheels). I ride roller coasters, I avoid casinos, I get energized for the next year.

And in my spare moments I check up on the folks from Risitgo. This year they were wearing windbreakers emblazoned on the back with their new slogan, "Risitgo, The True Definition of Cycling." I hope they'll be back next year.

John Gallagher is the owner of Bikefit, a shop specializing in custom fitting, custom bikes, and cyclocross. Contact John at Bikefit@materialpost.com

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"Christmas" from page 1



Night Rover Xtra dual beam headlamp by Cygo-Lite.

Jeff Greiner, manager of TiCycles in Seattle expects much of the cold weather gear to do well, as per usual around this time of year. He has Sidetrak Neoprene Booties, Castelli Windstopper Socks, as well as Bell Weather and Burley Rainjackets.

He's also seen many sales with the TUFO cyclocross tubular tire. As for bikes, TiCycles' Skookum full-suspension mountain bike has done very well, selling for around 1,500 dollars.

Greiner also recommends the BOB Yak Bike Trailer that offers riders the option of leaving their load behind and taking to the trails while touring.

Jim Couch with Spoke and Sprocket of Tacoma suggests speed levers for a great stocking stuffer. Couch says, "They're popular, yet a lot of riders don't have them yet, so they make a great gift."

Couch also expects DeFeet's Microsupreme unDshurt to sell well because its high tech performance acrylic now comes in a long sleeve for extra warmth.

Couch says, "Surprisingly many riders don't own a good floor pump to keep their tires filled up making them more resistant to punctures." As simple as it is, a quality floor pump could be a gift that really gets used.

Bobby Mullins, bike manager of REI in Seattle, sees fitness related products selling well this Christmas season. Heart rate monitors, fat content measurers, any products which will "help people keep in shape in the off-season."

For the best in bike lights he recommends the NiteRider Digital Pro 12. With five light levels (6-32 watts), a thirty percent longer burn time, and being one third the size of most other lights, Mullins says it's "the ultimate commuter or trail riding light."

For a less expensive light, Jim Vaughn at

Elliot Bay Bicycles in Seattle recommends the Nite-Hawk. The ten-watt bulb is basic, but all that's needed for most commuter riding.

For bicycles he's seeing a shift back to road bikes from mountain bikes. Vaughn sees more and more customers who want "a sensible bike that can be used day in and day out."

Vaughn also mentioned that Speedplay Frog Pedals are selling like hotcakes. The ease of entry and release is appealing to many riders, making this clipless pedal a favorite of his customers.

Morgan Coleman with River City Bicycles in Portland is stocking up on Swobo wool biking attire. Coleman says Swobo, "the King of Wool" makes wool jerseys, shorts, and tights, all ideal for winter bicycling.

Bruce Franklin, buyer for Bridge Town Bicycles in Portland expects the Elite Fluid Incased Indoor Trainer to continue to be a



Inline floor pump, and Planet Bike Ozone Deluxe floor pump.

hot item. He also mentioned a great gift might be Bell Sports' colored housing for lights, a fun item out this year.

Kay Christenson with Fairhaven Bike and Ski in Bellingham has seen a dramatic increase in sales of comfort saddles. The Specialized Body Geometry Saddle for men is her most popular. The saddle comes in a variety of different levels, offering a saddle for the most casual biker to the most competitive road racer. She'll also be carrying the Specialized Body Geometry Glove which has an extra layer of road padding for riders.

The NW Cyclist's Xmas Wish List

- ✓ Head Light
- ✓ Rain Jacket
- ✓ Wool Tights/Jersey
- ✓ Floor Pump
- ✓ Tires
- ✓ Indoor Trainer
- ✓ Bicycle Tune Up
- ✓ 99 Tour De France Video
- ✓ Clipless Pedals
- ✓ Gloves
- ✓ Messenger Bag
- ✓ Club Membership
- ✓ NEW BIKE!



Innovations Chubbie Telescoping Dual-Head Mini Pump.

Michael Martin, manager of one of the three Paul's Bicycle Way of Life shops in Eugene emphasized that this is the season for kids' bikes. He makes 30-40 percent of all his kids' bikes sales during the Christmas season.

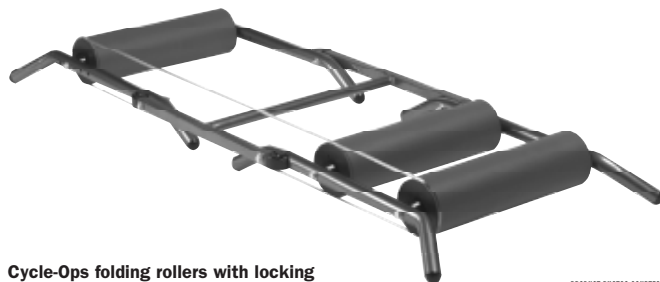
Martin is also betting a popular gift item will be some of the high quality messenger bags and commuter saddles out in stores right now.

Eric Moe with Kulshan Cycles in Bellingham says he's expecting the '99 Tour De France videocassette to do very well because of Armstrong's win. For stocking stuffers he suggests DeFeet's Air-E-Ator socks which come in a variety of designs.

For a different type of gift, Jim Couch suggests buying a friend a membership to a local bike club. Couch says that often it's the

initial signing up which stops riders from joining a club and attending rides. Buying a membership renewal for a friend who is already a club member is another idea.

Also, check to see if your local bike shop offers gift certificates for tune-ups, as TiCycles does. This can be a much-appreciated gift for cyclists who dread bike maintenance and winter is the perfect time to get bikes in tune.



Cycle-Ops folding rollers with locking frame. Comes with a training video.

PRODUCT PHOTOS COURTESY OF SEATTLE BICYCLE SUPPLY



"Going Postal" Video by Oranc, USA. Highlights radical BMX dirt jumping.

Bound for Chile

Preparing (or Not!) for a Chilean Bicycle Adventure

ESTELLE GRAY

When you work in a bike shop in Seattle you usually get to take your vacation during the winter months. From my way of thinking, there is only one place to go – south. And there is one kind of trip to take – a cycling trip. So late this summer I took my wandering eye and focused it on a map of South America. South America is BIG. I have been there before, but its vastness and diversity continue to intrigue me.

Do I speak Spanish? Everyone asks me that. No, I don't. I only speak what I call traveling Spanish. I know how to say "uphill" or "downhill," "bakery," and other basic words necessary for a cyclist. More than once, I have contemplated learning Spanish. Usually it's when I'm in South America and don't understand a word of what someone is saying. I wish I could have that same motivation when I am at home in Seattle.

I really wanted to take this trip with a

friend, but it's not easy to find someone who can and will take an entire month off. Throw in the fact that you want to ride a fully loaded bike on dirt roads and camp (calling that fun), and your options decrease even more.

I have a friend, Sal, who is self-employed, fit, and adventuresome, so I made her my target. I am lucky that I'm a professional sales person. I tried to sell her the idea that this was something she had always wanted to do. I had to throw in some perks, including that I would take care of all the bicycle logistics, she could pick the country, and I would spring for a hotel and shower at least once. We negotiated a bit, I threw in a few more showers – and she bought it!

I asked her if she had any idea which country she wanted to go to and she

immediately said Chile. I'd made the deal that she'd get to pick the country, so once I found out that Chile didn't require any shots, I couldn't argue. I went to a bookstore, found a Chile travel book, and promptly gave it to her. We began our preparations, which only really meant that we were telling people we were going.

Shortly thereafter, we were with some people who asked us why we'd picked Chile. Sal replied that I had chosen it. I then insisted that she had been the one to name the destination, to which she replied, "Well, that was because I want to climb Mt. Aconcagua." I informed her that Aconcagua was in Argentina. She thought that because I had given her the Chile book, I wanted to go to Chile. I concluded that since

we really did not care where we went, and we'd already had this mix-up, perhaps it was destined that we go to Chile. And so it is.

Being a very long, thin country, Chile's widest point is only about 170 miles across. It is almost 3000 miles from northern Chile's

Atacama Desert (parts of which have never recorded any rainfall - very attractive to a Seattleite), to the southern tip which is comprised of glaciers, fjords, and rain. When people ask me exactly where we are going I don't have a very definite answer. They often respond to this with a quizzical stare. I guess it's like telling someone you are going to the U.S. and you may go to Delaware, or Ohio, or maybe California. But my theory is - no expectations, no disappointments. We were able to purchase a pass that will allow us to take three internal plane flights without determining them in advance. How can we go wrong? We'll get to go wherever we want, whenever we want.

We'll be gone an entire month sans e-mail, computers, or palm pilots. We won't receive faxes or use cell phones. We won't have heart rate monitors, or cyclometers. Our technology will be limited to only a map, guidebook, and dictionary. We'll have mountain bikes, lots of camping gear, and a frisbee. However, I AM packing a solar shower! Most importantly, we'll be bringing our sense of adventure (combined with common sense of course) and compiling a tale for the next issue of the Bicycle Paper. To be continued...



by Estelle Gray

Welcome to the Pacific Northwest's most comprehensive bicycle calendar

All events are listed chronologically within their respective sections: **Events** (clinics, expositions, lectures, etc), **Offroad Racing** (competition featuring single-track, cyclocross and other off-road riding), **Offroad Touring** (rides and spectator events 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), **Track Races** (competition in the velodrome) and **Multisport** (events that include bicycling as a part of the competition).

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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Mountain

Bike Racing

Nov 28: BC Cyclo-Cross Series. Fort Langley, BC. 604-538-6415.

Mountain

Bike Touring

Nov 23-Dec 6: Ghana: People-to-People. Africa. David Mozer, International Bicycle Fund, 4887 Columbia Drive South, Seattle, WA, 98108-1919. 206-767-0848 or 206-767-0848.

Series Racing

Nov 20: JogMate Seattle-Metro Cyclocross SuperCup. Marymoor Velodrome, Redmond. Jerry Baker, 206-675-1424.

Nov 28-28: JogMate Seattle-Metro Cyclocross Series #9. North Sea Tac. Site of the 1994 and 1996 US National Championships, this twisty, technical course features steep run-ups, deep mud slogs, and about 8 dismounts per lap. Race day registration only Jerry Baker, 206-675-1424.

Dec 6-6: Washington State Cyclocross Championship. Olympia, WA. This fast course is characterized by many Fairground buildings to be ridden around and through. Riders will encounter pavement, hardpacked fields, gravel, sawdust, and a trip through the rodeo corral which should be quite muddy. There are two run-ups per lap, and a dozen

dismounts. Race day registration only Jerry Baker, 206-675-1424.

Rides & Tours

Nov 21-28: Hawaii Tour. Hilo, Hawaii. 6 & 8 day tours available. Cycling highlights: Kilauea Crater rim ride; 30 mile descent down Mauna Loa Volcano; Kona Coast; Ironman bicycle route. Designated: Beginner to advanced. Free brochure available. Bob Clark, Bicycle Adventures, P.O. Box 11219, Olympia, WA, 98508. P.O. Box 11219, Olympia, WA 98508, 360-786-0989 or 800-443-6060, www.bicyclesadventures.com or 360-786-0989.

Dec 5-12: Hawaii Tour. Hilo, Hawaii. 6 & 8 day tours available. Cycling highlights:

Kilauea Crater rim ride; 30 mile descent down Mauna Loa Volcano; Kona Coast; Ironman bicycle route. Designated: Beginner to advanced. Free brochure available. Bob Clark, Bicycle Adventures, P.O. Box 11219, Olympia, WA, 98508. P.O. Box 11219, Olympia, WA 98508, 360-786-0989 or 800-443-6060, www.bicyclesadventures.com or 360-786-0989.

Jan 1-Dec 31: Odyssey 2000. Everywhere. Around the world. Slots still available for this awesome adventure. The world's first professionally organized, mass start bicycle tour of the globe. Over 20,000 miles, 366 days. 48 countries, including every continent except Antarctica. Tim Kneeland, Tim Kneeland & Associates, Inc., 200 Lake Washington Blvd #101, Seattle, WA, 98122. 800-433-0528 or 206-322-4102.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BICYCLE PAPER ARCHIVES

Two breeds of bikers (motor and bi) share a tarp and stories of the weather as they wait out a rain shower in Western Washington.

Back to Basics

JOHN CRIBARI

So here we are on the cusp of another Northwest winter and if you are not

participating in cyclocross you are busily outlining your off-season training program and gearing up for next year. There is a lot of planning to do. Something that should not be forgotten is building core strength.

For cyclists, building and maintaining a strong torso is critical no matter what level the rider.

In my business as a massage therapist and coach, most of the complaints I hear from cyclists are low back related. The position a rider must maintain on the bike reduces or compromises the natural curve in the low back, which puts a lot of strain on the erector muscles. If these muscles are weak, fatigue will set in much faster.

Cycling is unique in that it requires a lot of torso strength, but in reality does nothing to really build or maintain the muscles of the torso. Therefore additional exercises must be performed year round.

Building core strength means developing all the muscles of the abdomen, which include the upper back, oblique, abdominal,

and most importantly the low back muscles. When you're pushing big gear on the flats, climbing, time trialing, tandem riding, or mountain biking, these muscles are almost always flexed.

There are a variety of ways to strengthen the torso. For cyclists, strength training should focus on developing muscle strength and endurance. This means emphasizing more repetitions per set of exercise instead of low reps at a high weight. Exercises that need to be included in your strengthening program include:

Back Exercises

Back Extensions: Lie on your stomach with your arms extended over your head. Try to lift your arms and legs by arching your back. Hold this position for three seconds, gradually increasing the duration and number of sets. This exercise can also be done on a fit ball or on a back extension machine.

Seated Cable Row: Rest your feet against a foot brace. Spread your feet approximately as wide as they would be on your bike. Grip the handle overhand and start the movement from a slightly bent forward position. Keeping the arms straight, move your torso to a straight up to slightly bent back position.

Lat Pulldown: Sitting or kneeling in front of an overhead cable machine, grasp the bar with an overhand grip slightly wider than your shoulders. Make sure your arms are stretched fully overhead. Pull the bar down until the bar touches the upper back. Slowly return to the start position.

*The above exercises should be done as 3 sets of



PHOTO BY AMANDA GARRICK

Annie keeps her back muscles in tone by doing twisting crunches.

12 to 15 reps. Gradually increase weight over time.

Abdominal Exercises

Stomach Crunch: This exercise should be done on the floor or on a bench - a more advanced version can be done on a fit ball. Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Keeping your hands at the sides of your head, start the exercise by rolling your head forward off the floor toward your feet. Only go until your shoulders have risen off the floor. Hold for a second and lower yourself back to the floor. The fit ball version of this exercise requires a little more strength and balance.

Leg Raises: This exercise is performed while lying on the floor on your back. Place your hands under your buttocks, with palms down; keep your elbows out so the small of your back is pressed against the floor. Your head should be up, putting your chin to chest, and your shoulder blades off the floor. Extend your legs straight out, with knees unlocked, and your heels resting on the floor. Use the muscles of your lower abs to lift your legs off the floor until they are perpendicular to your body. Finish each rep by lowering your legs in a slow controlled motion.

Twisting Crunch: The same as the stomach crunch except you will be twisting each time you come off the floor and

touching your elbow to the opposite knee. Left elbow to right knee and right elbow to left knee.

*The above exercises should be done as 3 sets of 25 reps. The amount of reps can be increased over time.

These exercises can be done throughout the year, and remember to always consult your doctor before beginning any exercise program.

Cycling is an incredibly fun sport especially if you have the stomach for it.

John Cribari is a licensed massage therapist working in the Greenlake area. John has been the massage therapist with many professional cycling teams including Volvo/Cannondale, Trek/VW, Gary Fisher, Coors Light, and Saturn as well as the technical director and mechanic for a professional team in the early 90's. John can be reached for consultation and massage appointments at 206-706-5411.



PHOTO BY AMANDA GARRICK

Heather demonstrates the crunch.



PHOTO BY AMANDA GARRICK

Annie works on her lats at the UW's IMA.

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Bike Clubbing the English Way

Pip, pip... cheerio!

MAYNARD HERSHON

I've just returned from Meet Greg LeMond Day at River City Bicycles in Portland. It was historic, both American Tour winners together in Dave Guettler's River City bike shop. Ya shoulda been there.

After Greg's talk, I chatted with an English couple living in Portland, Jon Walpool and his wife Kirti. I'd ridden in England, in Leistershire, not far from where they grew up. While there, I rode with the Coventry Road Club, to my mind a typical (terrific) UK bike club.

We talked about clubs in the UK and US and agreed: Club life THERE is superior, so superior that Jon and Kirti have been trying to replicate British rides in Portland. I'll try to explain why.

English people generally are joiners — not just the cyclists. Hobbyists of all types form clubs there, happy for like-minded company. Often, British cyclists stay in one club their entire cycling lives, 50 years or more. Clubs meet frequently, the entire club, not just the board of directors. Lots of clubs rent or own a clubhouse.

Many British cyclists hang out with riding friends OFF the bike, too. In England, your bike club may be a vital part of your social life. Few US riders would call their club membership a major social benefit.

A club ride in England starts at a pub or cafe, same one every time. The ride goes rain or shine. If it's raining and there are no mudguards (fenders) on your bike, you will be asked to stay at the back so you won't pelt others with road grime and water.

The ride proceeds in a side-by-side paceline at a pace most people can sustain. Seasoned riders teach newer ones how to follow a wheel and ride in formation. Veterans pass along helpful information, not

barked criticism. Everyone speaks softly, is my impression.

Mid-ride, the group stops at a cafe for tea and a biscuit, some sort of cookie or pastry. More information and cordiality circulate at the cafe. New riders are encouraged to feel welcome — they ARE welcome.

Jon Walpool became thoughtful as we spoke of that comradeship. He said he felt that Brits were more willing to sacrifice their own needs for those of the group. Americans, we agreed, focus on themselves, on their own fitness or training. We're more individual, somehow.

"It's in the constitution, after all," he said.

Club rides as described above have been happening in England since bicycles became common. Many British cyclists (and Europeans from the continent) have been riding for decades. They've gotten over their Olympic dreams, if they ever had them. The urgency is gone. They enjoy getting out on the bike with their mates.

If they compete, they ride time trials, competing against themselves, trying to beat their best-ever times on some course or other.

Brits ride lots of time trials — races against the clock over measured courses. Sometimes the course is 10 miles; sometimes it's 25. Sometimes it's 12 or 24 hours. We hold very few time trials here; they do hundreds or thousands annually in the UK.

I mentioned to Jon and Kirti that when I was in England four or five years ago, I rode a "10," a 10-mile time trial. What fun, I said. They said they loved time trials too, and had done many of them.

In all but the most sparsely populated areas in England, a cyclist can ride two or three evening time trials a week. Many RIDE their bikes to and from the events. No car necessary.

In spring and fall, when days are shorter,



you may need clip-on lights for the trip home. You need a little money for your entry fee and you need a helmet, but that's it.

You certainly don't need a special bike or even a new bike. Some of the Coventry clubbers had been riding the same old bike for years and years; it didn't seem to slow them down or dampen their enthusiasm.

In these club time trials, you show up at the start/finish, just a place along some highway somewhere. All your riding friends are there. You pay your entry fee and swap pre-ride lies.

When your number is called and someone says GO, you ride 10 miles or 25 miles by yourself. You aren't allowed to draft, so you won't ride close to other racers. You don't take big risks. Crashes are rare.

You merely put your head down and ride fast as you can for the distance. If you want to suffer, go as hard as you can; if you don't, don't.

At the finish, someone will have set up a table with urns of tea and coffee and trays of biscuits. A biscuit tastes really good after 25 miles with your nose on your stem. You swap post-ride lies with your mates. Eventually you pedal home or rack your bike and drive home.

You ride the same courses often; it's easy to gauge your fitness compared to last week, last month or 10 years ago.

We prefer road racing in the States. Road racers must have courage and pack-riding ability. Promoters must organize and prepare, plus arrange permits, corner marshals, porta-potties, on and on. Time trialing is one rider at a time; road racing is traffic blocking packs.

In a road race, if you are five percent weaker than the others, you're dropped. You finish all alone, perhaps feeling defeated. No such risk in time trialing. Everyone finishes alone. No one looks like a "loser."

Here in the US, many riders like their cycling tough and without frills. They don't need cycling friends; it's a workout, not a dating service. They don't need to learn about technique or tradition; they learned all they need to in Spinning (tm) class.

They love training with faster riders, limping home alone, fried, and hungry. They're motivated by being yelled at, dropped, snubbed, and ignored. Our clubs provide plenty of inspiring masochistic rides for those people.

Me? I miss my friends in the Coventry Road Club.

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