



Photo Courtesy of Joe Sales

What could be more fun than playing in the mud and snow like these Seattle area riders!

It's Time to Get Dirty

By JOE SALES

As summer draws to a close, all Northwest cyclists can sense the days getting shorter, the thermostat beginning to drop, and we begin to cope again with the relentless rain. All of these changes will combine to make our daily lives on our bikes more of a challenge. For an increasing number of us however, it is a time to celebrate because it means the cyclocross season is upon us, and it's time again to get out and get dirty. The Northwest has a long history of a vibrant and active cyclocross scene, and 2006 promises to be one of the very best yet. With lots of new venues added to the calendar as well as several new races, there should be something for everyone, from the new and inexperienced racers wanting their first taste of cross's delicious nectar to nationally ranked elite racers looking to gain form and fitness for national and international competition. Indeed, if you love 'all things cross all the time', you would be hard-pressed to find a better location than the beautiful Northwest to spend a season attending the myriad of races and local series'. There is quite literally something for everyone.

The Seattle Cyclocross Series, formerly known as Emerald City Cross, continues to be hosted by the Marymoor Velodrome Association under the hard work and guidance of promoter Jerry Baker. Cross seems to thrive in Seattle, and the Seattle Cyclocross Series continues to both draw new racers into the sport and foster emerging talent. Reigning masters

National champion Dale Knapp and his wife, former National women's champion Anne Knapp, have both been fixtures at the Seattle Series for over a decade and have put the local races to good use as a springboard into international competition. Dale still wields a heavy hammer at the races, but now he spends most of his time coaching the Rad Racing Junior team including 13-14 National Champion Benny Swedberg. Of all the race series' in the Northwest, no one consistently hosts junior racers like Baker. With multiple categories, including noon-hour races for the kiddies, and an extraordinarily generous prize list, it's no wonder Seattle continues to draw the largest number of junior competitors and develop some of the best juniors in the nation. Last year's elite series champion Morgan Schmidt started racing cross as a junior in Seattle and will be back for the upcoming season in top form, sporting the colors of the Hagen Berman Team (formerly Broadmark Capitol). Like Dale and Anne Knapp before him, Morgan hopes to use the local series as preparation for both the National Championships in Providence, Rhode Island, and a trip to the World Championship being hosted in Belgium next January.

This year the Seattle cross series is comprised of nine races, including a double header at Fort Flagler on the weekend of Dec. 2nd and 3rd. Also, only one race is being held in the direct vicinity of the SeaTac flight path ("What did Jerry say? I can't hear him").

See "Cyclocross" on page 8

CYCLING TIPS

Turning the Corner: Tips for Tight Switchbacks

By CANDACE SHADLEY

Work with the Sugoi Dirt Series Mountain Bike Camps all summer long, running technical skill sessions, leading instructional rides, and basically doing my best to help participants improve their mountain bike skills so that they get more fun and success out of every trail.

One of my favorite skills to cover is tight slow-speed switchback cornering, both because I love that kind of riding myself and because a few simple tips usually have a significantly positive impact. Here are the suggestions I provide, and a hope that they'll work just as well in print.

The first, and most important aspect of riding a switchback is looking around the corner, where you want to go, and where you want to end up. This means assessing the terrain in front of you, deciding on

the line you want to take, and then committing your eyes to the exit of the maneuver.

Turning your head to look where you want to go turns your shoulders, encourages the correct body position for the move, helps to maintain forward momentum, and does mental wonders. After all, looking down at the apex of the turn, or worse, over the cliff where you might end up if things go awry, doesn't hold a candle in the confidence department to focusing on that nice smooth stretch of trail you'll get to once you're successful.

The next key element is shifting your body weight to the outside of the corner. If you're seated, this means sliding your butt to the outside such that only the half closest to the inside of the corner is on your saddle. If you're standing, this means moving

See "MTB Tips" on page 8

INSIDE THE RACE

Officials: What Do They Do Anyway?

By LISA TILSON

Races require a lot of preparation, training and energy, and while cyclists are the most visible component of the competition, the day could not go smoothly without the officials. A commissaire's (French word for official's) day is just as long, or most often longer, than a racer's. It requires tedious preparation and can be very stressful.


"The rider is full of nervous energy for his/her race, but the officials are 'on' from the start of the first event until the final posting of results," says Candi Murray, Oregon Bicycle Racing Association (OBRA) administrator, better known as Queen Mother of Oregon Racing.

To understand how an event really runs, you need to know the hierarchy of officials. Each position requires a different set of responsibilities. The Chief Commissaire (also referred to as the Chief Referee (U.S. only), President of the College or Head

Official) has control over the entire event. The Chief Judge oversees the results portion of the race. The rest of the officials are responsible for the riders obeying the rules, registration, start lists, timing, safety issues and reporting/consulting on problems and issues with each other and the Chief Referee. The type and magnitude of the race dictate the size of the College of Commissaires (the number of officials). Road competitions typically require three to five, while track events may have up to twelve. Smaller mountain biking races can be done with only a Chief Referee. The workload varies according to the level of sanction. For example, a small local competition requires less preparation, while an international event requires a much higher time commitment.

According to Wayne Pomario, Canadian Cycling Association commissaire and UCI course conductor, race day for Chief Officials generally

See "Commissaire" on page 7

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Calendar Powered by
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Bicycle Paper is published 8 times per year from March to November by Seattle Publishing. Subscription is \$14 per year; \$26 for two years.

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Phone: 206.903.1333 and Fax: 206.903.8565
Toll Free: 1.888.836.5720

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Oregon Judge Says Fixed Gear Bicycles Must Have Hand Brake

By JONATHAN MAUS

In late July, a Multnomah County judge upheld a citation given to a cyclist for riding a fixed gear bicycle without a hand brake. The decision came during the traffic court trial for 28 year-old Portland messenger Ayla Holland, who was ticketed by a Portland Police officer on her way to work on June 1st.

Holland was stopped because the officer didn't see a brake on her bike and believed she was in violation of an Oregon statute (815.280(2)(a)) that states:

"A bicycle must be equipped with a brake that enables the operator to make the braked wheels skid on dry, level, clean pavement."

The officer told Holland she was violating this equipment requirement and said she must install a front brake to her bike or face a fine. Holland disagreed, and she wasn't the only one. Several Portland cyclists had been given similar treatment, and the issue was already on the radar of local bike lawyer Mark Ginsberg.

Ginsberg - a veteran Category 2 road racer and owner of several fixed gear bicycles - thought the officer overstepped his authority by requiring the front brake and that the judge was incorrectly applying the statute.

Ginsberg represented Holland in traffic court on July 27th. He argued that Oregon statute does not clearly define what a brake is, and that his client was fully capable of bringing her bicycle to a "skid on dry, level clean

pavement." Ginsberg also offered to have his client demonstrate a skidding, fixed gear stop for the court; but the judge declined.

The judge, who had no idea how a fixed gear bicycle worked until just minutes before his decision, ruled to uphold the citation and stated that, "Gearing itself does not fit the definition of brake. A brake must be a device separate from the musculature of the rider."

According to Ginsberg, "The issue was whether or not my client is able to meet the statutory requirements. Based on the facts I believe she was right, and the officer and the court were incorrect in their interpretation of the law. In my opinion the judge was adding words to the statute that aren't there."

As of press time, Ginsberg's office was awaiting the full trial transcripts in order to review the case and decide if they will take the case up with the Oregon Court of Appeals.

Ayla Holland feels the court's decision was incorrect. "It just doesn't seem right. I can come to a safe stop at any time, and I shouldn't be forced to buy a brake...or pay this ticket."

The decision quickly spread around the Web and eventually made its way to the front page of the Oregonian newspaper.

The case has even spawned a "Ride a Fixed Gear, Go to Jail" T-shirt from an entrepreneurial bicycle dealer in Sacramento, California. The Bicycle Business - who does a good business in fixed gear parts - plans to donate a portion of the proceeds to Holland's legal defense

fund.

According to Masi Bicycles Brand Manager Tim Jackson, most suppliers that offer an urban-focused fixed gear bike package

them without hand brakes installed. This is because the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) doesn't require hand brakes if the bike is built with a fixed cog and lock ring (as opposed to a freewheel).

The question remains whether this judge's decision will lead to a crackdown on fixed gear bikes without hand brakes. There are serious concerns from the Portland messenger community that this is simply the latest attempt by the Police to harass them, and they feel they are being unfairly targeted.

While the recent fixed gear trend likely started with messengers, they have been around for over a hundred years. "Fixies" as they're sometimes called, also continue to be a small, but growing sales category for many manufacturers including; Trek, Bianchi, Fuji and Raleigh.

Jonathan Maus is an independent bike advocate and journalist who covers the Portland bike scene at BikePortland.org. You can reach him at jonathan@bikeportland.org.



OPINION

Triumph of Evil?

By MARK LANSING

"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good people to do nothing" - Edmund Burke.

Follow Maynard Hershon's advice not to challenge motorists who abuse cyclists (Bicycle Paper, August 2006) if you must, but don't expect the rest of us to be impressed. This abuse is the number one problem bicycles face on the roads today. Not only should someone do something about it - everyone on a bike should join the ranks of the opposition or count him/herself as part of the problem.

For at least 20 years, Hershon has been writing insightful and entertaining pieces about the two-wheeled world. But of late he has been sliding. Six months ago he announced that he had quit riding a bicycle because of all the inconsiderate motorists and - to be blunt - maybe he should quit writing about bicycles too. He offers nothing in the way of a solution (other than, by example, suggesting that we should all stop riding), then goes on to say that those who oppose harassment from cars should avoid that behavior as well. His last column concluded:

"I'm not going to do that, and I suggest you resist doing it too. Drivers don't hear your words but they sense your disapproval. Even a glance might be enough to provoke that insane rage. Please don't react to their abuse. Swallow your outrage."

I am here to suggest that you resist listening to Maynard. True, confronting the driver on the road may be a bad idea because it is more

risky and less effective than other available alternatives. The motorist still has the upper hand because he/she is sitting in the larger vehicle, and a verbal exchange or a dirty look isn't likely to get the driver to rethink his/her behavior.

But do nothing at all? Triumph of evil, on your watch? Say it ain't so. Where I live (Oregon), cyclists oppose motorist abuse and it is making a difference. The cyclists can look at themselves in mirrors knowing that they aren't just lying there, letting drivers violate them. Even a yell or a hand gesture helps send motorists the message that cyclists are not their whipping posts.

The better, less risky and more effective approach is also more time consuming. It begins with getting the plate number. Hershon says, "Those drivers get away with their hateful behavior because they're boxed up in cars, anonymous, and their victims are largely powerless." Well, not quite.

They are only anonymous if the cyclist doesn't know how to memorize the plate. With the plate number, you can locate the registered owner, which in turn can lead you to the name of the vehicle's driver.

Likewise, bicyclists are not powerless - they are only as powerless as they think they are, and as powerful as they are willing to be. Drivers aren't so tough after they park their two-ton weapons.

Many police officers are willing to take reports and talk to offending motorists. Without police assistance, any individual can bring a small claim lawsuit or issue a citizen's citation.

My favorite is The Letter. It isn't as time consuming as the courthouse route, and it lets

the motorist know that he/she isn't the anonymous, omnipotent wrongdoer of Hershon's theory. Written words resonate in ways that verbal ones don't - a letter to a bad driver will be read two or three times before it goes in the garbage can. Plus, by putting some physical distance between you and your new road-raging pal, your challenge to his/her reckless driving can be made in relative safety.

The Letter should begin: "Dear Owner: You are the registered owner of [describe car]. Please give this letter to the person driving it at [insert time/place]. Dear Driver: . . ." (If you want to see a few sample formats drop an email to the address below).

The list of ways to oppose motorist abuse is as long as the list of things that happen to cyclists out there on the road. As an attorney who prosecutes tort claims on behalf of bicyclists, the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles has given me direct on-line access to its registered owner database, which helps cyclists cut through red tape. Are there any lawyers in your cycling group? They can be a key part of the strategy you use to oppose motorist abuse.

Whatever you do, fear of reprisal should not be your guiding light. "Even if you are on the right track, you will get run over if you just sit there" - Will Rogers.

Are you just sitting there? Say it ain't so.

Mark Lansing is a lawyer practicing in Grants Pass, Oregon, which recently passed a city ordinance requiring motorists to leave a minimum 3-foot buffer when passing a bicycle. His email address is lansingatlaw@rvi.net.

Doping Sucks!

By MATT USBORNE

Doping, doping, doping. All I hear about these days is doping! I am so sick of it. I don't want to think about it, I don't want to write about it, but I am irritated by it - enough that I am going to write about it. I've read several articles about the testing methods etc. and I am pretty surprised at the inaccuracies as well as the conclusions.

There are two major cycling scandals going on right now, Operation Puerto in Spain and what has now been termed the 'Landis Affair'. Unfortunately, in the minds of many cyclists and non-cyclists alike, the message is that bicycle racers are a bunch of dopers. When I'm asked at the water cooler what I'm on, well, you know there is a problem.

But before we delve into what are some pretty gaping holes in the case of 'Landis', let's look more locally. I've been in the sport for a while now - long enough that I know that accusations about doping go on with or without evidence at almost any level of competition. It seems that we tend to question riders' performances rather than attributing them to hard work. Ride too fast - 'must be on something'. Too slow after going well, 'I guess he missed his dose'. Where is the logic in that? Yet I have heard it many times. I've even had it leveled at me before, and I am certainly not an exceptional athlete. So given that reasoning, I hardly find it surprising that cycling banter often entertains the notion that all Pro's are on something. Oh boy, let's take a step back and a deep breath. Yes there are and always will be cheaters - but that goes for almost anyone in any profession. But is it healthy to just assume that everyone 'Pro' is guilty? I would say not, but that's just my opinion.

I can say that at the elite level in BC, and the Pacific Northwest you do not need drugs to win. I know a few of the big guns and would bet my skin that they are absolutely clean. I will say unequivocally that it is more than possible to win elite events with NO banned drug use.

Why make the distinction between banned and not banned? Because by definition, many of the things we take can be classified as drugs. To paraphrase W.A. McKim in his 1991 book *Drugs and Behavior*, if I eat an orange just to eat it, then it's a food. If I eat it for the Vitamin C, then it could be classified as a drug. I drink coffee, take aspirin when I have a headache, and I use an inhaler, plus I take a multi-vitamin. So you can't say I'm 'drug free', but I can say that I'm not a doper. And as multi-time NORBA and Canadian Champ Geoff Kabush's T-shirt says, "Dopers Suck!". But let's make sure they are dopers for sure - BEFORE we condemn them.

I have seen athletes test positive for silly things, like former mountain bike world champ Roland Green's ban for using an inhaler. Why is that silly? Well he had an exemption to use his puffer for several years. The exemption wasn't renewed on time (you need your doctor to fill out an Abbreviated Therapeutic Exemption form and file it with the UCI and CCES). It was fine to use every other time, but his paperwork lapsed and wham - he gets a suspension. I understand that we need rules and regulations, but banning an athlete for a paperwork issue just doesn't seem like good common sense, especially when there is a documented medical history and exemption on file.

I've also seen others banned for Nandrolone (Triatheletes - plural) when the levels couldn't enhance an erection in a lab rat, let alone make you go faster. Prior tests were negative; yet you float above that magic number of 2 ng/ml of pee and WHAM you are a doper. In one of these cases it did not matter that the athlete may have had it from a contaminated supplement that is

made in the states and does not list nandrolone or any of its precursors on the label. You are responsible for that which is in your body. Sounds fine until you realize that you can't possibly account for every substance in your body if it is not listed as an ingredient on your food (i.e. Paola Pezzo got off for Nandrolone when she claimed it was from Belgian beef) or your FDA approved supplement. We live in an age where animals are pumped up with all kinds of drugs, and there is documented contamination of supplements (in some studies I believe the number was around 70% of some supplements were contaminated). Seems to me there should be some sort of 'smell test', a common sense approach to interpreting test results. After all, if you are going to get banned for using performance-enhancing drugs, shouldn't you have enough to actually enhance your performance?

Of course, no common sense will ever permeate WADA chief Dick Pounds ranting. From WADA's website we can see that their "core values are supposed to be independence, ethical approach, accountability, professionalism, best practice, and innovation, it aims to fulfill its mission of promoting, coordinating and monitoring on an international basis the fight against doping in sport in all its forms".

Don't most of Mr. Pounds' statements, both in the past and present, violate at least one or more of those values? How professional is it to comment ad nauseum on Mr. Landis' status as a doper when only his A sample was tested? Especially when Dr. Gary Wadler, a member of the World Anti-Doping Agency and a spokesman for the American College of Sports Medicine goes on record and says "something's missing here...It just doesn't add up". He went on to say that while the "A" and "B" samples are rarely different, the results might not be because he was doping.

In other words, and to quote Dr. John Berardi, Ph.D. "There is a good chance that Floyd didn't 'cheat.'" Numerous others have gone on record stating that there is a large variation in what they consider a normal actual value for testosterone - not the ratio - the raw numbers. No one to this day knows exactly how Landis scored. "Were his results within normal limits or just out of sight?" asks Carlos R. Hamilton Jr., MD, professor of medicine and an endocrinologist at University of Texas Health Sciences Center in Houston, and a member of the health, medical, and research committee of the World Anti-Doping Agency. With all those questions shouldn't we put the brakes on the condemnation of Mr. Landis and do more follow-up testing - after all the UCI testing states that more longitudinal testing is needed if the testing isn't ironclad in determining exogenous testosterone (and despite rumor we have little factual information in this regard).

In this case, with my rather limited intellect and skills, I was able to find some documentation that noted Hypothyroidism (lack of thyroid function) is linked to decreased sex hormone binding globulin (SHBG) production, which means that the free testosterone levels will be higher (as it remains 'free' and unattached). My sleuthing also uncovered that corticosteroids can interfere with the measurement of testosterone in the body, and we know Mr. Landis was taking cortisone for his hip. My 'smell test' says that I would like more information before I condemn a man. Especially when the 'Landis Affair' and Puerto might mean that networks stop covering the Tour due to scandal.



RACING NEWS

MTB World Championships

Jill Kintner (Seattle, WA./GT Bicycles) successfully defended her women's 4-cross title in Rotorua, New Zealand. Kintner led from start to finish in a flawless final run to give the U.S. National Mountain Bike team its fifth world 4-cross title since 2002.

Max Plaxton from Victoria, BC recovered from a poor start where he got caught behind a crash, to finish third in the Under 23 cross-country men's race. Micayla Gatto, also from BC, took third in the junior women's downhill competition.

Masters Nationals Track

The five-day event was punctuated by 66 national titles awarded to USA Cycling members ages 30 and up, of those 14 went to Northwest riders.

Heather Vanvalkenburg (Vancouver, WA/Team Rubicon) was amongst the first to claim a national title establishing a 38.388 in the 500-meter time trial on the opening day of the championships. Donna Smith (Coviche, WA/Chinook Cycling) set a new national and world record (39.862) on the same distance in the women's 50-54 category.

Byrne Specialty Gases Woody Cox (Redmond, WA) posted a 2:24:439 to claim the national title and a new world record in the 55-59 men's 2000-meter time trial event. His composite team also won the 4000-meter time trial event in the men's 50+ category.

Kenny Williams (Kenmore, WA/First Rate Mortgage) added five new stars and stripes jerseys to his already exhaustive track collection. His resume now includes 2006 titles in the men's 35-39 points race, 3000-meter individual pursuit (3:26.920) and kilo (1.06.799). He also won the Madison, and helped the Texas Roadhouse composite team, which included Leif Clarke, (Seattle, WA/Benaroya Research)

to win the 4000-meter TT in the 30+ category with a time of 4:31.463.

The Byrne Specialty Gases 3000-meter time trial team of Annette Hanson (Kenmore, WA/First Rate Mortgage), Tracey Huber (Louisville, KY), Kele Murdin (Kenmore, WA/Velo Bella-Kona) and Debbie Preller (Kirkland, WA) set a national record in the women's 30+ category posting a time of 3 minutes and 51.772 seconds. Hanson had already won the 2000-meter pursuit early in the week (2:33.611) and the points race titles in the 40-44 category. Like Hanson, Murdin took home the Points Race and 2000-meter titles, but in the 30-34 category.

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August 7 | 2375 Miles East Sedalia, Missouri (Part 2)

By JOE KURMASKIE

When we last left the Metal Cowboy and his pint-sized posse, they had just made friends with two dogs as they hungrily searched for food in a small town off the KATY trail (Bicycle Paper, August 06).

"Forget about the dogs. Forget 'em because unless we forage for some grub, I won't even be able to lug you guys much farther."

Enzo chuckles.

"That's nice. Laugh at another man's suffering, why don't you?! That's cold, son."

I'm getting punchy. It won't be long before the boys start looking like Loonie Toons cartoon drumsticks and chicken wings.

"No Dad, I just like it when you say the word 'grub.'" "Vaseline," Quinn contributes. "Now that's a good word to say out loud."

Enzo nods in agreement. Each of them sits Indian style around me, identical beagles in their laps calling for belly rubs at the same time. If the moment gets any weirder we'll have to sign on as extras in the cast of Alice in Wonderland.

"What about sarsaparilla?"

Quinn is just getting started.

"Ickabog Crane," Enzo comes back with.

"Iceberg Oggie," Quinn says.

It's a riveting verbal ping-pong match they've put into play, but it's getting us no closer to food.

"Watermelon," Enzo tosses into the ring. It

breaks the rhythm they have going.

"Watermelon?" Quinn challenges.

Enzo won't admit defeat. He points into the woods.

"No, there's watermelon over there," he clarifies.

And just when I thought our Mad Hatter's tea party couldn't take it to the next level.

Sitting off to the side of the trail, nearly hidden by flowering plants, is a child's bookcase loaded down with watermelon, not one of which weighs less than 30 pounds. The bookcase reminds me of that game, Don't Break the Ice, or the other one, Jenga. I'm afraid the entire structure will collapse into rubble if I pick the wrong melon from the shelf.

"Ronnie's watermelon sweetness tester machine would be handy right now," Quinn says.

It's August, I'm peckish and the watermelons all look like winners to me. Let's give Ronnie his props, but I'm willing to take my chances. I hand Enzo two dollars to put in the honor system coffee can and reach for my McGuyver.

The McGuyver is only the coolest tool known to man. It's what every kid thought they were sending away for in the mail when they joined a private detective, star fighter, adventure hero, secret agent decoder club. Instead, after six to ten weeks of painful anticipation, what arrived was utter crap; a dime store penknife or flimsy magnifying glass with less torching power than a pair of reading glasses. The ring always turned your fingers green, and that "secret" code? Nothing more than switching numbers for letters and writing words backwards. It wasn't so much that all your allowance money

was sitting inside a Great Neck, New York, P.O. Box, but that your trust in mail-order products had been shattered. Thirty years after I lost my faith in comic book come-ons, the McGuyver arrived by mail. It makes up for everything . . . almost. I'm always going to be bitter about those sea monkeys.

The McGuyver is a Swiss army knife on steroids. If all your favorite tools were gathered together into some sort of indestructible Gordian knot through alchemy, then miniaturized without losing strength, you would still have a pale imitation of the device I now hold in my hand. With three dozen tools for working on every part of a bike, car, anything mechanical, really; or alternatively for escaping from a terror cell in Pakistan, this is the Cadillac of travel tools. The magnifying glass is powerful enough to actually start a fire, there's a fishhook and line feature, fillet knife, and a screwdriver small enough to fix wire rim glasses. Once you've accomplished every Mission: Impossible activity you can find in a day, there's a bottle opener for celebrating. Unlike Rogaine, elevator shoes or beard dyes, my McGuyver makes me something more. And it makes easy work of our forty-pound watermelon. We munch on half-moons of sweet ambrosia until our distended stomachs can hold no more. It's far from a steak dinner, but it'll have to do. I'll surf a sugar river of pulpy red juices into Jefferson City or die trying. Okay, that's a little melodramatic. Maybe I'd better pack the rest of the melon along in case of emergency.

"You've got a passenger, Enzo." I strap the remaining 25 pounds of melon into the trailer seat, using the five point harness as if it were a toddler. It fits nice and snug by standing it

on end. Our lunch looks like a forest green barrel with the lid off. Enzo puts his arm around it, patting it a few times. "There, there," he says. I gotta find these kids some real playmates.

We reach the bridge into Jefferson City on fumes. I can't seem to bring the bike above 5 mph on the long ascent to the center spans. A noisy chopper pulls alongside us. I see Quinn flinch at an oversized rider's unnecessary revving. I look over in time to see that he wants to say something. Burning energy I don't have, I lean in. He stops revving.

"Bet you wish you had a motor right about now." His laugh is that of a hyena.

There are so many things I want to say in the moment, and I'm just the guy to say them. I don't get stage fright or come up with killer comebacks after the fact, an hour later on the drive home. Just before my mouth starts to misbehave and dig my own parental grave, I spy Quinn bird-dogging the proceedings with the intensity of a Wimbledon line judge.

Alone, I would have said something along the lines of, "Your future heart attack will be sponsored by Harley Davidson, &*\$%" or "Does your Momma make you wear all that leather in August?"

Instead, I offer him a placid smile. "This is just my speed."

Properly confused, he roars off with little satisfaction for his hardhearted efforts. A perfect example of how having kids can make you a better person.

"Jesus, what an idiot," Quinn mumbles under his breath.

And that would be an example of how children learn a lot from the way adults (me) usually talk to themselves (me) and others in rush-hour traffic.

"Momentum is your Friend" will be published September 1. Joe will be performing at Third Place Books in Seattle September 14, Village Books in Bellingham WA September 15. More dates to be announced.

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The Roles of Your Tendons

ERIK MOEN PT, CSCS

Tendons, which attach muscles to bones, transfer torque and create joint stability for activities such as bicycling. Tendinopathies, or tendon injuries, occur with exposure to constant, irregular force. They are somewhat common for endurance athletes, and often occur near the knee. Being aware of the structure, function, dysfunction, and repair process of the connective tissue will better prepare you for healthy activity and tolerance of torque production (speed!).

Structure

A tendon is a rope-like structure made from tiny fibers. It is primarily composed of a material called collagen, which is your body's source of fiber. The dynamic tissue changes structure and strength in the presence or absence of load. This is termed "tissue mechanical adaptation" for those in the mechanobiology-world.

A tendon tends to strengthen when exposed to increased levels of load or torque. This is not an instantaneous process, but rather happens over time (weeks, months and years). Its structure changes as it begins to accept consistently higher loads. In other words, cells called fibroblasts begin producing collagen faster than it is broken down.

Use It or Lose It

De-training, or immobilization of a tendon, creates a lack of stimulus causing results like those found in studies demonstrating the loss of tendon weight, stiffness, and tensile strength.

Significant structural changes were seen in various animal models following three to four weeks of relative immobilization. Irregular, uneven collagen fibers, and dilated veins and capillaries emerged. For example, if I were a couch potato for three weeks, and then went out to the velodrome and tried to race with the local heroes, I might end up with a tendinopathy. So, use it or lose it!

Too Much

Overuse refers to repetitive stretching that results in an inability to endure further tension. Excessive and chronic strain results in micro-trauma. If the tendon is generally stretched over 4%, microscopic tearing of the fibers occurs. Beyond 8-10%, macroscopic failure can be seen. Further stretch causes tendon rupture. Consistent microtrauma will result in inflammation, characterized by redness, pain, heat and swelling. Tendon injuries are most known for their pain. You know you are in trouble with your tendonitis when it limits your ability to participate in activities or sports, or even simple daily actions, such as going up and down stairs. Some inflamed tendons will actually "crunch" as they move. This is known as crepitus. These injuries will most often be point tender. If pain persists, even when you are at rest, it is a pretty bad sign. This level of discomfort means a longer road to recovery. Initial onset of tendonitis is tricky because the pain will decrease with the activity, making you feel like you don't have an injury. However, the pain will come back, most likely worse than before.

Recovery

There are three overlapping phases of tendon healing: inflammation, repair and remodeling. A single "insult" injury results in an initial 24-hour period of inflammation that creates a cellular reaction, which prepares the area for repair. A few days following the injury, the repair phase begins. Fibroblasts begin to lay down new collagen fibers. Six weeks following the injury, the remodeling phase begins. This is when the production of collagen slows down. Water content of the healing tissue decreases, and the tendon becomes more fibrous. At ten weeks, the repair site becomes more scar-like. Scar tissue is known for its disorganized nature, and responds to stress and strain. In fact, a controlled exercise program after the initial inflammation stage is indicated for better healing. A well-remodeled scar will allow for better load tolerance of a tendon in the future. Resuming loading is important, but not at the expense of "fanning the flames" of inflammation.

What Do I Do If I Develop Tendonitis?

Basic treatment strategies for acute tendonitis pain include ice and relative rest. Healing begins with the cessation of pain-producing activity. Once diagnosed with it, consider getting an evaluation of flexibility, strength and coordination. Take this opportunity to discover why you developed an overuse injury. Your awareness of these deficiencies will allow you to best plan your road to recovery. An adapted exercise plan is the next step for tendonitis resolution. It responds well to pain-free stretching and progressive eccentric muscle loading. All exercise should start pain-free. Keep track of your activity "dose" to better figure out how to

progress. Your gains will not always be linear in nature, meaning you will most likely not be able to "add 5 reps a day" with this plan. Have a Sports Physical Therapist help you with this type of program.

What Now?

Tendon is a dynamic tissue. You have to "use it smartly or lose it". Tendon remains healthy when exposed to a reasonable load. Slowly work up to your desired levels of activity. Strength development is partially why the required training process takes so long. Weight training may be used to increase tensile loading capacity. The inclusion of a regimen for the endurance cyclist typically occurs in the Fall. Flexibility is also an important component of tendon health. Avoidance of tendinopathies requires a proactive approach. Planning for your projected load and motion requirements will maintain the health of your tendons.

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Erik Moen PT, CSCS practices orthopedic and sports physical therapy in the greater Seattle area. Erik specializes in work with the endurance athlete. He is nationally known for his expertise in working with the bicyclist. www.bikept.com




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"COMMISSAIRE" FROM PAGE 1

starts about a month before the event when they receive the technical guide from the organizer. From that point, they are able to check details such as special rules, prize money, route problems, potential for cars, etc. For national and international events, the next step is to verify the list of entrants.

"I check to see that the teams that are entered are allowed to enter based on the category of race. I then check every rider against the UCI lists to make sure they are actually on the teams, that we have the correct spelling of their names, and that their UCI code is correct," says Pomario.

After the entrants list, officials need to make travel arrangements and arrive in time to check in with the rest of the College. Either on race day or the day before, depending on the level of the event, the President meets with the organizer and the College to check vehicle arrangements and radios, and delegates duties to each commissaire. Even though they have completed all the pre-race tasks and meetings, their job is just beginning.

When they arrive at a race site, it is their responsibility to make sure the riders are aware of any areas where safety may be a concern. Randy Shafer has been a race official since the early '80s. He began officiating in Portland, but now lives in Colorado Springs.

"I will discuss areas of the course and perhaps suggest areas that, based on my experience, are likely to break down or present additional danger to the riders," says Shafer. Pomario says he also checks in with the police motor marshals, ambulance personnel and other key volunteers before the start of the race.

"During the race our key role is to make sure that the race is fair, upholds a positive image of the sport and takes place in a safe environment," says Pomario. "It should be noted that the commissaire is not responsible for the safety of the course. This is the responsibility of the organizer." Interestingly, in the United States, officials hold greater responsibility for the safety of the racers than in most other countries.

The promoter also has a huge responsibility for the event, venue and riders. His/her participation on race day is very important to the racers and officials. While many organizers are easy to work with and enthusiastic about the races they put together, some are not as committed to the events.

Shafer says one of his worst experiences with an organizer involved a paperwork problem that spiraled into a very stressful race day for all the officials involved in the event. He explains, "As I got up to go to the venue for a 7:30 a.m. start, I noted the organizer's hotel room went dark. I smiled and was impressed that they were on the ball. Later, I found that they had just gone to bed after not being able to prepare the start sheets for the time trial. The organizer never arrived at the venue, the officials hand wrote the entire start list and ran the event."

An irresponsible promoter is not a com-

mon occurrence, but one of any number of unexpected hurdles an official may have to overcome.

Murray explains a unique and interesting situation she faced on race day. "One of the weirdest events I had to deal with was at a stage of the Elkhorn Stage race. We had to pull over and wait for a herd of cattle to cross the road."

Pomario recounts one of his more memorable stories as an official at the Tour de Georgia in 2004, where he was President. "We noted some of the US Postal Team pacing behind their team car back to the caravan and then peloton (which is illegal). Lance Armstrong was one of the riders," says Pomario, "So we fined all of them, including Armstrong, 30 Swiss Francs, which is about \$20." The media asked Armstrong about the penalty and he stated that he just could

not understand why he had been fined, and that the commissaire must have been "a pioneer." Pomario says now he is sometimes called the pioneer commissaire.

The key to a successful race day is good communication amongst everyone. However, unpredictable problems do arise.

Yet, even with these surprise dilemmas, the responsibilities that an official has during a race are endless. They have to be ready to check bikes, numbers,

and clothing, and make sure caravan vehicles conform to regulations. They have to start their day sometimes around 6 a.m., finish at 7p.m., complete many tasks, anticipate problems and be in the right place at the right time to make the right calls. After the race, they have to meet with the other officials, fill in a race report and penalty sheet if necessary, finalize results and send everything out to various associations as soon as possible.

In addition to these duties, the officials need to possess a reasonably thick skin to deal with the people-related issues that arise. "The officials must always (are expected to) be in good humor, take grief from people in 71st place, be told you know nothing of the sport after participating for 25 years, manage on 3-4 hours of sleep in a stage race and be threatened by people who dislike the fact that you sent them away for running a car off the road (instead of watching them being transported in an ambulance for such an act)," says Shafer.

While it is not always fun and games, being a race official can be an incredible way to stay in touch with bike racing. Commissaires have some of the same opportunities to travel and make friends as the racers do.

"I have been allowed to officiate in the US and in Europe, and as a result have a world perspective of the sport, friends from around the globe and a camaraderie in the sport that is indescribable," says Shafer.

"In many ways it is like a big family. Especially on the track world cup circuit...and it is almost like a reunion meeting up with these people every time," says Pomario. "There are a lot of really great people involved in cycling."

To become a race official you must . . .

- Be at least 18.
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- Pass an entry-level, open book rules exam.
- Purchase an officiating license and start working at races as a C official.
- Work a specified number of races, to become a level B commissaire.
- Pass a course to be upgraded to an A official after one year as a B.
- Pass a course and get your federation to submit your name to UCI to be considered for an upgrade to international commissaire (before the age of 45).

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"CYCLOCROSS" FROM PAGE 1

The Washington State Championships are being held in Spokane on Nov. 5th and are part of the Inland Northwest Cyclocross Series, a ten-race series held over five weekends.

Meanwhile, in Portland this fall, Brad Ross, the modern day Barnum Bailey of cyclocross, will host the largest series of its kind in the world. The Cross Crusade sees well over 500 racers per event, numbers that are unheard of even in European cross, and it's not just elite level riders like 35-40 Master National Champion Shannon Skeritt (who incidentally won the hardest cross race ever at last year's blizzard-overwhelmed Nationals). Cross Crusade also attracts the less-than-fit but fully cross committed legion of Portland's rolling party on a bike. Portland cross has its own sub-culture that simply has to be experienced; it's fun and wild. Part of the atmosphere has to do with the series being sponsored -Euro-style- by a regional brewery. It also has to do with the fact that the Cross Crusade's emphasis is on participation. Brad Ross says, "We want everybody with a bike of any kind to come out and give cross a try."

While Portland and Seattle host long established race series, there are several new events in the region that are also worth checking out. Vancouver B.C. has always had occasional cross races, but up until recently they have never really had a series to call their own. Last year saw the launch of the BC Cup series, and it's back again and promises to be even better. Most of the race promoters for the BC Cup have been competing in Portland and Seattle races for years, and they are proud to be able to have a series on home turf. Several of the BC Cup

races are scheduled on Saturdays, tempting racers to make a short trip up to the vicinity of Vancouver for a day of racing on incredible courses, followed by traditional Sunday races in Seattle or Portland. Although the number of overall contestants in BC is small compared to the Seattle and Portland races, this won't last long as more British Columbian's catch the fever and more Americans realize that it is worth the trip across the border for some of the most beautiful venues that still allow cross races. What's more, Vancouver hosts some of the very best in cycling talent and the start lists, while small, are a virtual Who's Who of racing talent. Any weekend can see the likes of Geoff Kabush, Andreas Hestler, Alison Sydor and reigning Canadian National Woman's champion Wendy Simms on the start line. A USCF license is all that's required for Americans to participate; it's as good as a UCI license. If you haven't crossed the border lately bring ID that establishes your nationality. While a passport is not yet mandatory, it is your best piece of



2005 US Grand Prix winner Barry Wicks in action.

ID. Leave your weapons at home, don't bring back any 'herbal' souvenirs, and you should have a great time.

British Columbia will also play host to the Canadian National Cyclocross Championships in November in Nanaimo on Vancouver Island. The race is being promoted by Canadian Masters Champion Norman Thibault and is in the hometown of Velo Bella/ Kona racer and Canadian Women's National Cyclocross Champion Wendy Simms. As well as hosting nationals, Norm is putting on a BC Cup race and organizing a Vancouver Island series that should be worth checking out.

Also new this year are three races being promoted by Ryan Rickerts in Bellingham, WA. Ryan has chosen Saturday race dates to avoid conflicts with existing series' and has locked in several great courses including Nov. 4th at the Western Washington Campus. Ryan hopes for a healthy turnout of locals as well as Canadians and Seattleites looking to fill out their schedules.

If you want to combine partying and cross you do not want to miss the circus known as Star Crossed. In its fifth year at Marymoor Velodrome, this race has its own unique flavor. While not part of any local or even national series, Star Crossed attracts some of the very best racers in the nation and seems to be the official start date for big time racing. This night race is held under the lights of Marymoor Velodrome and features a spectator-friendly course that includes lots of fast grass as well as sections of the velodrome. In addition to the racing, expect trippy grooves from the DJ, a wildly popular and raucous beer garden that the racers circumnavigate, and prizes for spectators. Last year the organizers, Terry Buchanan and Jonny Sundt, introduced an awesome Euro-style plywood bridge structure that racers needed to navigate. The winners were presented awards by scantily clad podium girls. If you read this far and you have never attended a cross race before you should mark Sept. 30 on your calendar. If it's raining it will be epic racing and pure mayhem.

Having attended Star Crossed you no doubt now have the fever and are wondering where else you can satiate your cross cravings. I have good news, because the biggest show in North American cyclocross returns to the Northwest this season. The US Grand Prix is a national cross series of six races held over three weekends. The final two stops in the series are on Nov. 18th and 19th. Junior development squad Rad Racing is hosting the penultimate race in this hotly contested national series for the 5th year in a row. Jim Brown heads up the Rad Racing Grand Prix which returns to Steilacoom Park in Tacoma, and he has confirmed that the course



Morgan Schmidt encouraged by the crowd.

will again include the toughest run-up in cross, officially named the "Kona-Knapp Time Run-up" that racers love to complain about. It's a vicious hill, and it makes for a great place to watch the race unfold. The Grand Prix will attract the very best cross racers in the nation, and the big boys will crawl up the run-up at least 10 times in their quest for victory.

The following day, the Grand Prix heads down to Portland for the Series finale hosted by the Cross-loving people at Cross Crusade. Brad Ross tells me that the course is pancake flat and features almost a mile of pavement that should make for some exciting and close racing. Last year's overall Grand Prix champion in the men's series was won by Barry Wicks, who went on to become the 2005 National Short Track champion in mountain biking.

Brad Ross is also trying to revive the Grail de la Grunge, a points competition that pits Seattle racers against Portland racers. The Grand Prix weekend will be the only two races that count toward the title. Seattle's army of cross crazies will have to make the drive down to Portland if they want the cup back.

The story of cross in the Northwest for the 2006 season may well be an abundance of great races. In a season of thankfulness, cross racers have plenty of reason to rejoice. We have a full schedule of nothing but the finest that Northwest race promoters can throw at us, and it's time to get dirty.

"MTB TIPS" FROM PAGE 1

your weight laterally such that your hips are balanced over the outside of the bike, and the seat is nearly touching your inside thigh.

If you've ever aimed to get through a switchback only to dab your inside foot halfway through the process, you'll already have an idea of why this weight shift is important. As your steer your bike through a tight corner, forces naturally pull it to the inside. You need to compensate with your body in order to counteract these forces, and keep yourself and your bike upright right through to the exit. Note that this lateral weight shift is in conjunction with any fore-aft weight shift you're already doing to accommodate for the pitch in terrain.

Another technique for improving stability and balance, particularly in the standing position involved in descending switchbacks, is pointing your inside knee into the corner. When I'm riding, I find that this widens my base of support, helps open up my body in such a way that I'm encouraged to look around the corner and shift my weight to the outside, and queues me into committing to the task at hand.

And yet another technique involves being

conscious of your braking, front and rear. When traveling in a straight line, we want to be sure to use both breaks fairly equally, modulating slightly between the two as our speed and terrain requires. In a corner, however, when your front wheel is steered and therefore compromised in position, using less front brake works to your advantage.

When I teach a standard switchback lesson, I generally ask participants to find an open spot on flat terrain, start by riding in a large circle, and then add in each of the above techniques one by one to make their circle smaller. Even though turning in one direction is easier than the other direction for most riders, it's important to practice both.

Once participants are comfortable with the four key techniques mentioned above, I add in two more: ratcheting and line choice. Here they are now.

Ratcheting involves moving your bike forward in small increments by using only the top part of the pedal stroke, pedaling forward one quarter of a revolution from vertical to horizontal with one foot, and then backing that

foot up to repeat the same motion. Ratcheting allows you to get the maximum amount of turning in while using up the minimum amount of forward room.

Ideally, you should ratchet with your inside foot forward. Doing this allows for the tightest turns, as well as gives you the chance to pedal forward to recover if you do indeed start to fall to the inside. Having a different foot forward than usual sometimes takes a bit of time to get used to, but in the end, it's worth it.

Finally, line choice means picking the route through the switchback that is the easiest to navigate, requires the least tight turn, and allows your back wheel to clear the apex even though it always takes an inside line to your front.

Barring major obstacles in your corner that necessitate an unusual line choice, the most effective line starts at the outside of the corner, moves to the inside of the corner at the apex, and finishes back on the outside. Incidentally, this is the same line you'd want to take through a high-speed corner, and the same line you likely drive in your car on a curvy road with lots of lateral space.

There are heaps of other tips I could provide on dialing in a tight slow-speed switchback



Learning to shift your body weight will help your cornering abilities.

corner, but the above includes the key examples, and there's plenty of fun in practicing and discovering extra bits and pieces on your own. So it's time to move back from the paper and out onto the trail. Have a great time.

Candace Shadley is the founder and director of the Sugoi Dirt Series Mountain Bike Camps, presented by Rocky Mountain Bikes. She has eighteen years of multi-sport instructional experience, an incredible passion for teaching and learning, and a love of outdoor sport in general. For more information on the Sugoi Dirt Series program, visit www.dirtseries.com.

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To conserve space, we've chosen to run web sites only on events where both web site and email are available. If you are an organizer and your event is not listed, or if the information listed changes, contact us and we will gladly update the calendar. Please send your event information in the same style and format seen here.

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EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

Sep 1-30: Bike Commute Challenge

Oregon. Friendly competition — workplace against workplace — with benefits for companies and individual cyclists when employees bike to work. The workplaces with the highest percentage of commuters by bicycle during the month win! Bicycle Transportation Alliance, 503-226-0676, www.bta4bikes.com

Sep 16: Timberline Marathon

Mt Hood, OR. Trail marathon from Timberline Lodge to Timothy Lake. Finisher medals & T-shirts. Rogue Multi-Sport, LLC, 503-327-5531, www.RogueMultiSport.com

Sep 20: Ray Thomas' Bicycle Legal Clinics

Portland, OR. Oregon's vehicle law from a bicyclist's perspective. Learn how to pursue motorists for vehicle harassment and bring them to court, and gain an overview of traffic and insurance laws. 6:00pm-7:30pm Bicycle Transportation Alliance, 503-226-0676, www.bta4bikes.org

Sep 23: 2nd Annual Run/Walk 4 The Poor Trail Marathon Benefit Challenge

Lakewood, WA. Fort Steilacoom Park. 1mile, 5km, 10km, and marathon. WA State Trail Running, Walking, & Duathlon Club, www.humanmultisportspnw.org

OCTOBER

Oct 4: Bicycle Alliance Annual Auction

Seattle, WA. Join 400 bicycling enthusiasts at the 14th Annual Bicycle Alliance Auction. Seattle Center Exhibition Hall. It's a ton of fun. Barbara Culp, Bicycle Alliance, 206-224-9252, www.bicyclealliance.org

CAMPS

SEPTEMBER

Sep 9-10: Sugoi Dirt Series

Whistler, BC. Co-ed MTB camps. Sharpen your technique, build confidence, and enjoy riding more than you ever thought possible. Candace Shadley, 604-905-8876, www.dirtseries.com

Sep 15-17: DevineRIDE Women's Mountain Bike Camps

Rossland, BC. Fun-filled women's weekend, includes skills, trail rides and socializing as well as bike fit and maintenance seminar for riders of all levels. Cindy Devine / Kirsty Exner, 250-362-7378, www.devineride.com

Sep 16-27: Alpenrose Cross Clinic

Portland, OR. Refresh your skills before the season or learn new ones. \$5 registration. Start at 6:30pm. Registration opens at 6:00pm. Erik Tonkin, Sellwood Cycle Repair, 503-233-9392, www.sellwoodcycle.com

RACE SERIES

May 28-Sep 24: Island Series Marathon

Various, BC. 3 Marathon events. "E" level race. Points system determines overall winner. www.cycling.bc.ca

Sep 5-26: PIR Handicap Series

Portland, OR. 4-event race series at the speedway track. Handicap format. 3 groups starting 2 minutes apart. Cat 4 riders start first, followed by Cat 3, and Cat 1/2. All riders race the same number of laps, and contest the same sprint. All finish as a single group. Cat 3 riders may choose to start with the 1/2s. Prizes awarded based on points accumulated in primes and at the finish. Start at 6:00pm Steve Mullen, www.obra.org

Sep 10-Oct 28: Giant Bicycles BC Cross Series

Various, BC. 6-event series. Overall points determine winner. Last event is double points. For A race - cross bike only for other categories, any bike accepted. Men A race: 60 min., women A 40 min. Points to top 15 riders. US riders welcome, no need for UCI license. Allan Pratzsky, Cycling BC, 604-737-3137, www.cycling.bc.ca

Sep 24-Dec 10: Seattle Cyclocross Series

Various, WA. Series of 9 events raced around the Seattle area. Open to all categories. Overall calculated on points. First start at 9:30am. entry fee \$20, except women Cat 4 and junior \$5, kids free. Race categories = age as of Dec 31, 2006. MTB without bar ends are ok. Series Finals earns double point. Race day support. Registration closed 20 minutes prior to start. Marymoor Velodrome, www.seattlecyclocross.com

Sep 27-Nov 12: Cross on the Rock - Island Cup Series

Vancouver Island, BC. 4 events. Registration opens at 11am. First race at noon. Categories: Women, Expert, Master, Intermediate and Beginner. Double points for series final. Kids race at each event. Norm Thibault, www.island-multi-sports.com

Sep 30-Nov 12: Sandy Point Beach Race Series

Boise, ID. 3-event race series, raced at Sandy Points. Clinic before the start of the first race. www.idahocyclocross.com/

Oct 1-Nov 19: Cross Crusade

Portland, OR. Largest cyclo-cross race series in the nation. Category A, B, C, Beginner and Master 35+. All bikes are legal. UCI races - cross bike only. Pre-registration recommended, day of race registration available. Overall winner calculated on points. Kiddie Kross for 12 and under, prizes for all categories. Brad Ross, Club Vivo, 503-806-6943, www.crosscrusade.com

Oct 7-Nov 18: Eagle Island Race Series

Boise, ID. Raced at Eagle Island State Park. Four event series. Start at noon. www.aerocyclos.com

Oct 14-Nov 12: Inland NW Cyclocross Series

Various, WA. 9-event series. Points 9 deep - 5 for showing up. Men A, B, Master 40+ Men, Women, Junior U18, Total rookie and MTB categories. No pre-registration, registration opens at 10am and closes 15 minutes before the start. \$20. One day license available. Michael Emde, 509-326-6983, www.emdesports.com

MULTISPORT

SEPTEMBER

Sep 9: XTC Off-Road Multisport Race

Vancouver, BC. Start at Buntzen Lake. 1500m swim, 24km mtb and a 10km trail run. Open to all levels, from new to off-road triathlon to pro-athlete. Half XTC also available. Part of the Triathlon BC Junior Elite Series. Cove Communications, 888-788-4645, www.xtccanada.com

Sep 10: Escape from the Rock Triathlon

Mercer Island, WA. Half-mile swim, 12-mile bike, 2.5-mile run. Start/finish at Luther Burbank Park. Individual, physically challenged and relay categories. Enviro-sports Productions, 415-868-1829, www.envirosports.com

Sep 16: Flowing Lake Triathlon

Snohomish, WA. Registration opens at 6:00am, closes at 7:45am. Race starts at 8:00am. Swim 400m, bike 12 miles, run 4k. Bu Du Racing, 253-334-4433, www.buduracing.com

Sep 24: Vancouver Muddy Buddy Ride & Run

N. Vancouver, BC. Get dirty! Start at Camp Brick. Team of two - one run, one biking. Conquer 5 obstacles, while you leap frog switching from biking and running throughout the course. Obstacles consist of tire/hay bail challenges, mud pit, rope challenge, etc. Free kids race. Cove Communications, 888-788-4645, www.covecommunications.ca

Sep 30: Mind Over Mtn Adventure Race

Cumberland, BC. 40km - MTB, kayaking, trail running. Mind Over Mountain Event Co., 250-715-8933, www.mindovermountain.com

OCTOBER

Oct 6-8: Methow Valley Fall Bike Fest

Winthrop, WA. Bike Festival for the whole family; cyclocross, MTB rides, MTB races, road rides. Jan Erickson, 509-996-3287, www.mvsta.com

CYCLO-CROSS

Sep 10: Giant Bicycles BC Cross Cup #1

Langley, BC. Masi-Adobe MS Cyclocross Classic. Base Clement, www.steamracing.ca

Sep 12 & 19: Eugene Short Cyclocross Series

Eugene, OR. Opening event of the Oregon cyclocross season. At Camp Harlow. Start at 6:00pm. \$10 registration, proceeds to benefit local women cycling club. MTB or cross bike ok. Norman Babcock, 541-485-6007, www.obra.org

Sep 17: Cross on the Rock #1

Nanaimo, BC. Diver Lake Park Cross. Norm Thibault, www.island-multi-sports.com

Sep 24: Giant Bicycles BC Cross Cup #2

Vancouver, BC. Escape Velocity Grand Prix. See Race Series for details. Stephen Cork, Escape Velocity, www.escapevelocity.bc.ca

Sep 24: Hood River Cyclocross Classic

Hood River, OR. Kick-off the 'cross season at the Hood River Valley High School. Many categories, including kids. Jeff Lorenzon, 541-490-6837, www.discoverbicycles.com

Sep 24: Seattle Cyclocross Race #1

Fort Steilacoom, WA. See Race Series for details. Marymoor Velodrome, www.seattlecyclocross.com

Sep 30: Clif Bar/Hagens Berman Star-Crossed

Redmond, WA. Marymoor Velodrome - Racing under the lights. Not an ECC series race. Beer garden. www.hagensbermancycling.com/starcrossedcx/

Sep 30: Sandy Point Beach Race #1

Boise, ID. Clinic followed by racing. See Race Series for details. www.lostrivercycling.org

OCTOBER

Oct 1: Cross Crusade #1

Portland, OR. See Race Series for details. Brad Ross, 503-806-6943, www.crosscrusade.com

Oct 1: Seattle Cyclocross Race #2

Seattle, WA. South SeaTac course. See Race Series. Marymoor Velodrome, www.seattlecyclocross.com

Oct 6-8: Methow Valley Fall Bike Fest

Winthrop, WA. Bike Festival for the whole family; cyclocross, MTB rides, MTB races, road rides. Jan Erickson, 509-996-3287, www.mvsta.com

Oct 7: Eagle Island #1

Boise, ID. Race Series for details. www.aerocyclos.com

Oct 7: Fox Hollow French Immersion School #1

Eugene, OR. Galen Mitterman, 541-687-3177, gmit98@yahoo.com

Oct 7: Giant Bicycles BC Cross Cup #3

Surrey, BC. Bayside Cyclocross Race. See Race Series for details. Jason Fluckiger, Bayside Cycling Club, www.geocities.com/baysidecycling

Oct 7: Veloce's Battle at Barlow CCX

Gresham, OR. Kurt Gritman, 503-752-3496, www.obra.org

Oct 8: Portland Veldrit

Portland, OR. Cyclocross race - Belgian Style Kris Schamp, 503-466-9007, www.portlandracing.com

Oct 14: Giant Bicycles BC Cross Cup #4

Delta, BC. Coastal Cross Classic. See Race Series for details. Team Coastal, www.teamcoastalcycling.com

Oct 14-15: Inland NW Cyclocross Series #1/#2

Spokane, WA. Valley Mission Park (Spokane) on Saturday. North Idaho College (Coeur d'Alene, ID) on Sunday. First race starts at noon. Michael Emde, 509-326-6983, www.emdesports.com

Oct 15: Cross Crusade #2

Hillsboro, OR. See Race Series for details. Brad Ross, 503-806-6943, www.crosscrusade.com

Oct 15: Cross on the Rock #2

Courtenay, BC. Diver Lake Park Cross. Race Series for details. Norm Thibault, www.island-multi-sports.com

Oct 15: Seattle Cyclocross Race #3

Sumner, WA. Kelly Creek course. See Race Series for details. Marymoor Velodrome, www.seattlecyclocross.com

Oct 21: Eagle Island #2

Boise, ID. See Race Series for details. www.aerocyclos.com

Oct 21: Giant Bicycles BC Cross Cup #6

Vancouver, BC. Vanier Park cyclocross. See Race Series for details. Krebs Cycle Club, www.krebscycleclub.com

Oct 21-22: Inland NW Cyclocross #3/#4

Walla Walla, WA. Both days, Mill Creek Sport Complex. First race starts at noon. Michael Emde, 509-326-6983, www.emdesports.com

Oct 22: Cross Crusade #3

North Plains, OR. Horning's Hideout. See Race Series for details. Brad Ross, 503-806-6943, www.crosscrusade.com

Oct 22: Seattle Cyclocross Series #4

Auburn, WA. Donida Farms. See Race Series for details. Marymoor Velodrome, www.seattlecyclocross.com

Oct 28: Giant Bicycles BC Cross Cup & Prov. Championship

Vancouver, BC. Jericho Cross Classic. Provincial championship. Double points event. See Race Series for details. Team Wedgewood, www.teamwedgewood.com

Oct 28-29: Inland NW Cyclocross #5/6

Spokane, WA. Saturday - Highbridge Park, Spokane, Sunday - North Idaho College, Coeur d'Alene, ID. First race starts at noon. Michael Emde, www.emdesports.com, 509-326-6983

Oct 28-29: Sun Valley Cyclocross

Sun Valley, ID. 11:30am to 5:00pm. Registration begins at 11:30am. Prizes in all categories. Sun Valley Road & Dirt Cycling Club, www.sunvalley.com

Oct 29: Cross Crusade #4

Yamhill, OR. At Flying M Ranch. See Race Series for details. See Race Series for details. Brad Ross, 503-806-6943, www.crosscrusade.com

Oct 29: Cross on the Rock #3

Victoria, BC. Diver Lake Park Cross. See Race Series for details. Norm Thibault, www.island-multi-sports.com

Oct 29: Seattle Cyclocross Series #5

Snohomish, WA. See Race Series for details. Marymoor Velodrome, www.seattlecyclocross.com

NOVEMBER

Nov 4: Eagle Island #3

Boise, ID. Race Series for details. www.aerocyclos.com

Nov 4: Inland NW Cyclocross Series #7

Spokane, WA. Riverside State Park (7-mile area). First race starts at noon. Michael Emde, 509-326-6983, www.emdesports.com

Nov 5: Cross Crusade #5

Carver, OR. At Barton Park. Race Series for details. Brad Ross, 503-806-6943, www.crosscrusade.com

Nov 5: WA State Championships

Spokane, WA. At Valley Mission Park. Not a Seattle Cyclocross Series event nor an Inland NW Cyclocross. Emde Sports LLC, www.emdesports.com

Nov 11-12: Inland NW Cyclocross #8/9 (finals)

Coeur d'Alene, ID. North Idaho College on Saturday, Sunday - Highbridge park. First race starts at noon. Michael Emde, 509-326-6983, www.emdesports.com

Nov 11: Canadian Nat'l Championships

Nanaimo, BC. Norm, Island Multi-Sports, www.island-multi-sports.com

Nov 11: Sandy Point Beach Race #2

Boise, ID. See Race Series for details. 3rd Annual Toys for Tots race. www.lostrivercycling.org

Nov 12: Cross Crusade #6

Estacada, OR. See Race Series for details. Brad Ross, 503-806-6943, www.crosscrusade.com

Nov 12: Cross on the Rock #4

Parksville, BC. Island Cup Series Finals. Double points. Norm Thibault, www.island-multi-sports.com

Nov 12: Sandy Point Beach Race #3

Boise, ID. See Race Series for details. www.lostrivercycling.org

Nov 12: Seattle Cyclocross Series #8

Seattle, WA. Evergreen High School (location may change, check website to confirm). Marymoor Velodrome, www.seattlecyclocross.com

Nov 18: Crank Brother US Gran Prix of Cyclocross

Lakewood, WA. Jim Brown, Rad Racing NW, www.usgpcyclocross.com/

Nov 18: Eagle Island #4

Boise, ID. Race Series for details. www.aerocyclos.com

Nov 19: Cross Crusade #7 & USGP Finals

Hillsboro, OR. See Race Series for details. Crank Brothers US Grand Prix Finals. Brad Ross, 503-806-6943, www.crosscrusade.com

Nov 22: Fox Hollow French Immersion School #2

Eugene, OR. Galen Mitterman, 541-687-3177, gmit98@yahoo.com

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DECEMBER

Dec 2-3: Seattle Cyclocross Series #7/#8
Oak Harbor, WA. Fort Flager State Park. Race Series for details. Marymoor Velodrome, www.seattlecyclocross.com

Dec 3: Veloshop CCX
Portland, OR. Molly Cameron, 503-335-VELO, www.veloshop.org

Dec 8-10: National Championships
Providence, RI. USA Cycling, www.usacycling.org

Dec 9: Santiam Bicycle CCX
Salem, OR. Evan Plews, www.obra.org

Dec 10: Seattle Cyclocross Series - Finals
Sumner, WA. Kelly Creek course. See Race Series for details. Marymoor Velodrome, www.seattlecyclocross.com

MOUNTAIN BIKE RACING

SEPTEMBER

Sep 9-10: Scotty Graham Memorial Series Finals
Mt. Hood, OR. Mt. Hood Skibowl Series Finals presented by Shiloh Cyclery. DH and XC events. Friday - DH training, Saturday DH race and Sunday XC race. Mountainous, rocky course with spectacular views. Hurricane Racing, 503-272-0146, www.skibowl.com

Sep 23: Cheakamus Challenge
Squamish to Whistler, BC. Oldest, toughest XC race in Canada. 72 km marathon event. Endorphin Enterprises, 604-938-1799, www.cheakamuschallenge.com

Sep 24: Island Series Marathon #3
Rowboatham, BC. See Race Series for details. Ramble, www.cycling.bc.ca

Sep 24: Mt Ashland Hillclimb
Ashland, OR. Tita Soriano, SOMBA, 541-840-6580, springthaw@sombaba.org

Sep 30-Oct 14: Gunbarrel Challenge MTB Stage Race
Western Australia. 1200km over 10 days - \$38k Cash Purse. Mind Over Mountain Event Co., 250-715-8933, www.gunbarrel.com.au

OCTOBER

Oct 6-8: Methow Valley Fall Bike Fest
Winthrop, WA. Bike Festival for the whole family; XC, MTB rides, MTB races. Jan Erickson, 509-996-3287, www.mvsta.com

Oct 8: Boise Banzai Singlespeed MTB Championships
Boise, ID. Ron Dillon, www.wildrockies.com

MOUNTAIN BIKE TOURING

SEPTEMBER

Sep 10: 2nd Annual Fat Tire Festival - Poker Run
Federal Way, WA. Ride Dash Point. For of all ages & abilities. Raise money to maintain the trails. 7-mile ride shows you all that the park has to offer. Collect the cards, best hands win prizes and cool stuff. Skills contest, snacks, free parking. Phil's South Side Cyclery, 253-661-3903, www.teamtailwind.com

Sep 16-30: South Korea: T'amhomhada Tongjiokui
Ecuador. Explore Eastern Korea. IBF fundraiser and cultural/ natural heritage tour of Ecuador. Ibike Tours, 206-767-0848, www.ibike.org/ibike

Sep 24: Olympic Discovery Bike Adventure
Port Angeles, WA. 50 miles on the off-road Olympic Discovery Trail. Port Angeles to Sequim. MTB with semi-slick or smooth tires or road bike with wider tires recommended. Start at City Pier. City of Port Angeles Parks and Rec., 360-417-4550, www.olympicdiscoverybike.com

OCTOBER

Oct 1: Black Rock Ride
Bend, OR. 20-mile around Paulina and East Lake. Very strenuous with no food or water provided. Begins at 10:00am. Free. Meet at Paulina Falls parking area. Hutch's Bicycles, 503-382-9253, www.hutchsbicycles.com

Oct 6-8: Methow Valley Fall Bike Fest
Winthrop, WA. Bike Festival for the whole family; MTB rides, MTB races, road rides. Jan Erickson, 509-996-3287, www.mvsta.com

Oct 7: Mt Spokane Autumn Bike Ride
Spokane, WA. This bike ride is on a vehicle-closed road and mostly downhill. Mike Aho, Spokane Parks & recreation, 509-625-6246, www.spokane-parks.org

ROAD RACING

SEPTEMBER

Sep 9: LOTOJA CLASSIC
Logan, UT to Jackson, WY. RR: 1,000 Cyclists. 1 Day. 3 States. 206 Miles! Epic Events, 801-546-0090, www.lotojaclassic.com

Sep 9: Ring of Fire 12/24hr Time Trial
Madras, OR. Terri Gooch, 541-760-1024, www.racecrossoregon.com

Sep 9: Triple Crown Series #3
Boise, ID. Bogus Basin Hill Climb. See Race Series for details. 208-867-2488, www.lostrivercycling.org

Sep 10: Mt. Baker Hill Climb
Bellingham, WA. The ultimate fitness test. 24.5 miles, 4300ft from Glacier to Artist's Point. All categories and recreational riders. Fundraising for cancer care in Northwest WA. Ken Meyer Memorial Foundation, www.meyermemorial.org

Sep 10: OBRA Hillclimb Championships
Cancelled

Sep 12, 21 & 26: PIR Handicap Series #2/#3/#4
Portland, OR. See Race Series for details. Steve Mullen, 503-788-8704, www.obra.org

Sep 17: Skull Hollow Roubaix
Cancelled

ROAD TOURING

Sep 3: Great Northwest Fall Tour
Newport, WA. Enjoy a beautiful ride in the country! Choose a 15, 30, 50 or 85-mile ride. Registration is \$20 or \$30 with shirt. Food/water stops provided on all routes and a meal at the Newport City Park. Melody Geddes, Newport/Priest River Rotary Club, 509-292-5099

Sep 3: Hutch's 100km
Bend, OR. Metric century (62 miles) begins and ends at Tumalo State Park. Mostly small rollers, with views of the Cascades. Includes maps, mechanical support, energy food and drink. Meet at Tumalo State Park. \$5.00 entry. Hutch's Bicycles, 530-382-6248, www.hutchsbicycles.com

Sep 9-16: Amgen California Coast Classic
San Francisco to Los Angeles, CA. Fully supported 6- to 8-day tour along the California coast to benefit the Arthritis Foundation. Arthritis Foundation - Pacific Northwest Chapter, 206-547-2707, www.california-coastclassic.org

Sep 9-10: Bicycle Trek for Life and Breath
Surrey, BC. 2-day, 200km ride through the Fraser Valley. Start at Hazlemer Campground to Cultus Lake and back via a different route on Sunday. Fully supported. Fundraising event for the BC Lung Association. BC Lung Association, 604-731-5864, www.bc.lung.ca

Sep 9-23: Big Ride Pacific Coast
Seattle, WA. Experience the Pacific Coast by bicycle. Ride along the coast from Seattle to San Francisco, CA. American Lung Association of Washington, 206-441-5100, www.bigride.org

Sep 9-16: Cycle Oregon
Various, OR. 7-day, fully supported 500-mile bicycle tour that travels through Blue Mountains area. You pedal and we take care of the rest. Cycle Oregon, 503-287-0405, www.cycleoregon.com

Sep 9-Oct 1: Ride the West
Portland, OR. Fully supported 23-day, 1,350-mile bicycle tour from Portland, OR to Newport Beach, CA. America by Bicycle, 888-797-7057, www.abbike.com

Sep 9-10: Group Health MS 150 Bike Tour
La Conner, WA. 2-day, 150-mile bike tour to raise awareness about multiple sclerosis and raise money for nat'l research programs and local services. Shorter and longer options available. Fully supported, rest stops every 10 miles, 6 full meals, entertainment, beer garden, finish line BBQ and Rider Village. Explores Skagit, Island and Whatcom counties. National MS Society, 800-344-4867, www.nationalmssociety.org/was/event/default.asp?g=6

Sep 9-19: Utah Parks
St. George, UT. 11-day catered and van supported event. 493 miles of beautiful scenery and landscapes. Terry Malouhney, Adventure Cycling Association, 800-755-2453, www.adventurecycling.org

Sep 10-15: California Redwood
Santa Rosa, CA. Hiking and biking tour through the redwood forest. 6 days, all levels. Also available Sept 24 & October 8. Bicycle Adventures, 800-443-6060, www.bicycleadventures.com

Sep 10: Headwaters Century BAW
Enumclaw, WA. 3 gorgeous routes (45, 65 or 100 miles) in the headwaters of the Green River. Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club, 253-272-6747, www.twbc.org

Sep 10-15: Santa Fe-Taos Tour
Santa Fe, NM. 6-day Tour: Bike, Hike, Raft. Highlights: Bandelier National Monument, Enchanted Circle. Also available Sept 24. Bicycle Adventures, 800-443-6060, www.bicycleadventures.com

Sep 11-16: Bryce-Zion Camping
St. George, UT. Camp under the clear desert sky, see the wonders of Bryce and Zion national parks and Kodachrome Basin. 6 days. Family version available. Available: Sept 18 & 25. Bicycle Adventures, 800-443-6060, www.bicycleadventures.com

Sep 11-19: Sawtooth Trek
Sawtooth Mtns, ID. Wonderful, 120-mile, 3-day recreational expedition through some of Idaho's most scenic vistas. Novices and advanced riders alike, emphasis on fun. Limit 125 riders. American Lung Association of Idaho, 208-344-6567, www.lungidaho.org

Sep 16: 5th Annual Oregon Covered Bridge Fest
Stayton, OR. Guided and self-guided tours of 6 area covered bridges. Maps available at the festival grounds, Pioneer Park, at Marion and 7th Ave. Bill Cockrell, 503-399-0436, www.covered-bridges.org

Sep 16: Sawtooth Century Ride
Ketchum, ID. Sawtooth Velo., www.sawtoothvelo.org

Sep 16: Tour de Vine
Wenatchee, WA. Wander through 4 picturesque wineries, apple and pear orchards and a bakery. Alberg Sports, 509-663-0425, www.tourdevine.com

Sep 16-17: Tour des Lacs
Spokane, WA. 2-day tour with multiple routes, mileage options & boat cruise on Lake CDA. Round & Round Productions, 509-455-7657, www.roundandround.com

Sep 16-19: Trek Tri Island
Seattle, WA. 3-day, 135-mile fundraising tour from Seattle to Victoria through the San Juan Islands. Ferry included. American Lung Assn of WA, 206-441-5100, www.alaw.org

Sep 17-22: Bryce & Zion
St. George, UT. 6-day trip around Bryce and Zion Canyon National Park, and Cedar Breaks National Monument. Average 40 miles / day. Includes 2 days off. Also available 9/17. Noo Funteers Bicycle Vacations, 866-539-2453, www.nooFunteers.com

Sep 17: Cascade Spawning Cycle
Seattle, WA. 30-mile recreational ride following the salmon migration. Great for families. Cascade Bicycle Club, 206-522-3222, www.cascade.org

Sep 17: Fall Isle-Lander
Victoria, BC. Start at Cook Street Village Moka House, Cook & Oscar Victoria, 7am. Route: Saanich-Metchosin. 200km. Raymond Parker, BC Randonneurs, 250-388-5365, www.randonneurs.bc.ca

Sep 23-29: Central California Coast
San Luis Obispo, CA. From Big Sur to Santa Barbara. Quiet country roads, wonderful fall weather, and gorgeous scenery. 7 days, all levels. Also available Oct 7-13. Bicycle Adventures, 800-443-6060, www.bicycleadventures.com

Sep 23: Emerald City Lights Bike Ride
Seattle, WA. 30- or 65-mile route. Start/finish Auburn Game Farm Park. The 30-miler travels out to Flaming Geyser Park and through Enumclaw Plateau. 65-mile route goes to Black Diamond, Ravensdale, Cumberland, Enumclaw Plateau. Proceeds to The Seattle Basket Brigade which feeds families at Thanksgiving. Patricia Hansen, 425-881-0299, www.emeraldcitylights.com

Sep 23: Fall Flatlander 200K
Maple Ridge, BC. Start 7:00am from Maple Ridge (Hwy #7 @ 240 Street). Tour Mission, Rosedale, Ft. Langley. BC Randonneurs, www.randonneurs.bc.ca

Sep 23: Heber Valley Century
Heber City, UT. Autumn splendor of Wasatch Mountains. Scenic hamlets, pristine horse & farm country & awesome ski country with magnificent vistas & views. Bob Kinney, Bike 2 Bike, 801-677-0134

Sep 23: Ride the Rogue
Rogue River, OR. Relatively flat, easy terrain through Southern Oregon. 100-, 65-, 30-mile or 6-mile family ride available. Registration opens at 7am., 100-mile starts at 8am., the 65- and 30-mile at 9am. Family Walk and Ride at 10am. Starts/ends at Palmerton Park. Gail Frank, Rogue River Recreational Corridor and Greenway, 541-582-1112, www.ridetherogue.org

Sep 23: Ride4US
Tacoma, WA. One phenomenal day - The 31-, 62- & 100-mile begin with a scenic rolling tour of Vashon Island (following a short ferry ride). 62-milers continue to Steilacoom riding along the water and back. 100 follow Commencement Bay, past Tacoma's downtown landmarks and up Brown's Point hills - and Steilacoom. Each course ends with a loop in Pt. Defiance Park. 4 family-friendly events (Ride4US, Run4US, Walk4US & Fun4US). Something for everyone, food, music & discounted passes to the zoo and go-karts. Diego Wendt, Ride4US, www.ride4us.org

Sep 23: SIR 100km Mountain Populaire
WA. Randonneur event open to all. End of the season event for the SIR. Jan Heine, Seattle Int'l Randonneurs, 206-612-4700, www.seattlerandonneur.org

Sep 23: Tour de Whidbey
Whidbey Island, WA. Challenging 100- or 50-mile routes, or a moderate 25-mile ride. Pancake breakfast and chili feed. Benefit the Whidbey General Hospital Foundation. Excellent rest stops and friendly volunteers. Whidbey General Hospital Foundation, 360-321-7656, www.whidbeygen.org

Sep 23-24: Wine Country Trek
Yakima, WA. 2 days from Yakima to Prosser and back. \$85 all inclusive. Immerse yourself in wine country! David Severson, Apple Valley Kiwanis, Prosser Kiwanis, 509-972-8803, www.desertvalley.com/rides

Sep 24: Olympic Discovery Bike Adventure
Port Angeles, WA. 50 miles on the off-road Olympic Discovery Trail. Port Angeles to Sequim. MTB with semi-slick or smooth tires or road bike with wider tires recommended. Start at City Pier. City of Port Angeles Parks and Rec., 360-417-4550, www.olympicdiscoverybike.com

Sep 30-Oct 7: Big Sur Classic
San Francisco, CA. 8-day ride, incredibly scenic 502-mile coastal tour from San Francisco to Los Angeles via Big Sur. Four Seasons Cycling Events, 818-445-4060, www.BigIslandRide.com

Sep 30: Dam2Dam Thumbs Up! Bike Tour
Wenatchee, WA. Help find a cure for paralysis! 25-, 50- or 100-mile ride along the beautiful Columbia River. Rocky Reach Dam to Well Dam and back. Benefits the Mike Utley Foundation for spinal cord research. Mike Utley Foundation, 800-294-4683, www.mikeutley.org

OCTOBER

Oct 1: Kitsap Color Classic
Edmonds, WA. Multiple loops from 14 to 64 miles around Kitsap Peninsula. Cascade Bicycle Club, www.cascade.org

Oct 1: Peach of a Century
Salem, OR. 100-mile and 100km routes. Start/finish Chemeketa Community College. The 100-mile goes through Jefferson, Roaring River, Mehama and Stayton. The 100km is generally flat and goes through Jefferson and Stayton. Rest stations. Salem Bicycle Club, 503-375-6139, www.salem-bicycleclub.org

Oct 2-7: Columbia Gorge
Portland, OR. Cycling, rafting, hiking and support! Explores portions of Lewis and Clark's route, as well as forests, mountain views, orchards, and the Columbia River over 6 days. Family version available. Bicycle Adventures, 800-443-6060, www.bicycleadventures.com

Oct 6-8: Methow Valley Fall Bike Fest
Winthrop, WA. Bike Festival for the whole family. Jan Erickson, 509-996-3287, www.mvsta.com

Oct 7-13: Hawaii
Kona, HI. Explore on foot, bike and in the water the very best parts of the big island. Ride the rolling grasslands to the High Country. 7 days. Also available: Oct. 2, Nov. 4, 18 and Dec. 2. Bicycle Adventures, 800-443-6060, www.bicycleadventures.com

Oct 7: Manastash Metric Century
Ellensburg, WA. Annual tour through the Kityitas and Yakima River valley. Michael Reilly, United Way, 509-925-2730, www.manastash-metric.org

Oct 7: Vancouver Heritage Tree
Vancouver, WA. Part of the Old Apple Tree Festival. Guided visit to 12 downtown Heritage Trees. From 11am to noon. The Festival October 8th, 9am. to 1pm. Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation, 360-619-1108, www.vancclarkparks-rec.org

Oct 8: Harvest Century
St Paul, OR. Last organized ride of the season. \$40 per person. Three looped routes, 42, 75 & 102 mile, from Champoeg State Park. Fully supported ride highlighted by amenities such as continental breakfast, commemorative t-shirt, lunch from Taco Del Mar, Rolling Poker Game, Rogue Ales & Live Bluegrass music at the finish and much more. Visit the website for details and registration. Ride benefits Community Vision (www.cvvision.org). Smith and Miller Productions Inc., 503.720.6984, www.sampros.com/century

Oct 14-21: Limited Edition Epic Tour
Santa Rosa, CA. 8-day tour follows the routes the Discovery Team used for early-season training. Challenging climbs. Full van support. Intermediate to Advanced. Available Oct 28. Bicycle Adventures, 800-443-6060, www.bicycleadventures.com

Oct 29-Nov 4: Big Island Ride
Big Island, HI. An epic, fully supported, 271 mile tour around the Big Island of Hawaii. Four Seasons Cycling Events, 818-445-4060, www.BigIslandRide.com

NOVEMBER

Nov 4-9: Central California Coast
San Luis Obispo, CA. From Big Sur to Santa Barbara. Quiet country roads, wonderful fall weather, and gorgeous scenery. 7 days, all levels. Bicycle Adventures, 800-443-6060, www.bicycleadventures.com

Nov 5-10: California Wine Country 6-Day
Various, CA. Tour explores Napa and Sonoma Valleys. Includes lodging and dining and wine tasting. 4-day and budget grid available. Bicycle Adventures, 800-443-6060, www.bicycleadventures.com

Nov 5: Solvang Prelude
Solvang, CA. 25-, 50- or 63-mile rides around Santa Ynez Valley. Live DJ's at SAG stop, finish line Expo, BBQ lunch, etc. SCOR, 562-690-9693, www.bikescor.com

TRACK

SEPTEMBER

Sep 7, 14, 21, 28: Alpenrose Thursday Series
Portland, OR. Event schedule posted on website a few days before each race night. OBRA, 503-661-5874, www.obra.org

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Seeing People Pedaling

By MAYNARD HERSHON

Tamar and I have just returned from an exploratory new-home-hunting trip to Oregon. As you may have read in previous columns, we've become disenchanted with Tucson, where the weather is so good you can ride in fear all the year around - if you don't get hit.

We decided that in the second half of '06 we'd visit the places on our short list, beginning with Bend, Eugene and Portland. Luckily, we have friends in all three towns. They put us up, showed us around and advised us about bike-friendliness, weather and housing prices.

We flew into Portland and spent the night with old Berkeley friends Kim and Carl. We three were Berkeley Bicycle Clubbers back in the primitive days when we hand-washed our wool shorts (they shrunk anyway) and saved empty cardboard Campagnolo parts boxes, beige ones and blue ones. No kidding.

In the '90s, SF East Bay cycling lost its appeal for Kim and Carl, but both have re-found that lovin' feeling, riding in Portland. Carl commutes to his job at REI twelve months a year and races his bike on weekends, road and 'cross. Kim rides for transportation and fitness, and races too - not as intensely this season as her husband.

Kim and Carl rave about Portland cycling, about the city's sincere greenness, its many cool, colorful neighborhoods and its relative affordability. We had no time to experience those qualities 'cause we drove off the next morning, bound for Bend...

Where we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. The Cascade Classic stage race was underway

so we saw racing friends from all over the country. We saw old friends Susan and Don at Sunnyside Sports, a great shop that seems to get even better each time we visit.

We love Bend, but realistically we can't live there. Homes are no longer affordable for couples like us, dammit. Renting there isn't so steep, but buying...no way.

We drove our rental car over McKenzie Pass to Eugene. On Friday we'd been in Tucson; on Monday we were in Eugene. That's culture shock.

Just to hit the high spots, Tucson is ugly strip-mall boulevards, three lanes each way, huge, bullying cars and trucks going 15mph over, no pedestrians or transportation cyclists, "hip" cafes that do not recycle, lily-white gated communities across the street from rented homes with faded, flat-tired '70s pickups archived in their dirt front yards.

Eugene is none of the above.

People DO drive in Eugene despite the peer pressure, but they drive slowly, at the limit or just under it. They seldom follow you rudely close. They say excuse-me if they brush you on the sidewalk or in a store. You are pelted with rotten (organic) vegetables if you are caught failing to recycle. Older vehicles serve as transportation, not lawn ornaments.

And cyclists are everywhere. Cycling in Eugene (Portland too) is all-purpose. It's transportation and a statement of sustainability and equality. It's fitness and lifestyle and image and all the things the wonderful, elemental bicycle can mean.

Tamar and I had forgotten, living as we have been in a land where bikes do big miles

on the roofs of V-8 SUVs, that bikes are more than triathlon training tools.

Five years ago, I wrote a piece for the Tucson cycling paper suggesting that one could pedal to and from group rides. Imagine. Ride from Your Door, it was called. No one paid the slightest attention. You could say my prompting fell on deaf ears.

The piece would be just as useless in Eugene. Everyone there Rides from His/Her Door. It was a thrill to be there, frankly. Like Lourdes to a believer, it restored my faith.

As some of you will have noticed, I help the Bike Friday folks with their catalog. I've known Hanz and Alan Scholz, BF's founders, for nearly a decade, and I'm getting to know Hanna Scholz, Alan's daughter, who puts the catalog together.

If you're a Bike Friday owner and you've never visited the factory in Eugene, pedal by and say hi. Or drive by as we did. Parking is easy. There are lots of folks working inside, but very few cars in the BF parking lot. Empty spaces abound.

I'd been to Portland but Tamar had not. She was raised in Boston and Philly. Both of us love urban neighborhoods, narrow streets and small storefronts. We love seeing people walking and pedaling. We love funky cafes with regular, congenial clientele. We love city energy, especially if there's a young, counter-culture edge to that energy.

So Portland suited us just fine, thank you. We explored fun districts one after the other. Each seemed perfect: Let's live HERE! We learned which could be a bit pricey and which might be promising to folks with our meager buying power.

The Portland and Eugene visits meant more to us than mere sightseeing. Those two towns

eased our troubled minds.

We'd been afraid we'd singled out Tucson unfairly for its lack of civility. People we trusted told us it's the same wherever you go. Rudeness and carelessness, they said, prevail everywhere.

We were filled with dread.

We feel lots better now. Eugene and Portland are safe havens, if you ask me, from the sad battering we take elsewhere from our blissfully unaware fellow Americans.

Cyclists in Eugene and Portland are not a despised minority. They're legitimate road users - when they have to use the roads. Often they do not. There are extensive bike path networks.

So you don't have to share the roads (ride after ride) with your perhaps untrustworthy neighbors. When you do have to ride close to motorized traffic, the drivers have seen hundreds of cyclists - every day, for years. Their daughters ride. Their minister rides.

Bicycles figure predominantly in both cities' images and politics. Bikes MATTER beyond mere lip service in Portland and Eugene. Not only do heavies in both places not mind if you ride, they actually want you to, so they try to make it safe and convenient.

It appears to me that Portland and Eugene are genuinely green, genuinely focused on sustainability and sanity. Wow. Places to ride in peace.

Two or three more trips and Tamar and I will decide where to live. Thanks for reading these pieces and for the good energy you're sending our way.



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