Escape to the Olympic Discovery Trail

By Peter Marsh

Have you ridden the Olympic Discovery Trail? I hadn’t even heard of it until I reached Washington’s North Olympic coast on a “last-minute” bike tour this past September. In fact, it took a string of coincidences to put me on the road around Washington State’s Olympic Peninsula and back to my home in Astoria, Ore. Hopefully, I can inspire you to give it a try without waiting for your stars to align.

Wanting to escape for a week, I had been studying my map collection, looking for a new route that would interest me enough to pack and get going. I realized that I would have to use some transport — either road or rail to jump-start this ride. In 2012, I had ridden county buses from Astoria to Bremerton in eight hours, connected with the ferry to Seattle and then taken the bike trail north to my destination in Ballard. I arrived around 10 p.m., and was pleased to find my total cost was less than $4! However, I had no idea if this system could help with a real tour. Then I received an email from a boating friend reminding me that the Port Townsend Wooden Boat Festival was on the upcoming weekend. Every few years I have driven there after Labor Day with my bike in the truck and my kayak on the roof, and had a great outdoor experience. I decided then and there to go again, using the bus-and-bike system.

By midweek I had packed the bike and was taking a test ride along the Astoria waterfront before departing. I stopped in at the dive shop on Pier 39 at the east end of town to talk to the owner. When I explained what I was planning, he stopped me in my tracks by offering me a ride to a dive camp he was leading on the Hood Canal that weekend. That would save me about 200 miles of bus riding, so I gladly accepted the offer.

We set off on Friday afternoon with my bike perched on top of a pile of air bottles, wetsuits and gear bags. I enjoyed the winding road along the canal, not having to keep my eye on the road. That evening, at Mike’s Beach Resort in Lilliwaup, Wash., I watched the dive students gear up with lights and compasses for a night dive while the moon rose over the water. After an hour, they returned safely, and I was soon in my bunk bed in the cozy cabin they had rented.

Lilliwaup to Port Townsend

Waking at first light, I slipped out quietly and what little there was of Lilliwaup was soon behind me. I enjoyed skirting the unspoiled shoreline below Highway 101. It was cool, misty and silent as I rode over the Duckabush River and continued pedaling steadily north to Brinnon past oyster beds and rustic resorts where no one was awake.

Soon after, the mist turned to light rain. I pulled on my cape and pressed on. By 11 a.m. the rain had eased off and I was ticking off the miles, still trying not to rush. Navigating the old-fashioned way (by

Trestle bridges like this one were built in 1915 by the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific railroad line. Today cyclists, rather than trains, cross them regularly. Photo courtesy of Port Angeles Chamber of Commerce
The Tour of the Basque Country (Vuelta Ciclista al País Vasco)

First held in 1924, the Tour of Pays Basque (as many call it) is a rugged and fiercely contested weeklong stage race held each April. Extremely hilly, although not mountainous, many of the climbs are quite steep and it is often considered one of the top five most difficult stage races behind the Grand Tours and the Tour of Switzerland. It was mentioned in Ernest Hemingway’s novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, and after not being held from 1935-1969, has come back strongly to international prominence as one of the 24 UCI Pro Tour events.

Q1: Who was the first American to stand on the podium at the Tour of the Basque Country?
Q2: Who is the only American to ever win the event?
Q3: Who was the first American to win a single stage? *Hint: It was a climber.*
Q4: Who holds the record for the most victories in this race that falls in the midst of the Spring Classics? *Hint: He won four times.*
Q5: The race, usually six days long, often falls in the week between the cobbled classic Paris-Roubaix and the hilly one-day Liege-Bastogne-Liege. Incredibly, one man actually won all three on the trot. Can you name the rider and the year?

Answers on page 15

Dave Campbell has been writing race trivia since 1992. He began racing in 1982 in Wyoming, moving to Oregon in 1987. After years of racing triathlons, he returned to his roots as a competitive cyclist, now racing in the Masters category. A high school and science teacher and cross-country coach in Newport, Ore.

Cyclists With Compassion, Making Tracks & Gaining Ground

By Christian Downes

On Tuesday, February 4, Craig Undem of Cycle University spoke to the cycling guilds affiliated with Seattle Children’s Hospital. His presentation was titled, “Focused Goal Setting: In and Out of Your Bike Saddle.” The event sought to inspire riders to reach out to their respective communities and make the new year one of greater fun, fitness and purpose.

“The one thing really true to me, is the bicycle,” began Coach Craig Undem, with a friendly, comprehensive lecture on Advanced Focus and Motivation. Undem’s coaching philosophy develops a supportive and inspirational training environment as the means to improve skill level. He incorporated a responsible and holistic approach (balanced life = balanced wheels) to setting goals and understanding how one’s choices of exercise, nutrition, and lifestyle decisions help and hinder the achievement of those goals. Additional topics ranged from his cycling origin and that of Cycle University, to individual and team training. Undem urged the attendees to focus on their motivations and support their new recruits: “[Help them] get started right, give good advice and connect them to the community. If you’re not stretching to achieve challenging goals then you’re not adapting, not improving. Define your goals.”

A reception in the Wright Auditorium at Seattle Children’s Hospital opened the event, followed by an introduction to the various cycling guilds by Executive Director of Seattle Children’s Hospital. Craig Undem and Aileen Kelly. These groups support the hospital’s advocacy of volunteer, philanthropic and educational endeavors, ensuring that children in the greater Northwest are afforded excellent health care. Representatives then briefly explained their history, mission, recruiting and fundraising efforts. The following are only a few of the participating guilds, though each group’s impressive commitment continues to be fundamental to the vanguard of pediatric care.

More than 36,000 children require emergency care each year in Seattle. Big Wheels of Hope raises money for the emergency department at Seattle Children’s Hospital, and make the new year one of greater fun, making a child a program benefitting the Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals (CMNH). Fundraising by riders is matched by corporate sponsors. Donations pay for critical treatments most families cannot afford and support research, training and new equipment. Ace Hardware is a founding member of CMNH. Go to teamace.org for more information.

Cycle for Life encourages cyclists of all abilities to come together each year for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation’s (CFF) national ride. Cycle for Life raised nearly $4 million in 2013. The public’s support assists in finding a cure through life-saving research and care, and provides quality education to further the CFF mission. See Cycle for Life’s website for more details including Northwest event dates and locations (Woodinville, and Richland, WA, and Forest Grove, OR): ride4life.org.

“We hope to make this an annual event, even semi-annual, with different topics and speakers to bring the community closer together,” Kelly said.

For more information pertaining to guild activities and involvement, contact Aileen Kelly: 206-465-1410 or aileen.kelly@seattlechildrens.org.
W e may regard the title as a rhetorical one, and Lewis’s questionable motives. The inherent appeal to cycling has perhaps overshadowed their investment—but an ethical reading of the text prompts you’ll discover imbues the story with much son but an ethical reading of the text prompts of its new hero, Adrien Niyonshuti.

The book is engrossing, if for no other reason but an ethical reading of the text prompts a great deal of independent research. What you’ll discover imbues the story with much needed perspective. You will learn a great deal about Rwanda, cycling on the continent, and the country’s history of foreign investment, without egregiously pointing to two Americans whose unquestionable devotion to cycling has perhaps overshadowed their questionable motives. The inherent appeal of the title is a rhetorical one, and Lewis’s perspective begs the question, a second chance for whom?

Many chapters include succinct historical summaries that provide a helpful frame of reference to Rwanda’s challenges, be they economic and political instability or other factors contributing to ethnic division and genocide. His accounts shed light on elements of Rwandan history many of us — myself included — have come to find palatable. At least one refugee, at the infamous Hotel Rwanda, claims there was a darker side to the hotel owner’s courage. Much of the novel prompts reflection (consider the account of a genocide progenitor, served graciously by a survivor) and includes hardly palpable genocide statistics: 5.5 deaths per minute, for 100 days.

But according to Lewis, the bicycle is the “one object, more than any other, that encapsulates Rwanda’s past, present and future.” The chapters dealing with the origins of cycling’s history and influence on the continent support the paradoxical symbol of hope and progress: “A bicycle was a sign of civilization, big social status” and “a status symbol beyond the dreams of most citizens.” Bicycles are available to a privileged few, and so not merely a lifestyle choice but more so a culturally fundamental means of survival. It is customary in Rwanda to pass a bicycle to the next generation of riders, as Niyonshuti’s Olympian uncle did for him, along with some arguably simple advice: “If you want to do cycling, don’t waste your time. You have to focus your life on it completely. And don’t drink beer.”

I read half of the book in the first sitting, but grew impatient with Lewis’s effete reporting style. While many of the chapters proved informative, I waited for him to assert more than the tone of an elongated glamour magazine feature. His inclusion of the major players in Rwanda’s growth begs the reader to research and draw conclusions to the presence of entities in the country: AmWay, The Seventh Day Adventist Church, Stumptown, Costco, Starbucks and an Orange County mega-church.

Whether he chose to avoid implications of these companies and individuals duplicitous motivations, the inferences are easy to make. I only wish Lewis had more courage to posit inquiries in the same manner with which he demonstrates insightfulness. Though doubtful such bravery would have made an immediate difference, convicting those companies — with the knowledge that the world is speculating on their interests — would perhaps instigate more reverent behavior. Coffee conglomerates have a chance like never before to do as the Belgians did with Rwandan rubber. The mega-church is using its affluence to create inroads into the nation’s government, in efforts to substantiate its international presence. How are these organizations and individuals truly influencing the future of Rwanda and its people?

Tom Ritchey certainly found a way to cop the humanitarian title while leasing his new bicycle model to coffee farmers ensuring they would be able to carry greater loads over brutal terrain. The scheme increased productivity for the dealings of “President Kagame, like the Belgians and Habiyarima before him” with Costco, Starbucks, Stumptown and Intelligensia. Ironically, the bikes were built in China — the country that once supplied half a million new machetes to Rwanda just prior to the genocide.

Always viewing the project as an “investment and not aid,” Ritchey established hotels and bike-tours with the accumulated profits and what he saw to be the promise of “adventure travel and ecotourism.” Under closer examination, even the inception of Team Rwanda proves less than noble. With a small investment, Ritchey “wanted to roll the dice” by creating a national cycling group. Ritchey certainly did not gamble with Jonathan “Jock” Boyer, whose second chance afforded him the opportunity to rebuild the respect he earned for his cycling skills — overshadowed and dismissed elsewhere in the world — because of his prior felony record.

Boyer pleads guilty to ten counts of child molestation (over the course of five years) of an 11-year-old girl. While Boyer demonstrated remorse in the courtroom, his interviews assert a cold omission of guilt: “It’s a very unfortunate situation,” he said following the trial. When Boyer was asked if he thinks what happened affected his victim, he told Steve Friedman of Bicycling, “If you let something destroy you, whose fault is that?”

At times, Lewis seems to provide subtle credence to the gross comparison of Boyer’s crime to the mass slaughter of (Team Rwanda) riders’ families. Niyonshuti lost 40 relatives, including his father and six siblings, to ethnic cleansing when he was just seven years old. Boyer served a little over eight months of a one-year sentence. Of all that Lewis chooses not to say about second chances, failing to qualify the experiential equality of Boyer and Niyonshuti is not only irresponsible, it’s repugnant. The book seems to imply second chances accrue for those with money, its accessibility and accumulation. For instance, Lewis interviewed a local woman operating a milk bar. When she, a survivor of the slaughter, served a former judge who had perpetrated the genocide in that area (Rwamagana), Lewis was puzzled. She responded, “What I need is money. How can I survive if I don’t welcome anyone to buy things. We’ve built a mechanism to cope with the situation.”

It becomes easy to understand how, following the genocide, I don’t remember and impossible became characteristic Rwan- dan sayings. The behavior of the populace demonstrates survival characteristics of victimization. Unfortunately, it appears as though the fledgling goodness rising organically from the country’s bloody past, appears to have attracted the western desire for growth — a perversion of social justice and capitalization of a nation’s wealth. Except now, the nation’s greatest resource is its people, and it is the responsibility of Lewis to have asserted such, and that of all readers to acknowledge as much.

Read the book to challenge yourself and your perspective. You don’t need to be a cyclist to appreciate the tireless commitment to the multi-dimensional sport, but you do need to develop an informed opinion and not be afraid to use your heart in the process. In a Land of Second Chances, it’s not just the thing some have left, it is the right thing to do.

Land of Second Chances by Tim Lewis is available in hardcover, and was first published on July 23, 2013, and later on October 18, 2013, by Velo Press. ISBN: 1937715205

RWANDA AND NEW BLOOD: TIM LEWIS’S LAND OF SECOND CHANCES

BY CHRISTIAN DONNES

Rwanda is perhaps more recognizable for its history of genocide and poverty, not the small, lush country positioned on the equator with a long tradition of cycling, Land of Second Chances illuminates the country’s new reputation and identity, growing desperately out from its tradition of victimization, rising like the new day on the shoulders of its new hero, Adrien Niyonshuti.
The new Kids Dirt Camps will begin at the end of June and registration opened February 15. Camps run for one week, Monday through Friday, at Duthie Hill Park in Issaquah and are designed for beginner to intermediate riders ages 9-13. Each day will start off with games and skill builders and end with fun group trail rides. Plus, a half-day is spent learning about stewardship and trail maintenance techniques.

If a weekend day camp doesn’t fit the schedule, the popular four-week Dirt Riders Club series for kids ages 8-13 starts in May. These classes are offered through August at both Duthie Hill and Saint Edward State Park in Kenmore, Wash. Participants will meet one day a week for four weeks to ride together and have a blast doing warm-up drills, exploring twisting singletrack, rallying over roots and logs, and playing balance and agility games. A three-hour Basic Skills class may be the perfect option for children just getting started.

The Kids Dirt Camps, Dirt Riders Club and Basic Skills classes are all part of Evergreen’s new, dedicated Youth Education Program, a component of the existing Evergreen Education Program. The goal is to focus more resources on teaching youths to ride safely while having fun on the trails, and ultimately get more of them hooked on a healthy outdoor activity they can enjoy for the rest of their lives.

Previously, Cascade Bicycle Club offered children’s camps in the Seattle area. Evergreen and Cascade have worked together for years to support cycling opportunities, and both organizations have long offered skills classes for youth and adults. By mutual agreement, Evergreen is now adopting these camps as part of its mountain bike-specific Youth Education Program.

The program began in the late 1990s as an informal grassroots effort offering basic mountain bike skills — “Boot camp” classes for adults. In 2010 the education program was overhauled and formalized with professionally trained and certified mountain bike instructors.

Over the past four years, Evergreen’s Education Program has expanded to offer a wide array of skills classes to help people get started and get the most out of riding as they progress, as well as intermediate and advanced adult classes in downhill, enduro and freeride mountain biking styles. A team of professionally trained and certified mountain bike instructors who have years of riding and teaching experience instruct all classes; many have raced extensively, some at the pro level.

Classes are offered from April through October on both weekday evenings and weekends. Registration opens in early March. While most classes take place at Duthie Hill, a few are held at Saint Edwards State Park, and the enduro and downhill series classes travel to a variety of trails in the region. Evergreen also offers instruction through two of its regional chapters — Central, based in Wenatchee, and East, based in Spokane. Plans are underway to expand to other chapters as well.

Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance is the largest mountain biking organization in Washington State. The nonprofit’s mission is to create and protect sustainable mountain biking opportunities. To do this, the staff dedicates its time and efforts to trail building and maintenance, advocacy, education and providing people with opportunities to ride trails.

Evergreen is based in Seattle and the organization includes five chapters statewide, ranging from the largest mountain biking organization in the region. Evergreen offers instruction through two of its regional chapters — Central, based in Wenatchee, and East, based in Spokane. Plans are underway to expand to other chapters as well.

Choosing a rack doesn’t have to be a painful experience. There are many styles and options to choose from, so be sure to take your time and make an informed decision. Here are some factors to consider:

- **Cost:** How much do you want to spend? Make sure you get value for your money.
- **Durability:** Will the rack withstand the rigors of trail riding?
- **Ease of Use:** Is the rack easy to install and remove?
- **Security Features:** Do you need to lock it? Security features are available, often at an additional cost, whether the mounting system features locks in the bases or a locking pin, as with hitch-mounted racks.
- **Compatibility:** Will the rack fit your vehicle? Be sure to measure your bike and make sure it will fit on your rack.
- **Style:** There are many different styles of racks available, from roof racks to hitch racks to platform racks. Choose the one that best suits your needs.

In addition to these factors, consider the type of bikes you will be carrying. If you have multiple bikes, you may need a rack that can accommodate all of them.

Once you’ve chosen a rack, make sure to read the installation guide and follow all instructions carefully. This will ensure a safe and secure installation.

In conclusion, choosing the right rack for your needs can be a daunting task, but with the right information and considerations, you can find a rack that meets all of your needs and enhances your mountain bike riding experience.
Caffeine and Performance

By Ellen Chow, MS, RD, CSSD, CD

Caffeine is a natural stimulant. One of its most noticeable effects is increasing alertness, making us “more awake.” This is accomplished by complex neurological interactions in the central nervous system. While occasional caffeine users may experience increased heart rate and tremors, habitual users typically acclimate to their usual intake. Caffeine is found in coffee, tea, energy drinks and also as a dietary supplement in pill forms.

Caffeine and Exercise

When it comes to caffeine and cyclists, most people fall into one of two groups: those who habitually consume it and wonder if it is harmful to their health during exercise, and those who are interested in using it as a performance booster. Current research indicates that caffeine is a natural stimulant. One of its most noticeable effects is increasing alertness, making us “more awake.” This is accomplished by complex neurological interactions in the central nervous system. While occasional caffeine users may experience increased heart rate and tremors, habitual users typically acclimate to their usual intake. Caffeine is found in coffee, tea, energy drinks and also as a dietary supplement in pill forms.

Pills, Coffee, and Energy Drinks

In order to administer precise dosages, most studies used straight caffeine. But it was found that coffee beverages were also effective in delivering caffeine and improving performance. Caution should be used with energy drinks, as the additional ingredients are far from standardized and they may elicit post-exercise inflammation. The form of caffeine did not appear to differ on user safety, as long as the amount was moderate. Caffeine peaks in blood concentration approximately one hour following ingestion and has a half-life of roughly five hours. It is important to note that the dosages in these studies were similar to or higher than the subjects’ usual intake. Furthermore, subjects who were non-caffeine experienced tremors, slight nervousness, and other side effects after the exercise session.

It is important to note that the dosage in these studies were similar to or higher than the subjects’ usual intake. The common symptoms of caffeine withdrawal at even a 50-100 mg decrease, it is not known if individuals who habitually consume more than 5-6 mg/kg would improve athletic performance at this level.

Mind vs. Body

How does it work? Caffeine acts on a neurological level in the central nervous system. The neurotransmitter adenosine slows down brain activities and increases vasodilatation, whereas dopamine aids in seeking rewards, thus enhancing attention. Caffeine binds to adenosine receptors at the blood-brain-barrier while it simultaneously increases dopamine release. It improves motivation and reduces perception of efforts and pain. Based on its physiological actions, some scientists argue that caffeine’s performance enhancing effects originate in the brain.

Yet more recent research was able to manipulate muscle glycogen store, measure aerobic vs. anaerobic workload, and last but not least, other metabolites such as lactate, interleukins, platelets, and more. Such studies yield evidence that caffeine increases anaerobic output in skeletal muscles. However, the enhancement is minor when put in a recreational context and was rarely tested in exercise lasting over two hours. In short, there is no easy answer to how or how much caffeine improves performance individually. A mental state is only as good as the body’s ability and the body depends on the brain to facilitate action.

As a sports nutrition coach, I discourage performance-oriented caffeine use in those with heart disease, high blood pressure, mood and sleep disorders, Autism-spectrum disorders, eating disorders, and exercise addiction. Children and teenagers should also be deterred from using any substance, albeit legal, with the mindset of gaining an edge in competitions.

References:

Ellen is a Seattle-based sports and wellness nutritionist. She works with athletes of all ages. She also works extensively with athletes who have stable cardiovascular and metabolic diseases. Ellen can be contacted at endgamenutrition.com.
Bicycling Footbeds

By Erik Moen, PT

A numb and/or sore foot can really ruin the joy of cycling. Feet are subject to numbness or pain due to their function in the pedaling motion as the foot/ankle transfers force from the torque of the hip and leg to the pedal, therefore the feet are exposed to frequent compressive loading. Poor foot positioning and/or support can lead to irregular shear and compression, which equates to numbness and pain. The scope for the foot/ankle in bicycling starts with a properly fitted shoe, a well-fit bike, a correctly positioned cleat, and good pedaling skills; these being ranked in order of functional importance. A footbed is most appreciated after the aforementioned points have been managed. As an attempt for increased comfort and cycling function, however, it will not make up for poor pedaling skills, bad shoes and poorly positioned bike/cleats.

What is a footbed?

A bicycling footbed generally supports the foot in the action of cycling. The terms of “footbeds” and “orthotics” are oftentimes thought to be the same, however, footbeds are defined as “an insole that is usually cushioned or contoured so as to provide orthopedic support and/or better fit”. Orthoses or orthotics are defined as an orthopedic “appliance or apparatus used to support, align, prevent, or correct deformities or to improve function of movable body parts.” In other words, orthoses are footbeds but footbeds are not necessarily classified as orthoses. Orthoses are intended to correct some sort of foot dysfunction and are manufactured by well-trained healthcare professionals. Footbeds are generally accommodative, purchased off-the-shelf and often require some sort of trim-to-fit process, while orthoses (orthotics) are generally prescriptive.

The Foot

Let’s take a moment to appreciate the foot. It is sectioned into basic quadrants of thirds: the forefoot, midfoot and rearfoot. The forefoot is the primary contact point to the pedal and has pressure sensitive interdigital nerves (between toes), blood vessels, terminus of tendons, and some sesamoid bones under the big toe that accentuate the leverage of muscle and tendon. The foot itself features a series of arches not unlike any well-supported structure. Of interest are the longitudinal and the transverse arches. The first runs the length of the foot from heel to toes along the inside of the foot (medial) with its apex found within the midfoot. The transverse arch is in the forefoot and maintains the spatial relationship of the metatarsals. The rearfoot’s anatomy of infamy is the heel bulb or calcaneus. The rear and midfoot are supported by a series of leg muscles coming across the ankle.

Designed to move, the foot and ankle offer varying levels of mobility and are classified as either hypermobile, normally mobile or hypomobile. The movement allows it to adapt to varying surfaces, accentuate torque moments and attenuate load (shock absorption). Excessive collapse or dysfunction of either the transverse and/or longitudinal arch can create irregular friction and compression of the elements of the forefoot, thus increasing the possibilities of numbness and pain. Irregular foot motion can also have implications at the knee level. A scientific research established a possible relationship between irregular foot motion and irregular knee alignment and injury. It acknowledged that the foot should be considered with regard to the health of the knee. It did not define differences in foot motion or control for bike fit parameters and did not discuss or suggest the most appropriate method of management. However, excessive rigidity has possible implications to structures above and below, such as the Achilles and bottom of the foot.

Function of Footbeds

A footbed is thought to decrease foot fatigue, improve shock absorbency and improve mechanical efficiency. It achieves this by supporting the longitudinal arch through its length. Over-correction or support eliminates the foot’s roll in balance correction, load attenuation and “float” for the health of the knee. Construction and material of a footbed will help lessen vibrational and compressive loading of the plantar aspect (bottom) of the foot. It has been well established in occupational health journals that prolonged exposure to vibration and compression can be a hazard for underlying tissues. Pedaling a bike is no exception. There are no valid studies (large enough or non-product biased) that substantiate significant power gains with the use of orthoses or footbeds in spite of some industry claims. Most evidence is anecdotal.

Shoes

Most people can agree on the concept of increasing mechanical efficiency by stiffening the lever to the pedal. This is done more effectively at the base of the shoe. Carbon shoes are light and stiff ... perfect for mechanical efficiency, right? Of course, the math does not lie; there are drawbacks from a rigid shoe. A study compared peak plantar compressive forces of a polycarbonate (plastic) shoe versus a carbon one. Researchers found that the foot experienced greater compressive forces through the stiffer, carbon shoe. In other words, these cyclists feel the road more, which is not necessarily a good thing for longer rides on chip-seal. The shock-absorbing role of a footbed can be an important facilitator of comfort in this case. A stiff shoe, light shoe would be the perfect choice for shorter, velodrome-type events.

Shoes have traditionally been sold to bicyclists by suggesting a snug fit. This leaves a little room for a footbed, let alone an orthotic. Orthotic bicycle shoe inserts must be space conscious, or shoes should be purchased with a footbed in mind if there is an obvious need.

Footbed Models

Most commonly, bicycle shoes come with footbeds or inserts that offer minimal support. Although manufacturers are experimenting with more substantial options, it is hard to generalize for all, as people have various needs. There are multiple variations in the generic type of footbeds to fit most. The proper selection should be based on the individual’s arch shape and shoe size as well as performance requirements; in other words, they should fit comfortably and present the appropriate level of absorption. A custom, accommodative footbed should be considered if a basic footbed can’t be found. Heat-molded footbeds should reflect the athlete’s natural arch shape, which may differ from a person’s “normal,” full weight-bearing, collapsed, hypermobile foot architecture. An appropriate footbed will make the shoe fit well and encourages comfort. For these consult a person who has appropriate training and manufacturing knowledge to appropriately shape them.

When to Pursue Orthoses

Orthotics made by qualified healthcare providers should be looked into only after appropriate fit of equipment and trials of footbed options have been exhausted, or there is an obvious orthopedic dysfunction. Healthcare providers will be most effective with cyclists when they problem solve with bicycling equipment in mind. Orthoses must be able to fit in riding shoes and must be well supportive through to the foot connection to the pedal, which may vary from normal in some cases.

Other Foot Comfort Improvements

Pedaling skills can make a difference in foot comfort independently from footbed or well fit shoes. Lower cadence mashing or quad biased pedaling will create greater foot compression when compared to higher cadences. Improving pedaling mechanics by lifting on the backside of the pedal stroke has been shown to decrease negative torque (net foot compression). Improving this skill will increase comfort.

Can I use my current orthotics?

Cycling footbeds and orthotics differ from typical running and walking orthotics, as they must extend through the longitudinal arch of the foot to the connection point of the foot to the pedal. Running or walking orthotics are typically rearfoot dependent and will not extend out as far. Often times these orthoses are simply too wide for bicycling shoes. They simply fulfill different strategies and needs.

Do I need to have bicycling orthotics or footbeds?

Growing levels of running and walking researches show a migration away from highly structured orthoses. These studies suggest that there may not be significant differences between off-the-shelf footbeds and custom orthotics. Bicycling does not enjoy the same breadth of research. People have been riding bikes for years with minimal foot support and those who tolerate less support are generally those with rigid midfoot, average arch, and those with clinically flat feet. The determining factor when considering footbeds can be as simple as comfort.

Summary

Most bicycling-related foot complaints can be minimized or eliminated with a few fairly simple steps. These include proper equipment, bike fit, foot support and pedaling skills relative to a person’s goals and typical riding environment. Cycling seems to be following the running world, albeit 20 years behind. Current trends suggest that the more support and locked up the better that it will cure all and make one more powerful. This thinking will run its course just like it did in running. Be smart when choosing footbeds — more support is oftentimes not better. The proper choice in equipment will make your feet more comfortable and functionally efficient. Consult an appropriate healthcare provider if you experience difficulties finding the right solution. Life is too short to ride with painful feet.

Reference:
1. Merriam Webster and Oxford dictionaries
2. The Free Dictionary

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Riding the Loop Road: Lander, Wyoming

BY DAVE CAMPBELL

As a boy growing up in Wyoming, the trails, lakes, mountains, and streams all along the Wind River Range’s “Loop Road” were my playground. Ruggedly beautiful in a way only the Wyoming Rockies can be, the Loop Road begins and ends in Lander and connects Sinks Canyon State Park to South Pass. My most memorable boyhood adventures happened at the many scenic mountain lakes along the gravel road in between. From the time I first started riding bikes I have wanted to pedal it. The only question was how? All the cycling friends and outdoor adventurers I grew up with knew of no one that had ever done it and I wondered what type of bike would be up to the diverse task.

At over 66 miles, with around 8,000 feet of elevation gain and crossing the Continental Divide at just shy of 10,000 feet, the ride would be a formidable task to say the least. However, this was not the most daunting part. It was the gravel. Lots of it … and much of it was fairly intimidating due to the mountainous nature of the terrain. Thankfully, several years ago the worst of the switchbacks from Frye Lake to Bruce’s Camp, deeply washboarded from braking 4x4s and trucks towing trailers, were paved. It now definitely seemed possible … but on what kind of bike? About 17 miles of gravel remains and the beautiful climbs and descents of the road sections beg for a light, agile road bike. Michelin Pro Optimum 25c tires were chosen for their high volume, supple casing, rim protection and puncture resistance. They roll great on pavement too and just barely fit into my Cannondale Evo.

Departing a few of days after the fourth of July, I missed the camper traffic and tourist crowds, lakes and meadows. My most memorable boyhood adventures happened at the many scenic mountain lakes along the gravel road in between. From the time I first started riding bikes I have wanted to pedal it. The only question was how? All the cycling friends and outdoor adventurers I grew up with knew of no one that had ever done it and I wondered what type of bike would be up to the diverse task.

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Departing a few of days after the fourth of July, I missed the camper traffic and tourists, and a light rain the night before seemed like it would keep the dust down. The first 10 miles out of town were lumpy until the long drag up to the spectacularly beautiful Red Canyon. Formally designated a National Natural Landmark by the federal government, its color and magnitude, even just from the roadside, is breathtaking. The summit at Red Canyon is false, though, and a long gradual descent to a plateau forced another long climb back up, this time past aspen meadows and beaver dams to Limestone Mountain. Here, the winds picked up and then the sirens sang again but despite the many miles of climbing, it was not “the” summit. Following another long descent down to the old Atlantic City iron ore mine, the gusts really picked up and the last true climb looms ahead. Roadside signs tell the tale of the boom and bust that gripped this area during the 1970s. The last difficult climb on pavement, steep and against the tough Wyoming wind brought me up to the Louis Lake Road turnoff … and the gravel.

Lander was 31 miles behind or 35 miles ahead if the loop was to be completed. 3,000 feet of elevation had been gained in at least twice that amount of climbing. A great Forest Service sign laid out all the obstacles, sights, and mileage ahead. The opening two miles of gravel climbs over washboard ruts rattled my teeth and bones, and made me question this endeavor. Progress was painfully slow. I bent my elbows and let the bike dance around as much as possible to soak up the shock. I stopped and pulled on thin oversocks to keep the dust out of my well-ventilated shoes and to feel more Euro on my epic Wyoming Roubaix. Thankfully, once I thought I could take no more, the road leveled out, smoothed out, and the real dream began.

The first big open area is Granier Meadows at just under 8,900 feet of elevation. It’s expansive, covered in wildflowers, and beautiful. The peaks of the Winds, still streaked in snow, were now ever visible, and surrealistic piles of Shale and Granite appear along Forest Service Road 300. A few brown beetle-killed trees stand out amongst the sea of green Lodgepole Pine and Douglas Fir as my childhood frog hunting grounds come into view … Louis Lake. I filled up my bottles at the campground and got some bewildered stares at my skinny-tired steed and me from surly fisherman. After crossing the absolutely beautiful Little Popo Agie River on a wooden bridge, I saw more frog ponds of my youth, and finally and dramatically the much larger Fiddler’s Lake came into view. Most of this gravel was nearly as smooth as pavement. Just beyond this beautiful canoeing and camping site is the old Blue Ridge Fire Lookout. Constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps, the stone steps yield an amazing view of the high mountain lakes and meadows. My severe moment at Fiddlers was brief as the steep, bumpy climb up to Blue Ridge itself began.

The summit, Blue Ridge, was not only the highest point on the ride at 9,576 feet, but also on the Continental Divide. From here the road twists and winds, quite bumpy at times and with a bit of washboard in spots requiring very astute line choice and ample bending of the elbows. I threw caution to the wind and let it rip down the final stretch into Worthern Meadows where the vibration was intense but brief, but it managed to bounce off my chain, thankfully the only mechanical of a truly perfect day.

After passing the turnoff to Roaring Fork Lake, the gravel ended dramatically right at Frye Lake, where the Forest Service signs announced 16 miles to Lander. There is a short but steep climb up to the “top of the switchbacks” as everyone in town referred to them throughout my youth. Lander is home to NOLS (National Outdoor Leadership School) and is chock-full of rugged outdoor enthusiasts. People here are all about the Wind River Mountains.

The view of the limestone Sinks Canyon is awe-inspiring, as is the five miles of 6 percent grade descent. The minimal traffic, frequent constant-radius turns, and good road surface mean that this is nothing short of a cyclists’ playground. Pure descending gold. At the bottom, where trails lead to the Popo Agie Falls or Bruce’s Camp can be found, there is a spot to refill bottles. I did not stop, though, as the wind typically blows down the canyon and speeds in excess of 50 mph are possible, and I have even hit over 60 with the right conditions. The curves of Sinks Canyon are gentle and the walls of the canyon flank the plunge until the road levels out and the cattle ranches dot the countryside just outside of Lander.

My journey back to my parents’ home is always special but to finally realize a near lifelong dream on an idyllic summer day was mind blowing and full of emotion. The loss of a friend with a young family brought me home this time. Making the big ride just two days after her service, the spirit of these mountains and all their beauty and recreational opportunity drove me as well as the memory of Tammy. This story and this ride are dedicated to my lifelong friend David Millesen, who survives and thrives in this beautiful part of the country with their three children. The ride of a lifetime! I highly recommend it.

By Dave Campbell

Photos courtesy of Dave Campbell
two nights.

fairground, where I camped for the next
recovered enough to ride out to the county

Since the show would be closing in 24 hours,
legs. I had ridden closer to 60 than 50 miles.

I could hardly keep my balance on my tired
the crowded ramps and pontoons, I found
packed with people and wooden boats

changed my shoes.

up to the festival entrance, found a spot in

yachts with their ribs and planking exposed
way past big wooden schooners and motor

serious training since March. I threaded my
stretches for about half a mile.

Boat Haven — the municipal boatyard that
and along the shore into the Port Townsend
route through the forest, past a paper mill,
path miraculously appear. I gratefully turned

event. I had been on the go for six hours and
was over 50 miles.

but I was now fairly sure the total distance
was over 50 miles.

noon passed on the busy 101, where all
the traffic seemed to be headed to the big
event. I had been on the go for six hours and
was running out of steam when I saw a bike
path miraculously appear. I gratefully turned
off and was led on a meandering six-mile
route through the forest, past a paper mill,
and along the shore into the Port Townsend
Boat Haven — the municipal boatyard that
stretches for about half a mile.

I felt quite pleased with my first long ride
as a senior citizen, on a loaded bike with no
serious training since March. I threaded my
way past big wooden schooners and motor
yachts with their ribs and planking exposed
until I rejoined the highway, where every-
one was looking for parking. I rolled right
up to the festival entrance, found a spot in the
huge bike parking lot, locked up and
changed my shoes.

Inside Point Hudson, the festival was
packed with people and wooden boats
large and small. However, when I reached the
crowded ramps and pontoons, I found
I could hardly keep my balance on my tired
legs. I had ridden closer to 60 than 50 miles.
Since the show would be closing in 24 hours,
I had to push on regardless. Somehow, my
legs carried me around the marina and I
recovered enough to ride out to the county
fairground, where I camped for the next
two nights.

On Monday morning, I picked up a
bike map at The Broken Spoke on Water
Street before heading west. After 20 noisy
miles on the shoulder, I found the Old Blyn
Hwy paralleling the 101 and the adventure
began. I rounded the head of Sequim Bay
and passed the Jamestown S’Klallam tribal
casino, decorated with carved logs in the
native tradition. Here I stayed by the water
and found another back road, though I wasn’t
actually aware it marked the start of the off-
road section of the Olympic Discovery Trail
(ODT), with 30 miles of paved pathway all
the way to Port Angeles.

The Discovery Starts Now

I left the map in my bag and let the trail
lead me on. It wasn’t long before the path
drifted north into the forest and began the
marvelous stretch where it runs along an
old railway bed, crossing nine bridges built
in 1915 by the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul
and Pacific line. Four of the bridges are
spectacular large railroad trestles.
The first is the Johnson Creek trestle just
east of Sequim, a 410-foot structure 86 feet
above Johnson Creek that carried lumber
trains until the 1980s. Then I made a short
detour off the trail and into Sequim to find
some food. I settled on Kivi’s Fish and
Chips, which looked and tasted like the real
English style. It was just what I needed, and
I returned to the trail with a full stomach.

I couldn’t believe my luck when two more
overpasses appeared ahead: the second is a
150-foot tall truss bridge over the Dunge-
ness River that stretches 585 feet with the
approaches. Its original fire barrel stations
have been converted to viewing platforms so
you can see the lower structure and spawn-
ing salmon in season.

When the sun set I started scouting out a
campsite and eventually found a quiet spot
just yards from the trail. Early in the morning,
bike commuters started coming by with their
lights on, which inspired me to follow their
example. The route continued west through
the Dungeness prairie, between fields with
great views of the Olympic peaks.

There’s one longer trestle bridge to cross
over Morse Creek before dropping down to
the seashore for the last four miles to Port
Angeles. I arrived right by the port before
encountering the first car I’d seen for hours.
Here I detoured from the last leg by the
airport and turned uphill past some fine
historic murals to find the library and do
some emailing.

There are several route options from
there. I took the quiet road west along Hwy
112, which goes through some wild hilly
country and has very few settlements. I
rafted near the ocean before pushing on to
Forks, avoiding the temptation to take one
of the many “Twilight” tours on offer. There
were no vampires to be seen either — they
too were surprised by the temperature hit-
ing 95 degrees!

I picked up a few food items and a cold
drink to carry me the last 25 miles to the
Pacific Ocean. However, my enthusiasm
flagged when the road dropped down into
the mist and the mercury plummeted about
30 degrees. I pulled on several layers and
then continued with less enthusiasm down
a deserted road through the forest until I
saw a hand-painted sign that read “Rainfor-
est Hostel.”

I was 20 yards down the road before
managing to react to this latest surprise and
jamming on the brakes. I rode up the drive-
way to find a rather suburban-looking ranch
house — the front covered with the flags of
many nations. I found the owner working
in the vegetable garden around the back
and soon settled in for a good night’s sleep.

This is indeed a unique and independent
place and a hostel to remember. The price is
right at $10 a night if you help with a chore
in the morning. The owner lives at one end
of the house, the guests at the other, with
the kitchen and a rather crowded living room
that is shared. It was the right place at the
right time and another amazing surprise on
the Discovery Trail.

I highly recommend this route for anyone
looking to take on a multi-day tour that both
inspires and delights.

Editor’s note: The Peninsula Trails Coali-
tion website is full of information, maps and
pictures. Find the details at olympicdiscovery-
trail.com. The Rainforest Hostel can be found at
fr1.centurytel.net/rainforesthostel.

Doubleheader – Ride the Olympic Discovery Trail and enjoy the Wooden Boat Festival on September 5-7, 2014.
Photos courtesy of Peter Marsh and Port Angeles Chamber of Commerce

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ATTORNEY AT LAW

CYCLING ACCIDENT? INJURY CLAIM?
— No Charge for Initial Consultation —
— Member of Cascade Bicycle Club —
— Former Member of STP Executive Committee —

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frequently. The manufacturer’s fit guide will ascribe weight and load capacity.

Is the rack stable?
This factor relies greatly on customers following the manufacturer’s fit guide, installation and loading recommendations. Deviations often result in safety hazards, not to mention damage to bicycle(s) and vehicle.

Does a higher price tag mean a better product?
Cycling and product forums provide a great deal of experience and opinions from users all over the world and will assist buyers in determining whether the more expensive carrier is right for them. Similarly, an inexpensive rack may suit one’s needs, but should be checked and maintained to prevent any safety issues. Opinions vary, be informed.

Compatibility: can it be moved easily from one car to another?
A mounting system can be acquired for multiple vehicles, but try to find a bike carrier that will mate with various systems.

What about the paint job?
Padded or cushioned legs and rubber feet are common with trunk carriers and effectively prevent both bicycle and vehicle from paint damage and scratches.

Would a trunk model be an issue?
Many trunk carrier models and styles are available for every type of bike. Each work well, but be cautious not to impair full line of sight while driving. The use of a bike adapter tube may be required, which work well with non-traditional frames such as a step-through.

What is an alternative for pickup trucks?
Many racks allow for transport of bicycles without having to lay them down, maximizing cargo space by using bed racks or fork mounts. Downhillers often drape a heavy-duty pad over the closed tailgate and place front wheels over it.

How do you carry a bicycle on a motorcycle?
First make sure the carrier you want to select is certified by the DOT. This option does not clamp to the bicycle frame, but braces forks and secures the front tire separately (requires removal). Other models compactly secure the bike, though disassembly is required.

How do I carry downhill bikes and frames with unique geometry?
Racks are available to securely clamp the wheel, not the frame, with a ratcheting strap and locking cylinder. The design accommodates non-traditional frame designs, disc brakes and thru-axles. There are also new adapters for fat bikes.

What about tandem and recumbent specific carriers?
Partial disassembly may be required to transport on a vehicle, although hitch racks easily transport both types. Some roof racks like Atoč’s Tandem Topper also come with a pivot system to assist loading.

What’s the difference between carrying adult bikes vs. children’s bikes?
(Special considerations?)
You will want to choose a rack that allows you to carry the different size bikes at varying levels to reduce contact with one another while allowing for an additional adapter bar to be mounted for carrying more bikes.

Can the rack be installed for me?
What’s the cost?
If you purchase from a carrier/rack retailer, many offer installation – most with same-day service.

Which roof racks transport bikes with front wheel versus without?
Fork Mounts: Transporting a bike without the front wheel is more stable and less bulky. Unfortunately, the front wheel must go in your vehicle and be reinstalled upon destination arrival. Special wheel holders can also be purchased.

Wheel/Upright Mounts: No need to remove the front wheel! This choice is also compatible with most bicycles. On the downside, the entire bike must be lifted up and secured to a (generally) bulkier rack, all of which will create a great deal of drag on the vehicle, thus inhibiting efficient gas mileage.

Considerations for rental/leased vehicles?
Consult your rental/lease contract for clauses pertaining to alterations and/or modifications. In some cases, auto rental outlets can meet your request.

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Reinventing the Wheel

By Katie Hawkins

Many people say there is no use in reinventing the wheel. Some students from MIT decided to take on the challenge by developing a self-power generating hub. The Copenhagen Wheel adds a lightweight motor, connectivity, and a smartphone app to any bicycle, giving a 21st century approach to the invention thought to be created in 3500 BC.

In 2009, the city of Copenhagen (where 36% of its citizens travel approximately 400 km of bike lanes per day) asked Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s (MIT) Senseable City Lab to come up with a way to make biking more accessible to people in urban areas. “The main motivation was to make cycling a competitive alternative to car travel and public transport, while preserving the pleasures of normal cycling,” Assaf Biderman, associate director of the lab and co-inventor of the wheel, told Fast Company.

As opposed to an e-bike, or even an e-bike kit, the Copenhagen Wheel is more of an e-wheel. It can be added to any bike with 700c and 26” rims — more sizes are in the works — and is powered by regeneration, braking, transforming the kinetic energy used to slow a rider’s speed into stored power — the same basic principal behind hybrid cars. When you brake or go downhill, the battery recharges, similar to a pedal e-bike. It operates on a 350-watt electrical motor with a 48-volt lithium-ion battery, which can produce an output of energy more than four times that of the average cyclist.

The wheel reads your effort through the pedal sensory and control algorithms. As the rider pushes harder, like when going uphill, the wheel increases power. Pedal options range from “Turbo,” causing the largest energy boost; “Flatten Cities,” which helps with an incline; and “Eco,” which adds a small push when pedaling seems slow. The additional energy from exercise mode is also captured to regenerate energy.

Elegantly packed into one hub are the motor, a 3-speed internal hub gear, batteries, torque sensor, GPS, and a sensor kit that monitors CO, NOx, noise (db), relative humidity, and temperature. While riding, the sensors are collecting information about air and noise pollution, congestion and road conditions.

To top it off, the wheel is controlled through a smartphone. Its Bluetooth module syncs energy from exercise mode is also captured to regenerate energy.

The wheel is compatible with many smartphones.

The Copenhagen Wheel can be charged in as little as 30 minutes (two to four hours for regular use). Their batteries typically last between three and five years, and cost about $300-500 to replace. Four hours are needed to recharge the Copenhagen Wheel’s 48-volt battery, which lasts approximately 1,000 cycles. After 1,000, the battery is still usable, though capacity could be reduced to as low as 70%. The Copenhagen Wheel can be charged in two easy ways: by either connecting the charger directly to the wheel or removing the battery from the wheel casing for charging in a more convenient location.

Of course, the benefits to a traditional e-bike apply to the Copenhagen Wheel as well. Riders still get exercise as much as they like, avoiding a sweaty commute, or perhaps going easy on an injury.

Factor in the satisfaction that it contributes no emissions; for every 500 miles an e-bike is used in place of a car, a combined amount of 30.5 pounds of hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide, and nitrogen oxides are prevented from polluting the air.

Consider the savings of never having to get gas, as for every 500 miles an e-bike or the Copenhagen Wheel is used, an average of 25 gallons of fuel is saved as opposed to using a car.

With the added technology of the Copenhagen Wheel’s sensors, users can contribute data, anonymously, with their city by sharing the environmental and infrastructure data collected. Ultimately this information can influence how cities allocate resources, respond to environmental conditions, and implement transportation policies.

In addition to the 26” rim requirement, a 120mm dropout spacing is needed for a singlespeed set-up and for a multi-speed, a 135mm dropout is required. The wheel is fully compatible with 7, 8, 9, and 10-speed cassettes.

The Copenhagen Wheel Limited Edition can be pre-ordered for $799. A Developer’s Edition specifically designed for software developers can be purchased for the same price, and along with the wheel, owners will get access to Superpedestrians API, receive developers’ support, and a subscription to the developer’s newsletter. Both will be made and delivered on a first-come, first-served basis. Buyers will also receive a user manual and charger with international adapters. Additional spokes and batteries may also be purchased through Superpedestrians’s accessory program. The first generation will feature the red hub with silver spokes and rim. Color variations may be offered in future releases. Shipping begins this summer.

Thousands of city officials and the invention of the wheel, it doesn’t hurt to add a modern touch for a wireless, compact, data collecting, social networking tool that improves urban cycling and gets more people out on bikes. Who knew the wheel could be reinvented?

Devices that are compatible with the wheel

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PRODUCT REVIEWS

Shower Pass Women’s Elite 2.1 Jacket and Crosspoint Hardshell Gloves

When it comes to cycling in Seattle, breathable waterproof clothing is crucial if you want to ride comfortably. This I know all too well because I spent 2012, my first winter commuting by bicycle, wearing an off-brand water resistant rain jacket that I picked up from a local retailer. It was technically not athletic wear and certainly wasn’t designed for someone who was going to be using it five days a week for a 15-mile roundtrip commute. Since 2012 was also the second wettest year on record since 1996, and due to my lack of preparedness, it was a soggy and mostly uncomfortable season.

Still, I powered through the spring showers and enjoyed the warmth of many afternoons before the temperature dropped and the rain clouds formed, however, I decided that winter 2013 wasn’t going to be a sequel to sweat-fest 2012. Amateur hour was over and I was on the hunt for a waterproof jacket. The Bicycle Paper crew made the helpful suggestion of looking into gloves as well. (Did I forget to mention that, while the temperature dropped and the rain clouds formed, how-winter rides. As soon as the temperature for a 15-mile roundtrip commute. Since It was technically not athletic wear and wearing an off-brand water resistant rain warmers are wrapped snugly around the lining pocket of the right ear’s speaker. At each ride; one charge lasted almost two full hours of talk time. The insulation and lining are 100% wool and perforated along the fingers, I be thankful, even if it is nice to be reminded. The Minimus is a lightweight rain shell constructed of Pertex® Shield + nylon with micro-taped seams for keeping water from penetrating. Additional features include articulated arms, adjustable cuffs, an internal storm flap, reflective details, and a wired peak on the front of the hood for more stability during downpours. The whole jacket can be placed in the included stuff sack for compact storage and easy carrying.

I’ve worn the Minimus almost every day since it was delivered and it has proven to be an effective windstopper as well as a durable waterproof garment. Montane knows their gear and the little details put into construction do wonders. The longer and articulated arms are perfect for cycling and the cuffs stay put over gloves without pulling up and exposing the wrists. The amp-style chest pocket is perfect for quick stashes of a phone or wallet or for putting those gloves away after warming up.

The collar has a very soft micro-Chamois fabric sewn in for added comfort and the chest pocket includes an inner audio port. The Crosspoint Hardshell Gloves are bonded with an OutDry membrane — a proprietary product that bonds to the outer shell for seamless waterproofing without depleting breathability. Lined with Merino wool and perforated along the fingers, I found my hands were kept dry even after extended rides in wet weather. Another feature I really appreciated is the reflective piping along the top. Wrapping from the base of the cuff along the back of the hand and ending at the tip of the pointer finger, they were clearly visible to traffic when placed on my handlebars or when signaling.

As mentioned before, I opted for a medium size for both garments. The gloves were a wonderful fit, but the jacket was a bit larger than anticipated. I made my choice based on the Shower Pass sizing chart, but could have probably downsized to a small for a slimmer fit. Additionally, if looking into purchasing the Crosspoint Hardshell Gloves with plans on using them in colder weather, I suggest also purchasing a liner glove for added warmth; in temperatures below 40 degrees, my hands were kept dry but my fingers were definitely cold.

Overall I’ve been very impressed with SHOWERS Pass products. They performed up to par and as advertised and have made a drastic difference in my winter commute. I can say with confidence that I am no longer the underprepared, overheated, amateur commuter I was a year ago.

MSRP for the Elite 2.1 Jacket is $249. The Crosspoint Hardshell Gloves are $95. Find out more at showerspass.com.

180s Bluetooth HD Ear Warmers

180s Bluetooth HD ear warmers have incorporated the latest in Bluetooth technology with hi-definition speakers, creating the most advanced winter headset on the market. This past season I had the chance to give them a try and can honestly say that they are my new favorite winter accessory.

The Bluetooth feature claims an impressive eight hours of music play time on a full charge and nine hours of talk time. Although I can’t attest to the talk time, I can say that eight hours worth of tunes on a full charge is 100% accurate. I tested this during a straight eight-hour session as well as broke it up between my 30-minute commutes, powering the ear warmers down between each ride; one charge lasted almost two full weeks. That said, I kept the volume low when riding so I could hear my surroundings.

The charging port is tucked behind the lining pocket of the right ear’s speaker. At first I thought this hard piece of plastic would be bothersome and make them uncomfortable. I was completely wrong. Once the ear warmers are wrapped snugly around the back of the head, the port is undetectable. The power button is located on the outer side of the shell. This too is very discreet, has no impact on the actual fit or feel of the product, and is easy to find when taking a phone call or pausing music.

I’m normally skeptical of rear wrap-around headphone designs, as they tend to slip out of place. The 180s click-to-fit frame gave me the flexibility to adjust them to my exact preferences. And, due to its design, the frame has a natural tendency to collapse back into itself, holding them in place even while wearing a bicycle helmet.

The insulation and lining are 100% polyester, which I found incredibly soft to the touch and kept my ears toasty warm. The shell is a poly-snapblend allowing for a bit of stretch while still insulating. Although not waterproof, I did ride in quite a few rainstorms and they did an excellent job of protecting my ears from getting wet while the inner lining accumulated almost no moisture.

As for sound quality, they performed nicely. I found the bass to be a bit lacking, but nothing that would deter me from recommending them to a friend. MSRP for the 180s Bluetooth HD Ear Warmers is $80. Find out more at 180s.com.

Montane Minimus Jacket

I received the Montane Minimus jacket back in October 2013 and was starting to wonder if I’d ever be able to truly test its waterproof capabilities. After a particularly cold and dry first half of winter, it finally started raining again in the Pacific Northwest. For that, we should all be thankful, even if it is nice to see so much of the sun.

The Minimus is a lightweight rain shell constructed of Pertex® Shield + nylon with micro-taped seams for keeping water from penetrating. Additional features include articulated arms, adjustable cuffs, an internal storm flap, reflective details, and a wired peak on the front of the hood for more stability during downpours. The whole jacket can be placed in the included stuff sack for compact storage and easy carrying.

I’ve worn the Minimus almost every day since it was delivered and it has proven to be an effective windstopper as well as a durable waterproof garment. Montane knows their gear and the little details put into construction do wonders. The longer and articulated arms are perfect for cycling and the cuffs stay put over gloves without pulling up and exposing the wrists. The amp-style chest pocket is perfect for quick stashes of a phone or wallet or for putting those gloves away after warming up.

At 215 grams, it is light and perfect for touring, backpacking, or commuting when weight savings is at a premium. I’ve recently been in numerous rainstorms while wearing it and have arrived at my destination dry, save for the sweat. That said, one feature that would be nice is a pair of pit zips for extra ventilation, something that certainly isn’t a deal breaker; the front pocket can be unzipped and the mesh backing allows air inside, nearly accomplishing the same thing. The red color I chose provides extra visibility while riding during the day and the reflective details add to that at night. The hood can be rolled up and there’s a Velcro tab that secures it to keep it from unfurling when a blast of air catches it just right.

I would easily recommend the Minimus to anyone looking for something that keeps the rain out while also looking stylish. Machine wash in warm water, drip dry. MSRP is around $240.
Welcome to the Pacific Northwest's Most Comprehensive Bicycle Calendar

All events are listed chronologically within their respective sections: clinics, expositions, lectures, etc., that include cycling as part of the competition; competitions where cumulative point standings are awarded; competition featuring singlespeed and other off-road racing; rides featuring singlespeed and off-road racing; bicycle competition on roads of varying difficulties. To conserve space, we’ve chosen to run websites only on events where both website 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 this page. Please see your local newspaper for information not listed here.

All aspects of this calendar event are copyright 2014 Bicycle Paper. This calendar may not be transmitted or reproduced by any means, electronically or printed, without written consent of the publisher.
ApR 26: ACP Spring 400
Bend, OR. ACP. Brevet. Oregon Internationals, rideviciouscycle.com

ApR 27: Signs of Spring
100-mile supported from Bend to Pinckel Park. See details. Peter Bartel, BC Masters Assoc., 604-384-6040, randonneurs.bc.ca

ApR 27: Lopez Island, WA. Leavenworth tour of beautiful San Juan Islands. 5, 12, 19, and 31 mile routes. Great gourmet lunch after the ride.

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COlE GE:
May 10: Seattle Tour de Cure
May 10: OSLP Pedal for People
May 4: May Day Metric (250 miles)
May 3: Wheel to Heal (W2H)

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I live in the middle of a city, dense with traffic. For at least 10 minutes of every commute, I seldom drive, preferring instead to walk or ride my motorcycle or a bicycle. So every day I’m out there among the motorists — many of whom, don’t you agree — are less than perfectly considerate.

More specifically, they appear to be too important, too self-important to burden themselves with consideration. Can I get an amen on that?

Let us further agree that whatever sense of urgency or need for distraction drivers experience appears to be more important to them than their own safety or that of others. Nod if you concur.

Now, then, are we to respond to this evident truth — that most drivers couldn’t care less about us?

We can’t change them — the qualities they bring with them into their cars — can we? No matter what we do or say, they’re going to continue to drive as they do, I right? I’ve shotusted at drivers and spoken to them in reasonable tones; never convinced even one of his or her folly.

We are each offered only one person we can change — change ourselves.

Can we only watch ourselves as we respond to motorists’ disrespectful, unreasonable actions — at the moment and later.

We can try to sense how our reactions negatively affect our long-term mental health and happiness, our attitudes toward others, our feelings of safety and well-being. How those reactions deepen the poisons of resentments in our guts.

Years of feeling acted-upon and some what helpless as a rider and pedestrian have left a mark on me. When I’m threatened by some motorist’s careless move, I feel what seems like disappointment (how can he or she not see my safety?) but is a jolt of fear followed by anger.

Hey, you say, expecting bad driving is mere self-preservation. Counting on better or more attentive driving is worse than foolish. It’s walking on a frozen lake, watching the cracks open around your feet.

But can we mistrust our motoring neighbors, knowing as we do that they can’t value our safety even a little, while still feeling that people generally are okay? How can we prevent one rotten apple’s actions from poisoning our feelings about the 100 other drivers who treat us with reasonable respect?

Are our neighbors OK when they’re outside their steel boxes and despicable in them? Or are they faking it when they’re in social situations, only to reveal their hatredfulness behind the wheel? Is the truth not in someone’s drinking behavior but in his or her driving?

I know that I am all too quick to blame mankind when one person offends me in traffic. Those incidents fill my head with thoughts like the ones in the last two paragraphs.

I know too that focusing on motorists’ bad manners is not good for me. It is anti-happiness. Luckily I can do the things I want to do like walk and ride, but the occasional careless driver can ruin my walk or ride, my day ... or even my week. Happens far too often.

It’s a story in my writing. I feel gloomy after watching drivers demonstrate man’s inhumanity to man. The gloom seeps (or rushes) into my stories. I love my riding and my walking, but after reading you could imagine I hated them and had to be forced to do either. I’ve let myself be poisoned by the toxic (or ten percent) of road-sharers.

I’m letting the actions of a few individuals bring me down. I can’t be alone in this, can I? Many of you reading this must suffer the same sort of depression. Must.

I came to new clarity about this poisoning just weeks ago. I decided to make certain that when motorists behave decently toward me or toward another person in or out of an enclosed vehicle, I’d take that action to heart just as I would some driver’s negative actions.

And when I am the witness of bad motorist behavior or the victim of it, I try to shrug it off as soon as I can. I don’t dare dwell on it. I don’t tell anyone what happened. It’s not as if I’d be telling that person an enlightening or even an interesting tale. We’re all OD’d on stories about motorist callousness and ineptitude.

And I’m better off not reliving the event in the telling, restarting that familiar queasy feeling in my belly. Focusing on an event, bringing the awful moment back by dwelling on it and telling the story ... all that is genuinely bad for my mental health.

Just realizing that I tend to let the one bad incident spoil my day has allowed me to shrug off unfortunate incidents more easily. I can resist absorbing the actions of a few, blocking those actions from dragging a threatening black cloud into an otherwise brilliant blue sky.

I’d like to say that I’m on the road to emotional health and happiness, it’s easy to say while sitting in my little office at my keyboard, not out among the hostiles as I was earlier and will be again soon. But if effort in this direction is like acting “as if ye had faith,” I may be doing better.

I hope I am.

Even if I never mention this again, you, my readers, will unfailingly be the first to know. Merely notice what I say about the worthy motoring public with whom we joyfully share our roads.

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March

Mar 1: Echo Red to Red Piker Ride Echo, OR. Rider pool, rest 5 hours. Benefits the Echo Food Pantry. All participants receive an entry for a Niner Bikes EN50 frame. Shane Meyers, 541-571-8109, echored2red.com

Mar 8: Mussels in the Kettles Coupeville, WA. Non-competitive MBT and piker ride on Whidbey island starting at Port Ellis. 3 routes: easy 7.8 miles with double track, medium 9.45 single and double track expert 7.11 miles with technical single track. Matt Pitch, Whidbey Island Bicycle Club, 360-914-0692, musselninthekettles.net

May

May 6–12: Kettle Valley Trail 2 St Bernadette, BC. Beginner to Pro ride. Classic Kettle Valley, live with options to McCloughen Lake, Chris Lake, West Summerland, Chain Lake and Princeton. Average 24 miles per day. Need hybrid or MTB. Also available later in summer. Robin McKinnon, Great Escapades, 1-800-424-1825, greatescapades.com

May 17: Bird Fest Rides Lundbreck, WA. Variety drive. Binding by Christine or James Munty, Das Red Haus and Der Sportmann, 506-384-5615, donaldswaxx.com

TUESDAY

May 11: Race Hijinks Victoria, BC. Mass start events, Scratch, Points, Mile and Out, Keirin. Madison and Omnium Season overall for A, B and C categories. Weekly program varies. Race from 6:30-8:30pm. Cash for top 3 in each category. Race from 6:30-8:30pm. Mark Kees, gvva.bc.ca

Wednesday Night Racing May 1–Mar 29 Redmond, WA. Marymoor Velodrome. Designed for beginners (Cat 4 women and 3 men). Program designed nightly. Must have completed a KIVA track class, hold a racing license, be a KIVA member. Bike rental available. Calendar if raining. Race no. 774/21. 205-937-4555, velodrome.org

Friday


After TUESDAY

Wednesday Night Racing May 1–Mar 29 Redmond, WA. Marymoor Velodrome. Designed for beginners (Cat 4 women and 3 men). Program designed nightly. Must have completed a KIVA track class, hold a racing license, be a KIVA member. Bike rental available. Calendar if raining. Race no. 774/21. 205-937-4555, velodrome.org

Friday


Commercial Classified

Cycles LaMoure

Custom handcrafted bicycles. Frame repair, painting, S&S coupling retrofits. Visit our website or call Mitch.

Phone: 360.477.0257 Website: www.lamourebikes.com

Trivia

Answers from page 2


A2: None other than Bend, Oregon’s own Chris Horner back in 2010. He was second going into the final time trial, just one second behind Alejandro Valverde, but won the TT to take the overall victory by just eight seconds.

A3: 7-Eleven’s mountain man, Andrew Hampsten, back in 1989! He won the hilly stage 2 into La Arboleda in the lush, wet, hilly Spanish countryside that bears much resemblance to Oregon’s Willamette Valley. He was followed just a few days later by his teammate Jeff Pierce who won stage 4.

A4: Spaniard Jose Antonio Gonzalez, who triumphed in 1972, ’73 and ’77. Swiss rider Tony Rominger and Irishman Sean Kelly both won three times.

A5: Truly one of the top five time greatest cyclists, the man was Sean Kelly. Today, very few of the riders that contest Liege also ride Pasus Basque and literally one who does Roubaisais it at all. Kelly is probably one of the very few to ever attempt doing all three straight through. Imagine bouncing on the cobbles then hopping a plane for a hilly six-day stage race and flying back into Belgium right before the holiest one-day Classic on the calendar. King Kelly!
They are out!
PICK THEM UP AT
YOUR BIKE SHOP
or download them at
BICYCLEPAPER.com

DIDN’T GET YOUR EVENT LISTED IN TIME?
Provide your information by January 15, 2015 to make next year’s guide
Email: Editor@bicyclepaper.com or fill out the form at bicyclepaper.com/calendar