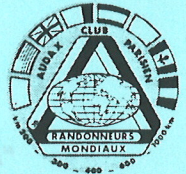




B.C. RANDONNEUR Marathon Bicycling



Founding Member 1983

The Newsletter of the BABC Randonneur Committee
September 1992

EDITORIAL

The token 200K I said I might do, I haven't done, and most likely will not do this season. Read all about what I did do, somewhere in this issue.

See you at the AGM, October 4th, and now for a few notes:

Harold Bridge is organizing the Fleche Pacifique for 1993, so you can contact him for details at (604) 941-3448.

Randonneur T-shirts and sweatshirts will be available for purchase at the AGM in October - Deirdre doesn't want them in her basement anymore!

Robert Lepertel, who headed the Paris-Brest-Paris organization in the 60s, 70s and 80s was in our fine province this summer, along with his wife Suzanne, who has been responsible for the Brevets Randonneurs 5000 and other aspects of this sport for many years. They were at the Fraser Valley 400K event, and the next day, a large group of Randos joined them for dinner at Horizons restaurant.

According to Harold Bridge, 100 riders started Boston-Montreal-Boston, 73 finished, the first rider finishing in about 54 hours, with Keith Fraser being the sixth rider in at about 64 hours.

The next newsletter will be printed after October 4th. Please send your articles to Barbara Lepsoe, 4720 Quebec St., Vancouver, B.C. V5V 3M1. Phone (604)876-5228. Fax c/o the Bicycling Assoc. (604) 738-7175.

EXTRA RANDO PINS?

If you have extra randonneur pins, please contact Anna Bonga at (604) 420-9509, as she will be gathering them all up.

BC RANDONNEUR - AGM

OCTOBER 4, 1992

**BEDFORD HOUSE
FORT LANGLEY**

**RIDE - 10:00
LUNCH - 13:00**

The weekend you have all been awaiting rapidly approaches. As in the past years we will meet at the Bedford House, Glover Road, Fort Langley (between rails and river) at 10:00 and go for a ride. Buffet lunch will be at 13:00 and will cost \$13.00, including GST and gratuities.

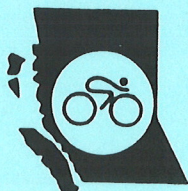
The event is popular and there is room for about 70 people. Money can be collected at the door, BUT a head count two or three days beforehand is required.

Please phone Harold Bridge at (604) 941-3448 and let him know how many you are booking for.

REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

Barry Monaghan is riding a 100 mile time trial on Saturday September 26th from the Billy Miner Pub to Harrison Hot Springs and back, and wants to borrow someone with a day to spare and a motor vehicle, to act as support person. Barry will pay expenses and lunch at the Billy Miner after the ride.

If tempted, call Barry at 879-9048 - an offer you can't refuse!



Bicycling Association of British Columbia

332 - 1367 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V6H 4A9

Hotline: (604) 731-RIDE (24 hrs)

Telephone: (604) 737-3034 • Fax (604) 738-7175

A SOUTHEAST 600

(Jimmy Vallance)

"He stepped out on the street, where a passing eagle swooped out of the sky at him, nearly forcing him into the path of a cyclist, who cursed and swore at him from a moral high ground that cyclists alone seem able to inhabit."

- Douglas Adams, *"The Long Dark Tea-time of the Soul"*

The foregoing quotation has absolutely no relevance to what follows, but it's certainly a different perspective.

On a July day in the summer of 1956, equipped with snorkel, face-mask and flippers, I spent much too long in the North Atlantic waters of Loch Torridon trying to nudge a gigantic flounder on to my friend's baited hook; all to no avail, naturally, for the flounder was more intelligent than I. At the end of it all, I sat at the fire in Finlay Beaton's croft, wrapped in a blanket, teeth chattering, limbs shaking uncontrollably, unable to hold a huge mug of hot chocolate steady in both hands. I swore at that time that I'd never do anything so stupid, so far beyond the limits of common sense, again.

And so it was, having paid no heed to the past and therefore destined to repeat it, that at 8:10 on the evening of Sunday June 14, 1992, Norman Batisse and I stood, dripping water all over the floor of the Priddis, Alberta, general store, teeth chattering, limbs shaking uncontrollably, unable to hold a styrofoam cup of coffee steady in both hands.

It is thus we evolve as the most intelligent species on Earth, and it was thus the two of us ended our 600, from Fernie to Golden to Priddis - a stone's throw from Calgary. Conditions were so bad that Norman, a strong rider and a cheerful and imperturbable partner, was latterly reduced to the occasional muttered imprecation or to a resigned, sodden silence. I wasn't too happy either.

We left the Fernie 7-11 at 7:05, Saturday a.m. Within 16 kilometres it had started to rain, and not a fine, gentle rain, either, but an unrelenting downpour which bedevilled us for 19 of the 28 hours in the saddle, and which fell out of the clouds and unfortunately hid The Steeples, the magnificent peaks on the Bull River road to Fort Steele, the sight of which is a bonus at any point in a ride.

At the Fort, we turned north heading up the Columbia River Valley. Through Wasa and over the Kootenay River, an unattractive Gumbo Grey rather than its usual fresh Glacier Green, past the strikebound (and therefore smell-less) Skookumchuck pulp mill, over the drag at Columbia Lake and past billboard-infested Inveremere, it rained. Then just before Radium, it dried, and the clouds, our wet, low, gunmetal-grey ceiling for the previous eleven hours, finally lifted. During those hours, at our various stops we would be the objects of friendly and well-intentioned but somewhat inane remarks such as:

"Oh. Out cycling in the rain, eh? or,

"Not the best sort of weather for cycling is it? Ha!

Ha!"

And the inevitable semi-serious question. "Why do you do it?" To which the inevitable semi-jocular answer, "Because somebody removed our brains"

In Golden, at the 327 kilometre mark, just over 15 hours after leaving Fernie, it was steak and baked potato (heavy on the sour cream) for Norman, and a small dish of spaghetti for me, and off to Mary's Motel, which we left at 2:50am on Sunday the 14th and immediately had to face the first major grind up the Trans-Canada enroute for the Kicking Horse Pass.

It remained dry and a tailwind stayed with us to Field. At the Information Centre, the flags stood straight out, blowing from west to east. Great! 75 metres past the flagpoles - bang! Quite irresponsibly, and without prior notice, the wind swung 180 degrees just in time for the worst climb of the lot, over the CPR Spiral Tunnels, where we were almost blown to a standstill on more than one occasion.

Breakfast, finally, at the West Louise Lodge and then down into the valley of the Bow, with me becoming reacquainted with Norman's back mudguard from about 15cm away, for long periods of time. By Banff there was a dampness in the air and clouds wreathed the peaks, making them grim and intimidating.

In Banff, we noticed that even the cowboys wear Goretex.

And then it started to rain again, another hard, pitiless downpour, aided and abetted by a blustery headwind. The temperature seemed to drop too, for as we exhaled on the climbs along the No.1 towards Calgary our breath condensed in front of us, making us more like draught horses in mid-November than cyclists in mid-June.

At Dead Man's Flats we saw what, arguably, must be the Biggest Canadian Flag in the Western Hemisphere flapping over the Husky station there, and, as we stopped for a chattering bite just a little further on, we were come upon by a middle-aged French-Canadian cyclist out of Montreal Nord, sodden, lonely and far from home. We had to leave him at the Bragg Creek Junction, where Norman and I turned south for the last 45 kilometres of our ride, uneventful except for a change in the weather. It rained harder.

At our final control point, we were to be met by Norman's wife Debbie. Circumstances, unfortunately characterized by crossed lines of communication, almost conspired to do us in completely, where the rain had failed. Looking back, it was a real comedy of errors, although I guess it wasn't all that funny at the time; as I entered Norman's V.W. Westfalia to head home, I remember thinking, "And in just over two weeks, this ramshackle duo hopes to ride a 1000?"

How many wheels could a wheelsucker suck if a wheelsucker could suck wheels?

THE FRASER VALLEY 600KM: A RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE?

(Doug Cho)

So how did this randonnee get me into a church on a Sunday morning in Bellingham? Would the congregation be offended by my cycling attire and my obvious need for a shower? Actually, it was too early for services to begin. The weather had been terrible earlier in the week, but this weekend, as if by divine intervention, the clouds had parted and the sun was shining. Was I here to give thanks? While I was grateful for the ideal weather, this was not the purpose of my visit.

Perhaps I was here to pray for strength to carry me through to the finish. True enough, the hills of Chuckanut Drive had been a chore after a long journey through the night from Marysville and Anacortes. My colleagues at work will certainly look at me with disbelief when I tell them that I pedalled through Concrete during the weekend. No, this wasn't why I was here.

I was in danger of leaving Bellingham without obtaining a signature on my control card. At the 24-hour convenience store where I had bought some food and drink, the clerk had refused to sign my card saying that she didn't care what it was for, she wouldn't sign anything. The words "justifiable homicide" took on new meaning for me as I observed no witnesses present. Too bad I wasn't of this bent.

Hallelujah! There was a church across the street and down a block. The minister was most kind, signing my card and allowing me to use the church washroom, and that kindness is the beauty of a randonnee. For every rotten person you encounter, there are five others who treat you with overwhelming generosity. When I was struggling to stay awake with a cup of coffee at a Denny's restaurant in Mt. Vernon, a waitress offered me the use of her camper in the parking lot to stretch out for an hour or two. The gentleman at the store in Anacortes brought out a chair for me to sit down on and let me use the staff washroom.

Thank you, Lois Brodie, for orange juice and a sandwich at the ride's end. Thanks to Harold Bridge for his sage advice, truly this sport's best ambassador. Thanks to all the organizers and volunteers who made this season such a success and thanks to all the riders whose company made the miles pass so quickly.

WHERE THERE IS LIFE THERE IS "OAP"

(Harold Bridge)

When I saw the date of the FV600 I just knew I had to make a special effort; it was to be two days after I started drawing Old Age Pension. Also, it would be the culmination of my tenth consecutive "Super Randonneur" season.

At 92-07-11, 07:04, I was away from the Canada Games Pool in New Westminster with Real Prefontaine in tow. A very essential stop at a gas station in Whalley had us

doing 7 kilometres in the first 30 minutes. A great start I must say! Another gas station between Langley and Aldergrove provided facilities for more relief and I finally felt I was getting into my stride.

By Everson we had caught Doug Cho, and Larry Wasik, and we paelined down to Sedro Woolley. Doug began to feel the pace was too high and he disappeared off the back. At the 9/20 intersection, the "fast" crowd were still milling around. We went across the road for our check, and I took off early promising to wait. The Stary, Cook, MacPoland, Brodie paeline passed me before too long and I briefly held their pace, until the first hill!

Near Concrete I was startled out of my saddle by a "Gotcha"; Real and Larry had made an effort and caught me. I suggested lunch and they went along with my suggestion - no doubt my vast experience helped them through whatever worries they may have had about wasting time. We called Doug in but he decided not to stop again. We had been averaging about 25 and it seemed so easy, even our lunch stop only brought our average down to about 22. 200 kilometres in about 8:45 and we were about 10 kilometres from Newhalem when we met the chain gang. Doug was just leaving as we rode into town and that was the last we saw of him.

Despite the fast ride UP to Newhalem, the return didn't seem to be too difficult. Dave and Judy Charnock were near Marblemount when we met them and they seemed happy enough despite their 0600 start and some tyre trouble. It is a quiet road from Rockport to Darrington and it was a beautiful evening with low sun filtering through the trees. A meal in the village set us up for the evening ride to Marysville. 300 kilometres passed in about 13:45 - my second fastest 300. It isn't a particularly nice ride and suffice to say we did it pretty quickly with another pit stop at a gas station by I5 exit #208. I was thankful to get off the I5 at Marysville and was looking forward to doing the return trip when the road was a lot quieter. It wasn't to be. There wasn't a bed to be had and we wasted an hour or so looking. But, soup and pie in the Pie Shop got us rested and refreshed and ready to tackle the I5 northbound at about 12:30 - two hours gone and no sleep!

I5 done with, we turned on to the rural roads to the west of the freeway and relished the moonlit scene. We were going quite well and just hitting the hills in the farm country south of Stanwood when Real hit some debris. He got an immediate flat in the rear wheel and the three of us struggled with it and must have lost at least 15 minutes. The worst part was that being right outside a farm house, two or three dogs spent the entire time barking. At 2:30 in the morning it is annoying for everyone. I got going and a couple of kilometres up the road realised I was alone. I turned back to find that Real had punctured his front tyre as well. More non-stop barking!

At Conway we had to choose whether to take the direct route to Anacortes or detour via Mount Vernon. We decided on the latter as it was a chance to catch up on sleep if we could get a room. We couldn't!

At this point we split up, Real and I going to Denny's to see if they would let us snooze in a cubicle before breakfast, and Larry going to find a comfy bush or ditch, or something. We got 45 minutes of sleep followed by a full breakfast. Thus restored and with the opening of the skies to dawn we felt ready for anything.

The ride to Anacortes wasn't as bad as it might have been but the expected tail wind return showed up as a cross wind. It was good to see Dave and Judy were not too far behind us; we crossed them on the big, high level bridge onto Fidalgo Island, some 10-12 kilometres from Anacortes.

Drowsiness began to overtake me and I remembered a refuge Norm and I had found during that miserable 400km we did during the GV600. The Post Office across the road from the Rhododendron Cafe on the flat part of Chuckanut Drive at Bow is always open for the wall of post boxes. The floor has mats. Fifteen minutes in which Real and I took turns disturbing each other with snoring was enough to take the edge off the sleepiness and I was raring to go at 0900. We set off and at the first climb I wondered what had happened to Real. But impatience and a feeling I could still get inside 34 hours overcame my concern for Real. I saw Larry's bike propped up on a wall at a viewpoint and guessed he and Real would get back together. I quite enjoyed the challenge of Chuckanut. I felt pleased that my 34 hour schedule called for me to be in Bellingham at 11:00 and I checked into The Cookie Cafe on Cornwall at 10:15. It is a good checkpoint, with friendly staff, excellent coffee and super baked goods. Above all, it is relaxing with piped music instead of Labour Ward sound tracks that seem to be the norm. This time they were playing some Swan Lake music. Last time I was there, it was, I think, Benny Goodman.

Before I left, Real and Larry turned up and I said I would press on at 10:45. Two and a half hours later I was caught in the first rain of the ride as I rode through a shower into the Pantry at Mission. A signature, some pie and a coffee, and I was on my way at 13:30. I had to finish by 17:00 and I had about 53 kilometres to go. It looked good, but it was difficult to tell what the wind would do. I didn't fight the hills too much but instead made full use of the fast sections to make as much time as I could. Apart from the usual frustrations brought about by the succession of traffic lights, it was a straight forward ride to New Westminster with the 97" gear getting its full share of use.

Arriving at the Brodie's back door I made my presence known as I removed the Duegis. But, no response! I walked in to see Norm sound asleep on the chesterfield. I think he had been watching golf on TV or this game North Americans call football. I wouldn't think he would need anything like that to put him to sleep after a 28 hour 5 minute 600! I tried not to wake him but I needed a control to show I had finished in 32:43. I was pleased but would have preferred the lost time had been spent sleeping rather than looking for a bed.

Well, that should be my last 600 until 1995 anyway. God-willing I will tackle PBP again then and so will return

to the grindstone in preparation.

Of course 1993 will see the second running of "EL & Back", or to be more precise, Edinburgh-London-Edinburgh. It is Britain's answer to PBP and it is 1400 kilometres of rolling hills with a 102 hour time limit. There is a romance attached to the Great North Road that runs between the Capitals of England and Scotland. Of course, the main road itself is no longer practical for cycling but as a life member of the North Road Cycling Club Limited, I feel I should attempt to get there for it. I assume the qualifying procedures are the same so perhaps I shall have to do another 600 next year anyway. But, a good ride in ELE may satisfy me to the point I can say "STUFF PBP!"

RAMROD

(Barbara Lepsoe)

I know I'm at the right place when I hear, "Well, you can pour me a cup of tea." As I roll my deadly treadly into Deirdre's basement there she is at the truing wheel truing none other than her brother's rear wheel! "I can't believe how loose his spokes are", Deirdre exclaims.

I can't believe the last minute repairs! Is RAMROD to be a reminder of Michael's PBP mishaps?

RAMROD, (Ride Around Mount Rainier in One Day), is a 245 kilometre event in Washington State which involves 10,000 feet of climbing.

With a 4am wake-up call, we bolt upright, pack our gear and devour various breaky goodies. At the King County Fairgrounds, in Enumclaw, we check in, but not before visiting the loo where to our dismay we find the women's, full of men! A woman waiting outside cautions Deirdre and I about going in. We look at each other and without a word, go in. A toilet is a toilet, and we have jobs to do. In PBP, you make use of whatever is vacant.

And we're off along the country roads, grabbing on to pacelines going our speed. Shameless wheelsuckers, Deirdre calls us. But do we do anything about it?

61.3 miles later we gorge down some boiled spuds, and fresh juicy fruits at the first food stop. Other BC riders are here gorging as well - we're just a bunch of rando gorgers! I get heck for waiting in a loo line up. I'm not in a hurry and I'm not ready to go yet. Michael waits in line too.

The climb to Paradise (5400') calls for a granny gear - what do you reckon Harold? It's scorching hot, but the grade is constant and Mt. Rainier pops into view when least expected. The roads are narrow with tall Douglas Firs providing shade for portions of this tour.

Riders at the Paradise water stop are talking about comrades who've dropped out because of heat exhaustion and dehydration. "My friend was puking his guts out all over the place", was one comment I heard several times along the route. Drinking water is such a basic prevention, but often left out while concentration is devoted solely to reaching the summits.

Knowing there'd be long descents, made the sweltering climbs somewhat bearable. Cool waterfalls and streams for soaking T-shirts provided incentive to keep climbing as well. Yup, there stood Deirdre and I with all the men - couldn't whip off the shirts fast enough eh Deirdre? When you're hot you don't care about who sees what. We were, however, prepared such that no one could see what!

The climb up Cayuse Pass (4695') was a tad warmer but RAMROD's incredible support crews were always at the right spot providing cold water, and cold wet towels to cool the bod.

And there's the mountain from another angle-spectacular!

On a certain climb, t I hear a familiar clicking sound. I look back to see that it's Michael. I tell him how familiar that sound is, and he tells me it's his crankset. I ask for confirmation that he's not riding his PBP bike. He's not, but it's the same crankset he had on PBP!. Good grief, I mutter with a smile, his cleat will be the next to go! It's a good thing we won't be riding at night!

At the top of Cayuse, I put a chunk of bagel into my mouth. I chew it but it just moves around and around, up and down, and around and around - it will not go down! With a big huck tooey, the unswallowable goes into the bush - food fit for a marmot.

Feeling slightly nauseous and a little shaky, I force myself to drink a litre of cold water immediately. Dehydration is a sneaky thing. If your pee is yellow, you haven't been drinking enough!

Deirdre and I enjoyed several rests waiting for Michael who is a little slower on the climbs, but on the descents, it's see-you-later Michael as he cannonballs down.

From Cayuse the descent is long and as we near the finish line our group of three grows to 10 or more. Each lone rider we pass gets an invitation to hang on and at the end we are thanked for the pull.

And there's the mountain from another angle - spectacular, just as Deirdre said it would be.


MICHAEL'S CHUCKANUT DITTY

How many nuts can a Chuckanut chuck if a
Chuckanut could chuck nuts?

(Ed. Deirdre's brother composed the above as we returned home from Ramrod via randonnee routes. This ditty may assist some in completing certain randonnees, as it's at about this section of some rides that riding becomes mentally and physically challenging. Recite and repeat the above ditty as necessary.)

DID NOT START (DNS)

(Dave Cambon)

 Now that we have read all kinds of accounts by enthusiastic randonneurs who have attempted various parts of the 1992 Randonneur Series, I think it is time for some exposition from someone who not only Did Not Finish, but did not even start.

It all started (or did not start, as the case may be) four years ago when I was burning the candle at both ends and I subsequently burnt out. Four years later, still toast, I attempted, completed and should have abandoned the devious "Fleche Pacifique". Barely able to draft behind Bisaro, Monaghan and Stary (who had brazenly led me to believe that Arscott would be leading a choir of sweet female voices to entertain the participants), I was reduced to a mere shell of a human being. Hence, I did not start the 1992 Randonneur series.

Lest I should be accused of showing up for Rando events only to qualify for the PBP (as I have done in the past) I will here attempt to regale you with a story of a Rando-type event I completed that was more suitable to my present deteriorated condition:

I left my house at 2:30pm. The gods were smiling upon me as I cycled east on third avenue in a gentle tailwind under clear skies. 2:33pm; ensconced with early-ride euphoria I patiently waited for traffic to clear on MacDonald Street. I was face-to-face with the steepest part of the Seaside Bike Route, the top obscured by the forbidding slope (and parked cars). Halfway up the hill my recollections of the Roc Trevezel and the Stelvio were interrupted by the need to shift from my 42-26 to a 42-28. I didn't have a 28 so I made do with the 26, hoping beyond hope that I did not aggravate an old knee injury I had five years ago. Nearing the top, I was nearly overcome with that Rando sense of accomplishment we have all felt knowing that we were about to reconcile the inevitable forces of gravity. 2:35pm; rounding the corner on Balsam Street I pulled into the Safeway, my halfway point. Although the Fourth Avenue Safeway cannot be called scenic by any means, the parking lot is newly paved and the soothing music makes shopping a more pleasant experience than the Sedro-Woolley AM-PM. After spending eight minutes in the Soviet-style food line-up at the "Express" counter, I loaded my bike with newly purchased ju-jubes, Eggo Waffles, and fish sticks (for later). The ride back was basically uneventful except that my derailleur was making clicking noises and probably needed adjustment, but that's another story!

1000K WORLD RECORD ATTEMPT BY KEN BONNER

JUNE 20 - 21, 1992

(Carol Hinde)

July 17, 1992: Well here I am driving to Port Hardy for the second time this year (I must be getting lazy as I'm getting older, or maybe sanity is creeping up on me.) This

time it's to accompany Mike, Anna, Eric (from Ft. McMurray), and Stephen on their 1000K randonnee. The heat, 28 degrees Celsius, and the headwinds take me back to that momentous weekend in June, conveniently the longest days of the year.

A ride such as this is not undertaken lightly. The UMCA (Ultramarathon Cycling Association) has a myriad of rules and regulations. Ken signed Stephen and me up as members earlier this year and, as part of the membership package, there was "The RAAM Book" which included the rules, rules for the rider, for the official, for the support vehicles, etc. A support vehicle was required, as was an official observer. Verification of the distance by an independent agency was also needed. Stephen obtained figures from the Ministry of Highways. Stephen, as official observer, had to write down Ken's time approximately every 25 kilometres. However, Ken was also doing his 1000K randonnee and we wanted to be at the checkpoints to help. It was often a mad scramble from one point to the other as Ken rode so quickly. Only once or twice did the checkpoints overlap.

Ken started in Victoria at 3 o'clock in the morning. UMCA regulations require a record to be from one landmark to another so Ken was riding from Victoria City Hall to Port Hardy City Hall and back. Randy Scott was his support crew, Stephen, official observer, and I was a spare driver (fifth wheel?). Stephen spent Friday night in a motel in Victoria and picked me up Saturday morning in Chemainus. The night was much too short!

Stephen kept meticulous records of distance driven of the route, did regular comparisons of our odometer distance versus the Highway's mileage, and determined a factor to convert our odometer mileage into actual mileage.

Out of curiosity we also kept a record of what Ken ate and drank. Considering the heat, he drank very little liquid, only 12 bottles and very few of them were water. Most were Ultra-Energy or Exceed. It was not until late in the ride (Duncan on the return) that he complained of being thirsty. His favourite food was creamsicles. He also drank skim chocolate milk. Are these the new wonder foods? Although he lost 12 pounds during the event, I would not recommend this as a quick weight-loss plan.

Stephen borrowed two radios from work so he could communicate with Randy who was driving Ken's Volkswagen van. These were invaluable; they not only provided a means of keeping in touch but they also provided a source of entertainment for Stephen and Randy. They didn't work through mountains though. Pity.

The drive was very enjoyable for me although none of us had much sleep. I had an enjoyable swim in Roberts Lake and another swim with Randy at Qualicum Beach. Randy cycled from Campbell River to Qualicum Beach, during which time Stephen drove the van. We managed to nap occasionally, but this was risky; we did not want to miss Ken as he went by. Randy drove the van behind Ken from Port Hardy to Port McNeill, with the emergency flashers on, as that was a particularly dark and tortuous section of the

road.

While we were amusing ourselves in the car, Ken was suffering on the hills. The Island is not flat. In fact there are about 6800 metres of climbing. There is a long hill out of Campbell River, there are long hills into and out of the Adams River Valley and Eve River Valley, each about 10 kilometres, and, of course, there is the Malahat (not the biggest or longest) at the start and the finish of the ride. Ken looked so very stiff, tired, and sore when he was off the bike that we hated to curtail his stops, but the clock was ticking away. He thanked us later for keeping his stops short.

There was a headwind all the way to Port Hardy and variable winds between Port Hardy and Campbell River on the return. There was a good tailwind from Campbell River to Victoria. I'm sure Ken was relieved.

Despite the wind, the hills, and the heat, Ken maintained a very consistent pace. We had stopped at the Gorge Rest Area just north of Victoria. We wanted to take a photograph of Ken but even at that point in the ride, he was just a blur to the camera.

Last year he did the ride in 46 hours 46 minutes (unsupported). This year he rode it in 43 hours 47 minutes which included a 4-hour stop to sleep at a motel in Port Hardy and a 15-minute nap in the van at Woss.

Congratulations Ken!

PS: We received a postcard from Ken recently. He was tracing part of the PBP route by car in France. He got to see what Mortagne au Perche looked like by daylight.

1000K ISLAND STYLE

July 17 - 19, 1992

(Eric Nadin - Rocky Mountain Randonneurs)

I left Fort McMurray, Alberta, Wednesday night on the 1600 kilometre trek to Vancouver after arranging with Mike Hagen to start the 1000K Vancouver Island ride on Friday morning. While waiting for the ferry at Horseshoe Bay in Vancouver, Anna Bonga and Mike Hagen showed up, so we crossed over to Nanaimo together.

The ferry ride gave us a chance to catch up on things since the Kootenay 300. Also, Anna decided to repair a slow leak in her front tire. A plastic insert used to cover a cut in the tire had worn a small hole in the inner tube. Mike, who has ridden his Trek to near destruction, decided to try his luck one more time with a bottom bracket that was loosening every 20 kilometres or so and a broken cleat on his shoe. I began to wonder if the rides weren't challenging enough!

Thursday night was spent at Mike's sister's house in Nanaimo. We cooked up a mess of spaghetti and order-in pizza for the pre-ride carbo load. Friday morning revealed a perfect day for riding. Stephen Hinde, the fourth rider on the randonnee, pedalled up from Chemainus and around 6:20am we were on our way. The ride out of Nanaimo was like a roller coaster as we set a fast pace over the hillside. The only exception was the numerous railroad tracks which cross the road diagonally. As the day started to warm up, it was

apparent we would be fighting a headwind.

Around the 65 kilometre mark, Mike had to stop to tighten his bottom bracket, so we took a break. A short time later, Stephen had a rear tire blow out. Mike and Anna decided to ride on to a bicycle shop in Courtenay to repair Mike's bottom bracket. Stephen's tire had to be replaced and in the course of forcing the stubborn tire on to the rim we pinched the tube and had to start over again. We regrouped with Mike and Anna outside the bicycle shop only to discover that Anna's back tire was flat. A quick tube change and we were off again, or so we thought. On the way out to Courtenay, Stephen got another flat. While fixing the flat, Stephen's wife Carol drove up to help as support. The temperature was now quite hot and the cold melon Carol provided hit the spot.

Underway one more time, we travelled the remaining distance to Campbell River without incident but had only covered 153 kilometres in 7 1/2 hours. A local convenience store which was being renovated was scavenged for what little food and refreshments they had. The second check point was reached at 4:00pm, near Sayward. The roadside restaurant was the last food stop until Port Hardy, 171 kilometres away. Hot and thirsty, we went through pitchers of water so quickly that I helped the waitress by refilling them myself. Equal amounts of food were consumed before we were ready for the next leg of our journey.

From Sayward, we entered the remote northern end of the island. I quickly learned that Vancouver Island is by no means flat. Sweat poured down my forehead and the salt burned my eyes as we tackled one climb which lasted about 11 kilometres. Then it was over picturesque passes and through valleys with names like Adam, Eve and Nimpkish.

In the early evening as the heat subsided, I developed a slow leak in my back tire. I conveniently hoisted my bike up on a roadside marker pole and fixed the flat in short order. As darkness set in we made our way to Port McNeil. From a roadside lookout, the twinkling lights of the town could be seen across the bay. We arrived at the hotel in Port Hardy around 1:20am having completed 391 kilometres. A shower was followed by a bite to eat, then welcomed sleep.

Day 2 started with Anna running over some glass just outside of Port Hardy. Mike stayed back with Anna to fix the flat, while Stephen and I carried on. Several hours later, Mike and Anna caught up and we rode together for a stretch. The heat and sweat from the day before had made my rear sore and constantly I had to shift in the saddle never really finding a comfortable position.

Since Mike had a hard time riding at night in traffic, he and Anna parted our company in order to reach Nanaimo sooner. So Stephen and I were left behind as Mike and Anna slowly rode away. We were nearing Sayward and as we worked our way up a pass, Stephen pointed to a roadside spring. Splashing the ice cold water on my face was very refreshing. We met Mike, Anna and Carol at the restaurant near Sayward and a repeat performance of the day before rejuvenated us for the next section.

Again Mike and Anna went ahead. At Campbell River both Stephen and I smiled when we passed by Mike and Anna. Anna had yet another flat. The next encounter with Mike and Anna was at Qualicum Beach where Anna had to replace her front tire. Just after midnight we reached Mike's sister's house in Nanaimo and feasted on leftover spaghetti and pizza.

With only 220 kilometres to go we began Day 3 at 6:00am. Carol parted company after doing a superb job of support. Rather than follow the Trans-Canada to Victoria, we took several side roads. The first side trip passed Stephen and Carol's town of Chemainus with murals depicting the valley's history on most of the buildings. A stop in Duncan, then on to the Malahat. Rather than climbing the Malahat we took a side road around Shawnigan Lake. The scenery was beautiful and the climb enjoyable. The road emerged near the top of the Malahat. On the steep descent, Anna got her final flat. Tired and hot, it took both of us to pry the tire off the rim. Once the tire was fixed, we carried on to Victoria.

By the time we reached Victoria, I was exhausted and needed a meal. Mike wanted to keep going, so Anna, Stephen and I searched for a restaurant. A full meal helped and we were ready for the final stretch. It was now mid-afternoon, and grinding gears, extreme heat and sweat, best describe the climb up the Malahat. Once at the top, we cruised down past Mill Bay and on to Duncan where we indulged in pop and ice cream bars.

Stephen started to pick up the pace as we neared Chemainus like a horse heading for the barn door. In Chemainus, Carol greeted us and after congratulating Stephen, Anna and I headed for Nanaimo. The late afternoon was pleasant as the mid-day heat subsided. The 34 kilometres to Nanaimo went quickly. We both decided to cut across town rather than travel on the busy highway. Without a map, we stopped every couple of blocks to ask directions. One fellow who had wandered out onto a quiet back street, imparted a profound statement (or so it seemed) that "All roads lead to Rome", when we asked for directions. After telling him about our ride, he clarified the remark with a series of lefts then rights. Well, eventually we reached Mike's sister's house some 61 1/2 hours later.

For Mike and Anna, their first successful 1000K randonnee, for Stephen and I, the Randonneur 5000 award. I would like to thank Carol, Anna, Stephen and Mike for making my first 1000K a most enjoyable ride.

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VANCOUVER ISLAND 1000KM

(Gord Cook)

Dave Charnock, Bruce Hainer, Manfred Kuchenmuller and I met in Nanaimo on the evening of June 19th for our "make-up" 1000km ride. As I painfully type this account of our epic journey into the wilds of northern Vancouver Island, Manfred and Margaret will be cruising down the Yukon River in a canoe. I hope the canoe seat isn't as hard on the butt as a bicycle saddle because they have two months of paddling ahead of them.

We started on June 20th at 6am from the 7-11 in Nanaimo. Ken Bonner had left three hours earlier from Victoria in an attempt to set a new record for the 1000km. He passed us while we were eating at the Golden Arches in Campbell River (you didn't think he could possibly pass us on the road did you?). I owe Ken one for the advice he gave regarding eating on a long ride. This has been a major problem for me in the past (just ask Manfred and Brian Wood!). But, no longer - thanks to Ken, I have the SECRET! More on this later.

The ride to Campbell River was done in excellent weather and at a good pace - about 25km/hr as I recall. The hills north of Campbell River slowed us somewhat but the weather remained excellent until north of Woss when we experienced a very light rain shower. This was the first rain I have ridden in this year (I didn't ride in the Vancouver 600). Unlike the 1000 last year, I was able to keep up with the others on the hills (am I getting better, or are they getting worse?).

We reached our turn around at Port Hardy about 2am Sunday morning, ate, showered, slept, and left again at about 5am. We had eaten the previous evening at Woss and stopped there to refuel again on Sunday. The food was good but the service was S-L-O-W. Between the two stops, we blew at least three hours, but, when you're the only eating establishment between Port Hardy and Sayward Junction (170 km, give or take) you can afford to be slow. The weather was a little too hot to be comfortable during the afternoon but there were many delightful little creeks tumbling down the mountain side where we were able to refill water bottles. I understand that on the Vancouver 600 they just opened their water bottles and held them upright for about 30 seconds to get a refill.

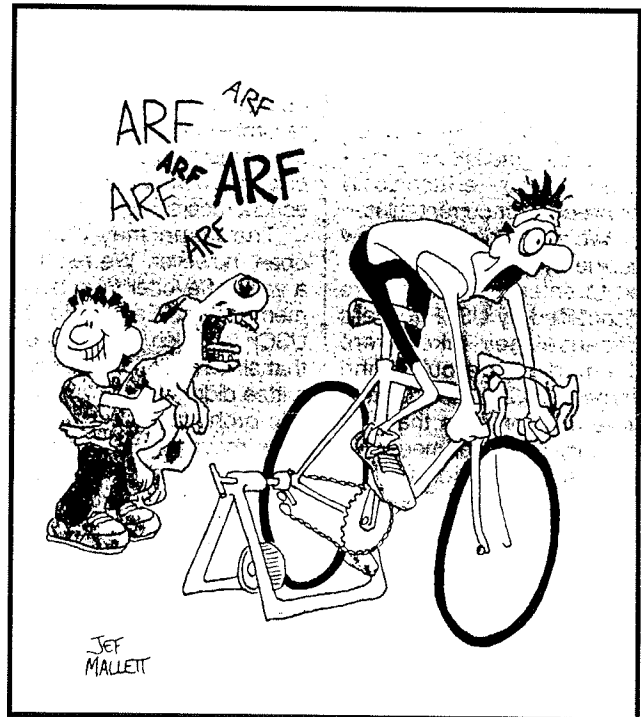
It was nice to get out of the hills and onto some flat road again south of Campbell River (we actually averaged about 30km/hr between Campbell River and Courtenay). We arrived back in Nanaimo about 2am on Monday morning, showered, slept, etc., then went to Bino's for breaky. A mistake. It took about an hour to get fed. We left for Victoria at about 6:30am. It was warm enough that we were comfortable in cycling shorts and jerseys even first thing in the morning. We had a fast ride to Victoria arriving before noon. Checked in at the 7-11 then went to MacDonalds for lunch (no more slow eateries for us!). The temperature seemed to be much hotter in Victoria than it was on the highway and Manfred seemed to be succumbing to it. An extra water

bottle was produced so Manfred could shower occasionally to cool off. This seemed to work well and after going over the Malahat we set a relaxed pace back to Nanaimo, arriving at about 5:20pm for an overall time of 59:20. This was better than last year's time of 61:25, so we were pleased.

Steven and Carol Hinde came from home to present us our pins and to have a beer with us at a local pub. A nice touch, thanks!

I read with amusement, Mike Hagen's account of the Vancouver Blub, Blub 600. Well Mike, on our ride we didn't see any accidents, had no measureable rain, no DNF's, only one flat (I think Mike put more air in his tires so his bike would float!) And then he closes his article with "All you suckers riding the Vancouver Island 1000 next weekend, eat your hearts out." Sour grapes Mike, we had a great time!

Getting back to the "SECRET" I mentioned earlier, it is a product that is mixed with water. It provides all the nourishment needed plus the liquid required for marathon events. Although I ate one meal per day, I could have easily done without anything solid during the entire ride. I didn't have even a hint of an upset stomach during the ride, so, for me, it's the answer.



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