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## British Columbia

# Randonneur

## Marathon Cycling

### Heart-felt Thanks

*Ken Wright*

I wish to extend my heart-felt thanks to all the 50 k Rando riders in the Pacific Populair who stopped to help me when I crashed at 71st and Hudson St. on April 9. I only suffered stitches, road-r-r-rash, and an hour deep sleep --- thank goodness the bike is okay! To my fellow rides --- be wary of sand covered oil patches.

Also, thank-you to the Police officer who returned the bike to Riley Park, and to the ambulance paramedics who scraped me off the ash and into VGH without losing any nonregeneratable parts.

In my time of need Good People came forward to help.

### 2 EK 200's

*Jimmy Vallance*

The first one was dry and dusty with a tree-bending headwind funneled up the Elk Valley. The sun shone for the whole ride, but not too hot and kept a sparkle on the show.

The second one started cold and dry, finished cold and snowy, and stayed cold in between. The wind gusted but was often lost in the trees which occasionally sheltered the Fernie-Cranbrook out-and-back route.

Self control snapped in the face of my third flat-and the ride not even two thirds through. Strong language prevailed, I fear. "Oh my," I said, "this is most distressing.

Snowstorms scurried among the mountains on the road home and, catching up with a squall which seemed to slide up the mountains on both sides of the defile north of Elko as I approached, I felt quite like Moses. Well, not really.

Concerned about growing aches and pains I finally tried ibuprofen. It had been rumored, even as far as the East Kootenays, that this was the Legal Recreational Substance of Choice of randonneurs down the Coast.

It's good stuff; and you don't even have to inhale.

### Island 300km: April 22, 2000

*Ian Stephen*

In a reckless fit of enthusiasm I recently volunteered to help out with the LM300. This compelled me to ride the Island 300 to get my pin before the Darcy 400. My telling Stephen Hinde that I would be there April 22 wrote this course in stone. Only after that was I told by friends, strangers and voices in my head not to do the Island 300 as it was too hard, too hilly and generally evil. My trepidation grew as the day drew near, but I could find no excuse to get out of it. Good Friday found my loyal Marinoni overloaded with camping gear as I set off to meet my doom.

I took the ferry to Swartz Bay for a reasonable \$11. From Swartz Bay it is a pleasant 20km to Brentwood Bay where you can catch a little ferry to Mill Bay. This ferry shortens the ride to Duncan by a considerable amount and at \$4.75 for bike and rider is well worthwhile. During the 25-minute ferry ride I read some history of the ferry in the tiny passenger lounge. Have a look if you get the chance, though this little piece of history may soon be removed from service by the bean counters at B.C. Ferry Corp. From the Mill Bay dock it's 26 km to Duncan.

At Duncan the hotels I checked were all too rich for me at around \$70 per night. I was told later that the Village Green motel might be cheaper, but didn't check. I chose to stay at Duncan RV Park, a nice quiet spot off Boys road, only a few blocks from the brevet start. \$12 per night for rider and tent. They have coin operated showers at 25¢ for 5 minutes. I found I need about 6 minutes, but didn't mind

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50¢ for a shower. The couple who run the place live in a trailer at the entrance. Very friendly people who assured me that my tent etc. should be fine left there all day Saturday.

Saturday morning I was at the brevet start on time, but only by skipping breakfast. Carol Hinde said "Go!" and I dropped my bike and went into the gas station for a quick burrito and coffee. Carol seemed to think this was a strange event strategy, but as they say "eat before you're hungry".

Once on the road I soon found that the route was hilly as I had been warned. I also found that there was not a kilometer of the route that was not enjoyable. A strong antidote to the many climbs was to grin ear-to-ear and repeat the mantra "This is SO beautiful!" One section that stands out is Humpback road, a section I will always remember as the enchanted forest. The steeps here were steep enough that if one placed a stationary object (say maybe Harold for example) on the road, the object would begin sliding back down the hill! The scenery is a must see though. If you look out the corners of your eyes you just might see a unicorn there.

The route continues by little roads and big through beautiful forest and ocean scenery. Look at the houses as you ride, many look quite old and unique. Some of stone and wood fit the scene like they grew there. One that you will see if you watch to your right (after the first control is memory serves) is literally growing there with its large sod roof.

The route gets busier as it enters Victoria. Beware the bridge on Esquimalt, it's a steel mesh sort of deck and was quite unnerving to me to come upon unaware. You'll pretty much follow the water around Victoria and up the Saanich Peninsula to Sidney. There is a bike shop across the street from the second control at Oak Bay. I would have bought a tire there as my rear was separating at the bead. They didn't have my size though (700x28) so I used my spare.

All along the route Stephen and Carol had been popping up

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Editor: Susan Allen

**Submissions:** Please send articles to me. My preference is Word or plain text files and digital photos in JPEG format to [stoker@telus.net](mailto:stoker@telus.net). Or mail (preferable a diskette) to Susan Allen, 2356 W 6<sup>th</sup> Ave, Vancouver, BC V6K 1V9

Next publication deadline is July 13.

out of nowhere and they did it again here. They made sure I had everything I needed, letting me use their bike rack as a work stand and saving me considerable effort with the loan of their floor pump. I may have been a little spoiled as Stephen had a broken arm so was not riding the brevet. The two of them took wonderful care of us riders. I never felt alone and they always appeared at just the right time with an encouraging word such as "It's all downhill to the checkpoint from here!" One couldn't ask for better hosts.

After Oak Bay you will pass through a little place called Cadboro Bay. Stop at the fish and chip shop if you have time. It is a cheerful family-run place and I was very well looked after there. The lovely ocean scenery continues to Sidney, then you cross the highway and head south again. There is a section after Sidney that you'll love if you like rollercoasters. The road dip and climbs and twists like it was paved by a madman, but what a ride! The drops are mostly big enough to carry speed over the next climb and enthusiasm is greatly refreshed.

As dark was falling I reached an area called the Highlands. My mom's side of the family were Highlanders, so I looked to them for strength here. There are some leg burning climbs, not long, but steep. Fortunately this was another area I found I could heavily use my "This is SO beautiful!" mantra.

Nasty little climbs continue so it's tempting to descend with all the caution of a ten-year-old boy. Luckily the Hinde's passed me at the top of the nastiest climb (it was there Carol said "all downhill to the checkpoint"). Over the crest I was going into ten-year old boy mode then I saw the car lights suddenly plunge about 120 degrees to the right below me. This gave me the extra second or so to get on the brakes and make the turn rather than soaring off into the trees like I did once when I really was ten years old.

At the 248.6 km checkpoint I found myself procrastinating. Some of those climbs had tested my legs and the great dragon named Malakwa lay ahead to finish me off in the darkness and cold. Another shot of coffee, some advice from Harold and there was nothing left to do but face the dragon that had been on my mind all day. There was some fun riding after the checkpoint, but finally I reached the climb that I knew would pummel me into submission.

I started fairly conservatively. Maybe I could sneak up it before it noticed. I climbed some. I climbed some more. Suddenly came the realisation "Hey...I'm not even in my granny gear!" and the battle began in earnest. "The Great Malakwa! I this all you've got? You're not so tough! Look, I'll even gear up a cog! Ha! Who's bad now huh?!!" (To which the Malakwa replied "Bonner's bad!") "Malakwa! Pppthpt!" The Granddadd Dragon turned out to be not so big in reality. The descent was tougher. I wished I had taken more care in the set-up of my lights.

Dragon slaying was followed by a dip down to Mill Bay. Stephen told me that this dip was added a couple of years back to avoid highway construction and had been kept because rider like it. I agree. Good spirits reside along that road. It's one of those places that just feels good.

It was past midnight, but Stephen and Carol were at the finish when I arrived. Good to their word the Hinde's stayed till the last rider was in, though fortunately they didn't have much

longer to wait. On this day he was also the only other rider to finish in Duncan, a fellow named Jim from Seattle. Jim rode a fine ride on his recumbent to complete his first 300km ever! My helmet is off to him as I don't think this route was well suited to a recumbent.

If you haven't seen this route for yourself give it a try. Stephen and Carol would love to see more riders at their events and this was possibly the prettiest route I've seen yet. Yes it is hilly, but if you accept that it's not going to be a fast 300 I think you'll like it. As I basked in satisfaction and the warmth of another burrito and coffee, Carol upped the ante by inviting me to try their 600km. I certainly intend to take her up on that sometime.

## 50/100/150 km Victoria Populaire

*Mike Poplawski*

I am organizing a 50/100/150 km Victoria Populaire, set for July 23. It will start/finish at 9:00 AM from Oak Bay High School. I will maintain a web site for the event at <http://members.home.com/mbkp/victoria-populaire/>

## Rocky Mountain Update

The toll-free number for the Rocky Mountain 1200 has changed - it is now 1-877-606-BIKE (2453). And good news - a few more volunteers have come forward. Things are now looking much healthier - thanks to everyone. We can still use a few helpers and loans of equipment, so don't be shy - give me a call at 737-0043.

## Vancouver Bike Club Rides

*Chris McPherson*

As many of the members of the BC Randonneurs are aware, John Hathaway was a long time member of both the Randonneur and the Vancouver Bicycle Club. For the last couple of years, the Vancouver Bicycle Club has organised a John Hathaway ride in June. This year the VBC has arranged for an entire John Hathaway weekend. We have the following rides:

Saturday, 17 June - Mountain Bike ride on Mt Cheam. Contact Sharon Johnstone (733-3108) for details.

Saturday 17 June - Shortride on the Sunshine Coast. Meet at the Horseshoe Bay terminal at 900 AM for the 920 ferry. A short

ride to Roberts Creek and then back to Gibsons for the Jazz festival.

Saturday 17 June - Sunday 18 June - All night ride. Meet at the Knight and Day restaurant at Broadway and Boundary at 9:30 PM. Plan on a coffee break some time during the night, and to greet the sunrise from Little Mountain. Contact Henry Hulbert (253-7077) for details.

Sunday 18 June - three different rides. One at a leisure pace, one at a medium pace and one at a faster pace. All will meet at the Towne and Country Inn (South side of Massey tunnel) at 930 AM. The rides will conclude at about 3 PM at the River House (formerly Fiddler's Green) where we hope to raise a pint or two in memory of John Hathaway. For details, contact Chri McPherson (682-0342, [cmcp@istar.ca](mailto:cmcp@istar.ca))

Also, for the last ten years the VBC has run the Single Sock Sentury. It includes an old fashioned 100 miler that leaves at 0800 from Spanish Banks East Concession on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. We try to raise some money for the Lower Mainland Brain Injury Association (David Blanche, a randonneur and VBC member is very active in the organisation). If interested, you can pick up an entry form at most bike stores or contact Chris McPherson.

## Triple Mountain Challenge

*Danelle Laidlaw*

The Triple Mountain/Grouse Grind Challenge is a go - and it has a purpose (other than pain). We are going to charge a \$15 entry fee which will go towards Tim Pollock's fund-raising efforts for his trip across the country. Tim i raising funds for a charity ride he is doing this summer.

So the Tim Pollock Triple Mountain/Grouse Grind Challenge (TPTM/GGC for short) will start at 8 a.m. at the parking lot for Grouse Mountain on June 3rd. Participants will descend Grouse, ride to Seymour, climb Seymour, descend, ride to Cypress, climb Cypress, descend, return to Grouse, climb to the parking lot, put the bikes away, grab the hiking boots, and hike the Grind. Celebration at the top. (unless you want to hike down, bring \$ for the tram ride down).

See you there - please let us know if you plan to participate - we would like to have an idea of numbers - Danelle (737-0043)



## Coming Events

*Triple Mountain – June 3*

Grouse Parking Lot

Danelle Laidlaw 737-0043

*Peace 400 km – June 3*

[wkok@nlc.bc.ca](mailto:wkok@nlc.bc.ca)

Wim Kok 250-785-4589

*Seattle 400 km – June 3*

5 am North Bend

Mark Thoma 206-612-4700

*Interior 400 km – June 3*

Kamloops

Bob Boonstra 250-828-2869

*Island 600 km – June 3*

Langford 3am/Nanaimo 5:30

Stephen Hinde 250-245-4751

*Yukon 400 km – June 10*

[todd\\_christine@hotmail.com](mailto:todd_christine@hotmail.com)

Christine Todd 867-633-6745

*L. Mainland 600 – Jun 10,11*

Abbotsford 6 am

Stuart Wood 538-7589

*Interior 600 km – June 17,18*

Kamloops

Bob Boonstra 250-828-2869

*L. Mainland Shorts – June 18*

50, 100, 150 k Fort Langley

Tim Pollock 939-8166

*BC 1000 km – Jun 23-25*

Victoria 3am/Nanaimo 5:30

Stephen Hinde 250-245-4751

*Single Sock Sentury – Jun 25*

30, 60, 100, 160 k Vancouver

[www.vbc.bc.ca](http://www.vbc.bc.ca)

*BC 2000 k – Jun 24-Jul 1*

Abbotsford

Real Prefontaine 853-9594

*Canada Day 133 k – July 1*

Fort Langley 9 am

Harold Bridge 941-3448

*Yukon 600 km – Jul 1-2*

[todd\\_christine@hotmail.com](mailto:todd_christine@hotmail.com)

Christine Todd 867-633-6745

*L. Mainland 200 k – Jul 9*

+ 50, 100, 150 Surrey 7 am

Keith Fletcher 530-9273

## Liquid Sunshine in the West Kootenays

*Harold Bridge*

I think Karen Smith is the problem.

It's 6 years since I have ridden the West Kootenays 300 and in the meantime subterranean tectonic action has pushed those hill tops considerably further up into the clouds. In the past I have made that rather long trip to experience blue skies, spectacular views & roads uncluttered by traffic. After a fine weather drive in Gordy Cook's van with Gordy, Michel & David it was a discouraging scene that greeted us Sunday morning. Low clouds and fairly heavy rain.

Why do I blame Karen for this? Well, she was responsible for introducing Rainy into the Club. And what cycling organisation needs a Rainy, especially in the Pacific Northwest? We might as well put out a contract for an indigenous medicine person to do a rain dance!

I'm not well known for thinking ahead, but when John Bates dumped the Nelson paper work on me I knew it would be disastrous to leave everything until the Sunday morning, especially with a 06:00 start. Thus I arrived at the Northshore Inn with named cards filled in & signed & the waiver forms at the ready with just signatures to be added. In the foyer on Saturday evening I handed out ziploc bags with cards & route sheets enclosed. Within a minute or two of us arriving Jimm Vallance, my room mate, arrived. He was the reason I opted to ride the 300. Jimmy is a lonely Scottish randonneur living, as he does, in Fernie and I suspected most people were going to ride the 200 (they said it was so they could socialize on Sunday evening, yeah, sure!). I felt that my socializing could take the form of keeping Jimmy company.

Eleven of us went into town to try the restaurant recommended by Gordon Cook. While strolling the streets like a bunch of past-it youths looking for trouble, a bike laden car squealed into the curb at the sight of us. It was Barb Henniger. She had come as far from the east as we had come from the west, from Calgary. It was a bit of a squeeze getting the extra body into the tables we had booked, but we managed. The place was packed & so service was slowed. But the food was good & the conversations going round the table suggested everyone was enjoying the occasion. Two newcomers were amongst us; Rob Bernhardt and Raymond Wagner, both from Vernon. Rob was there for the 200 & Raymond, who joined the Club while entering a Kamloops event, was planning on the

300. Up at 05:00 & the night clerk was most helpful putting on the coffee & "Continental" breakfast so we didn't leave completely without food. Two more bodies arrived, Larry Voth from Langley had stayed next door at the Villa. Karen's friend Aladar Reusz from Rossland turned up to ride his first randonnee. The final tally was 5 of us "real" randonneurs were riding the 300 while the other 8 made do with the 200.

The fact it was 06:01 when I looked at my watch & people were still standing under the canopy indicates the reluctance people had to face the weather. I had to tell them to go! Keep Jimmy company? Some hopes. He was off like a herd of turtles & the next time I saw him was about an hour south of the Nakusp control. There was no way to keep dry, just had to

consider keeping warm. In ones & twos the other riders went by while I was anxious not to extend myself before Kaslo. During the climb of one of the minor drags Karen went by. As usual she had a word of encouragement and a smile before she glided away over the top of the rise on her grotty looking mountain bike sans toe clips or clipless pedals. I could get to hate that woman!

The control card said "Treehouse Restaurant". But a large group of cycle tourists had monopolized that facility. We responded to Bruce's beckoning & used the bakery across the road where another coffee & a cindy bun helped us prepare for the long grind up to Fish Lake. That 30 or so kms is mainly on an old rail grade & as such is one of the most gentle climbs one will find anywhere. But it is deceptive. I set myself the aim of getting from Kaslo to Fish Lake non-stop. I did, but at a price.

By this time, Barb Henniger & I were out the back of the bunch & after the delightful descent into New Denver we decided lunch at the Slocan Lake Golf Club was not just advisable but essential. Six years ago I had lunch there on the way back from Nakusp! The ride north reminded me there are long hills on that road & we progressed somewhat slowly. Barb managed to pick up a piece of glass in her front tyre & it was an opportunity for me to demonstrate the advantage of finishing up replacing the tyre at the valve rather than starting there.

We met Raymond heading south & had a brief chat. He was envious of the sandwich bag & elastic band I had round my computers, his computer had quit due to the wet. He seemed to be on a 13 hour ride. (I was wrong, he got round in 11:55). By this time there had been a hint of sun & Barb got the laugh of the day with her: "I forgot to put any sun screen on!". We stopped to talk to Jimmy; "How's it going?" "Not bad, not bad at all". "How's the head wind?" "Not bad, not bad at all".

Larry Voth seemed cheerful enough, about 30 minutes behind Jimmy. The ladies in the store at Carson's Corner were helpful & cheerful & we had a snack before venturing south on that long trek down the Slocan Valley. The hills were beginning to take their toll. The rain had taken its toll of the transmission as well. Gear changing was becoming a bit haphazard. We made the most of the long run down into New Denver knowing that soon after there was "THE" climb; Silverton Hill. A pizza place being run by two charming & helpful teenage girls provided a good bowl of chili & coffee.

By this time it was just about 18:00. Another 12 hour 200! I've had one of those this year. In 1994 I rode up Silverton with 2 bottom gears of 45" & 37". They seemed adequate enough then. The 26" bottom gear I now have was just about low enough. The grind went on too long & the 12 kms Gordy mentioned was, we had hoped, measured from New Denver. But I don't think it was.

Once at the top it was time to get some bright clothes & my Sam Browne reflective belt on. Since early afternoon the weather had been improving. In fact, as we got to Summit Lake before the drop to Nakusp Barb got quite excited at seeing dry pavement! But, with the darkness came rain & I wasn't looking forward to the last 80 or so kms. "Barb, what would be your response to someone offering us a ride?" "You can quit if you like, I'm going to finish!" I only asked.

It was a never ending plod to Winlaw. But it did end, about

22:00. We were looking for the "Duck Stop" or some sign that said we were in Winlaw. One place, The "Hungry Wolf", was ablaze with lights but obviously closed as all the chairs were up on tables. But the door was unlocked & the staff were in there. "Is this Winlaw?" "Yes" "Did this used to be the Duck Stop?" "Yes". "Can we get a coffee & a piece of pie?" "Yes" The signed our cards too. Nice people. Got underway about 22:30 & just after midnight got to Highway 3 at South Slocan.

Another stop while Barb used the Interac machine at the Credit Union & we set out on the last leg of this epic journey. I had suggested that whatever our average speed was at the top of Silverton Hill would indicate our finishing time. It seemed at that point we might get inside 19 hours. But my memory was playing tricks with me & the several climbs after Silverton destroyed the sub 19 hour myth. A stop under the lights at the Rossland turn off found me getting dodderly & in stopping managed to tip over & bruise my arse. It was obviously time to go to bed!

It was an encouraging sight to see the lights of Nelson spread up the hillside across the lake & the speed picked up. We felt better as a result, albeit anxious about the proximity of 02:00 Monday morning, the closing time of the finish control. I didn't have a key & the code for opening the front door didn't work. We had to disturb the night clerk who had been so helpful in the morning to let us in & sign our cards with a time of 01:51 - 9 minutes to spare. So, I'm still breaking records, thanks to Barb's self styled stubbornness!

The room door was open, Jimmy was lying reading. He looked up with: "You want a hot bath" It wasn't a question, it was a statement. While I removed soggy apparel, Jimmy ran me a bath for me. By the time I had dozed & washed in the tub, then dried, Jimmy was asleep. I crawled into my bed & the next thing I knew was: "It's a fine morning!" "Is it breakfast time?" "Noo, it's 5 o'clock!" A little more sleep & the breakfast was put on hold when it was found the restaurant next door didn't open until 08:00.

I collected the cards & couldn't find Karen's. I was told her rear rim had suffered from excessive braking & it blew apart. Good planning by Karen had it happening at New Denver so she didn't have to climb Silverton Hill. A lady gave her a ride into Silverton. The lady knew everyone & found a bush resident with a truck who gave Karen a ride into Nelson. Nice people.

After a drive that my knees found to be a painful as the 300 I got home about 19:30 Monday to hear the peep peep of my answering machine. There were 2 messages, both from Karen. As she, Bruce & Chris had gone back to Rossland with Aladar she was anxious to find out how we got on. Cynics might think she wanted to gloat, but that's not the case, she's sweet isn't she?

## Invitation to Seattle 400 and 600 K Brevets

*Mark U. Thomas, Seattle International Randonneurs*

I wanted to call BC randonneurs' attention to our 400km and 600km brevets this year (June 3-4 and July 1-2). They are both pretty challenging pass climbing routes which would be great training for the RM1200 (the 600 has 18000ft of climbing and covers some wonderful areas around Mt. Rainier and Mt. St. Helens). We'd love to have some of you guys ride with us. More

info is available at <http://www.seattlerandonneur.org> or by contacting me: Mark Thomas: Mobile: 206-612-4700 or [mark.thomas@lightmail.com](mailto:mark.thomas@lightmail.com)

## May 2000 Peace Region Ride Report

*E. W. [Wim] Kok, Coordinator*

Greetings from Canada's sub-arctic. "What a spring it has been," pretty well sums up the Populaires and Brevets in the Peace region so far. When forecasts called for 30% probability of precipitation and temperatures in the mid teens, it really meant 100% rain or snow and temperatures not much above 5 degrees Celsius. Needless to say that some of the cycling spirits were frozen. As a result the 75 km randonneur was canceled and the 100 km Populaire was rescheduled to Easter Monday when a strong westerly tailwind blew two riders from Fort St. John to Goodlow near the Alberta border in less than no time. Then came the revenge of the wind: the tail -- now headwind -- as well as substantial hill climb slowed progress to a completion time of just under six hours for the 110 km distance.

The first official 200 km Brevet took place on May 6 with pouring rain and three riders showing. Two decided not to ride due to these conditions, but Jim Mackenzie from Mackenzie has to honour of completing the first ever Brevet in the Peace region. Considering the adverse conditions Jim was able to finish the distance in just under 13 hours. Bravo Jim!!! An alternate 200 km was scheduled for a week later. That Saturday morning saw below zero temperatures and more snow, with very questionable road/ride conditions. Rumour had it that I had unleashed the wrath of the weather gods. However Sunday morning looked slightly better, and I decided to face the low temperatures, up hills, headwinds, cloudiness, rain and snow flurries as challenges, with downhills and a low UV Index as a bonus. Along the route, many deciduous trees appeared to have 'white buds and blossoms,' which was nothing more than captured snow from the previous day and night. However as the day wore on, the sun came out and things got better, giving credence to the adage, "never judge the day before it is over." And so it went, the incessant winds shifted from head to tail to side, only to become a headwind again toward the end of the ride. This builds character they say. No matter how I turned, the wind knew what to do, but in the end the 204 km ride was completed in just under 10 hours.

The 300 km Brevet took place on May 20/21 with three riders completing this event. Since Susan Allen and Doug Latornell from Vancouver completed this 306 km distance, I like to give them the opportunity to report on this distance. Thanks for traveling up North and supporting this event. In conclusion, the weather conditions have made randonneuring in the Peace Region a tough challenge so far this year. As with a long ride, one perseveres and continues until the finish line, so we will continue with the events. So far the out-of-towners formed the majority of the participants.

