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British Columbia

Randonneur

Marathon Cycling



Prez Sez

Whewww; almost ½ way through the schedule and what a year it has been so far. In the lower mainland, the moral of this year's rides are you are better off to be an organizer!! The pre-rides have had great weather, and the ride day has been wet, and wetter. Perhaps this means we are in for a dry summer.

You know how bad things go in threes – well, we have had 3 major mishaps (that I know of anyway) – Pat Martel, Gary Baker, and Roger Holt are all on crutches from fairly major falls/accidents. We wish them a speedy recovery and thanks for being the fall guys (pun intended).

It is time to remind members of the philosophy behind randonneuring. It is all about preparing your bike; preparing yourself; making sure you follow the route, and the rules (not only our rules, but the traffic laws); fueling the body; and making it to the finish without assistance, except at controls.

And it is time to remind our organizers that we don't want to diminish the accomplishment of doing these rides by bending the rules. Nor do we want to make it harder for the next organizer who sticks the rules.

Well, enough finger wagging – I wish everyone a good season and remember, although we have completed one series, there are plenty more rides on the schedule – see you out there – cheers – Danelle

PBP Jersey

Is it time for a new look for PBP in 2007? We are thinking of bringing out a new jersey design for 2007. Give us your opinion – would you like to see a new design for 2007 or are you happy with the jerseys we have? Email – Danelle – dplaid@telus.net

Victorian lecture:

Randonneurs attract women

by Raymond J. Parker

Victoria-area randonneurs held a well-attended information meeting at the Emily Carr Branch of the Victoria public library on March 16. The lecture covered a short history of the sport and focussed on opportunities for new riders in the upcoming BC Randonneurs 2006 schedule, beginning with the March 26 Nanaimo Populaire and the Mainland's April 2 Pacific Populaire.

I opened the event with my recollections of meeting four crazed cyclists in 1978 -- John Hathaway, Dan McGuire, Gerry Pereja, and Wayne Philips -- who would be the first B.C. "team" to enter PBP, the following year. Mike Poplawski gave a brief history of his initiation into the sport, followed by Jaye Haworth's perspective on participating in a male-dominated sport, which was much appreciated by new female faces. Though in the minority, it was gratifying to see women among the audience who wanted to find out "what's randonneuring all about?"

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The penultimate event of the evening was a 15-minute video -- a series of Paris-Best-Paris vignettes -- edited by myself and Ray Sr. over a period of several days that echoed with shouts of "5-4-3-2-1, Cut!" and other, less printable, oaths. A professional editing suite may be in the cards. The resulting DVD set up a spirited question period and technical examination of bikes brought to the venue.

Where did the attendees come from? I announced the meeting via events calendars in newspapers and on TV. The latter resulted in a phone call from a producer who is interested in doing a feature report on randonneuring. And I plastered the Greater Victoria area with posters — in bike stores, coffee shops, sports rehab clinics, book stores, the university, etc. But it seems that many were alerted to the event via e-mail, listserves, computer bulletin boards, etc.

This is not to say the postering effort was in vain, though. In the week after the event, I met 3 potential new member/participants (all women) who had noticed the posters in various locations and, though they couldn't attend the lecture, had made a mental note of the club. Ken Bonner also ran into a woman cyclist (not literally, though he was into the final miles of a double-century day!) who had also planned to attend. So the posters had planted a seed that only required a bit of post-event irrigation.

It should be noted that the eye-catching poster was also the creative work of Jaye Haworth, who took a photo I made (of a paceline led by Karen Smith) at last spring's Gold River 600 and turned it into a bold advertisement for randonneurs' legendary endurance: Randonneurs do it longer!

British Columbia Randonneur Marathon Cycling is the newsletter of the BC Randonneurs Cycling Club. The BC Randonneurs are a founding member of the Randonneurs Mondiaux (1983). The club is affiliated with Cycling BC and the Canadian Cycling Association.

The opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the article authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, club executive, Cycling BC, the CCA, or Randonneurs Mondiaux.

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Editor: Scott Gater

Submissions: Please send articles to the club's webmaster (eric.fergusson@telus.net) or to the newsletter editor (sgater@alumni.sfu.ca). Preference is for plain text files or Word and digital photos in JPEG format. Or mail (preferable a diskette) to Scott Gater #108-7411 Minoru Blvd, Richmond BC V6Y 1Z3

Next publication deadline is September 30/2006.

CLOTHING-- Don't tell me you haven't been riding your bike because you've got nothing to wear. We can solve that problem for you. We have jerseys, jackets, shorts, socks, gloves and a variety of t-shirts, so give me a call for your clothing needs – Danelle – 604 737-0043.

The opening brevet of the year for the club is the Tour of the Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island. This year the ride was organised by Susan Allen and Doug Latormell. Always well attended, its' beautiful scenery and challenging terrain make it an excellent opening ride to the season.

That Euphoric Feeling

by Steve Lonergan (Aging and Toasted Randonneur)

A friend of mine asked me yesterday if I felt euphoric after finishing the Tour of the Cowichan Valley 200km brevet on Saturday. "Euphoric?" I asked. No, I don't think so. Maybe relieved. Hungry. Sore. Tired. Definitely not euphoric. I wasn't sure what word would best describe my feelings. With the help of Graham Fishlock, who finished a few minutes ahead of me, I tried to re-create the discussion I had with Susan Allen, who was checking everyone in at the finish. Just to recall how I felt on finishing the ride.

Susan: "Hey, congratulations!"

Me: "What? Oh, yeah, thanks. Whew. I'm glad that's over."

Susan: "Here, sit down in the chair while I stamp your card and then you have to sign it."

Me: "Sign what? Didn't I sign something at the start?"

Susan: "Yes, but now you need to sign your card."

Me: "What card?"

Susan: "Your route card; the blue one."

Me: "It was blue?"

Susan: "Just sign it here... on the line... here... no, with a pen, not your finger. No, you can't just put an X. Ok, that's it. How do you feel?"

Me: "Uhhh... (I couldn't think of the right word then, either, apparently). What does it mean if the room is spinning around?"

Susan: "It means you pushed too hard and overdid it."

Me: "I wasn't pushing, I was pedaling. But it was uphill all the way. Unbelievable."

Susan: "Maybe you should have some water; did you drink enough water on the ride?"

Me: "Water? No, but I bought a Coke at Youba. Youbo. You-something."

Susan: "You need to drink more while you are riding. Is everything else ok?"

Me: "What?"

Susan: "Is everything ok?"

Me: "I guess so, but can you take out this stake that is stuck in my upper back? It is killing me."

Susan: "There isn't a stake. Your neck muscles are just sore."

Me: "No, there was a stake; I felt it go in around Youbo... Youba... Maybe it fell out on the bumpy section back there. Is there blood? I couldn't turn my head at all to see the traffic."

Susan: "No, there's no blood. Maybe you need a mirror."

Me: "A mirror? You just told me there was no blood; why do I need a mirror?"

Susan: "No, you should get a mirror for your bike."

Me: "What for?"

Susan: "Ok, look, here is your pin. Congratulations."

Me: "A pin? I thought you said I need a mirror?"

Susan: "No, you get the pin for finishing the 200km."

Me: "This looks like a hamsa hand, or hamesh hand, or something. You know one of those good luck charms to protect you from the evil eye, except with the fingers cut off."

Susan: "No, no; it's a bicycle glove."

Me: "I thought you said it was a pin!"

Susan: "Maybe you better get some water and some food before you leave. Just take a seat over there."

Me: "I don't think I can stand up; my legs are shaking."

Susan: "They'll probably be much worse tomorrow. You definitely overdid it."

Me: "Overdid what?"

Susan: "Look, just drag yourself over to that chair and order some food."

Me: "I can't; my butt hurts too much. Particularly on the left cheek; why is that?"

Susan: "I don't really know, but it might have something to do with sitting on your bike seat for the last nine hours and twenty minutes."

Me: "Whew, that's a long time. What day is it?"

Well, as I said, "euphoric" doesn't seem to be quite the right word. Toasted. Yeah, that's it. Toasted. And thanks, Susan. I'll get a mirror this week. Trouble is, I don't have anywhere to put it, since I dumped my bike in Shawnigan Lake on the way home! Did somebody say something about a 300km ride?

Cow Vale 200

By Harold Bridge

When leaving Fuller Lake Motel at 05:30 in Keith Fletcher's truck the first thing we saw was a bright LED light approaching from the direction of Oak Bay. Upon catching the rider at the bottom of the hill we confirmed our suspicions that it was Bonner. At the Bouncing Bean Ken gleefully admitted he would get home with close to 400kms; "...depending which way I go!"

People who do that sort of thing don't normally aim to be first finishers, but Ken was anyway. It was probably due to the fact that Keith Fraser went off route at least once. That is assumed from the way Keith flew past us approaching Cowichan Bay, he should have been well ahead of us.

A colorful crowd of 38 set out to open the BCRCC's 2006 season on this twisted, torturous and challenging route. Fletcher, Sharkey and I felt our station in life restricted us from joining in the early gallop and so we let the mass go while we took a staid approach to the journey. Sandy and Stella would pass us and stop, pass us and stop. But eventually they too faded in the distance.

Conditions were, I thought, ideal. Warm enough, dry and a fresh breeze. One cannot hang about on the early part of the route as its

Coming Events

Halfmoon 200-July 15

Sunshine coast

Robert Irvine 604-885-1044

Backroad 400- July 22

Victoria backroads

Raymond Parker 250-388-5365

LM 300-July 29

Squamish- D'Arcy return

Barry Chase 266-4214

Interior 400- August 5

Tina Hoeben 250-245-3133

CCC 1000- Aug 5-8

Clearwater Start

Stephen Hinde 250-245-4751

Dam Brevet- August 5

Peace District

Wim Kok 250-785-4589

LM 1000-August 5-8

????????

Eric Fergusson 733-6657

Gold River 600- August 5

Campbell River start

Don Munro 250-746-5236

LM 400- August 12

??????

Ivan Andrews 536-5994

Victoria Fat Tire 200- Aug. 19

Off road 200

David Sudbury 250-389-6177

LM 600- August 26

Maple Ridge

Scott Gater 244-7234

Make Up 200, 300, 400-

Aug.26

Maple Ridge

Scott Gater 244-7234

convolutions foil any attempt to build up a time cushion. But an attempt to get to Control #1 non-stop was only thwarted by calls of nature.

At a little over 25% distance it is nice to get an hour inside limit, but we were a sad 30 or so minutes. By Control #2 we had hardly made up any ground and were still only about 30 minutes inside limit. But at Glenora Susan had arranged for sun and the afternoon proved to be quite nice. However the westerly wind was causing us to struggle and with little leeway stops couldn't be too long.

By Lake Cowichan Keith and I had left Jack to his own Via Dolorosa. But we left our bikes in plain view while we walked across the road to a café. A sit down meal had become a priority. We knew we had little time to spare and as we got up to pay the bill a huge crowd descended upon the counter and till, we stood around waiting to pay. Got into conversation with one of the other patrons and we explained what we were doing. Just to make ourselves look sane we told him about Ken Bonner!

As we got ont' bikes we had 55 minutes for the remaining 14kms to Youbou. The wind and gradients made that a serious situation. I had expected to see Sandy & Stella heading east as we approached Youbou. But the only one we saw was John Patterson who had gone through Lake Cowichan as we parked our bikes.

The last 7.5 kms to Control #3 was a "Devil Take The Hindmost". There was no sense in all 3 of us being OL. But I think I had 2 minutes to spare, Keith one and Jack none.

With the wind behind us we should have been making up time. But its other use is to have an easier ride over the height of land and so our 15.3 average remained constant. Once over the HOL it was a flyer down most of the way to town.

Approaching Duncan there is a left hand bend in Hwy 18 with a road turning off right. Big green signs proclaim Nanaimo to the left and Duncan to the right. It is several years since I have got that far but I knew Hwy 18 ended in Duncan and with a route of only 200.6 I didn't want to shortcut by taking the Nanaimo option. That mistake added about 4 kms.

Finished at 19:40, Jack came in at 19:56. Only Doug and Susan were still there. Had time for a couple of beers & a meal before catching the 22:45 from Duke Point. All 38 entrants finished. I was satisfied I had redeemed myself and was resigned to the fact that Bonner was probably home in Oak Bay before I finished in Chemainus.

P.S. I was wrong, Bonner didn't get home to Oak Bay before I finished in Chemainus -- I beat him by 5 minutes!

Our Lower mainland 200 was again organized by Manfred Kuchenmuller. Bob Goodison made the trek to the coast from the Interior and filed this report about the " Bay to the Barn 200"

200 km (241.7?)

by Bob Goodison

I have developed a new interval training program based on my first ride in the lower mainland. To increase the degree of difficulty and training benefit do this in wet, windy weather.

1. Start with a fairly fast group. Make sure to let as many riders as possible pass on descents to provide incentive on climbs. Re-pass these riders. Repeat several times.
2. When you get to a flat windy section, make sure you are riding by yourself -- except for the riders you can see just 1/2 km or so ahead, but can't quite catch.
3. Read the name of the road you are supposed to turn onto from your route sheet, but shift your eyes to the next line down for the distance to go. Ride 13+ km in the wrong direction into a headwind. Turn around and return to route. This is to add extra distance and to add the incentive to hammer to make up the lost hour.
4. Ride as fast as possible. Pass several riders. Miss a turnoff in your haste. Turn around, return to route. Pass same several riders. Repeat six or more times.
5. Miss as many traffic lights as possible, to initiate a sprint/recover pattern.
6. Find a few other riders who have also misinterpreted the route sheet to cruise around Mission with looking for the control. This serves as a mid-ride cool down.
7. Miss the turnoff for the Mary Hill Bypass by 2 km. This has the added benefit of providing a safer alternative to the shorter route indicated on the route sheet.
8. Thinking you have missed yet another turn, backtrack 1/2 km until you meet other riders. Give up trying to navigate yourself and follow them to the finish.

I learned a few things, as I usually do. We in the Interior are spoiled. Our usual 600 route sheets would take up less than the first page of the LM 200 sheet. I think our 400 will be about 6 lines long. In comparison, we have no traffic, although I found the masses of cars I encountered to be very courteous. Also, it never rains sometimes.

One rider who missed the opening Tour of Cowichan Valley Brevet, but who showed up strong for the Bay to the Barn 200 was Melissa Friesen. Perhaps this story outlines why she seemed so strong...

Spring Training: Building mileage and confidence at the inaugural PacTour's Women's Week

by Melissa Friesen

Many of the best adventures are unplanned and spontaneous. My adventure started with a brief note on a long distance cycling forum from Seattle randonneur Amy Harman who said she was registered for the upcoming PacTour's "chick week" and that I

should come. A phone call to my husband asking him to talk me out of going only encouraged me further -- "Of course you should go, it sounds great! You can't miss this." Next I was searching for airfares on-line and on the phone to Amy and to Susan Notorangelo, of solo RAAM and transcontinental record fame and the organizer of the event. By the next day I was a registered participant for a week long women's cycle camp only three weeks away (April 2-9).

Beyond the opportunity for long miles in a sunny, warm climate, I was drawn to the event by the accomplishments of the coaching staff. Susan Notorangelo, Anna Catarina (Cat) Berge, Michelle Grainger, and Lon Haldeman. All had successfully completed RAAM (Race Across America)! The plan for the week was six days of riding with distances of 80-140 km, with an optional 200km brevet, plus an unorganized shorter arrival day shakedown ride. There were plenty of opportunities to expand my fascination and knowledge of ultra-distance cycling. Each late afternoon was filled with coaching clinics, including topics such as bike fit and maintenance, nutrition, resistance training, overtraining/burnout, climbing/descending, etc... Our evenings were filled with documentaries of RAAM and transcontinental record crossings, including the as of yet unreleased documentary of Cat Berge's successful 2005 RAAM. The massage slots quickly filled. Morning yoga sessions really helped loosen our muscles for another day of riding. We also had a special guest, Tucson-based Elaine Mariolle who was informed that she would be inducted into the UMCA hall of fame that same week. In addition to completing and winning RAAM, Elaine co-authored a book with Michael Shermer in the late 1980s called "Woman Cyclist" that includes chapters on endurance cycling and RAAM. Scott couriered me my copy of her book and was fortunate enough to have Elaine, Susan, Michelle, and Cat sign it. I hope to eventually meet other women RAAM finishers and have them sign this book, too.

What made the week very special was the camaraderie amongst the women riders. Most of us were not ultra-distance racers, though a few of us were randonneurs, and others had never heard of randonneuring or RAAM. When I first heard of the training camp I was intimidated and not at all confident that I would be able to keep up, hence the phone calls to Amy and Susan who both reassured me that I would fit right in. They were right! Cycling with these women was a joy, as we worked together rather than racing each other to the next stop, top of hill, etc.... The riding paces of the women were not all that different, so over the course of the week I had the privilege of riding with almost all the women. The group ranged from a beginning rider who started cycling just a few months ago (Anna D.) and who completed her first century on the last day of women's week to experienced cycle tourists such as Susan C. who had ridden her bike almost all the way around the world on the Odyssey tour and Anne Marie who had completed several PacTours and Mavis who has the Furnace Creek 508 in her sights.

By the end of the week I was sunburned and tired from 750 km of riding and amazingly I began wishing for a bit of rain. Perhaps the miserable cold and rainy weather on our spring 200 was my fault? But it was very hard to say good-bye to all the new friends I

made at this camp. Each of these women -- the participants, coaches and crew -- are extraordinary role models. Most importantly, I came back more confident in my own riding abilities, having tackled multiple 10km climbs and descents, 25+ mph headwinds (Thanks for trading pulls, Gary!), navigation, riding alone, and trying to hold my own in bike talk while riding with Lon Haldeman on his Rivendell Quickbeam singlespeed.

The Hills are Alive 300 was next on the calendar. This traditionally hilly route was organised by Don Munro this year and added some extra sections out by Don's 'hood of Duncan to the route this year.

Riding Hills

by Steve Lonergan

It has taken me a few years to figure this out, but I now know what binds randonneur ride organizers together: they are all sadists. I mean, they seem nice and all, but behind their smiles and shining faces, evil lurks. To make matters worse, there is also a not-so-subtle form of competition among the organizers. This became readily apparent to me two weeks ago at the "Hills are Alive" Vancouver Island 300km. I was riding with Ray Parker and Graham Fishlock, and Ray kept stopping to check and recalibrate his altimeter. This was fortunate for Graham and me, since Ray never got too far ahead of us. At the end of the ride, his altimeter read just over 3300 meters of climbing (or roughly 11,000 feet). My legs felt it was more like 23,000 feet, so I'm not sure I believe Ray. But I did remember why I only ride Gillespie and Rocky Point Road one time per year. And it ain't no fun in the dark, neither. As I was standing on my pedals to get up these hilly roads, the front end of my bike was wobbling like it was having an epileptic fit. Which means my light, rather than being focused on the pavement in front of me, was spastically flashing back and forth in a very wide arc.

So back to Ray and his altimeter. I realized that he was not just checking to see if the device was working or to keep track of the total elevation gain; he wanted to make sure that his "Tsunami 300km" ride in June has more climbing than the "Hills are Alive" one that we were presently riding (and that Don Munro organized). Once while he was checking the altimeter I heard him mumble, "I'll send the buggers up to the Dominion Observatory a couple of times and then I'll make sure there is more climbing in my route." I don't know about everyone else, but I find this very scary. Given my wonderful experience in the 200km two weeks previously, I brought along 12 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, 24 packs of GU and enough Power Bars to last three weeks -- assuming, of course, that one could actually eat those delicious "treats" for more than a day. There was no way I was going to bonk this time. And I didn't. Our stop at the Sooke Harbour House for a couple of beers and a snooze by the fire definitely helped as preparation for climbing Gillespie Road. In the end, the three of us rode (well, two of us staggered; Ray looked fresh as a daisy) to the finish at 11:30 pm.

The next day, I encountered another problem; I couldn't walk down stairs without a lot of pain. My quadriceps felt a bit like spaghetti that has been cooked too long. The only way I got through the 300 km in the first place was the thought how I was going to pick Don Munro up and deposit him into the Gorge Waterway when I finished the ride. But I was just too exhausted and he was smiling and telling me congratulations and all as I finished. However, if I had known the pain that was to visit me over the next couple of days, I would have been less cordial to Don. Various coaches have told me that the best way to approach a long ride is to break it up into a bunch of small rides. So the 300km is simply twelve 25km rides. Graham divided it into 10km rides, but that was too many for me to think about. Another way is to divide it by time. If I expect to get in at the 16 hour mark, then give myself a treat every hour. Sometimes that works as well. But this is the only ride I have ever done where I set my progress by the hills that had been climbed. West Saanich Road; Prospect Lake; Munn; the Malahat; Lakes; Shawnigan Lake; Humpback; Otter Point; Gillespie; and Rocky Point. There were others, of course, but these are the ones that I mentally tick off. My secret for getting up the hills? Well, I make up little rhymes or songs as I huff and puff and sweat and... The wording is very complex and the message sometimes quite subtle, but feel free to use them if you find they help (I haven't copyrighted any of them):

Here is a road called Munn,
But climbing it ain't no fun.

I sure wish I'd had a joint,
Before climbing up Rocky Point.

(To be sung loud!)
Oh, Gillespie, Gillespie,
G-I-L-L-E-S-P-I-E.
Gillespie, oh Gillespie,
You sure are beating the XX out of me!

If I can just get up Lakes,
Then I'll go flying down Herd.
But then comes another hill,
Isn't this rando stuff absurd?

The Malahat is quite a hill,
I get nightmares in my sleep.
The noise, the trucks the constant wind,
Oh, Lord, why do you treat me so bad???
(No, it doesn't rhyme, but halfway up the Malahat I lost the urge to do anything but curse.)

Sometimes I sing "filk" songs. These are folk songs that I have filched from others (and changed the wording). Maybe some of you remember this song from Arlo Guthrie. I adapted it during the ride.

I don't want a pickle;
Just want to ride on my bi - cycle.
And I don't want a tickle,
I'd rather ride on my bi - cycle.

And I, don't wanna die;
Just want to ride on my bi, ci, cle.

Late last night, the other day,
I thought I'd go for a ride with Ray,
So I went for a ride with Ray,
But there was only one thing Ray could say...

I don't want a pickle;
Just want to ride on my bi - cycle.
And I don't want a tickle,
I'd rather ride on my bi - cycle.
And I, don't wanna die;
Just want to ride on my bi, ci, cle.

Now we're riding up these damn hills,
I gotta take some more a them pills,
So I took some more of them pills,
But they didn't help much climbing those hills.

Oh, I don't want a pickle;
Just want to ride on my bi - cycle.
And I don't want a tickle,
I'd rather ride on my bi - cycle.
And I, don't wanna die;
Just want to ride on my bi, ci, cle.

And so on. If some of you would slow down a bit (or a lot), you could hear me singing these. Much better than an iPod.

Ron Robbed -- Fleche 2006

by Eric Fergusson

After being awarded the M&M trophy at the Flèche Pacifique banquet, Ron Himschoot's "Pasty White Guys" were ask to return the trophy so that it could be awarded the "Limp Ligaments". The issue was this: the Ligaments had a 29 year old rider named Scott Simpson listed as being on the team, and this would have disqualified them for the M&M trophy because all riders must be 40 or older to meet M&M eligibility. But it turns out that Scott didn't ride. And here is where I fit into this fiasco: ride organizer Michel had asked me to check control cards before the awards portion of the banquet, presumably to catch things like this. So I checked the cards, determined that Scott Simpson was a "non-qualifier"... but it didn't occur to me that this would affect the trophy results. So Don, Ron, Dave, Dottie and Charlie, a thousand apologies. But also, congratulations! to the Limp Ligaments -- Tom, Bob, Paul and David -- for winning the coveted M&M trophy.

Regardless of which of these teams took this award home this year, the more startling thing was that Manfred Kuchenmuller did not. Not only did Manfred establish this competition back in 1992, but his teams have won it in 8 of 14 years including all of the last three. Some people call the M&M trophy the "Manfred and More Manfred" trophy...

Fleche trophy winners for 2006

Gordon Bisaro Trophy for Greatest Distance

Fleche Test Dummies- 449 kms

Randy Benz, Rob Bernhardt, Bob Goodison and Peter Mair.

Lungs are for Life Trophy (One rider must be under 35 years, one rider must be 55 years or older. Total distance plus 6 points for every year over 55 of the team's oldest rider)

Travelling Willoughbys- 536 pts (422 kms)

Manfred Kuchenmuller, Graham Willoughby, Dave Gillanders, Alard Malek and Hugo Blad.

M & M trophy "The Most Kilometers By the More Mature"

For teams whose riders are all over 40 - average age x distance.

Limp Ligaments- 22,550pts (379 kms)

Tom Clements, Paul Kusch, Bob Koen, and David Lach

Sleep-riding through the Salish Sea: I dreamt I went to Hell and back

by Raymond J. Parker

Maybe he stopped for a leisurely, sit-down breakfast.

No, I don't think "leisurely" figures in his approach.

Lost the route?

On a straight, out-and-back course he's ridden before? Not likely.

Perhaps he had multiple punctures.

These were some of the rationalizations that ran through my sleepy head, as I tried to figure out how Lindsay Martin and I had arrived at the first (110km) control of the 2006 "Highway to Hell" 400 kilometre randonnée five minutes before Ken Bonner, a man who has already cycled over 10,000 *miles* this year!

It turned out Ken (perhaps seduced by recent sky-high market prices) had picked up some scrap metal along the route, which had bent his big chain ring - the only one he uses. No problem. The human dynamo had stopped at a gas station, hammered it flat, and continued merrily on his way. As I gulped a muffin and coffee at the Nanaimo 7-11, he leaped back in the saddle and headed north. As we were approaching the turn-around point, Ken passed us heading south, under a full head of steam.

Lindsay and I soldiered on, into the stiff northwest breeze alongside the blue waters of Baynes Sound. As onetime mountaineers, we admired the blindingly white, sharks-tooth summits across the Strait, guarding the remote head of Jervis Inlet. Who knew Hell could be so scenic?

The headwinds first arose at 8AM (a civilized hour) and continued building toward noon. When we turned south, we would be propelled at record speed, back toward Nanaimo, setting new personal bests. But just shortly after making the Union Bay U-turn, Lindsay announced: "That tail wind has turned into a head wind!"

"Uh, yeah, I noticed!"

Lindsay and I entertained several theories to account for this phenomenon: the notorious Qualicum winds; some other form of catabatic anomaly, sweeping down from them thar hills; Steve Lonergan had squirted peanut butter into our hubs, while we were lapping cream of broccoli soup at Critters Café; or, the hypothesis I was leaning toward, hallucinatory delirium disorder.

After all, we'd been on the road since 3AM, a starting time that had elicited cries of horror from saner folk. Which I guess left us hardcore sleep deprivation researchers to pursue the serious science at hand. Who knows what future advances will issue from our selfless dedication?

And it is science that best explains the dashing of our dreams of the perfect tailwind. No, I speak not of the psychology of ego deflation (though its fortunes may also appear subject to vagaries of barometric pressure and ephemeral winds) but the sometimes equally arcane prognostications of meteorology. The aptly-titled Environment Canada paper *The Wind Came All Ways** explains that, during the dominant summer pressure-slope pattern, "winds oscillate back and forth in the Georgia Basin ... almost like a bathtub." We were taking a bath.

"When the pressure slope is near 170° the westerly winds turn and move up the Strait of Georgia Typically, they do not go all the way up the Strait, but converge with light northwest winds that occur over the northern part of the Strait, somewhere near Qualicum Beach "

"The most well-known southwest wind is called the "Qualicum" for it pours out through Port Alberni inlet and over the community of Qualicum, then into the Strait of Georgia."

Escaping the fickle zephyrs of Qualicum, we passed through Parksville, where I noticed Steve's bike, outside a Starbucks coffee shop. It was as gratifying to see he was continuing our sleep deficit research, as much as it was to overcome his nefarious, gooey hub sabotage plot. He pulled in just behind us at the third control, back in Nanaimo, and we tried to get him to accompany us for a real meal. He gracefully declined, so that scotched our plan to spike his coffee with Sleep-Eaze - all in the name of science, of course. Wasn't he, come to think of it, supposed to be part of the control group . . . and what's in those "hill pills" he's always singing about?

The friendly staff at White Spot actually allowed us to bring our bikes *into* the restaurant and park them behind an unoccupied counter. We experimented with two kinds of pasta - which did nothing for the rambunctious stomach I'd been suffering all day - chased with pure (I read the report) Nanaimo water. We observed

that caloric infusion to last about 40 minutes - the amount of time our average speed increased marginally. During that period, we were surprised by my parents (who had been visiting family in Nanaimo) cheering from the shoulder, near Cassidy. That stimulated us as well, but not enough to catch the caffeine-crazed Lonergan, Nigel Press and Luke Galley, who had all now passed us. By the way, would the Vancouver duo please submit your report on the effect of time-release nitro-glycerine.

But the best test was yet to come, at 370 kilometres: the somnambulant slog up Shawnigan Lake Road, back to the frigid, moonlit summit of the Malahat. When I looked up from the kaleidoscope of grit, pebbles and small, pressed amphibians slowly passing under the fading white orb of my headlight, steely stars alerted me to the correct orientation of the universe, above the black gauntlet of trees.

Lindsay said at the end, that the dreaded sting in the tail of this ride "wasn't too bad." I wondered if I were still adrift, dreaming on the Salish Sea. Had I walked, not into a neon-lit Tim Horton's, but through Alice's looking glass? I was knackered!

Why did I find this ride so hard (besides the circadian rhythm study obligations and the aforementioned intestinal ailment)? I looked at results from previous years and compared my more favourable experience at last year's "very difficult" Baker 400. I sent webmaster Eric Fergusson the elevation-gain data from my altimeter - 2940 metres - and wondered why Stephen Hinde had come up with 510 metres less climbing, last year. Then it dawned on me: In 2005, the Vancouver Island 400 route had used the Duncan-Campbell River variation - sans Malahat!

Well, I'm off for an afternoon nap; perchance to dream of that ultimate tailwind.

**Referenced in "Wind Patterns in the Georgia Basin - the Salish Sea" - Owen Lange, Environment Canada.*

The Pacific Rim 600 was the first 600 of the season and the Parksville start inspired a song from Deirdre Arscott- we seem to be on a song theme this spring, hmm.....

Last Train to Parksville

by Deirdre Arscott

Took the last train to Parksville,
Heading for the Chevron Station.
Had to be there for five thirty,
'Cause I'd made a ferry reservation.
Don't be slow, oh, go, go, go!
Oh, go, go, go!

Susan fed me pasta dinner,
Salad, and even some red vino.
Made me coffee in the morning
So I could make it to Tofino.

Oh, who could hope for more?
More, more, more!

Chug, chug, chug, Doug hauled up front.
Couldn't keep up, Couldn't keep up.
My muscles were all hurting
And my soup was coming up.
Feeling low. Oh, no, no, no!
Oh, tow, tow, tow!

Couldn't hear you in the headwind.
What? WHAT? You want some pop?
We've just one last stretch together
Huh? You wanna to stop??
OH you have to GO, GO, GO?
Oh, go, go, go!

Took the last train to Parksville,
Amanda waited at the station,
Shook our hands and gave out pins.
Then it was time for some libation.
Oh feel that glow! Oh, go, go, go!
Oh, go, go, go!

Took the last train to Parksville
Took the last train to Parksville ...

Last Train to Clarksville was a number 1 hit performed by The Monkees in 1966. This is the latest rendition, Last Train to Parksville, 2006.

(Abbotsford) 4 : LM600

by a survivor

With a few notable exceptions, those of us on "The Island" rarely venture over the water to participate in randonneuring events on the Mainland. As everyone knows, it is always sunny and warm here on the Island, in stark contrast to the lousy weather to the east of us. The roads here are traffic free, life is a little more laid back, and randonneuring events are structured around cafés, coffee shops, national parks and wonderful restaurants. On the other hand, events on the Mainland seem to have as key controls places like the toll booths on the Coquihalla Highway, or an Esso gas station or, in the case of last weekend's 600km ride, Abbotsford, Abbotsford, Abbotsford and..., yes, Abbotsford. Nevertheless, I decided not to heed my fellow Island cyclists warnings and instead ventured over to Abbotsford (where else?) to ride my first ever 600km brevet. Ken Bonner also made the trip, but since I didn't see him on the ferry I expect he swam over, pulling his bike behind him, before riding to the start.

To give the Mainland organizers their due, the ride did start at the civilized time of 6:00 am, unlike the Island 400km that began at 3:00 am, about the time I normally go to bed. Despite some early morning sprinkles, 19 Mainland riders joined the two of us Islanders as we started the ride (in Abbotsford) and made our way through some beautiful countryside along the Chilliwack River.

Even with 50 km on the TransCanada Highway, the first 200+ km was quite enjoyable, blessedly flat, and made me begin to question all the nasty things that Island riders said about Mainland brevets. At 215 km, we returned to... Abbotsford, where I kicked back and had a cappuccino and some treats at the nearby Starbuck's Coffee shop. By the time I emerged, somewhat reinvigorated and ready for more time on the bike, all the other riders had left the control and were headed toward Tsawwassen. Hmm; I had been warned of this. While we Islanders like to linger over coffee and tea, or maybe a brandy or two, at control stops, the Mainland riders get their cards stamped, wolf down an energy bar and take off. You mean I actually have to look at my control card to see where to go? I clearly wasn't used to this, and an hour later missed a turn and biked an extra five km, singing merrily all the while and totally oblivious to my surroundings.

After the morning wanderings along the Chilliwack and Fraser Rivers, the ride deteriorated rapidly. We (well, since I was alone at this point, it was "I," not "we") rode along the Fraser Highway, with virtually no shoulder and mega-traffic, only to turn onto 64th Avenue, with mall after mall and a bit of ad-hoc drag-racing adding to the local colour. And while the traffic was terrible, I was more perturbed by the sight of an enormous hill in the distance, some 10km away. I just prayed that we would turn before reaching the hill. No such luck. I'm not sure whether it is more stressful to see a hill for 30 minutes before climbing it or just knowing it exists and worrying about it. I think ignorance is bliss, and I would prefer not knowing and not seeing. Where are all these cars going anyway?

As I crept into the control in Tsawwassen, I caught up to most of the other riders... only to have them leave just as I was sitting down for tea. Gee, that ain't too sporting; I was used to Ray and Graham diddling around for an hour while I got myself all primed and ready for the next leg. In a way, I was impressed with the Mainland riders; while they seem very efficient at controls, it always takes me at least 30 minutes to coax my weary rear end back on the bike seat. Seeing two riders come into Tsawwassen behind me actually gave me some courage, so I jumped (for effect only) on the bike, turned around and headed back to Abbotsford again, arriving before midnight. At this point, the thought of a warm shower and a bed was simply too overwhelming to resist, so I decided to take a short break, which turned into a five hour nap. Well, maybe it was more than a nap. By the time I was ready to leave for the final 220km it was drizzling steadily and the other riders had long gone... except for Luke Galley, who overslept and barely made it to the Maple Ridge control before closing time. My kind of guy. At least I had achieved one of my goals; getting out of Abbotsford before any other rider finished. I made it by 15 minutes!

After riding for six hours in a constant drizzle and into a headwind, all I could think about was how wonderful it would be to have a tailwind for the final 100km out of Hope. It gave me a lot of hope about arriving in not-so-big Hope. But when I saw the large sign that read "Welcome to Hope: The Chainsaw Carving Capital of Canada," I realized that this was, indeed, a strange place, and things on the Mainland don't always work the way one expects them to. This is hard to abide by. We always have a tailwind for the last 100km of brevets on the Island. It's sort of a

requirement for all ride organizers to ensure this. So as Luke, Paul Kusch and I left Hope, the rain intensity increased and the wind started blowing like a banshee. And either the wind switched direction or I was going the wrong way (always a distinct possibility), since we now had a very strong headwind. I decided the first thing I was going to do when I returned to the Island is check the randonneur rules about headwinds at the end of a brevet. It was a long, wet slog back to Abbotsford, made a bit more miserable by the climb at Woodside. About 500 metres after starting the climb, my bike just decided it couldn't take anymore, and fell on its side. No amount of cajoling could get the damn bike to rise up and carry me over the hill. With my heart beating at 220 bpm (and this when my maximum heart rate is 177 bpm), I didn't even have the energy to kick the bike. After five minutes of staring at each other in the pouring rain, we compromised. I walked 100 metres after which the bike seemed to be willing to pull me the rest of the way up the hill. I guess that is why so many people have switched to aluminum or carbon frames; steel ones are too much like donkeys; very ornery.

Late Sunday afternoons, the Lougheed Highway is jammed with cars, trucks and 4x4s coming down from mudding in the mountains, so there was a constant splash of water from the noisy passing traffic. I also realized that they must train engineers at UBC different than they do at UVic. Because on the Island, the roads have a camber to allow the water to run off into an adjacent ditch. But on the Mainland, while the road surface is convex, the shoulder is slightly concave. This means that water accumulates on the shoulder. To make matters worse, the white line that divides the road from the shoulder (assuming there is a shoulder) is not a line at all, but is a bulge of tar painted white. So water accumulates on either side of the white bulge as well. This means a cyclist has four options. 1) ride on the shoulder, through the puddles; 2) ride on the white bulge, which is slippery and eventually you slide into water on one side or the other; 3) ride to the left of the white bulge, incurring the wrath of most drivers, getting honked at, spit at and yelled at; or 4) ride in the ditch. I tried all four, and none worked very well. Luke - who had been riding with me since Hope - didn't fare much better (except his bike didn't whine or complain going up Woodside like mine did). We basically just wobbled our way back to... Abbotsford. And I was never so glad to see Abbotsford.

I never did get to talk about the ride with the others; they were long gone by the time we finished. The weather did claim one victim, as Roger Holt fell within a kilometer of the finish and broke his hip. Bummer. And to be fair, Bob and Patti Marsh were great; they had treats laid out for the riders, always were keen to help, and even waited until we laggards finished the ride before closing up shop.

So were my fellow Island randonneurs accurate in their assessment of rides on the Mainland? Well, maybe they overstated things a bit. We are a little isolated out here, you know. And the water does strange things to our brains. I also wasn't completely honest with my reasons for riding the 600km brevet on the Mainland; I really didn't want my friends to see me whining, crying and cursing as I lay on the side of the road at 500km or so. I shouldn't have worried; by the time I reached

500km, there was nobody near me.

I couldn't finish this piece without a little chest puffing, however. I know, randonneuring is not a race and the sport is not competitive. But everyone has to admit that the Abbotsford 4 600km did demonstrate the superior speed of us Island riders over our Mainland counterparts: the average finishing time for Island riders was 30 hours and 28 minutes, over three hours less than those Mainland folks. Suck on those eggs for a while!

*** Steve Lonergan, 2006 "Super Randonneur" (heh, heh; it might be better to title this "Surviving Randonneur.")**

Interior 600: Okanagan Whine Tour

by Bob Goodison

To be honest, it is not entirely my fault. We (I) will blame Richard, because he had reservations about the route and still let me do it. I don't recall his exact words, but I think "You're NUTS" was in there somewhere. What could be wrong with taking a bunch of my favorite short rides and linking them up into one very scenic (hilly) 600 ?

Seven of us started in beautiful weather at the top of the hill West of Kamloops. The first several km were downhill, and the first real climb wasn't until Chase. With no wind and no hills we were lulled into a false sense of security. After Chase we got into some mild hills, nothing to worry about. Ken was long gone out front. I thought Peter was too, but I saw him just leaving the 1st control South of Salmon Arm as I was arriving. I had an uneventful ride through Deep Creek Rd and Hwy 97 to the second control on Westside Rd. By this point a headwind was developing, and we were heading towards dark clouds.

After the control, Westside Rd gets VERY HILLY . I normally enjoy this road. I loved the 300 we did going the opposite direction. Today I did NOT love this road. Even going what I thought was an easy pace, granny gear and single digit speeds my legs went away very rapidly. I decided that I should beat the crap out of the idiot who thought of this route- wait a minute - I already am doing that. After the climb to Fintry, I saw an abandoned pylon in the ditch and thought would make a great dunce cap for the guy who laid this out- oops, me again. The nonstop flow of traffic on Hwy 97 was loud and annoying after the quiet of Westside Rd. I decided to stop at the Subway in Westbank for some food, but changed my mind when I saw the line-up right to the door. No time for this, so on I went. About 10 km later in Peachland, I started to bonk badly. I stopped at a roadside restaurant hoping for soup and a sandwich. They had no suitable soup, and no sandwiches on the menu. The waitress said she could make me a sandwich if I told her what I wanted, but at this point my brain had shut down. I ordered the special- bbq chicken and a salad- very tasty, but no carbs. Poor choice. The rest stop did me more good than the food, and I continued South toward an ever blackening sky. I had only ever done this part in a car, and didn't remember it being this hilly. It started to spit rain at

Summerland, and by the time I hit Penticton it was gushing and I was soaked. The ride along Skaha Lake is fun, even tired and in the rain. At the Okanagan Falls control I enjoyed a couple of burritos as the food I was packing hadn't appealed to me since before I had bonked.

I bonked again just as I was starting up the long hill towards Keremeos- the food hadn't processed yet. I ate some gummy fruit things, drank a can of Red Rave (same as Red Bull) that I pack for just such an occasion, and took a few moments to regroup. That was enough to get me over the top and I enjoyed the gentle long downhills into Keremeos.

At the start of the ride, I had been undecided about whether to ride through or sleep in Princeton, but by now (10:00 pm) it was obvious I needed to stop, and the sooner the better. Fortunately the road from Keremeos to Princeton is virtually flat, because so was my energy level. I stopped at an inn just off the hwy in Hedley. Everything was dark, and it looked to be out of my price range. On the road again! Next came a motel with cabins next door. All dark, but the motel had a sign saying "Open-please ring bell." I rang, waited, rang, waited and so on for about ten minutes before giving up and going to the cabins next door. It was locked up tight. On the road again! Soon, another sign advertising cabins. It was now 11:30. I wandered around knocking on various buildings unsure of which was the right one, and finally lights came on and a door opened. I had apparently set off an alarm. The price was right-\$50 taxes in, and I had a shower and a good 4 1/2 hrs sleep.

I left there at about 5:30 and cycled the remaining 25 km to Princeton where I used the A&W for my control and breakfast. Stopping to sleep had been the right choice, as my legs felt stronger after 400 km than they had at 200 km. Good thing too, as there was a major series of climbs on Hwy 5A towards Merritt. Another advantage to having slept was the scenery. This is a beautiful stretch of road, and it would have been a shame to miss it riding in the dark. I was finally feeling good, and neither the rain that started to fall, nor the flat that I got near the summit dampened my spirits. After 5A joined the Okanagan connector there was a section of road construction, but nothing major, then downhill into Merritt. I checked in at a Super Save gas, had a chocolate milk and a bag of Cheesies (rando health food) and continued. It had stopped raining.

On the way out of Merritt, I met up with Richard, Mike and Barry. Apparently they had passed me by not sleeping as long. To my surprise, none of them tried to hurt me. I looked forward to riding with them to share the work, as a strong headwind was developing. Unfortunately, they had not yet stopped for food and I had so I continued into the wind towards an approaching storm. Did I say a strong headwind? Strong doesn't begin to describe it. It was coming from the front and left diagonally, accompanied by torrential rain and hail. I struggled to maintain 15 kmh. Every time a transport went by, I had to be careful as the momentary windbreak would cause me to veer spastically towards traffic. Also unnerving were the deafening thunder, and lightning I guessed to be about 1 km away. Amazingly, I still felt strong. Luckily the storm didn't last and by Quilchena the rain stopped

and I had a good tailwind that pushed me all the way to the top of the Cardew Hill. Suddenly I was cruising at 30-40 kmh. The headwind and heavy rain returned for the last downhill into Kamloops, but I didn't care. I was done. Unloading the bike at home, I found I had another flat tire- must have picked up something on that last downhill- second year in a row I've had a tire go flat after I finished the 600.

Note for Richard- Never, under any circumstances, let me plan a 600 route again! Roads that are fun on a short ride are not necessarily good for a long one. Destroy any remaining copies of the route sheet! That said, I would not hesitate to recommend this route to anyone looking to do a 5 day tour. It has it all- Tourist attractions, wildlife (lots of coyotes & mule deer), beautiful scenery. At 100 to 150 km a day it would be great. Oh well, live and learn. We do learn, don't we?

Quest for the Ultimate Rando Food

by *Bob Goodison*

My recent bonk-fest at the 1/3 mark of the Interior 600 got me to thinking that I should write something explaining everything I know for sure about rando nutrition. Since a blank page is neither funny nor informative, I will fill in the large gaps in knowledge with speculation and experience.

A local Ironman triathlete once told me I needed about 500 calories an hour. I suspect that to be based on a lightweight rider, which I am not, who is not packing the excess of stuff that I do. On an early spring training ride my heart monitor indicated I was burning about 1000 calories an hour, although I don't accept this as accurate either. One thing I have learned is that even if I eat enough, my digestive system will not process food as fast as my body burns it. This is not a problem on rides of 300 or less, but on the 400 and 600, it is. Sometimes the only thing to do is stop for a while to let your stomach catch up.

I have found a partial solution, as long as I remember to do it before my brain gets to that familiar stage of decay where all reason is gone. Iron Fuel, available at stores that cater to runners, is more palatable than Gatorade, and will keep me going until my stomach has processed some food and I feel like eating again. I should have mixed a bottle at Peachland, but didn't because I was saving it in case I ran short later in the ride. The only fault with Iron Fuel is the cost. Similarly, energy gels can help when a short boost of energy is needed. I find the Powerbar chocolate ones to be easiest to use and least revolting. Free energy gels are available for the frugal among us. The red ones (tomato flavor) available at fast food outlets (apparently also known as stompers) are not too bad, but the ones that you find in motel bathrooms should be avoided. They smell good but leave a soapy taste in the mouth.

It is important to have as much variety as possible in your packed food. Try to keep it as healthy as possible, but some junk food is ok. I had chocolate milk and cheesies at the last control on the 600 and felt great to the finish. I favour peanut M&Ms as a fuel

source but be warned -- if they get wet (I never ride in the rain -- do you?), they look really disgusting. I usually pack a bagel or two with melted cheese to eat early in the ride. Later in the ride, I find them too dry and switch to things like dried fruit and whatever looks appealing at Tim Hortons or convenience stores. I also carry a few Clif bars, mostly for ballast as I find them distasteful after the first few hours of a ride. They seem to work ok on short rides. I have heard stories of strange things being taken on rides -- mashed sweet potato to be squeezed out of a zip-loc bag like a gel, and cold cooked pasta. I have considered, but not tried, cold perogies.

One thing is a given -- on any given ride, the food of anyone you happen to be riding with is going to look vastly more interesting and edible than anything you have. My wife Susan has suggested a solution. Everyone packs a bag of food sufficient for the distance of the brevet. Before the start, everyone trades bags, sight unseen. Problem solved.

In the end, rando food must only meet two requirements -- it must be something you can stand to eat, and it must be available.

Cariboo Loop 1000

by *Melissa Friesen*

The Cariboo Loop 1000km has now been successfully completed by two brave BC randonneurs - Eric Fergusson (62:11) and Scott Gater (64:20). This ride had claimed 4 riders in DNFs on previous attempts (all on the first day, I think). This route did add rookie Jeff Mudrakoff to its DNF list who was riding strongly, but succumbed to sleepiness and a couple bad flats in the wee hours of Sunday morning. Jeff made it to Clinton just after the control closed, but was able to catch a few hours of sleep at the hotel before catching a Greyhound back to Vancouver.

The "curse of support" on the ride is also officially over. Beyond the challenging terrain, one of the challenges is the long sections with no services. So I was out on the course providing food stops on the first day at Joffre Lake Recreation Site (~196km) and Marble Canyon (~307km). On the second day I set up a secret control between Kamloops and Merritt - to confirm that the riders took the easier, but slightly longer, of the two routes between the two cities (he he). I also coordinated the hotel and food for the sleep stops (Clinton, Merritt). This ride would be challenging to do without support and while possible, would require lots of preplanning to ensure hotel room and food could be accessed. This was especially a problem on the first night when no services were open in Clinton (~365km) after 11pm and the next possible services were in 100 Mile House, another 75 km down the road. Did you know that you can aggravate your Achilles tendon with long driving periods when the car seat is a little too far back?

Beyond the challenging terrain, the riders encountered several bad road construction sections. An 8-10km grooved pavement section

was ridden in the dark on the first night. They had an 8km shuttle in a pilot car on the second day where the road was closed to cyclists - they still rode at least 1010km excluding that section. The worst of the construction sections had to be on the Coquihalla climb, where there was a long section of the climb with only one lane open which was very sketchy to share with the large trucks.

The weather was for the most part fine. Very short rain showers between Whistler and Pemberton. A short hail storm around mid-day Sunday. Moderate headwinds throughout the course. Unfortunately, they had a major downpour on the Coquihalla climb. That descent left Scott slightly hypothermic and desiring of his cycling tights that were left in his drop bag which passed him 1/3 down the descent without stopping. Sorry Scott, it's not a control. Scott used his creativity, however, and took an exit off the descent where he rode up and down the exit ramp until he warmed up.

Doug, Susan, and Deirdre were encountered riding strong between Barriere and Kamloops on the Interior 1000km route.

Eric, Scott - Great job done on a difficult route.

Eight Riders Receive New 40,000 Pin

by Eric Fergusson

Eight BC Randonneurs received the long anticipated 40,000 pin at the spring social at Moose's Down Under. This is a life-time distance award recognizing a rider for reaching the 40,000 km mark in ACP/RM sanctioned randonneur events. Why 40,000 km...? 40,000 km is roughly the circumference of the earth, hence the design which features a earth map. You might think of this as an award for your first lap around the planet. The pin design is by Karen Smith with conceptual input from Michel Richard. Here are the eight recipients of the "first lap" award:

Ken Bonner	105,660 km
Manfred Kuchenmuller	62,606
Deirdre Arscott	52,811
Eric Fergusson	49,495
Keith Fraser	47,821
Réal Préfontaine	43,029
John Bates	42,041
Karen Smith	40,197

A ninth rider, Ron Himschoot (currently listed at 34,309 km), is also over 40,000 km including brevet distance ridden south of the border. Stay tuned while we sort out his total.

A similar award recognizes a rider for reaching the 100,000 km event distance mark - only one so far.

History- The earliest Giro Di 'Burnaby???

By Harold Bridge

The recent announcement about the "Giro di Burnaby" brings back memories of the Canadian National Road Championships of 1972 and 1974. British Columbia was to promote the 1972 edition and "ancien de TdF", Tony Hoar headed up the organizing team. Instead of designing a route that would evade the built up area the team decided to run the event where lots of people would be able to see it - Burnaby. The resulting circuit was rather small for a National Championship and needed 19 laps to get 104 miles (approx. 167 kms). The start was at the intersection of Canada Way and Gilpin by what was Burnaby Municipal Hall and went clockwise; Gilpin, Royal Oak hill, Buxton and other side streets through to Willingdon and back along Canada Way. There were many protests from team managers when they saw Royal Oak hill (pre re-build) but it was a done deal by then.

With the hill restricting attacks the race became one of attrition and all the breakaways were from the back! For the last lap there were 4 riders in with a chance and the sprint down Canada Way was won by BC's Max Grace, He thus became, I believe, the first rider to collect 3 consecutive National Road Championships. Lyndsey Gauld from Manitoba was 2nd, A Quebec rider 3rd and an Ontario rider 4th.

In 1974 Quebec was to promote the National RR. But they were swamped by all the preparations for hosting the World Championships that year and BC was asked to take on the Nationals again. I got involved in route design and not being a great promoter was less concerned about media coverage and more concerned about safety. Also the then CCA President said he wanted the route to be similar to the Mount Royal route to be used for the Worlds. Thus a Sunday morning start in Lake City commercial district with a clockwise route west along Broadway, north on Duthie, east UP Curtis toward SFU and the fast section down Gaglardi being wide open & free of houses. We got the cooperation of BC Highways to allow a single lane closure for a short section of the Lougheed Hwy from the right turn from Gaglardi to the right turn back into Lake City. It required 14 laps.

1974 was the year that Jocelyn Lovell decided to seek retribution for his troubles with the CCA the previous year. He set out to win every National Championship; on the velodrome; 1 kilo TT, sprint, pursuit, team pursuit, and on the road; team TT and road race. He succeeded too. But with Lovell in the peleton and with "cursed Curtis" hill the race again became a process of attrition with all the breakaways from the back. At the finish Lovell & an Alberta rider made an attempt at fighting it out. But a world class rider such as Lovell was not to be denied.

There was a Labatts salesman driving round the route helping to allay any fears marshalls would die of thirst. He was parked at the bottom of Gaglardi and talking to me. There was also a police car patrolling the route and when the Labatts man saw him coming he moved on.