



## Contacts

<i>President and VP Rand C<sub>y</sub>BC</i>	
Ian Stephen	576-4425
<i>Vice-President</i>	
Francis Caton	839-3801
<i>Secretary</i>	
Larry Wasik	299-6115
<i>Treasurer, RM1200</i>	
Roger Street	228-1525
<i>Past President, Clothing, RM 1200</i>	
Danelle Laidlaw	291-2508
<i>Pres. Randonneur Mondiaux</i>	
Réal Prefontaine	853-9594
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	
Susan Allen	734-2504
<i>Social Coordinator</i>	
Rainy Kent	298-3580
<i>Web Guy</i>	
Eric Fergusson	733-6657
<i>Brochure</i>	
Gerry Nicol	931-2655
<i>Awards Coordinator</i>	
Karen Smith	732-0212
<i>Lower Mainland Route Coordinator</i>	
John Bates	291-2508
<i>Mid-Island Route Coordinator</i>	
Stephen Hinde	250-245-4751
<i>Interior Route Coordinator</i>	
Bob Boonstra	250-828-2869
<i>Peace Region Route Coordinator</i>	
Wim Kok	250-785-4589
<i>500/1000 Series Coordinator</i>	
Bob Marsh	467-7065
<i>South Island Route Coordinator</i>	
Mike Poplawski	250-882-1239
<i>Database Manager, Randonneur Mondiaux Canada Rep.</i>	
Cheryl Lynch	872-8761

# Randonneur

## Marathon Cycling

### Madame Prez Sez

*Ian Stephen*

I get to do 'Madame Prez Sez'! Might have to work on that title though.

Through the energy and ideas of so many members, 2002 promises to be an excellent year for BC Randonneurs. We have an event calendar that will be the envy of the cycling world and the weather is going to be beautiful, I promise! Of course there will be just enough dark, cold, wind and rain to make us feel like we really earned those pins!

Crowning the calendar is the 2002 Rocky Mountain 1200. Last time 'round the Rocky Mountain saw riders from Australia, Denmark, England, Germany, Japan and the United States. That our 1200 is a world class event was further evidenced this year by an invitation to make the Rocky Mountain a RAAM qualifier! We are blessed to have an organizer of Danelle's caliber for this ride. Still an event of this magnitude does not come off without the help of plenty of volunteers. If you are able to help out with the 1200 I urge you to do so. This is our club's opportunity to present BC to the distance cycling world. <http://www.tour-bc.net/rando/rm1200.htm> <http://www.raceacrossamerica.org>

### New for 2002

The BC Randonneur Cycling Club is now a member organization of the British Columbia Cycling Coalition (BCCC). The BCCC is a nonprofit, volunteer organization that has been an effective voice for cycling at the provincial level. Cycling BC is no longer active in advocacy, having streamlined to deal only with high performance cycling. Tapping into the strength and experience of the BCCC is the best way for BC Randonneurs to tend our playing field, the roads and highways of BC. Through our collective experience with the provincial highways in particular, our club can provide a valuable contribution to the Coalition as well. I have agreed to be the Club's representative to the BCCC and welcome your thoughts and concerns on matters pertaining to this aspect of our sport. Phone 604-576-4425, e-mail: [ianstepn@aol.com](mailto:ianstepn@aol.com). <http://www.bccc.bc.ca>

Keep those knees warm!

### Volunteers Needed

*Susan Allen*

The British Columbia Randonneurs is run by volunteers (you all knew that right?). Unlike other organizations I've belonged to, the Randonneurs work on many volunteers doing a little rather than a few people working until they burn-out. So I've been happily doing some each year for 6 years. Its quite satisfying and not all consuming! This system requires almost everyone to do a little volunteering.

Our signature event, the Rocky Mountain 1200 runs this year and we need lots of volunteers. Contact Danelle Laidlaw (291-2508) now! (I've already signed up for the Revelstoke control where, in 1997, I picked up 2 proposals of marriage!)

### London-Edinburgh-London: A Ride to be Remembered

*Danelle Laidlaw*

Really, this ride should be called Thorne-Thorne-Thorne, as that is how John and I decided to ride it. There were several reasons for this – the biggest one was that I have a friend who lives 20 km from Thorne and it was very handy to fly into Manchester airport (with a railway station right at the airport) and stay with her, which is what we did. But also, we wanted to be able to leave a change of clothes and extra food at the Thorne control to be picked up on our way south, and psychologically, we wanted to do the harder part first and be more than ½ way finished when we reached Thorne again. So, John and Cheryl Lynch and I opted for the Thorne start. Ken

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Bonner, Bob Bose, Grant MacLeod (Saskatchewan), and Mike Lau (Ontario) opted for the Harlow (north of London) start.

It was nice to get a good night's sleep before the start at 10 am (particularly as we had a 20 km ride to the start), but it also meant that the first day was a long one. With hindsight, it might have been better to try to sleep at Carlisle (about 300 km) rather than at Eskdalemuir (355 km) as we did. The weather was good to us on the first day – with only a few showers and quite a bit of sun. But the tempo was feverish. Everyone was keen and going fast. Even with controls every 50 – 90 km, riders still seemed to be making very good time. The countryside was flat and then gradually rolling. Our fears about following the route were unfounded as everything was well marked, though there were an exceptional number of turns. And the build up about Yad Moss was unfounded – yes, it is a bit of a climb, but the 11% grade in Alston on cobblestones was much worse. I remembered that I had already cycled this route in 1989 on my way up to Lauder in the border area of Scotland.

Eskdalemuir is a Tibetan Centre that is under construction. It was hard to sleep there and the control was not particularly well equipped to handle the riders – no showers and very few mattresses. Though the volunteers did their best. We started off on our second day with very little sleep, but the beautiful scenery soon changed our grumpy moods. The Scottish moors were dotted with sheep and the long gradual climbs were rewarded with long gradual descents. Dalkeith was my favourite control for food. It felt good to turn around and head back, even though we were not ½ way through the ride. Just outside of Dalkeith, we encountered Hubertus Hohl (a German RM finisher in 2000) and Paul O'Donoghue (an Irish tandem captain for a blind rider I met on a Blazing Saddles tour in France, Spain and Portugal) and Richard (a Frenchman) who were leading the Harlow crowd. It was great to see them and see how well they were going. A little while later we met Ken Bonner and he was also doing well.

We decided not to risk another sleepless night at Langdon

**British Columbia Randonneur Marathon Cycling** is the hardcopy 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.

The newsletter is published in hardcopy form approximately every six weeks. Articles and notices are posted to the club webletter at [www.randonneurs.bc.ca](http://www.randonneurs.bc.ca) as received (or a little later if work or riding get in the way) and subsequently edited and formatted into this newsletter. If you are happy with the html or pdf version on the web and do not wish to receive further paper newsletters please send me an email at [stoker@telus.net](mailto:stoker@telus.net). I email the data reports as pdf.

Editor: Susan Allen

**Submissions:** Please send articles to me. My preference is plain text files or Word 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 March 15, 2002.

Beck and opted to stop just before it at Alston where we stayed at a B&B. Unfortunately, no breakfast for us early leavers at 5 a.m., but we did have some bread and jam – good enough. We knew we could get good food at the controls. The day started a bit cloudy, but soon cleared up and was sunny for the rest of the ride.

On our way up to Scotland, we had several problems with our chain jamming and breaking. Coming into Thorne, we had a major jam, necessitating the removal of the cranks. At this point in the ride, this little mechanical problem was not well received and I had to restrain John from tossing the crank over the hedge. We eventually got it fixed after much gnashing of teeth, and we on our way into the control. From there, we were off to Lincoln where we spent our third night. This control was on the outskirts of the town and there were no 24 hour services and no rooms to be had. We were lucky to get a bed in one of the two room the ride had booked, but Grant MacLeod was not so lucky. When we got up to leave we woke him up and put him in the bed we had just vacated – hot bunking at its best!

The rest of the ride south was fairly flat with lots of the route on country lanes. The roads were slightly busier as we got further south, but only around Harlow was the traffic really busy. We had planned to book a B&B on our way south, but never accomplished it, so we were lucky to stumble onto a pub that had one room they agreed to let. We had a great breakfast at the Crown and Cushion and were off on the last leg of our ride. Throughout the ride, the weather just got better and better.

It was actually quite hot when we finished the ride. We managed to see the entire route in the daylight and we managed to see about 98% of the 300+ riders at least once. Cheryl finished just after us in Thorne, Ken had a good ride to Harlow, and Bob Bose decided in Hovingham (just north of Thorne) that it was more fun to staff the control than to carry on – well done all.

## The John Hathaway Bequest

*Roger Street*

John Hathaway was a one-of-a-kind dedicated cyclist. He was credited in his youth with numerous records for speed and in later years for covering vast distances. He was a founding member of our Club. John and his accomplishments are unknown to some of the more recent Randonneurs. I was fortunate to see John put his over 70 year-old efforts into hills and to witness John's signature riding style. However, in retrospect, I know nothing of the powerhouse that was John Hathaway.

The John Hathaway Trophy, now affectionately referred to as the Iron Butt Award, is given to the BC Randonneur who accumulates the most event kilometres in the cycling season. To qualify, you must be a member and complete a series of

200/300/400/600 kilometre rides in the B.C. Randonneurs annual schedule. International rides recognized by the ACP (France Randonneurs) and the RM (International Randonneurs) are included in the total.

On his death, John left a small estate. The Randonneurs were the recipients of \$5,000, which we wish to use in his tribute. We have considered various ways to express John's life-style with the bequest: dedicated bicycle routes, international cycling signs, airport cycling assembly kiosks, assistance for plane, train and boat wayfarers, etc., etc. I think that the involvement of public property and physical signage places a long-term responsibility on

club individuals for maintenance, which will become more of a burden than a memorial. I therefore suggest the following for your consideration.

The bequest will fund an annual payment of \$500 for more than ten years. And the money will go to THE ANNUAL WINNER OF THE IRON BUTT (JOHN HATHAWAY) AWARD!!

Why not? Because we should not pursue our hobby for profit. Because we should not sully our pure sport for monetary reward. Because we cannot maintain our good nature towards our fellow road riders if "money" is at stake. Because additional responsibility is placed on the ride organizers for rules enforcement and completion statistics and on the data base manager for comprehensive compilations. Because money is not an incentive.

Why? Because winning the Iron Butt award is not cheap and some aspirants may be held back by costs, not ability. Because the reaction of various individuals to this proposed \$500 Iron Butt award has been interesting. Because our membership might increase. Because I think it is a good match of the bequest to a long-term memorial. Because this award is worth it. And because - WHY NOT.

It is my hope that the John Hathaway (Iron Butt) Fund will receive additional contributions and bequests - from both recognized and unrecognized Iron Butts - and continue in perpetuity.

Do you have another suggestion or are you supportive of the above proposal? Make a submission to the newsletter, phone your president or vice-president, or attend the monthly directors' meeting. Be sure your opinions and ideas are considered when a decision is reached.

## Harold's Cariboo-Boo

*Harold Bridge*

I might have been better off, as far as the event goes, doing a "Jack Eason". That would involve tying some Safeway bags of spare clothing ont' carrier and pedaling off to 100 Mile House in the middle of the week prior to Adrian Messner's Cariboo 200.

I had arranged to travel with Keith Fletcher. He works; I'm retired. Thus it was that at about 14:00 I was making my way to Keith's Langley home from Port Coquitlam. That was the plan anyway. A truck driver had different ideas and he deliberately impeded me by tipping his semi over on the Cape Horn Overpass. (The name should be corrected to the

Riverview Interchange, it's more appropriate).

Scared of spending the rest of the afternoon in the Mallardville traffic mess while attempting to get on the Freeway at Brunette, I turned off Hwy 7 and headed home. Phoned Keith and suggested I drive to Albion, walk onto Ferry and he collect me, bike and bag at the south side. We got away about 16:15 and had an uneventful trip up to 97 Mile, where we would be staying at Keith's daughter's home. I have often left my truck at Albion before but never for 2 overnights and I did wonder what I would find when I returned Sunday evening. (I found my truck, intact!).

With several things on my mind I had forgotten lunch and had a hurried cheese sandwich. Not wanting to keep the family up too late we drove straight through and had sandwiches in the car enroute. There was another doubt in my mind too. I had put a lot into the "Highlander" on the Sunday and the couple of rides I went on during the intervening week told me my legs were still tired. Should I, at 74, attempt 2-200s within 6 days? I would find out soon enough!

We got to "Hills", across the Highway from 108 Ranch, in plenty of time for the 07:00 start. I had brought the OM-2 (ed: One of Harold's cameras), planning on making this an easygoing event with rose sniffing time spent with the camera. Lined up John Bates, Danelle Laidlaw, Larry Voth, Sharon Street, Roger Street, Susan Barr and Keith Fletcher for a start photo. Click and no Clunk! The mirror didn't drop down and the OM-2 was jammed. At least it happened by the cars and I could leave the camera behind. Sorry, but the slide show won't include the Cariboo 200. We will make do with snap shots from simpler, working cameras.

We started on 700 m of gross gravel among out of control horses. Before the highway I had to stop twice to unhook my rear fender extension, it kept getting caught in the coarse tread of the Avocet "Cross" tyres installed especially for this event. I cut the offending piece of mylar off. Don't need it these days, there's no one slow enough to take back wheel off me anyway!

I was at the north entrance to 108 just in time to see the others bumping over the grassy track that would take us round the lake. It soon turned to gravel and then disaster. A few days before they had decided to lavish a few tons of sand and gravel on the trail and it became a tedious plod. I was so thankful I decided on wearing uncleated touring shoes!

I was ahead of Keith as we tried to make up time. I knew we were a long way behind the others; I was breaking through spider webs all the way! When

## Coming Events

### *Seattle Populaire – Mar 2*

See website  
www.seattlerandonneur.org

### *Seattle 200 – Mar 23*

See website  
www.seattlerandonneur.org

### *Nanaimo Populaire – Mar 24*

10 am Tim Horton's at Tenth & Lawlor  
Stephen Hinde 250-45-4751

### *Spring Social – March 30*

7 pm Croatian Cultural Centre:  
3250 Commercial Dr.  
Ian Stephen 576-4425

### *Mid-Island 200 – April 7*

200, 150, 100, 50 km Chemanius  
Stephen Hinde 250-45-4751

### *Peace Region Pop. I – Apr 7*

25, 50 km: Fort St. John  
Wim Kok 250-785-4589

### *Seattle 300 – April 13*

See website  
www.seattlerandonneur.org

### *Peace Reg. Pop. II – Apr 13*

50, 75 km: Fort St. John  
Wim Kok 250-785-4589

### *Pacific Populaire – April 14*

9 am: Riley Park Comm. Centre  
25, 50, 100 km  
Danelle Laidlaw 220-8403

### *L. Mainland 200 – Apr 20*

Surrey Sports & L.C.  
16555 Fraser Highway  
200 km: 7 am; 150 km: 7:30 am  
100, 50 km: 9 am  
Dan McGuire 942-3235

### *Peace Reg. Pop. III – Apr 20*

75 & 100 km: Fort St. John  
Wim Kok 250-785-4589

### *Seattle Fleche – Apr 26-28*

See website  
www.seattlerandonneur.org

### *South. Interior 200 – Apr 27*

Probably Kamloops  
Bob Boonstra 250-828-2869

### *Mid-Island 300 – Apr 27*

Probably Naniamo  
Stephen Hinde 250-245-4751

we eventually got back onto terra firma, well, the road anyway, we knew the first control at Lone Butte was in doubt, it was to close at 10:34 and we were averaging about 11 kph!

I didn't eat enough and the long climb south of 100 Mile House was the last nail in my coffin. Keith was very patient, like he was caring for his dear old Dad! We arrived at Milline's Restaurant in Lone Butte at 10:46 or so. Only 53.5 km in 3 hours 46 minutes? 14.25kph!? Sharon was still there and would have cooperated on the control card I'm sure. If we had been jumping for joy and raring to go I think we could have pleaded exceptional circumstances and continued. But we weren't jumping or raring except to get a second breaky in Milline's. The day was getting too warm for exertion anyway.

With local knowledge, Keith led me on a relatively secondary road that took us back to 100 Mile House via Horse Lake. A final couple of suffers got us back to Hills and Keith's car with about 86 km of cycling for the day. We went looking for the others so we could gloat. But Keith's navigator didn't (couldn't?) read the map provided and we finished up at Sheridan Lake, well on the way to Little Fort. A dozing navigator isn't much use so Keith dropped me off at 97 Mile and he went looking for the others by himself.

A shower and a doze recreated me to a certain extent and after dinner we went to Marmont's Pub to spend a quick half hour with the crowd. 90 minutes of natter and laughter made short work of the intended 30 minutes and we said our farewells to return to our beds.

An interesting trip. I shall know what to expect another time.

## 100 Mile Challenge - aka - The Harrison Ford 200

*Danelle Laidlaw*

On Saturday, September 15th, seven of us gathered at the Hills Ranch at 108 Mile House to start the last big ride of the year - the 100 Mile, on/off road 200. Adrian Messner, the local organizer was on hand to explain the route to us and to bid us bon voyage. As we stood in the parking lot, a herd of horses galloped around the cars and past us - we knew right then, this was going to be an exciting day. But the fog was clearing and it promised to be sunny, and that it was.

As we headed down the gravel road from the Hills towards the highway, these same horses decided to run with us for a while. This was fine, until one cut right in front of the tandem. The emergency brake just about had me over the handlebars. Then another horse decided he would like to see what we were doing and charged right at us, turning away at the last moment. Whewww - it felt good to reach the highway in one piece.

From the Hills, the route goes north to the 108 Ranch Rest Area where it goes around 108 Mile lake on a pathway. Maintenance had recently been done on the pathway and new gravel/sand had been put down. Susan Barr called it the "knee-deep" sand and with our hearts in our mouths we muscled our way through this stuff, occasionally coming to a wobble, wobble stop. One of these, thankfully well away from the water did have me over the handlebars - the landing was soft though. Roger Street did the same thing, and we all ended up walking a good chunk. This made our time for the first control a bit tight. The lakes were just lovely to ride around (despite the sand). The mist was just rising off of them and the scene was idyllic.

The route goes around 108 Mile Lake and Sepa Lake (about 10 km) and then joins the road through the subdivision and out to the highway at 108 Mile to head south, up the 103 Mile hill (no, it

is really less than a kilometer) and through 100 Mile House. After climbing the hill out of 100 Hill House, we turned off at Highway 24 and into the first control at Lone Butte. Because of the sluggish start, Harold Bridge and Keith Fletcher both missed the first control on time, but had a great breakfast at Meline's and headed back to 100 Mile via the back road. The rest of us, skipped breakfast but enjoyed coffee and cookies supplied by Sharon Street and headed off towards Green Lake. By this time, it was already getting hot and even Susan Barr had bare legs and bare arms - that must be a first.

Adrian was at the second control (a secret one) at the Watch Lake Lodge. Here we were back onto gravel down the side of Watch Lake and Pressy Lake. Before we got to the Pressy Lake Recreation Area, we encountered another "raiders-of-the-lost-ark-like" obstacle - a herd of cattle this time right across the road. We were on the downhill at the time and expected them to scatter but the cows were having none of it, hurry not being in their vocabulary, but rather just turned to stare at us. John and I were the first on this scene and managed to slow enough to dodge through them. We decided to pause and catch the others on film. Susan Barr's comment - at least it was the cows and not their fresh droppings!! Roger then coined the name - the Harrison Ford 200! It was turning out to be a real adventure.

Both Adrian and Sharon were at the Pressy control - just shortly after we arrived. John and I had brought a stamp in case we had to sign our own cards. But again, juice and cookies were supplied. We continued on a very decent gravel road to the end of Green Lake, then headed north again along the side of the lake (which is indeed green). Our lunch stop was to have been the Lost Horse Restaurant, but they closed just as we pulled up, so we carried onto Meline's and had the best fries in the Cariboo.

This stoked us up for the gentle climb up to the top of the hill, the amazing descent into 100 Mile, the gentle climb up, the descent to 108 Mile, the wicked rollers around the subdivision - back onto the lake trail. After significant whining and whinging to Adrian, he altered the route slightly, so that we could avoid the sand section - we exited onto the road to avoid that part of the route and headed back to 108 Mile Ranch. Even the gravel road up the Hills, did not hold any surprises for us on the way back.

John and I took advantage of Adrian's invite to meet his dogs (he has a dog sled team) and soak in his hot tub. It felt very good and was a great finish to the last ride of the season.

Thanks Adrian for putting on a great event; thanks Sharon for the great support; and thanks to Larry Voth, Susan Barr, Roger Street, John Bates, Harold Bridge, and Keith Fletcher for attending.

## Island 1000

*Danelle Laidlaw*

Every once in awhile, just when you start getting a little cocky about riding Rando rides, the Rando gods test you to see if you are ready for the challenges. I had one such challenge on my recent 1000 km ride on Vancouver Island.

Originally, I had made other plans for Labour Day weekend - thought I might provide support for a 24 Hours of Adrenalin team in Vernon. But when that fell through, and back-up plans to attend the tandem rally in Levenworth, WA didn't come together, then the idea of maybe making a run at the Iron Butt award started to take shape. Thus, it was decided to head off to

Vancouver Island to ride the Island 1000.

As this ride was unsupported, we decided to start from Parksville in order to be able to leave a change of clothes and additional food where it could be picked up at the end of our second day. The plan then was to go from Parksville to Port Hardy in day one, return in day two and Parksville – Victoria return in day 3. Stephen Hinde helped us organize motels in Port Hardy and Parksville and even came to the ferry terminal to give us our cards and route sheets and deliver us to the motel in Parksville – that was certainly above and beyond the call of duty but graciously accepted.

We started off from Parksville at 6 a.m. and had fairly good weather with light tailwinds all the way up to Port Hardy. I had done this ride before and knew to stock up on food and water after Sayward Junction. There is now a restaurant in Woss which is less than ½ km off of the road, and there is a new Esso service station just north of the turn-off for Port McNeil – open from 5 am to 9 or 10 pm. The scenery is lovely and although there is quite a bit of elevation gain, the hills do not seem too bad. We were in Port Hardy just after dark.

On our return from Port Hardy, the day started out dry enough, but rain developed 20 km outside of PH and by the time we reached Woss where we had planned to have breakfast, we were well and truly drenched. While we were there, the sun came out and although we did get wet again, it was only showers. We encountered another couple on singles, loaded with camping gear, who had started in Vancouver and ridden up through Squamish, Duffy Lake Road, off-road from Pavillion to the highway to Bella Coola, taken the ferry to Port Hardy, and were doing the last leg of that 1600 km odyssey when we met them. Quite the feat – particularly loaded down the way they were.

As we discovered, though, our odyssey was just beginning. Everything went fairly smoothly back into Parksville. We encountered Jim Trout, the only other participant on this ride at Sayward Junction. He had started a day after us and started from Nanaimo. Jim was supported and seemed to be doing well. We later learned that he finished after battling headwinds on the last leg of his trip.

One humorous incident occurred just outside of Fanny Bay, on the uphill past the ferry terminal to Denman when out of nowhere came this kid on his mountain bike with a fishing rod. He had no lights and just tore passed us. It was quite startling and funny – my theory is that he had been told to be home before dark and was haring back because he was late. Thankfully, John did not take up the chase!

Our final day into Victoria was beautiful sunshine. Stephen had routed us through Cowichan Bay because of some construction on Highway 1 and it was just lovely going along the water. We expected Stephen and Carol to spring up as a secret control, but instead Harold spied us just north of Chemainus and conducted an impromptu secret control. He had been over to participate in the Masters end of season Hillclimb and Wine and Crab do.

The fun began when we descended the Malahat. With the memory of Eric Fergusson and his broken frame in my head, when we reach the bottom, I asked John – what was that funny noise I heard. He didn't know but we both thought it might have been the sound of our tires on the white line – not so. As we got

close to Victoria, we started to hear a knocking noise when the brakes were applied as if the wheel was out of true. I looked down and it wasn't. So, we stopped to investigate and the rim on the back wheel was starting to split. Yikes!! We weren't far from the Victoria control, so we cruised in there, and then started phoning bike stores to see what we might be able to do.

Well – good luck – it was Sunday afternoon of a long weekend – what chance did we have of finding a shop that was open, that would have a 26", 40 spoke rim to sell us, and have time to build up the wheel or let us use their truing stand. The first few shops we phoned weren't open, then the Bike Cellar said they had 36 spoke, but not 40 spoke rims, but suggested Fairfield Cycles as "the" tandem shop in town. We called them up, yes, they were open and yes, they had a 26", 40 spoke rim, but no, they did not have time to build a wheel for us nor would they let us use their truing stand as they were closing at 4 p.m. (this was about 2:30 p.m.).

Undeterred, we beetled off to Fairfield, got the rim and sat outside the shop to start lacing it up (I use the word we rather liberally here – John started to lace the wheel. I ran off and bought a jar of peanut butter, some bread and bananas to make lunch). Fairfield Cycles is at the corner of Fairfield and Moss. I remembered that I had a friend who lived on Moss who just might have a truing stand, so I called him up. On the second phone call, he was home but alas, did not have a stand. Oh well. About 15 minutes later, Denys showed up at the shop, thinking that he could just lend me a wheel. But that idea went nowhere when he realized that I was riding tandem and it was a different size. But not one to be easily defeated, Denys thought some more about it, and said wait here a minute and off he went (like we were going anywhere fast?).

About 15 minutes, later Denys was back with Sam Whittingham in tow. Now, if you have never heard of Sam Whittingham, you should make a note of this name. Sam is the holder of the Human Powered Vehicle land speed record (117 km/hour – on the flat over 200 metres). But he is also a frame builder and an excellent wheel builder. His bikes are called Forte! and he builds conventional bikes as well as recumbents. If his bikes are built as well as his wheels, then they are definitely worth looking at. After the introductions, Sam pulled out a homemade truing stand and John handed over the wheel he had just finished lacing and we were in business. 20 minutes later, we were ready for the road again. We were most grateful for Denys's ingenuity and Sam's expertise.

After Denys and Sam had left and we were just packing up, Neil showed up riding a Forte! bike. He was looking for Sam and we had a good look at the bike. I was impressed with the attention to detail and Neil attested that Sam knows his stuff. If you want more information, - <http://www.fortebikes.com> - Sam Whittingham, 1204 Clover Ave, Victoria, BC, V8S 1A6, (250) 381-3119, sam@fortebikes.com.

By this time we were 4 hours behind our schedule, but just thankful to be on the road again so quickly. We made a hasty departure from Victoria in order to be down the Malahat before dark. We accomplished that, just, and were back in Parksville about 2 a.m. after a little bit of rain in Ladysmith and a great tailwind from there north.

We finished off our experience by meeting Stephen for lunch at the ferry terminal, handing over our cards and enjoying a celebratory beer. Another great ride.

## Mike Pop's Pop On New Year's Day Or How To Make 100 km Seem to be a Long Way

*Harold Bridge*

I had already decided I wanted to ride this event before I found out it started and finished at a Hostelry! Christie's Carriage House Pub were very cooperative and put on coffee for us and allowed registration to take place inside while the staff cleared up from the previous night's festivities. Of course, they expected I suppose, to get some trade from the somewhat bedraggled participants at the finish. They did!

There was a complication for me in that a friend had invited me to visit him at his Mayne Island home during the holiday. My plans to leave truck at Tsawwassen were dropped when Mike Poplawski asked for signage and pins and I thought I would be taking them to Vancouver Island. But I wasn't able to collect the signs Friday night at "Spinning" and I was to be on my way at 06:00 on the Saturday morning. However, given the variable weather I think it was prudent to cough up the vehicle fare ont' fry. I'm sure John and Danelle think so too. We would have all been very miserable riding back to Swartz Bay on Tuesday, Jan 1st, evening. But Mike got his signs. John and Danelle were able to lash them onto their single wheeled trailer they use instead of panniers.

Mike had e-mailed the route info to me so that I was able to rehearse the route in my mind with the aid of a map. Then, on Monday 31st I arrived at Swartz Bay from Mayne Island with all afternoon to use and I decided to drive the route even though most of it I knew from previous exposure. But with over 80 lines of route instructions it is a big benefit to know where one is to go and I was able to ride the whole route without referring to the route sheet. In the pouring rain that is a plus!

Staying at Mike's place had the advantage of being within sight of Christie's and so with my registration being dealt with the night before I was right ready to go at 10:00. Others from the Mainland arrived ont' 07:00 Ferry were Wayne Harrington, Larry Voth, Frances Caton and Derek Shackleford. We all agreed, I think, that this was going to take between 5:30 and 6:00.

I'm not sure why but the first few kilometres were ridden alone. It seems others were reluctant to start. But it wasn't long before the crowd was swishing by. On such a convoluted route that twists and turns, both horizontally and vertically, my progress was quite erratic and apart from Ken Bonner spending a few kilometres with his brakes on during the early part of the route and the Bates/Laidlaw tandem likewise impeded into Victoria I rode very much alone.

About 25% into the route the drab conditions let go and at Island View Road's crossing of Hwy 17 it was time to don my rain jacket. Watching the average speed function on my Cateye, I was working on getting it to read 19 instead of 18. But as soon as I stopped it slid back and my efforts to improve upon it were constantly thwarted by another hill. The long, flat few kilometres into Sidney helped a little until I came upon a rider walking a flat tyre. I stopped to see if I could help. He had used his one spare and had no patch kit. In those conditions roadside repairs are seldom successful. The only thing I could have done was leave him with one of my spare tubes. As a great believer in Murphy's

Law I was reluctant to do that. He'd got a wife to phone anyway.

After I had used the 7/11 in Sidney for control purposes I found the lady staffing the official control a few metres up Resthaven Road. In the meantime Larry and Wayne also went into 7/11 followed by Frances and Derek. As I left the official control I saw, to my surprise, John and Danelle going into the 7/11. Either they weren't taking this event seriously or they were on their second lap!?

The ride round Land's End, despite the rain, was a delight. This was mainly due to the lack of traffic. Earlier on I was quite surprised that on the morning of New Year's Day there was so much traffic on the roads. Just before the left turn onto Downey (Uppery?) the tandem sidled up to me and I had the chagrin of watching it glide away up that grunt toward West Saanich Road.

My CBS is equipped with a 50/39 double ring and a 14,15,16,17,19,23,28 block. With minimal luggage and Michelin Axial Pros tyres I find that a 37-inch bottom gear gets me up most hills. But I wasn't looking forward the worst one coming as it does at 96 km into this route. More of that later...

The ride south on West Saanich seemed to go on forever and I had the feeling I had missed the turn off for Interurban. However I found it and shortly thereafter the Control at Colquitz. At Sidney my computer jived with the official distance (36.4 v 36.6). At Colquitz I was slightly under 80 whereas the control was 80.5. Here I joined John and Danelle in the Subway and the hot choc and muffin helped restore me.

I now have to make an admission. As I checked my route sheet for distance just now I realised my memory has let me down. At 67.4 km I was supposed to turn right on Wallace and re-emerge on West Saanich at 73.3 km. That explains why the ride to Interurban seemed different to what I drove the previous day. But distance wise, despite the Wallace loop apparent on the map, I didn't seem to lose any distance. But I guess I'm disqualified. I wonder if the knowledge there could have been a secret control down Wallace might have spurred my memory?

From this point on the ride becomes an urban drag into Victoria. But it was quite impressive as the wind whipped the Juan de Fuca Strait into a frothy cauldron along Beach Drive. By the time I got to King George Terrace my legs were complaining as I dropped into the 37" gear. I stood on the pedals to no effect and a short walk was in order. About 15 minutes later I finished with 102.3 km on the computer, the same as the official distance.

We thank Mike Poplawski and his band of helpers for laying this event on. I think it should be a regular feature of our season. Albeit, there will be some year's when it gets cancelled due to weather conditions. I trust Mike will add a list of riders and helpers for the Newsletter. Whatever, some of us have started the New Year RIGHT!

## Pin Design Request

*Karen Smith*

Put your creative caps on! We are looking for a pin designs for upcoming seasons.

Got an idea? Jot it down and send it in. Your design could become our next pin. And we all know – it's all about the pin!

Please send in your designs to Karen by fax at 604-264-2432 or by e-mail [ksmith222@telus.net](mailto:ksmith222@telus.net)

## Madame Past-Prez says

*Danelle Laidlaw*

What is the meaning of Randonneur riding? Oh god, not a philosophical treatise for her last word as President. Well, sort of ....

I have written an article about my 1000 km ride on Vancouver Island over the Labour Day weekend. I had a great ride, but I was challenged and I think every once in awhile, just when we are starting to feel a little cocky about these rides, the Rando gods swoop down and say, let's see what you are made of.

The essence of randonneur riding is determined by your preparation, your abilities, but most of all, your resourcefulness. The ability to put up with, overcome, and pull together determines what kind of randonneur rider you are or can be. Marathon cycling is not about being super fit - it is about endurance - enduring pain, sleep deprivation, and often making the best of a sorry situation.

We have had all sorts of examples of this - Joan Irwin finishing a 200 by packing her freewheel with Lypsol, Eric Fergusson duct-taping his bike together on a 1000 km ride, and Michel Richard finishing the 2000 with a broken elbow and several broken ribs are just a few stories that I can think of right off the bat.

Rainy Kent put it really well - you don't remember or appreciate the rides that are easy - it is the ones that you finished despite the adversities that stick with you and give you the greatest source of pride. And I would have to concur.

So, as you make your way through the rides that you plan to do each year; as you reach the goals that you set yourself in terms of the distances you do, or numbers of rides that you do, or the time that you finish in, remember, your best ride, the one you will remember and talk about, is the ride where despite the obstacles, you draw from deep within, draw from your many resources, and make it through.

I hope you've had a great year and that next year will be even better. See you on the road.

## The 2001 Rando Season: A Mini Review

*Eric Fergusson*

At the end of September it was John Bates's name on the top of the Iron Butt list (6917 km) followed closely by Ken Bonner (who managed 3 marquee ultra-marathons and a spin up and down the Island - 6700 km), and John's tandem partner Danelle (Madam Pres) Laidlaw (6541 km) who missed riding only one event with John. John and Danelle had done LEL in July, before heading off to try tandem touring in Turkey. Rounding out the list of Titans was last year's Iron butt runner up, Ron Himschoot (with 6282 km this year). The best of the rest was a new face on the Iron butt leaders board, Larry Voth, with an impressive 4965 km. Believe it or not, Larry is a first time Super Randonneur this year, though he did squeak onto the Iron Butt list last year with 1500 km (made up of six shorter brevets.)

There were some notable fast rides this year also. After a sub 23 hour Cache Creek 600, Keith Fraser went on to be first finisher at the Gold Rush Randonnée (GRR), and co-first finisher at Boston Montreal Boston (BMB). Keith's BMB time, 54:20, was

good enough to better Ken Bonner's record for a Canadian at BMB set just last year. Ken's time last year (54:26) had shaved about 35 minutes off Ted Milner's record, which had stood since 1992. Keith's Canadian BMB record is shared with co-first finisher Michael Lau from Ottawa who also finished with Keith (well, almost finished...but that's another story) at GRR.

One final speed note... Ted Milner dusted off his Cross Canada record-setting tandem, enlisted stoker Mark Hinder, and alongside Craig Premack entered new territory by crashing up against the fast end time limit at the Fall Flatlander 200 this year. (Their time was the limit - 5:53.) Both Ted and Keith Fraser had previously (and independently) ridden 200 km under 6 hours but never in a brevet. Ken Bonner was also on the course that day, but had to settle for a 6:30. We found out later that Ken had completed the Skagit Flats marathon the day before...

And speaking of Ken Bonner and marathons...the novelty story of the year has to be his Edge to Edge stunt. Ken noticed that the 'Edge to Edge' (Tofino-Ucluelet) Marathon and the Vancouver Island 600 happened to be scheduled for the same weekend this year. Then Ken said I wonder if... "I have this problem called "wunderif" --- started with running marathons ... ran 25; wunderif I can run 50; wunderif I can run 100; now at 131 marathons; wunderif ..... wunderif I can run a marathon in the middle of a 600 km??" (from an e-mail note from Ken, May 2001.) Well, he did it. Ken rode the first half of the 600, Victoria out to the rando control in Tofino, got a drive down to Ucluelet, ran the marathon (it was Ucluelet to Tofino this year), and then got back on his bike for the 300 km scramble back to Victoria - duathlon, Ken Bonner style. His time of 35:01 was comfortably within the 40-hour time limit for the 600.

Ken also became the first BC Randonneur to pass the 50,000 km lifetime event distance milestone this year (he's at 56,129 - go) ...wunderif he can reach 100,000 km?

There was a bumper crop of first-time Super Randonneurs in 2001. Among them was another Ken, Ken Wright, who may have a claim on the top rookie distinction. Ken had ridden the Pacific Populaire 50 km route several times, and had remained upright for most of them, but had never ridden a randonnée. He rode a very fast Pacific Populaire 100 km (3:31) in April, and then went on to register an event distance total of 2100 km - the highest of the 1st time Super Randonneurs (if you don't count Larry Voth way up there in the penthouse, but who is not really a rookie). Ken's total was followed closely by Victoria area ride coordinator, and first time Super Randonneur, Mike Poplawski with 2078 km. In all there were 9 first time Super Randos - Larry Voth, Ken Wright, Mike Poplawski, David Blanche, Phil Jones, Roger Holt, Ivan Andrews, Mike Ball, and Jim Kirby - congratulations to all.

And finally, a Harold story... After his crash and subsequent hospitalization last spring, it didn't look like Harold was going to be seeing much action this year. But it's tough to keep Harold boxed-up. In the end Harold bounced back to complete the Flatlander - not satisfied with messing around with the easy route, Harold insisted on doing Tim Pollock's tougher new 'highlander' version of the ride (in a decent time too - 9:42). "I designed the pin this year," explained Harold "I just want to have one of my own" (paraphrase). Harold Bridge...74 and still zipping up those hills.