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Randonneur

Marathon Cycling



Le Prez Sez

By Lyle Beaulac

Greetings, all. The BC Randonneur newsletter is getting a new lease on life with Scott Gater taking on the editor's role. Scott's willingness to take on this task is most gratefully acknowledged (particularly by the former editor). Thanks, Scott!

2004 turned out to be a pretty good year for the BC Randonneurs, without the anticipated PBP "hangover" effect (where club participation drops noticeably in the year following PBP) really materializing after all. We started out the year with enormously successful Pacific and Nanaimo Populaires, and ridership throughout the rest of the year remained very strong. There were even a number of people who joined the club at the Flatlander 200, our very last brevet of the year. To those and other new club members: Welcome! We hope you stick around for awhile.

Although the 2004 brevet season has ended, this is actually quite a busy time of the year for the club executive, as we are wrapping up loose ends from 2004 and planning for the 2005 season. To start with, a very full ride schedule for 2005 has been finalised and has been forwarded to the ACP for their blessing. New for this year, a full slate of East Kooteney brevets will be offered on the Labour Day weekend. The rides are tentatively scheduled to start in Nelson, but that may change. Thanks to Gord Cook for stepping up to organise this event.

For most of 2004, the position of Lower Mainland Route Coordinator went officially unfilled, as Harold Bridge was off on a cross-country adventure. Club president Michel Richard filled in as best he could, but the club sorely missed having someone dedicated to this task full-time. I'm happy to report that Michel has taken on this key position for 2005

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention volunteering. It's a bare fact that this club relies entirely on volunteers for things to happen. Whether it's manning a control, organizing a brevet, selling

clothing or maintaining the database, none of these things get done without someone deciding to pitch in and lend a hand. At the time of writing, there are still a few LM brevets that lack organizers. If you think you'd like to try to organize a brevet, please contact Michel and let him know. If you don't think you're up to running a brevet, but you think that manning a control might be fun (it can be), then get in contact with the organiser of the brevet you'd like to help with. Their contact information is usually posted on the Web site.

Helping out with a brevet doesn't necessarily mean that you'll miss a ride: the course is often pre-ridden a week or so prior to the actual event, at the brevet organiser's discretion. Ride volunteers and organisers are the only ones allowed to participate in a pre-ride. The club has a policy of reimbursing volunteers for mileage and out-of-pocket expenses (within reason).

To encourage volunteering, we have recently decided to increase the mileage reimbursement to 30¢ per kilometre.

As reported at the AGM, the club continues to make a profit, despite our best efforts not to do so. Not to worry, though: this year's executive has a number of ideas for how to spend money (increasing the mileage allowance being one

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such). For details, I encourage you to peruse the executive meeting minutes, available from the club secretary, Ali Holt.

Finally, I confess that, not being a particularly hard-core randonneur, I'm not getting out on the bike much in these dark and dismal days. I do feel appropriately guilty about that whenever I see an intrepid cyclist battling traffic and the elements, but I also feel a lot safer driving my car. If you are one of those die-hard cyclists I see and admire, my hat's off to you. But please, be careful and stay visible.

Clothing news

Danelle Laidlaw

Whaddya mean you didn't get the Rando clothing you wanted for Christmas? Well, we can rectify that situation easily - we have bountiful stock of jerseys and shorts, some jackets, lots of patches, 1 pair of small tights, and Populaire T-shirts - short-sleeved and long sleeved, and lots of socks. I changed the style of the socks slightly - they now have black cuffs, toe and heel. The rest is the same. Oh, and did I mention - we will soon have gloves - back by popular demand and this time they have a bit more padding - probably selling for \$20.

Give me a call (604) 421-1717 or email if you want something. Cheers - Danelle.

First Meeting of the New Executive

Lyle Beaulac

The first meeting of the new club executive was held on October 16. An ambitious agenda of topics for discussion was put forth

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Editor: Scott Gater

Submissions: Please send articles to me. My preference is plain text files or Word and digital photos in JPEG format to: sgater@alumni.sfu.ca or mail (preferable a diskette) to Scott Gater, #108- 7411 Minoru Blvd, Richmond, BC V6Y 1Z3

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and much lively discussion ensued therefrom. I will not attempt to report on all of the proceedings of the meeting, but will touch upon some high points. Anyone interested in acquiring a copy of the meeting minutes should contact the club secretary, Ali Holt.

One of the issues which has been on our plates for some years is the disposition of the John Hathaway bequest. John, who passed away in 1997, left \$5000 to the BC Randonneurs to be used in some manner appropriate to the aims of the club. Although a number of ideas for using these funds have been tossed around over the years, none have come to fruition. Given that seven years have passed since the bequest was made, there was general agreement at the executive meeting that it was past time for this money to be spent. There are currently five suggestions being pondered by the executive (see the minutes for details), but if anyone has any other good ideas, please bring them forward.

The short ride series was also up for discussion. By all accounts it was a disappointing year for short rides in terms of participation. A committee was formed to study the short ride issue and to make recommendations for the club at a future executive meeting. Anyone who has accumulated enough distance to qualify for a 500 km or 1000km medal qualify for a 500 km. or 1000 km medal in 2004 should contact Stephen Hinde the details of all their qualifying rides (dates, distances and times).

The brevet schedule for 2005 was tentatively passed by the executive, pending some minor adjustments. The final schedule has since been forwarded to France for approval by the ACP. In addition to our usual smorgasbord of brevets, Gord Cook has generously agreed to organize a full selection of brevets out of Nelson on the Labour Day weekend.

A proposal for a ride organizer's toolkit was put forward and enthusiastically embraced by all in attendance. Among other items, it was suggested that some spare bike lights be included in the toolkit, for loaning to new riders who may not be aware of the club lighting requirements. Danelle has posted a request on the discussion list for people to donate any old lights they might have for this purpose. In the interests of keeping the variety of batteries needed to a minimum, she has asked that only lights, which use AA batteries, be donated.

After much circuitous discussion a vote was made on the issue of fender requirements for brevet participation. The final resolution was that full rear fenders with mud flaps will be required on all brevets throughout the year.

There will be a time penalty of 1/2 hour assessed for non-compliance with this rule, to be added to a rider's total event time. This resolution passed by a slim majority of the attending executive members. If you take exception to this ruling, consider volunteering for next year's executive. You may be able to swing the vote the other way then.

Finally, the Executive would like all club members to understand that they are welcome to attend executive meetings and will be given a voice. The executive will take into account any opinions expressed by members when voting. Please advise Lyle Beaulac (President) or Ali Holt (Secretary) if you are planning to attend a meeting so that arrangements may be made to accommodate all of those attending.

A Reminder for new and old riders alike

Make sure you have lights, fenders, mud flaps ready before the first ride of the year and make sure to test them out before hand, a spring 200 is an awful place to find out that your lights are dead or your fender rubs. Make sure to pack spare batteries for your lights (if you use batteries) and keep in mind that the basic requirements of the club rules are just that- the basics. Nothing bad about carrying some of those leg band reflectors for night or low light riding (take up no space in a pocket and yet are great for getting the attention of drivers) or putting on some extra reflective tape or lights to get the attention of other road users. Also double-check the rules of any other club that you are going to ride with. Other clubs might require more lights than you have and it's awful to find that out the morning of a ride after driving a long way from home.

Lighting Discussions

For those who do not use the club discussion page on the Internet, there may be some things that might be of interest. We'll do our editorial best to clip out some of the discussions that ensue on the 'net and bring them to your attention here in the newsletter. One of the items that strikes a chord with rando riders is the discussion of lights and with all the new technology that gets highlighted every year, I though some discussion of some of the newer LED lights on the market might be of interest to the membership at large. So for the purpose of this occasion, and seeing how the shortest day of the year is just about upon us, what better then to serve up two opinions about lighting from Gary Baker and Barry Bogart. I certainly hope you find the test enlightening!!

LED vs BLT (no this is not a food test!)

Gary Baker

Hi folks. I got my hands on the new Cateye 500 LED and did a test ride last night with it. I also mounted a Cateye 300 LED, a Cateye Halogen Hyper with the upgraded bulb (approx 3W rating) and two BLT lights (a 6W and a 10W) to see how they all compared. Here is what I and the folks with me observed:

BLT 6 W - throws a wide unfocused light. Next to useless

Cateye Halogen Hyper - sharp focused beam. Bright for its rated output. Almost as good as the BLT 10W. People liked the 'color' of the beam.

Cateye 300 LED - not as focused or as bright as the 'Hyper'. Bluish hue took some getting used to. Not in the same league as the 500.

BLT 10W - more a flood light, but still projected a solid light that was more than adequate for cruising at 30 kph

Cateye 500 LED - the winner is... Projected a strong focused beam (more focused than the BLT 10W), much like the Halogen Hyper. Also had good flood light characteristics. Not as wide as the BLT 10W, but it was felt a better use of the light than the wide spread on the BLT 10W. Throws a 'whiter' light than the 300LED.

When asked what lights they'd like to mount in order of preference, the Cateye 500 LED was first, hands down, with the Cateye Halogen Hyper the second choice. We intend to take the 500 out again with some 12W, 15W and 20W lights to see how it stacks up against them. I'll let you know. It will be interesting to see if the 500's battery life is as long as they claim.

LED vs Dynamo

Barry Bogart

I picked up an EL -500 at REI (\$50 USD) and did some subjective testing with it. I rode the main trail in Pacific Spirit and back to Dunbar & 41st on SW Marine at around 9:30pm.

My friend Margaret rode my PBP bike with the Litespin dynamo and Euro-style Basta headlight (like the Lumotec). I had the EL-300 (5-LED job) on my commuting bike as well, and together with the 500 the coverage wasn't too bad, but I liked the Basta pattern better. There was more continuous coverage from the bike right up to the hot spot.

A few days later I rode around Stanley Park about 6 o'clock. It was overcast; darker than UBC and I noticed that the 500 close-in light was better than I had thought at UBC. Another fellow on this ride had the Schmidt/Lumotec combination and it was definitely brighter riding down from Prospect Point at 40+.

But if it is really pitch black, I think the 500 would be acceptable for rando rides. But I miss the road coverage of the old 5" Union headlamp - you could see the whole road in front of you as well as enough distance away. I prefer a halogen lamp on my helmet to spot the upcoming signs and corners anyway. But the

Coming Events

New Years day – Jan 1
11:30- Mike Poplawski
(250) 882-1239 or
ancien2003@shaw.ca

March 5- Seattle Populaire
100 km
Contact Seattle randonneurs

March 19- Spring social
Michel Richard
604-739-6798

March 19- Seattle 200
Contact Seattle Randonneurs

March 27-Naniamo
Populaire
Stephen Hinde -
250-245-4751

April 3-Pacific Populaire
Danelle Laidlaw
604-737-0043

April 3-Peace Region
25 or 50 km
Wim Kolk 250-785-4589

April 9- Van.Isle 200
Also 50, 100, 150 kms
Stephen Hinde 250-245-4751

April 9-Seattle 300
Contact Seattle Randonneurs

April 10 Peace region 50, 100
Wim Kolk 250-785-4589

April 16- Lower Mainland 200
TBA

April 17-Peace Region 100, 150
Wim Kolk 250-785-4589

5500 is pretty good as a single source. I put the lightmeter on my 500, and found that it was just about the same as the Hyper1500: 4800 lux for 440 foot candles (good enough).

The EL-300 was only about 1200/110, about the same as the Hyperlight on the low setting (not good enough). The Cateye Micro was just a little lower than the 1500 - 3600/330. I was disappointed to see that the EL-500 dropped off pretty fast, though. It was down to about 4000 lux after 4 hours and after 15 hours it was about down to about 1200. It was virtually out at 19 hours.

The tests were done with brand-new, freshly charged 2300mAh NiMh batteries. Measurements were made using a 18" box with the light on one end and a Gossen incident lightmeter at the other end.

Book Suggestions (also from the discussion page)

Rough Ride by Paul Kimmage - story of drugs in cycling

French Revolutions by Tim Moore - a non cyclist tries to follow the route of the Tour de France

The Rider by Tim Krabbe - covers a one-day race, interspersed with flashbacks to his other 300 and something races.

Great Rides by Pro Cycling magazine - lots of climbs and one day rides all over the world.

Lonely Planet has several cycling specific guides out for touring in places such as France, Italy, Australia and New Zealand. Nothing like beating the winter blues by looking at pictures of warm sunny places!

Rocky Stories

This was a Rocky Mountain 1200 year and that means lots of stories from the ride. Here are a few ride reports to give a taste of the event to those who have not ridden it.

Rocky Mountain 1200 km: A First-timer's Report Or... "A Gourmet's (Gourmand's?) Guide to the Rocky Mountain 1200 km

Susan Barr

To make a long story short, the ride was wonderful, all 71 hours and 9 minutes of it. Reflecting back leads to a jumble of emotions, but most of all, to a sense of elation and joy that I had the opportunity to be part of something amazing. To make that long story slightly longer, what follows is a non-chronological account of a few of the highlights. And to make the story longer still, consult the event website:

<http://www.randonneurs.bc.ca/rocky/rm1200.html>.

Basic Stats and Miscellaneous Trivia

1210 km; 84 (4 a.m.) or 90 hour (10 p.m.) starts; 94 starters (85

men and 9 women) from 9 countries (Canada, USA, United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, Finland, Bulgaria, Italy, and Germany); 7 bike varieties (tandem, recumbent, fixed gear, single speed, hybrid bike, mountain bike and road bike); 75 volunteers; 75 finishers. Controls were at Clearwater (124 km), Blue River (230 km), Tete Jaune Cache (341 km), Jasper (446 km), Beauty Creek (533 km), Lake Louise (680 km), Storm Mountain Lookout (705 km), Golden (813 km), Revelstoke (962 km), Enderby (1076 km), Salmon Arm (1098 km) and Kamloops (1210 km). Approximate distance without a traffic light: about 440 km, between Kamloops and Jasper. Maximum distance without access to drinking water: about 110 km (I heard that RVs were a supplementary source for some!). Amount of climbing: 3 computers provided estimates of 8100 m, 8900 m, and 9500 m (in other words, plenty!).

The Zagat Survey

One of my few regrets about the event is that I wasn't able to spend more time eating at the controls, and couldn't sample everything that was available.

The food was excellent! Highlights were the meal served at Tete Jaune Cache (picnic tables and umbrellas by a river; mountains in every direction); ice cream and macaroni and cheese (separately) in Jasper; breakfast at the Beauty Creek Hostel (made-to-order omelettes, hash browns, ham, pancakes...); the pasta at Lake Louise; perogies at Golden; wraps in Revelstoke; chili in Salmon Arm.... Blue River was one of the few controls that didn't provide a meal, but this suited me perfectly - I had vivid memories of substantial cinnamon rolls in Blue River from a 600 km a couple of years ago, and sure enough, the restaurant at the control didn't disappoint.

Wildlife

My first bear sighting was between Tete Jaune Cache and Jasper, when I was riding by myself. A rather large black bear loped across the highway about 50 m in front of me, and my heart was immediately in my teeth. I tried to calm down, thinking "Am I ever lucky to have seen a bear!". That worked for awhile...until Bear #2 loped across the highway. I started to sing: "Loo-de-loo-de-loo, bears please stay away from Su(san)". As anyone who has heard my singing voice will attest, this was undoubtedly a terrifying experience to any life form (wild or otherwise), and that was the end of my bear sightings for the evening. Later on, however, we saw numerous elk and moose, as well as another black bear. Several riders saw a grizzly bear near Lake Louise.

Weather

Through the years, riders on the Rocky have experienced virtually everything that can be found in the weather god's arsenal, including snow, sleet and heavy rain. That was what worried me as I prepared for the ride, and those worries were given further weight by Ken Bonner's experience a couple of weeks before the ride.

He'd ridden a 600 km in the Rockies, with steady hard rain, a HIGH of 8C (46 F) and a howling north wind. So I packed all my "arctic gear", which turned out to be completely unnecessary. Instead, we had near record-breaking heat and blazing sunshine.

Scenery

Amazing, glorious, awesome, spectacular, achingly beautiful... None of these words do justice to the scenery we saw. Even when grinding up hills with the speedometer well into single digits, the scenery was magnificent, and served as a wonderful distraction to fatigue. Bow Lake - a brilliant turquoise blue, with a backdrop of soaring mountains - almost too beautiful to be real. Rogers Pass - snow-capped peaks in every direction, memories of Roger Street [\[note 1\]](#) brimming up in my heart. Mara Lake as the sun began to set. The Northern Lights shimmering and dancing across the night sky. Kodak moments to last a lifetime.

Roads

One of the good things about the Rocky Mountain 1200 is the lack of navigational skills required to follow the route: as someone said, "If you're on a road, you're on THE road". Unfortunately, at least along the Trans Canada Highway, so is a lot of traffic. For the most part, though, the roads were fine, with wide shoulders, and courteous traffic. But the frost heaves on the Icefields Highway became a bit tiresome (ka-thunk, ka-thunk, ka-thunk), the rumble strips that appeared and disappeared randomly tended to catch one's attention, and the 'crevasses' on the shoulder between Lake Louise and Golden kept riding at night exciting.

Sleep

When registering for the Rocky, the registration form requests that riders indicate whether they plan to sleep at controls or at nearby motels. The third alternative was to check off "Sleep? Who needs it?" Accommodations at the controls were reportedly very good: dark, quiet rooms separate from the main control, with sleeping mats and blankets provided, and volunteers who would wake you at the requested time. I opted for the nearby motels, and managed to get 2-3 hours of sleep in each of Jasper and Golden. I would have had another hour in Jasper, but the deterioration in my mental skills prevented that. Here's why: The event stayed on Pacific time, even though Jasper was in the Mountain time zone. I set my wrist watch (that stayed on Pacific time) to go off at 4:15 a.m., and decided to set the alarm in the hotel as a back-up. I knew that it needed to be set for an hour different, but made the wrong decision - it went off at 3:15 a.m. 'event time'. ("Sleep? Who needs it?")

Scary Stuff

Just after leaving Tete Jaune Cache, a police car went by, siren screaming, followed shortly thereafter by an ambulance. My first thought was "Please, don't let it be a cyclist". But it was. Melanie Ashby, from Miami, had hit a hole in the road and crashed. When I went by, she was unconscious and being stabilized to be airlifted back to Kamloops. Fortunately, she had no serious injuries, but her accident was a terrifying reminder of how quickly things can go wrong.

Mind and Body

Before the event started, I felt as if I was jumping into an abyss: it's a long way between the 600 km ride I'd done during the brevet series and 1200 km. But as it turned out, the abyss wasn't as bad as I had feared, and I had a very soft landing. I actually enjoyed

almost the whole ride, which I hadn't thought would be possible. On the physical side, I had little to complain about -- several of us vied for bragging rights about whose rear end had lost the most skin, and a week after the ride, my palms are still numb and my thumb-forefinger control is sub par. By any account, a minor price to pay.

People

It's hard - no, it's actually impossible - to say enough about the organizers (Susan Allen, Doug Latournell, and Sharon Street) and the 75 volunteers who made this event a reality. I was overwhelmed by their support; heartfelt thanks go to one and all. There were also a number of remarkable riders. Ken Bonner, our 61-yr-young legend, finished in 52:20 with NO SLEEP. He came within 18 minutes of the course record, and in true randonneuring spirit, said that he "might have picked up the pace a bit if he'd known what the record was". Ken, along with Mike Sturgill (45, Phoenix, AZ 58:32), Landon Beachy (52, Kalona, IA 68:29) and Jim Joy, 55 (Minneapolis, MN 68:34) qualified for the Race Across America (RAAM) by giving advance notice of their intent to use the ride as a RAAM qualifier and finishing in less than 65 hours (age <50) or 70 hours (age 50-59). Also noteworthy were Manfred Kuchenmuller and Glen Smith, both of whom have completed all six versions of the Rocky. Beyond that, though, everyone's ride was inspiring: those who improved on their previous best time by large amounts; those who took much more time than in the past, but stopped to wade in streams, take pictures, and hang out at controls; the first timers who were amazed when they crossed the finish line; and those who kept on until their bodies gave out or they ran out of time.

Note 1: Roger was a long-time member of the B.C. Randonneurs with an incredible zest for life and cycling. He'd ridden the Rocky Mountain 1200, PBP, across Canada, and many other rides. He died suddenly in 2003, and was very much with us during this ride.

2004 Rocky Mountain 1200K Ride Report

Jeff Bauer

Last July I rode the 2004 Rocky Mountain 1200. It is a ride of about 760 miles, starting in Kamloops, British Columbia. In preparation and training for the Furnace Creek 508, I rode it on my fixed gear bike, a style of riding which allows a single gear selection and no coasting. Here is my ride report.

It's Tuesday morning and I'm still waiting for my luggage, including my bike. The lost luggage phone line has been busy for hours, but finally a call comes through to announce that my bag will be delivered to the hotel in a couple of hours. Bag? Not bags? I worry that either my gear or my bike will not be delivered. When the delivery guy arrives, he has only my duffel bag. Another call to the lost luggage finally gets through and they confirm that my bike has also been found. It's delivered later that evening by a girl who's dragged it all the way to our second floor motel room. I tip her for her efforts.

Aside from the hour or so it takes to assemble my bike and arrange my gear, David Bundrick and I just chill out. I read John

Irving's "A Prayer for Owen Meany", watch some of the Tour de France, and sleep. We both bank a lot of sleep prior to the ride.

The next day, David and I ride to the bike inspection, which is pretty laid back. I learn there's another fixed gear rider -- Sam, from Brooklyn. He's going out with the 90 hour at 10:00 pm, but I prefer the giving up 6 hours and departing with the 84 hour group at 4:00 the next morning. There's also a single speed rider (1 gear with coasting) who rode his bike 450 km from Vancouver. At the inspection, I got one of two reactions, depending on the nationality of the observer:

American: Are you f--king crazy?

Canadian: So, you're f--king crazy, eh?

But Kent Peterson has already established precedent (twice) by riding his fixie on this course.

At the bike inspection, the volunteers are careful to explain that it's a L-O-N-G way between services. To us dunderheads from out east, we learn not to expect to find a 24-hour service station every 20 miles. Indeed, en route I saw a sign that said "Next Services 158 Km".

Afterwards, David and I had lunch with the Kaiser brothers. Our motel was less than 10 miles from the start, but it was all uphill -- some sections pretty steep. I'm glad we got a good rate on the room.

Kamloops (0 km) Thursday, 4:00 am

I woke up at 2:00 am feeling well rested. The temperature was slightly chilly, but I didn't bother with arm warmers or a vest. Some riders were wearing jackets and tights. I mixed up a double dose bottle of Sustained Energy for the first leg, but would use solid food for most of the ride. For a while I was riding with Scott Ohlweiler, Kevin Kaiser, and Will Roberts, the single speed rider. I was particularly impressed with Scott, because even though he was considering a 60 hour finish, he was carefully managing his speed at this stage.

Clearwater (122 km) Thursday, 8:45 am

It would have been nice to draft other riders, especially with the headwind, but I didn't want to waste energy spinning to keep up going downhill. By the time I reached the first control at Clearwater, the temperature was still comfortable. I topped off my water and grabbed a tuna sandwich. There's a limit of one sandwich and cookie per rider, presumably so the slower riders have something to eat by the time they arrive.

We'd been forewarned about 2 km section of really bad road around kilometer 74, but it has just been repaved. Nice. The local population, never very dense, has dropped, as we see no more farms, just forest.

Blue River (228 km) Thursday, 1:23 pm

More headwinds on the way to Blue River. I'm not drafting off of anyone, but I do better against a headwind on my fixed gear than on a geared bike. We're gradually gaining elevation, but at such a slow rate it doesn't even feel like climbing. This is big, open country. The scale is enormous for those of us who do most of our riding east of the Mississippi.

The scenery is beautiful. We're riding on the shoulders of Highway 5, along the Thompson River. A major railway parallels the road and the trains pass us throughout the day. Despite all the eye candy, the riding itself is somewhat boring. Pretty flat with hardly any hills, much less major climbs. Flat is boring and uncomfortable on a fixed gear.

By the time I reach the control, a Husky service station at Blue River, it's pretty hot and I've almost run out of water. I grab a couple of bananas, a sandwich, and refill my Camelbak and water bottle. For the next 90 km there will be no services and little habitation.

Jasper (443 km) Thursday, 23:32 pm

Shortly after 10:00 pm, Kevin and I reach the Jasper Park Gate. The girl at the gate just waves us through, having seen all the earlier riders pass. It's too dark to see anything other than the road in front of us, so the scenery gets unnoticed.

At one point Kevin is in front of me and doesn't notice a grazing elk until the critter raises his head. With antlers of a 2 meter span, Kevin is lucky that he doesn't get impaled. The elk then scurries into the brush.

Jasper is a busy control. This is where many of the riders will bed down for the night, so there is a constant flow of riders coming in or going out. Kevin and I note that David Bundrick is still making good time. I stop for an extended sit-down meal, my first of the ride: fruit, mashed potatoes, macaroni & cheese, cottage cheese. After filling up with water and Gatorade, I leave with Kevin.

It's quiet for the first time in our ride, since this portion is closed to trucks. Kevin and I are riding at a conversation pace, which helps to keep us alert. As the night progresses, we get closer to Beauty Creek, and the temperature drops -- due to the late evening hour as well as our slow gain in elevation. I tend to babble on at night to stay awake, though afterwards I can't recall what we talked about.

I'm wearing two upper layers, plus arm warmers and glove liners. It's chilly, but not uncomfortable. I'm saving my tights until we arrive at the Beauty Creek control, so I won't have to stand around in wet tights

Beauty Creek (530 km) Friday 5:05 am

As we get closer to where the control was supposed to be, we're worried that we might have missed it -- the entire region looks devoid of any habitation. Finally a gravel road leads us down to a rustic hostel. Although it lacks water and electricity, the volunteers have rigged up heat in the cabin and are cooking up ham, pan-fried potatoes, hot cakes, scrambled eggs, and hot chocolate.

Dave Bundrick had slept briefly there and we met him as he was leaving. We had a nice breakfast and I put on my tights. We were now headed through the Icefields and into some actual climbing. With the snow covered mountains surrounding us, we feel like we're riding through a refrigerator. It's 42F and I'm grateful that we're not riding through rain.

About 10 km out we started climbing Sunwapta Pass (2035m).

This is the one climb I was especially interested in, because Kent Peterson had to walk up it both times. There is a steep 3 km section, then a drop, then a less steep 10 km section. After hearing all the horror stories about it, I was pleasantly surprised that it could be readily ascended in my 42x17. Though not a cakewalk by any means, it was less difficult than other steep climbs I'd tackled this year.

Around the 600 km mark, we stopped at a restaurant and picked up some food and water. Our next climb was up Bow Pass, at 2065 meters, the highest point in our ride.

The climb was under the hot sun with fast traffic passing close by the whole way up. I stopped twice just to get in the shade briefly and off the road. Our shoulder narrowed as we got closer to the summit and the grade got steeper. We saw numerous cyclo-tourists with red panniers heading down in the opposite direction. Once upon the summit of Bow Pass, we more or less descended for the next 45 km into Lake Louise.

Lake Louise (676 km) Friday 1:58 pm

Kevin and I were joined by Scott at Lake Louise. He'd had a spoke break earlier in the ride, which explained why he'd not caught up with us sooner. We decided that the three of us would try to stick together through the night.

My original plan had been to make it to Golden within 40 hours, but this no longer looked practical. I would have to cover 136 km in 6 hours. This would not be a problem on a geared bike, especially with the 80 km descent down from Kicking Horse Pass.

But weighing the options of making an all out dash for Golden over the next 6 hours vs. spending the next 20 hours of riding with my friends, I chose the latter. I was close enough to my 40 hour goal that I felt I could make some adjustments in the interest of enjoying the remainder of the ride.

It was incredibly hot when we left Lake Louise, but Scott promised that we'd soon be in some shade. He'd already driven through this section with his family before the ride.

Storm Mtn Lookout (Castle Junction) (701 km) Friday 4:01 pm

The route to Castle Junction is really just an out-and-back detour to help fill out the 1200 kilometer distance, and we would pass close by the Lake Louise control on the way to Golden. At the control we just nibbled a bit, having eaten our fill at Lake Louise. A couple of cute girls passed us on the way in, one was the daughter of the control official.

Even at this point, I could have possibly pushed into Golden by 8:00 pm, but given the nice pace and pleasant company, there didn't seem to be much point.

However, Scott had convinced Kevin that it was still possible to complete the entire ride in under 65 hours. This is one of Kevin's 1200K goals. I was thinking that it was possible, but worried that I'd slow them down on my fixed. As long as they didn't mind waiting for me on the descents, or hammer too hard on the flats, I was willing to join them, though privately I had my doubts that I

could last 65 hours without sleep.

Just before 6 pm we got to the top of Kicking Horse Pass. I didn't know it at the time, but virtually the remainder of the leg would be downhill (65 km) until we reached Golden. The descent seemed to go on forever. It would taper off for a while, then you'd descend again for several kilometers. The shoulder would occasionally turn into gravel or just disappear.

Golden (811 km) Friday 9:35 pm

Just a few kilometers before we arrived in Golden we climbed up a steep bridge, partially still under construction. Scott had a bad time of it and had to stop. He was feeling pretty sick and we had to slowly limp into Golden. Scott checked into a motel there and even called his wife to stop by. I was worried that if Marlene came out to see him, Scott would be tempted to quit. I wouldn't know until after the ride that Marlene had wisely refused to come out to Golden, thus removing the temptation, and Scott had resumed his ride the next morning.

At Golden the mosquitoes were particularly bad and had managed to infiltrate the interior of the control building. The control had a working kitchen, and I tried a local dish known as a "wife saver". It consisted of a casserole sandwiched between toasted bread and covered with some crunchy wheat flakes.

At this point Kevin and I faced a decision. I wanted to ride with Kevin, but worried that we'd need some sleep before long. We'd already gone for 42 hours, and the next control at Revelstoke was 150 km away. While Kevin lay down, I took the opportunity to take a shower, shave, and change into fresh clothes. Although the RM1200 permits riders to have up to 3 drop bags, I deliberately chose to use a single bag and have it waiting in Golden. My idea was that the thought of fresh clothes and a shower in Golden would keep me motivated to continue without stopping until I arrived.

I arranged to have the same 11:30 wakeup time as Kevin, so we'd be back on the road soon. I think the pre-emptive nap paid off later, as we were able to ride through the night and into the next day.

By midnight we were back out the door, but were still a bit fuzzy in the head. We got off route and out of frustration had to go back to the control and carefully count off kilometres, turn by turn to get to Hwy 1.

As we left Golden, we were pitched into total darkness, punctuated only by trucks passing in both directions. We couldn't see any of the countryside and there was no frame of reference aside from the white line dividing the road from the shoulder. The night was slightly chilly, though not unpleasant. I had to stop constantly to pee every 30 minutes. At least I was getting rehydrated, recovering from the heat of the previous day.

At one point we got off the main road by following the white line. The reason I knew we were off course is that we had gone for almost a full minute without being passed by a truck. The road was *that* busy, even at 2:00 am. Backtracking, we'd noticed a fork in the road covered with dirt.

We can tell by the sounds of water that we're crossing a river, but

never see it. Most of this portion is steady climbing which suits me fine, though it obviously affects our speed. At one point, just before sunrise, I hit a low spot. I've been here before and just back off from Kevin so I don't run into him. I focus on breathing and try to avoid (sometimes unsuccessfully) potholes. If I keep on riding, this fugue state will pass, especially as the sun appears.

An old Roger Miller tune, unbidden, enters my consciousness and won't let go:

Trailer for sale or rent
Rooms to let...fifty cents.
No phone, no pool, no pets
I ain't got no cigarettes
Ah, but..two hours of pushin' broom
Buys an eight by twelve four-bit room
I'm a man of means by no means
King of the road.

About 80 km into this leg the sun starts to appear and I've become more alert. I talk to Kevin, but he's unresponsive. Maybe he's just hit the same low energy patch I've traveled about an hour ago.

Soon we're encountering the first of 5 tunnels. The trucks never slow down and it's somewhat scary sharing the road with them in these confined quarters. I jump ahead of Kevin in one tunnel so I can take a photo of him emerging. It's interesting that these aren't tunnels that take you through anything. Their purpose is solely to protect the roads from avalanche debris.

After some slightly steeper climbing we make it to the top of Rogers Pass. At the summit we stop as it is the only store (fortunately open 24 hours) on this leg. I eat some cold pasta and have a soft drink. Kevin's somewhat bummed about our progress. We have been moving pretty slow, but we've been climbing since we left Golden. The important thing is not to get discouraged, as low morale will hurt you more than any physical impediments. I'm sure our speed will pick up with daylight and the next section is a 65 km descent.

Revelstoke (959 km) Saturday 9:15 am

I work hard on the descent into Revelstoke. It's finally starting to seriously affect my riding ability, as the saddle interface is getting very painful. Kevin is having to wait for me and that's no fun for him. Several riders pass us as I slowly make my way downhill. We pass through 3 more tunnels.

As we approach the city of Revelstoke, the sun is already intense. It's going to be a scorcher of a day with the forecast of over 100 degrees. These two days have set new records. It hotter in British Columbia than in Miami, Florida. We make a few turns through the city and find ourselves at the Revelstoke Curling Club.

At the control everyone is friendly and eager to serve. I order a veggie wrap and some pasta while gnawing through chunks of watermelon and cantaloupe slices. As Kevin swaps stuff with his drop bag, I apply sunscreen and fill my Camelbak with ice. One of the volunteers has updated me with the Tour de France. Lance has won yet another stage (3 in a row) and is unstoppable. By 10:00 am we're back on the road and exit Revelstoke in a slightly different route than we arrived.

About 20 km into this leg, I call out to Kevin. I'm having a hard time keeping up with him. We stop and examine my front tire. It's squishy, the victim of a piece of wire causing a slow leak. I remove the wire and change the tube. We're sitting directly under a hot sun, but there's no shade available anywhere. A passing vehicle offers me the use of their floor pump, but I've already inflated it with my CO2. Kevin and I are both aware of how lucky we've been to have so few flats over the past 1000 km, considering that we've been almost exclusively on the road shoulders.

Soon we encounter bridge construction and traffic is backed up for a couple of kilometers. Fortunately we can navigate past the motorists until we reach a barrier. As the flagman motions us through, we sprint to keep up with traffic. At one point Kevin loses me and waits up after we've cleared the road construction.

I'm seriously slowing him down and things won't get any better. He's given me Ibuprofen about a half hour ago, but I'm in major saddle hurt and can't keep up with even our ridiculously slow pace. I tell him to go on, so he can complete a sub-70 hour ride.

For a brief spell clouds appear and it even looks like we might be in for a welcome shower. Nothing emerges however, and I'm still riding under the hot sun. After another hour I pull off the road and find a wooded grotto to rest under the shade. My first intention is just to get off the bike, but with no mosquitoes to pester me I decide to take a brief mid-afternoon nap. I'm woken about a hour later by a couple of other randonneurs who are looking for a place to pee.

Next it's a slow gradual descent toward Hwy 97A. A dry hot wind is blowing. I ride for several kilometres beside Mara Lake and even consider joining the kids for a quick dip. The terrain is flat and I wind through dusty farm roads of Grindrod as I slowly count off the kilometers. The vegetation has a husky sweet aroma -- vaguely unpleasant to inhale as I'm associating the smell with heat and saddle pain.

Enderby (1072 km) Saturday 4:04 pm

I ride through the town of Enderby looking for the Enderby Drill Hall. A local assures me that I'm heading in the right direction. The Enderby control is listed as a "mini-control" since it is on the extrema of the route and minimal services are offered. However, one of the volunteers fills my water bottles and offers me split-pea soup. It's enough to keep me going into Salmon Arm, only 25 kilometers away.

Salmon Arm (1094 km) Saturday 5:49 pm

I'm still hurting as I meander onto Salmon Arm, but comforted by the fact that it's only 25 km to the control. After an hour of slow pedaling, I encounter a steep winding climb. But climbing isn't what's bothering me on this trip. Under the late afternoon sun, however, I'm sweating buckets. After the ride, one of the organizers referred to this section as the "Greenrod Grind". At lot of the post-ride discussion included various deprecations about this climb.

The final control was difficult to locate. The cue sheet listed it as a "Recreation Centre", but neither it nor the road was well

marked. The route took us through the backside, past a door with a small hand-lettered sign that said, "Knock loudly".

Once inside, however, it was nice and cool. I sat down and had some minestrone soup, potatoes, fruit, and several Cokes. The volunteers filled my water bottles and CamelBak with ice. One rider was soaking his feet in a bucket of ice while he ate. I was in no hurry to push on, as I figured the longer I delayed, the less heat of the day I'd have to endure.

After leaving the control, I had to make an urgent pit stop. I stopped by the most filthy 7 Eleven store I'd ever entered, with food and trash on the floor. The men's room had no toilet paper, so I eased into the ladies facilities.

The remainder of the ride can only be described as a slow grind. I was kind of in "death march" mode, just suffering through saddle pain and knee pain caused by my efforts to ride standing out of the saddle on level road. About halfway through this leg there were no more climbs, so I experimented with all sorts of ways to relieve the discomfort. I tried pedaling with one foot -- not practical with a fixed gear. I tried wrapping a spare jersey around my saddle, which provided some help, but the jersey wouldn't stay secure.

That same Roger Miller tune was humming through my head, so I soon joined in singing out loud ...

Third boxcar, midnight train
 Destination ... Bangor, Maine.
 Old worn out clothes and shoes,
 I don't pay no union dues,
 I smoke old stogies I have found
 Short, but not too big around
 I'm a man of means by no means
 King of the road.

Finally, I just started counting pedal strokes. I'd get to 100 and start over. After each 5 km, I'd reward myself with a brief respite off the bike and once stopped at a store in an unsuccessful attempt to buy some ice to sit on. Back on the bike counting pedal strokes, counting the tenths of a kilometer, singing in my head the constant refrain, "I'm a man of means by no means, King of the road".

About 25 km from the Kamloops, I noticed two of the European riders that passed me by. Just for kicks and to try and keep them in sight I kicked up the pace until I caught up with them. They were having a problem deciding how far they were from the Kamloops exit and invited me to join them. At first I kept getting dropped, but once I caught up and pointed to my lack of derailleur, the Italian said, "Ah, <insert some word in Italian here>!" to the Finn and they dropped their pace on the descents.

I told the Finn that I didn't want to slow them down, but they insisted that we ride in together. It was more painful riding in this manner, but I figured it would soon be over.

Kamloops (1206 km) Sunday 1:47

Finally, we started descending the last few streets into the Kamloops Curling Club. The bars were emptying and cops were making sure nobody was getting into their cars drunk. At the end

of the ride I was offered my choice of Coke or Heineken. I was incredibly hungry, not having anything to eat in the past couple of hours, and expecting at least something waiting at the end of the ride. Nada.

Kevin had arrived a couple hours ahead of me. Good. Even better, there was a message from Marlene to call her. I hated waking her up at 2:00 am, but thought I'd better check in. She informed me that Scott had gotten back on the road and would probably be in Kamloops early that morning.

I decided to find some food in town and located a pizza joint that stayed open until 4:00 am. Afterwards, I lay down at the control waiting for Scott to arrive. In the meanwhile, Marlene and her children had shown up to welcome Scott, who arrived sometime after 6:00 am. Afterwards, she drove me up to my motel where I showered and slept until our post-ride party that afternoon.

Conclusion:

My final time was 69:47. I had two 60 minute naps during the ride. The good news is that with preparation, I think I can stay awake and on the bike 48 hours for the Furnace Creek 508. I consumed a total of 200 mg of caffeine (2 half tablets) over the course of the two evenings, plus a couple Cokes. The other good news is that I had no problems climbing any of the Rocky Mountain hills -- though the ones on the 508 will be more challenging. Even more good news is that I've successfully cycled in similar dry heat conditions to what the 508 will offer.

The bad news was my saddle interface. It seriously limited my performance, possibly halving my potential speed on a geared bike over the last 200 km. This was also the most difficult part of the Georgia 600K brevet. By the time I got home, I had chunks of scabs and dead skin peeling off my raw arse. This issue must somehow be addressed before the Furnace Creek 508. Suggestions are welcome, but I already do the obvious things (change shorts, apply lots of chamois butter, etc.)

I was seriously considering withdrawing from the 508 after this ride, but David, Scott, and Kevin said it would be a waste to give up the 508 after all my training, so I will investigate solutions to this problem. Aside from saddle pain (and knee pain resulting from trying to stand and eliminate saddle pain) I felt great. In terms of legs, lungs, fatigue, etc. I could have continued riding.

Lest this report end on a sour note, however, I should point out that I did complete the ride in good spirits, on a fixed-gear, in less than 70 hours -- ironically my best time ever for a 1200K ride.

Ed- Jeff did finish the 508 in 44 hours, 1 minute and 5 seconds

In the Shadow: The LM Summer 1000

Kevin Bruce

If you've never heard of Sylvius Leopold Weiss, don't worry; he was overshadowed in his day. Silvius was a composer who wrote some of the finest music ever written for the baroque lute, and would have (in my opinion) become a household name had it

not been for the historical coincidence that he was born in both the same year and the same country as J S Bach. As if that wasn't enough to obscure his name forever, he also died the same year as Bach.

Does anyone out there remember a racehorse called Sham? If you follow horseracing and were around in 1973, you'll recall that the Triple Crown that year was won by a big red colt named Secretariat. Sham was the horse that ran second in both the Kentucky Derby and the Preakness. Then, in the Belmont, Sham chased Secretariat for over a mile before spitting out the bit, fading to dead last, and remaining in perpetual oblivion thereafter.

How about Pete Best? Surely that name rings a bell with many of you. He was the drummer who lost his job to Ringo Starr.

Jan Ullrich? I needn't elaborate.

Why do I appear to be obsessed with also-rans? It's because I chose to ride the LM Summer 1000 rather than the Rocky Mountain 1200 - that's why. In the same way that Sylvius Weiss, Sham, Pete Best, and Jan Ullrich can all claim rare accomplishment, that the RM 1200 and LM 1000 occurred but a week apart is a mere accident of timing - an accident that will forever mean the LM 1000 will live forever in the shadow of its more ballyhooed cousin. Unlike the RM 1200, there was no field of nearly 100 entrants with whom to build collegiality and depend on for camaraderie. There was no special website for this event, or staffed controls, or bag drop. There were no familiar faces at the controls offering support and encouragement nor hot meals waiting, or anyone to wake one up gently at a requested hour.

This was not the QE II Luxury Cruise Brevet that everyone else rode the week prior, but a raw, visceral, experience that demanded at least as much in the way of fitness and fortitude as its Golden Boy competitor did. In no way was the LM Summer 1000 a lesser light in the annals rides offered this year; it just had the misfortune of being offered the same year as That Other Ride.

The Summer 1000 had a field of exactly two for the Okanagan Loop: Ken Bonner and myself. Ken had ridden the RM 1200 the week before and, apparently not wanting to give up the comforts of a supported ride, had pre-arranged for his wife to meet him in Kamloops and Manning Park. I, on the other hand, have no wife with a car who tolerates my insanity, and so I must make do with whatever I can fit into a Carradice saddlebag. Without pre-arranged stops, I could only ride as far as my legs would carry me each day and then discontinue riding at whatever point that might be. Thus, I had formulated a Plan A, a Plan B, and a Plan C. Without going into the boring details, Plan A was the best-case scenario, Plan B was the worst-case scenario, and Plan C (abandonment) was no scenario at all.

About eight hours into the ride, I unceremoniously tossed aside Plan A and adopted Plan B. Plan C, I am proud to say, was never opened for discussion. This is all to say that I finished the ride and achieved my first-ever ultra marathon success. What strikes me about the immediately preceding statement is that I could be lying - no one was there to witness it. Oh, sure, Ken was there at the start at Denny's Restaurant at 3 o'clock in the morning, and we rode the first 13 kilometres together before I said, "You're dropping me, Ken", and he said "Okay, see you later" and quickly

disappeared into the early morning darkness. At that point, I could have simply turned around, headed home to my nice, warm bed, gotten a bunch of friends to sign my control card the next day, and then claimed to have completed the ride. No one will ever know with absolute certainty that I did, in fact, ride one thousand kilometres that weekend except me. I was on my honour. Unlike the RM 1200 where every rider had their every movement tracked, recorded, then posted on a website within minutes, my situation was completely the opposite: no one, not even my mother, had a damn clue where I was for three whole days. Those riding the RM 1200 were most decidedly NOT on their honour, thus implying that they could not be trusted. I mean, why else would there be the need for so many volunteers on that ride. There were no volunteers whatsoever on the Summer 1000, unless you count Ken's wife (I assume she has a name, but let's face it - non-cycling spouses merely tolerate their better-halves' obsession).

No, the Summer 1000 was for those of us who don't like things all mapped out, pre-planned, organized, oven-ready, just-add-water-and-stir. The ride that I did was for those who savour the unpredictable, the spontaneous, and the organic. It was a ride for those who prefer the unconstrained excitement of live theatre to the contrived outcome of a movie; or the uniqueness of a home-cooked meal to the predictable taste of a fast-food hamburger. It was a ride for those who thrive on leaving home not knowing where one would sleep that night or the next, if one lived to sleep at all.

The details of the ride itself seem rather trivial compared to the matters of honesty, integrity, and honour discussed above. Yes, there were the unrelenting hills between Hope and Cache Creek. There were also the famous Fraser Canyon tunnels which, when occupied by motor vehicles, emit a subterranean, demonic roar giving the meek cyclist the feeling of traversing a series of hellish, Freudian birth canals. There was a blue moon that lit up the road between Cache Creek and Kamloops, and the Okanagan Valley was predictably hot, reaching 41 degrees centigrade at mid-day. After leaving Keremeos at 3:00 AM, my lack of sleep caused the most wonderful hallucinations: abominable snowmen running alongside the road that turned into sagebrush when I got too close to them. The descent from Manning Park took about the same amount of time as the climb due to heavy holiday traffic, and following this was by the predictable headwind as I left Hope in the late afternoon. At around 10 o'clock on the evening of the third day I returned to the starting point, the Denny's Restaurant on North Road in Burnaby. Feeling that 1022 kilometres was quite enough riding for the time being, I took the Skytrain home. After a plate of spaghetti, a glass of wine, and a quick cuddle with the cat, I went to bed for a very long time.

For three whole days over the August long weekend, no one knew exactly where I was or how I was doing. None of my needs was tended to by someone else but, instead, I had to rely on my own resourcefulness to ensure my well-being. No one outside of a few anonymous convenience store clerks can verify that I was where I claim to have been at the times that I claim to have been there. At ride's end, there existed only a control card initialled by strangers to prove that I rode 1000 kilometres that weekend - that is, to prove it to others. To me, however, the proof that I accomplished

my goal was in the sore muscles that lasted for a few days and the sense of personal accomplishment that will last the rest of my life.

Lessons Learned on the Halfmoan Century

Doug Chinnery

As the week progressed, the weather report for the Half-Moan century was looking actually pretty good. Then, the night before I woke up several times to a solid downpour and at 5:30 Saturday morning it was still chucking down pretty nicely. Jeff and Sarah picked me up in a downpour. We drove to Horseshoe Bay in a downpour. We waited for the ferry in a downpour. We sailed to Landale in a downpour. But when we got off the ferry, the Sunshine Coast lived up to its name and we pulled up to "Mike's Place" on drying pavement and broken skies.

We started out just after 9AM with a peleton of 8 intent on the imperial century and another 9 for the metric version. I was about to learn first of several lessons that day as I rode away with Michel Richard and Larry Reid. It seemed to be a fairly comfortable pace. Somewhere around the 5km mark, the warm up ended and the hammer dropped, as did I.

Lesson #1: Don't try to keep up with Michel and Larry.

After that I rode on my own along rolling terrain with stunning scenery and a light tailwind. At an early control at the "On The Edge Bike Shop" in Sechelt, the friendly staff provided cookies, muffins, and had just finished mixing up a batch of Gatorade with a 6mm hex key.

Lesson #2: Anything smaller than a 6mm hex key is too skinny for stirring Gatorade.

At the next control, at the Smuggler's Cove parking lot, Bob provided cans of Ensure and bananas to go along with his signature on the control card. With the 1000 calories in the can of Ensure now in my belly and a huge smile on my face, I powered out of the control and on toward the Garden Bay turnaround 40KM away.

The riding continued on rolling terrain, although the hills got bigger and steeper as I pushed on. Ocean views, pleasant roads, a nice tailwind, goats, and little traffic were the order of the day all the way to the Garden Bay. The last few kilometers before the control are very hilly with stiff climbs and some exhilarating descents. After getting my control card signed at the general store I stopped into the roadside burger joint known as "Laverne's".

Lesson #3: Laverne makes a wicked cheeseburger and fries.

While I was eating this fabulous lunch Paul Wright passed by. We spoke briefly and I discovered that after the ride Paul was going for a quick soak in the hot tub then he was off to a 24 hour relay. Yikes!

Shortly after pushing off, I crossed paths with Siegfried Palme, which would be the only other time that I saw any other riders until the last 400km. It was becoming very obvious that the hills on the way back were giving me much more problem than the hills on the way out. It seemed as though I was shifting between 2

gears: my shortest for mashing up the hills and my tallest for blasting down the backsides

Lesson #4: Hilly riding requires a completely different strategy than flatlands.

The weather deteriorated a bit as I neared Sechelt, with some patchy drizzle; never enough to justify a raincoat, but enough to warn of things to come. Turning onto Mercer Road, I could see what I was pretty sure was a black bear on the edge of the road. Sure enough, as I got closer, I could see it was a small bear grazing on the grass just off the shoulder. I made enough noise to warn it of my approach and it tore off into the bush. Just another outstanding visual treat in this ride that was made of up hundreds of them.

I entered Gibsons and grunted up the final steep hill on Gower Pt Road, and with the finish damn near in sight I road over something and sliced my tire for the second time that day. Only 400 meters to do! However, Lindsay Martin took the "closest to the finish breakdown" prize where his rear wheel went flat less than 100 meters away. He and I weren't the only ones battling the flat demons. Jeff and Sarah also had their share.

Lesson #5: Bring several spare tubes when riding on the coast.

Just after I pulled in and was enjoying the various goodies that I procured at Mike's Place the skies opened and the downpours began. Although I was dry, eating Mike's fabulous gelato, drinking coffee, and thoroughly enjoying myself chatting with folks at the finish, I felt more than a bit sorry for the 3 riders left to finish. They soon come over the hill, wet and tired, but still smiling.

The Half-moan century can be summed up in a word. Outstanding! The riding was challenging. The scenery was unmatched. The organizers were excellent. Thanks a ton to Bob, Julie, Loraine, and Brad, and to the staff at Mike's Place.

Lesson #6: Ride the Half-moan next year.

Halfmoan 100

Melissa Friesen & Scott Gater

We beat Michel by 8 minutes on a hilly course! Okay, so we did the 100 km where Michel completed the 100 MILE (160km) course. And of course, Michel had no idea that one of our goals for the ride was to come in before the fastest 100 mile rider - he told us he wouldn't have stayed as long at the "On the Edge" bike shop if he knew he was "racing".

So who are we? We are Scott Gater and Melissa Friesen. This is our "second" year with the club, but we've had much greater involvement this year and are gradually getting to know other club members. With the 100km Halfmoaner behind us, Scott has earned the Randonneur 1000 pin and I have earned the 500 pin. These were our original season goals, but now we are both hoping to surpass these already incredible (in my opinion) milestones to achieve further milestones this year. A big THANKS to the club and the populaire and shorter ride organizers for reinstating these

shorter rides and the 500/1000 km pins. We're certainly using the shorter rides as a building block to the longer events.

The Halfmoan had a respectable 9 am start time, but a morning ferry ride made for an early wake up call. Liking to sleep in just a little, I convinced Scott to book us a hotel 0.5 km from the start. We're glad we did, because if we had woken up to the pouring rain in Vancouver we would never have made it to the ferry. Luckily, our ride ended up being completely dry, with the weather ranging from overcast to blue sunny skies. Several other riders on the course were less fortunate, as the rain started about 20 minutes after we finished and 13 of 17 riders were still out on the two routes.

Unfortunately, the threat of rain kept many people in their beds, as only 17 riders started the routes: 9 on the 100km and 8 on the 100mile. At the start, I (Melissa) proudly showed off my new bike to anyone willing to ooh and aah - a custom Mariposa with 26" wheels, with custom rear rack and fenders, and a LightSpin sidewall generator. Having only had the bike 2 weeks, this was my Mariposa's inaugural randonneur event.

We were so busy chatting, the start came as a surprise and off we went. Michel and Larry quickly became specks in the distance as the rest of us slowly warmed up our legs for what was to be a challenging, hilly course. Fifteen minutes into the ride, I got a pinch flat from some large gravel/rocks in the shoulder that I wasn't able to ride around. This flat was the time difference between our finish and our wishful goal of a 6 hour ride.

Most of the route took us off the Sunshine Coast Highway to little traveled, scenic, and windy roads - and did we mention HILLY. On the out portion of the ride, I had convinced myself that the wind was a "crosswind" that had little impact, which in fact was a tailwind which was speeding us along. I said this out loud, but Scott did not argue with me on this as he didn't want me to think about what was to be a moderate headwind all the way back. The two controls on the 100km route - On the Edge bike shop at ~25 km and a volunteer at the 53 km turnaround point were incredibly supplied with food and drink. What service! The ride out went well, except for Flume Rd hill up to the highway where I used an excuse of having to take my leg warmers off as a reason to take a break.

The headwind, however, taunted us the whole way back and made us work on the long gradual descents. Most of the route back was on the Sunshine Coast Highway, where the hills were more gradual, but longer. Trout Lake hill was a particularly challenging hill due to its length. I changed my cycle computer settings so that I couldn't see the speed anymore. No more 6-8 km/hr speeds flashing at me! There was no shoulder to speak of for most of the Sunshine Coast Highway, but traffic was light and considerate when passing.

There were no more controls on the way back, but we had a quick stop at the bike shop (a control on the way out) in Sechelt for a bathroom break. We should have stopped for a bite to eat, which we (I?) regretted about 5km later when I "hit the wall" and had to stop at the side of the road. Unfortunately, the only food we had with us was energy bars and I just couldn't stand their sweetness after drinking diluted Gatorade the entire ride. I managed to eat

half a "sickening sweet" bar and drank Scott's plain water while he promised we just have to go "a little further" to the Roberts' Creek General Store for real food. 4km later, we had the promised turkey sandwich and Doritos. The last 18km were completed strongly, except for two very steep hills (one on Lower Road and one on Grower Point Road) that I had been dreading since enjoying their descents on the way out.

In the last 10km, we kept waiting for Michel to come flying by us - he had been over an hour ahead of us by the 53km point. But we squeaked in to the finish 8 minutes before he and Larry showed up. At the finish, our appearance as the first riders in seemed to excite the volunteers as much as seeing the end was exciting for us!

A huge thanks to Robert Irvine, Brad Proctor, Loraine Proctor and the several other volunteers on the route for a great ride and great support at the Sunshine Coast Halfmoaner. And an even bigger thank you to those of you who convinced Bob not to include the 18% Redrooffs Highway uphill on the way back! The route had all our favourite things in a route: the roads were good quality, winding, scenic, and challenging - yes, even while we beMOAN the hills, we enjoy their challenges and how they push our limits.

600 km: Abbotsford to Abbotsford to Abbotsford to Abbotsford

Susan Barr

The prelude: Give me a brake!

I'd decided it would be a good idea to have my bike overhauled before the 600 km; everything was working fine, but it had been a loooong time since things like the headset and bottom bracket had been looked at. So I took it into the bike shop, left for Chicago, got home from Chicago, picked it up on the one day I was at home, left for Toronto, got home from Toronto, and with only one day left before the 600, thought I should probably take it out for a quick spin to see whether it (and I) still worked. Well, it turned out that my front brake was not connected. Being the mechanical simpleton that I am, I thought it would be a quick easy fix, so I rode - gingerly -- to the bike shop. Initially, they thought the brake was not fixable, but said they'd try to do so, or else would replace it. My plan had been to cycle from the bike shop to pick up my orthotics, but instead I set out on foot, planning to catch a bus. But my ignorance of the transportation system was quickly exposed: buses didn't run from "here" to "there" during non-peak hours. I continued on foot, but didn't like the fact that my cleats were crunching on the pavement, so took them off and proceeded in sock feet. I was by now late for the orthotics appointment, so started to jog, carrying my bike shoes and helmet. My route took me under the Granville Street bridge, the roosting ground of many hundreds (thousands?) of pigeons. And sure enough, one of them scored a bulls-eye, right on my head. I arrived at the orthotics shop shoeless, sweaty, and with pigeon shit all over my head.... But eventually, everything sorted itself out; I got the orthotics, and later on was able to pick up my bike, with brakes fixed and functional.

The main event: Give me a break!

We started out at 6:00 a.m. on Saturday morning from Abbotsford (which meant getting up at 3:30 a.m. for the drive out). I had on thick wool socks and rain booties, and my feet were warm, which was a good thing. Although it was raining, it was a gentle rain, and wasn't too cold, so I was feeling relatively optimistic about the event. Somehow, I ended up with "the fast guys" (Peter Stary, Michel Richard, Eric Fergusson) and managed to hang on for 100 km or so, by which time we were on the Trans-Canada Highway heading to Hope. It was pounding down rain and we were going uphill, so sanity prevailed and I let them go (and if you believe that....). I did catch up with them at the control in Hope, but decided to "chill" for awhile and wait for a group going at a more appropriate pace. That group arrived about half-an-hour later (by which time I was well and truly "chilled"), and we stayed together through about two hours of torrential downpour to a control at Abbotsford.

Shortly thereafter, after going up a significant hill, my rear shifter decided that it didn't want to leave my lowest gear. As already indicated above, I am a mechanical simpleton, and the guys I was with didn't know what was going on either. Luckily (or so I thought at the time), Gary was from the area, and directed me to a local bike shop. The shop was one step up from the bike section of Sears, selling primarily mountain bikes in the \$100-\$300 dollar range, with mechanics who looked like they were about 13 years old. They weren't too sure what was going on, but thought it might be a cable problem (even though the cable had just been replaced during the overhaul). So they replaced the cable and managed to get the bike shifting, at least to some degree. I thanked them profusely, got back on course and fortuitously connected with another group of cyclists (Ali and Roger Holt, and Scott Gater). After about five minutes, however, I was again 'shiftless', and to make matters worse, I couldn't get into the big chain ring at the front, so was down to two gears.

At that point, I was thinking that it might be time to call it a day - trying to complete the next 400 km with two gears, the biggest of which was a 42x25, didn't seem like a lot of fun. But Roger told me he could put the chain in a gear manually, and "fix" it there - I would still have only two gears, but at least they'd be a bit more functional. So I decided to do that, and see how it went - we'd be back to Abbotsford (and the car!) at 370 km, at which time I could re-evaluate. Plus, it had stopped raining, for the moment at least, which made the world a better place.

So we proceeded, and the rain held off for a few hours, but returned with a vengeance for the last few hours back to the 'overnight' control at Abbotsford. Everyone in our group had different plans - two wanted to continue after something to eat, two planned to sleep for a few hours and leave at about 4 a.m., and I was hoping to sleep (or at least, rest) for longer and leave at about 6. At about 4:30 a.m. though, I got bored with resting, and it was almost light out, so I set off. I managed to get a bit lost getting through the city, and added a few bonus miles before finding a gas station that was open and could direct me back to where I should have been going. After a couple of hours, I caught up with the Roger, Ali and Scott, and settled in with them.

We stopped at a McDonalds for breakfast (egg bagel - really hit

the spot), and after we started again the rain tapered off, so things were good again.

Or more accurately, they were 'almost' good. At that point, I was trying to ignore the fact that my ankles were *quite* sore, and that every pedal stroke was uncomfortable (this is an attempt at understatement - I was actually hurting big time). I managed to continue to ignore them until we stopped in Agassiz at about 540 km, at which point I took off my booties and socks to look at the damage. Bad idea! My ankles were a festering, blistered mess: the rain had turned my skin to mush, and my lovely warm, heavy wool socks had literally stripped the skin off. I slathered on Polysporin, took a handful of Ibuprofen to try to dull the pain, and off we went again. The ride up "Woodside" (with some 12%) made me realize that there's a reason that most bikes now have more than two gears, but it was the last significant hurdle and before long we were at the finish - where Patti Marsh had lawn chairs, snacks and drinks waiting (and even provided shampoo for a shower!).

In retrospect, I was glad I'd managed to hang in and finish the ride - thinking about the 1200 km would have been even more daunting without having completed a 600 km this season. It was also a learning experience - those warm, heavy, rough wool socks are obviously not the solution I'd thought they were. The only problem is that I'm not sure what is!

Heat, Headwinds, and Hills: The Okanagan Loop 2004

Kevin Bruce

After having read Eric's account of the hardships that those riding the Squirrel-on-a-Stick route faced during the solstice weekend, I can only tip my helmet, stand, and applaud their courage. Bravo! For a couple of us who attempted the Okanagan Loop 1000 that same weekend, we, too, decided to abandon, but unlike them we made good on our decision.

There was neither rain nor cold on our ride, but there was heat. In addition to the usual heat, there was also heat which wasn't really heat because there was more intense heat on the way which made the day's earlier heat seem like something other than heat even though it felt like heat at the time. Then there were headwinds that were both preceded and succeeded by other headwinds and, once they died down, gave way to more headwinds. At one point, we experienced what seemed like a tailwind, but over the course of about an hour, the perceived tailwind shifted and became a headwind. Thus, I concluded that an apparent tailwind might not actually be a tailwind, but rather a headwind searching for its true direction. There were also hills, and upon each hill sat a hill; and once we got over a given hill, we would find a bigger hill. Even on those occasions where we found ourselves going DOWNhill, we could look up the road ahead and see yet another hill.

It was hell.

The day before the 1000 weekend, Jaye Haworth came over from Victoria, crashed at my place, and the two of us headed out to the opening control on North Road in Burnaby in the early morning hours. There we met the several others that were also attempting

the ride: Manfred Kuchenmuller, the ride organizer, on his recumbent; Alard Malek, prepping for the Rocky Mountain 1200 with his classy, personally monogrammed steel-frame Marinoni; Lindsay Martin, on his stylish, rust-orange Rivendell with Carradice saddlebag; and Henry Berkenbos who could ride a bloody CCM tricycle and still finish an hour ahead of the rest of us.

Jaye and I spoke boldly of making it to Kamloops that first day, so off we went at the appointed hour and unflinchingly paced ourselves against a steady headwind to the first control at the Seabird Island Café, 104 km away. Cards signed, water bottles filled, we briefly greeted Lindsay who arrived as we were leaving, admired his bike, and then pushed on.

As we headed north from Hope through the Fraser Canyon, we were met with more headwinds. This was distressing and we soon realized that we were not going to make as good time as we had thought and, even before we reached Boston Bar, had our first inklings that maybe we would not make it to Kamloops that night.

The heat was oven-like and was more conducive to baking cakes than randonneuring. From time to time, I looked down at my body expecting to see a skeleton, the flesh having melted off the bone. Instead, I saw a familiar corporeal object that housed my consciousness so I knew that I was still, in fact, alive, and probably (though not certainly) sane.

As the heat continued its relentless rage, I looked to the sky to see if there might a cloud somewhere that would drift in front of the sun and give us a few moments respite. What I saw, however, startled me: there, above me in the sky, robes flowing and spoked-wheels spinning, was the Goddess of Cycling. Randonneurs are all too familiar with the works of this ethereal creature, for it is her job to ensure our humility. I looked desperately at her, begging her for the smallest morsel of mercy, but the Goddess just smiled at me with mock innocence as her hand reached for a thermostat which she cranked up to full.

Only once did Jaye and I actually run out of water and were forced to stop at someone's home and ask if we could fill our bottles. They were very nice, offered us the garden hose, and let us pet their pink-tongued puppy dogs who thought we were really interesting since we tasted like salt. The kind people asked us how far we were going, were amazed at what we were attempting, and wished us well. We said "thank you" several times since, after all, they had saved our lives.

Thus rejuvenated, we carried on toward Cache Creek.

The heat, hills, and headwinds did not relent until night fell, at which point only the heat gave way. By this time, we felt as though we had ridden an overnight 500 km Fleche even though we'd covered less than 300 km in about 16 hours. We were drained; exhausted; beat; fatigued; expended; depleted; pooped. We agreed that Kamloops was too lofty a goal for us to reach before we slept, and decided that Cache Creek, the 325 km mark, was more reasonable.

Jaye warned me that she had had an experience on a previous brevet where she actually fell asleep while riding and did not want to risk a repeat of that situation. I was glad she mentioned it,

because I was yawning repeatedly and my eyelids felt heavy and feared that the same thing could happen to me at any moment. So, with about twenty kilometres to Cache Creek and a hotel bed, we pulled over and laid down on the hard surface of a side road, and tried to regain enough strength to carry on. We lay there on the pavement on our backs and, because we were so tired, and our bodies so desperately needing to be motionless, the pavement felt like the softest, most invitingly sensuous surface imaginable. As I looked up at the stars, just beyond the Big Dipper I caught a glimpse of the Goddess of Cycling pointing at us while doubled over with laughter. Gradually, the Goddess' laughter drifted away in an echoing decrescendo and we slowly picked ourselves up off the pavement, one limb at a time, carefully placed ourselves on our bikes, and carried on.

Our pace was now slower than it had been all day, and it was a good thing that the darkness no longer allowed me to read my speedometer since it would have been embarrassingly slow and therefore exceedingly depressing. About ten kilometres outside of Cache Creek we came to a heritage house; a white clapboard affair, with a porch and a lawn, looking very civilized and inviting. It had apparently been turned into a tourist attraction and, since we were tourists of a sort, we pulled in, got off our bikes for a second time, and lay on the lawn.

The grass was cool and soft, and here there was a fence for us to put our feet up while we gazed at the stars. I have no idea what was running through Jaye's mind as we lay on the grass looking up at the sky, but running through my mind was absolutely nothing. At this point I was so tired, both physically and mentally, that either being eaten by wild animals or winning a million dollars would have met with exactly the same reaction from me: a simple, acquiescing nod of the head accompanied by a polite smile and the words, "That's nice."

Eventually, Jaye and I got up from our grassy repose, slung our respective legs over our respective bicycles, clicked into our pedals and resigned ourselves to riding the remaining ten kilometres to Cache Creek.

Once in the town, we happened upon a 24-hour restaurant which turned out to be the control listed on the route sheet although we failed to realize this at the time. Thus, we coincidentally got our control cards signed at the right place. We sat in the restaurant and stared at the menu. Jaye ordered something to eat and although I heard her enunciate the words to the waitress, my ability to process what I was witnessing had so badly deteriorated that she could have been ordering uranium on toast with a side of hatpins and a glass of motor oil. I ordered spaghetti and asked the waitress if it was a meat sauce. She said it was. I don't eat meat but was so tired and hungry I didn't care and ate it anyway.

As the food took effect and sentience returned to my state of awareness, I looked at my control card. What I saw made me do a Buster Keaton double-take: the ride from Boston Bar to Cache Creek, a distance of a mere 130 kilometres, had taken us over eight and a half hours.

How could that be? Jaye and I are both fully capable of riding 200 kilometres in eight hours, so how could we explain having taken a half hour longer to cover two-thirds the distance? We had not

squandered time at controls, nor taken unreasonably long unscheduled stops. There had been neither flat tires to fix nor mechanical problems to deal with and what road construction we had run into was minimally inconveniencing. We had not used up valuable time by taking guided tours, snapping photographs, earning PhD's, attending weddings, or writing our memoirs. What had happened? Quite simply, the heat, headwinds, and hills had taken their toll on us. Moreover, the state of Jaye's Achilles tendon was gradually deteriorating, and I had begun developing saddle sores.

At around 1:00 o'clock in the morning, we left the restaurant and went motel shopping. After a brief perusal of our options, we checked into the Sandman Inn where, as it turned out, Manfred and Alard had checked in about ten minutes earlier. Zombie-like, we had our respective showers, climbed into bed, and quickly let a very trying and tiring day slip away forever.

On the road again at 7 o'clock the next day, the cool morning air and sight of the sagebrush-dappled hills on the road to Kamloops were enough to lift our spirits and gave us confidence that today would hold greater promise than the previous. For the first time on this trip there was no headwind. As we progressed along the Thompson Valley and its magnificent views of the river below and mile-long trains snaking along the mountainside, a slight breeze from the north picked up. This boded well for us since it meant we would have a tailwind when we turned south at Monte Creek.

Once through the city of Kamloops, we stopped at a restaurant for lunch, and there I noticed that, in addition to saddle sores, I was developing bruises on the palms of my hands. After thinking it through, I concluded that two points of contact with the bike were being adversely affected by one mal-adjusted component. Given the kind of injuries the bike was slowly inflicting on me, I concluded that the handlebars were angled up a bit too high so I took out my Allen key and lowered them a few degrees. Once back on the bike, the relief on both my hands and butt was almost immediate, but the damage had been done - I was bruised and blistered in two key areas and the noonday heat only exacerbated the problem. To make matters worse, Jaye's Achilles tendon was restricting her ability to effectively climb out-of-the-saddle. She was now becoming concerned that continuing might result in greater injury and jeopardize her plans to ride the Rocky Mountain 1200 five weeks' hence.

As we progressed through the debilitating midday heat toward Vernon our tailwind flagged, shifted and became another headwind. We climbed more hills and then the paved shoulder of the road vanished forcing us to share a single, narrow lane with a constant stream of impatient cars, camper vans, and trucks. At this point, I looked to the sky and saw there the Goddess of Cycling looking down at me, a sardonic smirk on her face. I called out to her saying, "Should I take all this personally?" She nodded. My eyes narrowed to slits and I gave her the finger.

We arrived in Vernon at the 528-kilometre point in the late afternoon and pulled into a tourist information centre. Our plan was to make a motel reservation in Keremeos, but the grassy lawn outside the building distracted us. The lawn was banked slightly and we found that lying on the grass with our feet higher than our

heads produced a sensation that we were not about to end sooner than necessary. Thus, we lay in the shade of the building, on the grass outside the info centre, and explored various options. What if we just took a room right now and slept until midnight, then headed out at that time? What if we stayed in Penticton instead of Keremeos? What if we bought gel-padded seat covers and a foil blanket at Canadian Tire? What if we...

By the time that we had discussed all of the various scenarios, an hour had passed, and we both realized that we simply were delaying the inevitable, ugly decision. We were both sustaining injuries that would only get worse the further we rode; my original goal of finishing by suppertime on Monday was no longer possible; and since I had to be back at work first thing Tuesday there was no way that I would be well-rested and fresh were I to continue the ride. We therefore chose to abandon.

I entered the Tourist Info Centre no longer wanting information on motels in Keremeos, but rather for directions to the Greyhound Bus station. The young lady in the info centre was most helpful as she signed our control cards (for the record) and gave us a map with the bus depot clearly marked. As much as I hate to say it, the ten minutes' ride to the bus station was by far the most fun and relaxed few kilometres of the ride to this point.

At the Greyhound station, I approached the ticket counter, and addressed the young woman who, apparently, was running the whole place by herself:

"Hello. There are two of us, and we have to get to Vancouver, but we have bicycles with us."

"You'll have to put the bicycles in boxes, otherwise the drivers won't take them."

"Boxes?"

"Yes, boxes."

"How do we go about putting our bikes in boxes?"

You take them to a bike shop and they'll do it for you for a fee."

"Yes, I know that; but at 6:30 on a Sunday night?"

"Oh..."

"Have you any other suggestions?"

"Well, there is a bin out back full of broken down cardboard boxes. You can sift through it to see what you can find. I can loan you a packing tape dispenser and a box cutter if you like."

"That would be very helpful. Thank you."

And so, armed with a tape dispenser and box cutter, Jaye and I headed out back of the parking lot to a green metal dumpster filled to the brim with cardboard boxes. We attempted to raise the lid of the dumpster only to find it locked. On the front of the bin, however, was a slot about two feet wide and four inches high through which I could reach my arm and so had my choice of only those boxes that were within my grasp. As I fished around inside the bin, I wondered if there was any present significance in the quote, "A man's reach should never exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?" Indeed, there turned out to be great

significance in these words as the first box I pulled out was of exact proportions necessary in which to fit a bicycle. After several more smaller boxes had been hauled out, we set about the task of cutting, taping, and packing, and within an hour we stood admiring how well we had orchestrated the improvisation of makeshift bike boxes. With a few hours to kill before we caught the bus back to Vancouver we headed off to a nearby Chinese restaurant where we ordered too much rich food and drank too much bad wine.

Of six starters, only three finished. Alard also abandoned at Vernon having developed a sore shoulder and did not want to risk injury. Manfred and Lindsay finished only two hours before the final control closed, and Henry turned in a time of just over 68 hours which was 8 hours' slower than his previous time at the same route in 2002.

As the bus pulled out of Vernon and headed along the highway that we would not be travelling on bike, Jaye and I settled into our high-back seats in air-conditioned comfort and let the hum of the engine lull us to sleep. The troubling experience of two days' worth of heat, headwinds, and hills began to dissipate from memory. Just before I closed my eyes and bid adieu to the Okanagan, which had defeated me, I glanced out the window for the last time and, lo and behold, caught one final glimpse of the Goddess of Cycling. With a mischievous grin, she gave me a knowing wink and then scurried off in the direction of the Kootenays, presumably to create havoc for randonneurs in those parts.

Deflation: The Case of The Missing Bicycle Frame Pump

Jack Sharkey

Tina had prepared an interesting brevet route. Scott and Melissa had shared their two night motel reservation with me, allowing one night as Melissa is recovering from a knee injury and Scott decide to stay the second night on his way through Penticton during his 1000km. My wife didn't lock the door, throw away the key, or change the lock when I had returned home Friday morning a half hour after my earlier departure, to obtain my helmet that I had somehow left behind. Friday night found me in the motel room doing a bicycle check. When it came time to do a tire pressure check, no pump! I searched high And low for it. It was nowhere to be found. I finally resolved that without the pump, I would not be cycling the brevet.

Tina had everything in hand for the day. She offered me the use of a pump as did Roger And Ali. It was almost start time and since I hadn't yet had breakfast, I declined with thanks. On my return home on the 4th rather than 5th September, Rosemarie gave me that silent look! Again?, no result?, strike two! Yikes! I 'm thinking that she might be locking up my bicycle for the sake of posterity! I still haven't located the pump in question.

R. P. B.-- A NEW CYCLING HEALTH HAZARD?

Tom Hocking

Last month I shaved off the beard that I'd sported for most of my adult life. I'd been noticing the salt and pepper that I liked to think of as "the Sean Connery look" was becoming way more salt than pepper, so I decided to see how much chin remained hidden under that hoary foliage. Maybe I'll grow it back some day if it becomes all snowy white....

Now that my daily routine involves shaving, I've been looking at my face in the mirror a lot more, and I've begun to notice something startling. The thinning hair on the top of my head is developing what appears to be two parallel furrows exactly where my Giro helmet's padding strips sit. I knew I'd ridden a lot of randonneuring miles over the past several years, but this was weird. At first I thought it must be just an extreme case of the dreaded Helmet Hair, but there was no mistaking the remarkable pattern. My hair remains distinctly thicker where the air vents run in long straight front-to-back lines between the rows of barren skin in a demented sort of reverse Mohawk hairstyle.

I panicked. Just when we not-quite-over-the-hill males have learned to quit worrying about "biking induced erectile dysfunction" and love our old saddles again, we may have a new worry: RANDO PATTERN BALDNESS!

Ye gods, what was I supposed to do about this? Let my hair grow longer and go for one of those ridiculous comb-overs? Shave my head? I wouldn't want to be mistaken for some old guy trying for the young, hip look, and besides, it's really about all I can manage just to shave the lower half of my head. No, forget about the boot camp look.

I could start wearing a hat whenever I was not on the bike. I've got this great, faded old Campagnolo velo cap, but wearing it to family dinners would be viewed as inappropriate by most, eccentric by some, and cool by just a few.

Or I could choose to never be seen without my helmet. This would both hide my deformity and further strengthen my image in the community as a truly serious cyclist. The drawback here is that I'd also need to wear lycra shorts and jerseys exclusive to all else (again, not appreciated at family functions). Wearing of the helmet without the accompanying outfit would just get me sympathetic looks from the rest of society who might assume I was afflicted with some sort of falling down syndrome.

I wonder if any of you other readers have noticed similar patterns on your heads. Study your visage in the mirror. No, don't look away-scrutinise your hairline. Then look at the design of the vents in the helmet you've been wearing for all those brevets and compare it to the design left on your head after a ride. Notice any similarities? Depending on the model of helmet, you could have the beginnings of the same reverse Mohawk that I've got, or perhaps some variation on the mysterious crop circles found in farmers' fields by space alien hunters. Owners of more than one helmet might find they've got a pretty good start on a maze or a medieval labyrinth. That could be fun for the whole family.

"Wah, there's nothing good on T.V. tonight." "Hey, I know-let's follow dad's labyrinth with our fingers!" "Yeah, cool!"

I wonder if it's just us guys that are finding these bizarre patterns on our scalps. How about you women? Come on, fess up!

Jeez, think of the research articles in medical journals that this discovery could spawn. "The Incidence of RPB amongst a Population of Ultra-marathon Cyclists". Maybe I could sue the manufacturer for the hideous appearance caused by their helmets. Come to think of it, if we could find enough RPB victims we could have a class action suit. As the movement gains momentum, nation-wide support groups would be formed for "Cyclists Living with RPB". Disease rides could be promoted. "Hey Fred, are you going on the RPB ride on the weekend?" "Sure. It's for a good cause, you know."

Holy smokes, what if I'm the only one? But no, I fear I am not alone. If you've noticed something that could be the early stages of RPB, contact me via the editor. If you have not yet succumbed, you could be next. Be ever vigilant. Keep watching for a pattern to emerge.

I've decided what I'm going to do. I'll be appearing in public showing off my new "RPB look" to the world. I'm determined to, as Crosby, Stills, and Nash advised, "let my freak flag fly", and walk proudly with my hair as a mark of my total commitment to the sport of randonneuring. Kind of like those roadies with their shaved legs.

So come on, all you randos, join with me! Out of the closets and off with your helmets!

Shout it out together! **"WE'RE R-P-B RANDONNEURS AND WE'RE PROUD!"**

'Arold's Big adventure (pt 1)

Harold Bridge

After spending much of the winter & early spring booking campsites across the country by phone &/or computer, I suffered a disappointment. The Cross Canada Cycle Tour Society (CCCTS) had ordained that our Trans Canada Tour was to start in Victoria on May 31st. That meant that I would not be able to complete a Super Randonneur series as the first 600 would clash. "Madbridge" maybe, but start a 4,700 mile tour the day after finishing a 600? Not at 76. Without a 600 there was no reason to do the 400, especially as the route took the riders up and over the 1244 metre summit of the Coquihalla toll road. I would be climbing that as a tourist 2 weeks later.

So with a years total 'k's" at 3,596 I started the randonneur season:

April 10- Van Isle 200- Had 3 flats before I found my brake blocks had worn a groove through the side of the rear continental 25mm tyre! Duh! Was outside the limit at 50 kms- quit. Rode the Mariposa.

April 17-LM 200- A straightforward route I designed back in the 80's. Good day, some rain. 10 hours, 14 minutes. Rode the Tony Hoar.

April 24-Kamloops 200- Driving 350 kms to the interior town of Kamloops gave me the opportunity to check the campsites & route through the town for the TC Tour 5 weeks later. The 200 ride itself was good & it was a pleasant change from the well-worn grooves within a day's ride of Vancouver. On the Tony Hoar again- 10:49.

The Barnhartvale road, that takes us back to the finish of the Kamloops 200, bypassing the Trans Canada hwy, is a delightful romp down to about 1000 metres. But it has cattle grids & many pot holes. When I got home, I found the head bearings were about to fall apart!

May 1- LM 300- Great day. But the route, mainly in Washington State, contains some bad road surfaces. As I was preparing the Mariposa for the TC Tour, I rode the Tony Hoar again.

I am resigned to the fact that sub 15 hour 300's are probably beyond me now. Therefore I planned on 3 x 100 at 5 hours, 5:30 & 6:00 respectively. That worked out well except the last 100 kms (+ and extra 5.8kms) mainly in the dark took an extra 23 minutes. Time for the ride- 16:53.

*May 22-Fleche Pacifique-*At this point I had recorded 5,248 kms. I was co-opted onto a team with Sarah Tennant, a 26 year old triathlete, acien de PBP (2003-80 hours) & health club trainer. Our team goal was the Heart and Lung trophy given out to the team whose members include a rider at least 55 years old & one who was not yet 35. A 50 year age range made us a fairly safe bet assuming we finished. Our distance of 379 kms ensured that we rescued the trophy from the Olympia team from Washington State.

Six days after finishing the Fleche, I was off to Victoria, ready to start our Trans Canada Tour. It had taken me 47 years to get round to doing it. I think it was an article by the late John Hathaway that drew my attention to the endeavor. In 1957 "CYCLING" he wrote of his 24 day, 13 hour unsupported ride from Halifax to Vancouver (about 4,000 miles of it on gravel).

With 5,707 kms for the year recorded, I rode to the mile "Zero" sign by Beacon Hill Park on May 31. Here I met the others who had decided the official start from Fort Langley was missing a bit. Getting to Fort Langley, BC's Birthplace, amounted to 105 kms plus a pleasant cruise through Active pass, that separates Mayne & Pender Islands, enroute to the mainland

Many people were at Fort Langely as Dan had orgainized a 5 day "Hub & Spoke". This is centre tour type arrangement where everyone camps at one place & goes out on day trips. They were all here to cheer us on our way to Newfoundland. It was here I had my introduction to camping, something I have never been too keen on. The ravages of age, arthritis in particular, only goes to make camping less attractive.

After a day learning to set up the cooking/eating canopy & getting to know each other, we set out on June 2 to ride to Hope, at the apex of the Fraser Valley. When leaving Hope, we were to use the Coquihalla Toll road. It would be very long day as we were going through to Merritt. The last tour camped at the summit of the toll road at 1244 metres and it snowed!

Much of the Trans Canada through the BC mountains to the

Rockies is not bicycle friendly, although work is in progress to deal with that. Thus Dan routed us north through BC on Hwy 5 to Hwy 16- The Yellowhead. The pass is a gentle crossing of the Rockies with a decent shoulder. Provided, that is, one looks out for the rumble strips. Hwy 16 took us to Jasper for our first rest day at Whisler's Campground.

Elk, moose, bears, cougars, wolves etc all inhabit the National Park. Although others saw bear & moose, I was unlucky & only managed a distant photo of a browsing elk.

Leaving the campsite & heading south required us to ride the spectacular Icefields Parkway to the Icefields chalet. Expensive accommodation, but early June isn't the ideal time for camping at 6,000 ft! We learnt from the clubs previous experience. Just as well, it was a chilly 1 C & raining heavily when we descended the south side of Sunwapta pass the following morning!

I had volunteered to be a leader of the group. Also, being experienced with roadside repairs, I felt it incumbent upon me to ride at the back so I could assist with any bike problems. That was a good excuse for the first 2-3 weeks. But as I got older & slower so the others developed into quite strong riders. My place at the back was secured!

Heading across Alberta saw a gradual change from mountain scenery to wide-open prairie. Roads that go straight for 80 kms or more are quite intimidating & frankly downright boring. But one does not set out to ride across Canada without being aware of the downside of such an endeavor.

June 13th, there was a glitch in the route instructions created by computer-generated details not being accurate. We were to do 124kms between Rocky Mountain House and Olds. But due to trying to follow directions, some of us did 155 kms that day with most of the extra being on gravel roads. We finally got to Borden & then took Hwy 2A to Olds. It was long here that I nearly fell afoul of the worst rumble strips I have ever seen. Luckily, there was no passing traffic when I nearly fell into the road.

The Olds campground was flooded. Our persuasive administrator, Ken and our charming treasurer, Sandra worked their charm on the Best Western Hotel's front desk clerk and got us all in there for \$25 a head!

Monday June 14th we were to ride 131 kms from Olds to Drumheller where we were to spend our 2nd rest day. This was intended to give us an opportunity to visit the Royal Tyrell Museum where, I am told, there is an impressive display of stuff relating to the dinosaur remains found in the Alberta Badlands nearby.

The ride was a wet one & quite exciting as some of us rode across open prairie through thunder & lightning. I took shelter in the Orkney Church for a while, but as I was due on the cook team that night, I risked it & arrived in camp soaked. But then, so was everyone else who preceded me! All were in high spirits as they were sheltered in the truck. Dave's bottle of Bushmill's emptied rapidly! We ate out that night!

As a result, the rest day was just that for most of us. The sun shone & we spent time drying out our tents & Thermarest mattresses. Drumheller itself appeared to be quite a grotty town.

On arrival in our next destination, Hanes, the front runners found that the anticipated camp facility was useless and we finished in Fox Lake about 4 kms away. With a decent field and a hut in which to cook, this proved to be a good site. In fact due to the wind, several people pitched tent in the hut after supper. Nancy enjoyed the company of a mouse that an across her face during the night! When treasurer Sandra asked the management "How much?" they gave us the site for free. The midnight's sky star show was brilliant due to the lack of pollution & the crystal clear air.

I got clumsy & got an inflected wound in the shin. On June 19, I told the others to press on from Kindersley, Saskatchewan to that night's destination, Rosetown, 86 kms east. I went to the hospital, got the wound dressed & collected an antibiotic prescription.

I left town at 10:00am. My 88 inch top gear (47 x 14) was, for this one 7 only time, way under requirement. I got the 86 kms done non stop in 2:40.

The following day was a totally different story. The 115 kms to Saskatoon of which about one hour was spent off the bike, took nine hours. Riding northeast with a cold north wind blowing was quite tedious.

Route planning was intended to avoid large urban areas. As a result our 118 kms from Dauphin, Manitoba on June 27 took us to Lake Manitoba Narrows lodge as a bypass of Winnipeg. We all got to the Narrows before the truck, including me, the tail ender. Everyone was enjoying the sunshine on the dock & we rapidly absorbed the store's stock of beer, if Budweiser can count as such. We were all too merry to get upset with Wayne when the truck finally appeared. It was a novelty to sleep in cabins that night.

Stay tuned for the next newsletter for the completion of 'Arold's Big Adventure'

Motivations for 2005

Looking for some motivation for training over the winter?
Looking for a new pin or patch to add to you collection?
Well here are some ideas to help motivate you for the coming season...

Larry Schwartz Year-Rounder Century Challenge

Ultra Marathon Cycling Association

Club centuries are the highlight of many endurance riders' seasons: the fun of a day on the bike with friends and the challenge of riding 100 miles. And, at least for the day, an unrestricted diet!

The Year Rounder is for century riders looking for a new challenge: consistent performance throughout the year! Can you ride a century (or longer) every month of the year? You can maintain your fitness and have more fun cycling. The Year-Rounder is a division of the UMCA Mileage Challenge. All you

need to do is sign up for the Mileage Challenge, and submit your centuries - we'll do the rest. Centuries can be either organized centuries or Personal rides that you design yourself (explained below).

Mileage Challenge participants receive:

- an e-book Century Tips on training, nutrition, equipment and technique;
- an e-newsletter, sharing tips and stats;
- a bi-monthly Year Rounder column by Crista Borrás and Chuck Wood, who ride centuries every weekend;
- a section at www.ultracycling.com devoted to the best century stories sent in by riders;
- a rider with at least 1,000 miles in the Mileage Challenge gets a discount on Accelerade and EnduroXR4.

If you reach the goal, we'll award you a Year-Rounder medal.

Although the goal is a century a month, it might be too snowy or icy some months; so we'll allow two make-up rides. For example, if you get snowed out in January, just do two centuries in February.

For routing reasons some centuries are just under 100 miles. In the Mileage Challenge a Century is a ride of 90 - 149 miles.

To get started, go to:

<http://www.ultracycling.com/about/join.html>

Join the UMCA, add 10 bucks for the Year-Rounder, put on your wool jersey, head out the door, and we'll do the rest.

The Year-Rounder honors Larry Schwartz, who won the UMCA Mileage Challenge in 2001, was second in 2002, and was leading in 2003 when he was struck and killed by a school bus. For a profile of Schwartz go to:

http://www.ultracycling.com/about/hof_schwartz.html

Rules Summary:

An "Organized" century is a ride with: a name, designated start/finish location and starting time(s), route plan, organizer, and advance publication of the ride or ride series in club newsletters, etc.

A "Personal" century is a personally designed ride. For credit, you must complete at least 90 miles in a 12-hour period including off the bike time (and maintain an 8.33 mph average after that). Personal centuries provide century-length riding opportunities for riders in seasons or locales where organized centuries are sparse.

Any Mileage Challenge ride counts in the Year Rounder: brevets, double centuries and ultra events.

We like to keep the holidays free for time with the family, so the Mileage Challenge and Year Rounder will end on December 21, 2005.

For complete rules and ride documentation form, go to:

<http://www.ultracycling.com/standings/umcrules.html>

The Year-Rounder is a program of the UltraMarathon Cycling Association, Inc. www.ultracycling.com

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Kilometer Achiever Program (C-KAP)

KAP is an incentive program offered by the Canadian Kilometer Achiever Program. Our goal is to inspire all cyclists in Canada and beyond to ride and reach their goal, in improved health and lifestyle.

The program grew out of the vision of one man, Tom Parry, who metaphorically challenged all cyclist to join teams, cycling from all parts of Canada to the 1976 Montreal Olympics.

You can set yourself distance goals each year and work to achieve them. Each kilometer you cycle adds to your C-KAP total. The kilometers keep building for you and for everyone in the program. As of the end of year 2003, participants have logged 14,042,938 kilometers.

How Does C-KAP Work?

As you reach recognized C-KAP km totals you become eligible to receive awards.

Send in your registration form, to the C-KAP Coordinator and attach any fees. He will send you a Confirmation letter, C-KAP number and annual cycling log, with instructions. Each year when you receive the C-KAP annual report, you will also receive a new cycling log. Or you may wish to download and print a cycling log from the C-KAP web site.

You can use your cursor type in information on the C-KAP registration form. then print, sign and mail.

There are also Excel Cycling logs which can be saved in a folder on your PC. They are formatted to do all the adding for you. Instructions are included at the web site. PDF formatted cycling logs are also available for those who don't have Excel.

Using your bicycle computer, keep track of how many kilometres you cycled each week. Record your results on your cycling log. week by week. Weekly totals should be in whole kilometres. Include partial km in the following week by subtracting last weeks ODM total from this weeks using only whole km to get total km cycled during the week. Fill in the boxes for the monthly totals, and quarterly, or if using the Excel logs it's done for you. All on the road km count. No indoor trainers, or professionally logged km (couriers) please.

Special Needs (wheelchairs) may use the sidewalk where

appropriate. They may also count training and sports in a gym or track. They must remove their bicycle computer at home and work, but can count trips to and from work. In the end the Special Needs member must use their judgement as to what is appropriate for them to count, knowing that they cannot count in home or work km.

At the end of each year, you submit your log to the C-KAP Coordinator and you will receive an annual report and the awards you may have earned.

Cyclists in all programs, receive a Lifetime Membership in C-KAP by paying a one time registration fee of \$25.00

Badges and medals in the incentive part of the programs must be paid for as earned, badges \$6.00, and medals \$10.00 each, when sending in your cycling log at years end.

You may send in your log sooner if finished cycling for the year.

Note: The price of one laser printed and gold embossed certificate for the highest level reached per year is included in the cost of the award. You must pay for a badge or medal to receive a certificate. Extra certificates will cost \$2.00 each.

Make sure that all cheques are made out to Canadian Kilometer Achiever Program or C-KAP Mark in memo area what the cheque is for and send with your cycling log to your C-KAP Coordinator.

Only km from January first, of the year that you join C-KAP count. New members joining C-KAP over the age of 50, will be allowed to count an extra two years, if they provide a cycling log for those years.

www.ckap.ca for all the details

