

AMERICAN RANDONNEUR



Summer 2014 • vol. 17 #2





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On the cover

Summer was still months away when the cover photo was taken February 1 during a winter 600K. Riders enjoy a warming sun at a control in Boardman, NC (l-r): Mary Florian, Mike Dayton, John Ende, Mark Thomas, Ian Hands and Tim Lucas. Photo courtesy of Mary Florian.

RANDONNEURS LOVE RIDING THEIR BIKES, AND THEY LOVE talking about their bikes and their equipment when they're not riding. Offer an opinion about which saddle is best for long distance, or how wide your tires should be, and you're certain to light up a lively discussion.

You can add reflective gear to the list of equipment that will spark a listserv debate. RBA Liaison Spencer Klaassen recently posted to RUSA's RBAs about a proposed rule to standardize our reflectivity requirements for night riding. The proposal on recommended torso reflectivity would require either (a) an aggregate of 30 square inches of rear-facing coverage and 27 square inches of frontal and shoulder coverage; or (b) a vest that is EN-1150 certified (EN-1150 is the European standard used for PBP vests in 2011).

Spencer's post generated lots of feedback, both positive and negative. Everyone was in favor of using reflective gear to ensure our members were visible at night to other road users. But some RBAs in warmer climes took issue with the idea of requiring a vest in the hot summer months. Other RBAs were concerned they'd have to get out the tape measure to see if riders were in compliance.

The comments from our RBAs were invaluable in pointing out some of the real-world drawbacks of the one-size-fits-all approach to standardization. It was clear that any new standard would gain widespread acceptance only if it was easy for all riders to understand and comply with, and easy for RBAs to administer.

RUSA's board has decided not to adopt the rule just yet. Instead, we're putting together a "Best Practices" document, with guidelines and pictures of acceptable vests or sashes. We'll also show reflective gear that falls short of what we'd like to see. You'll find the guidelines on RUSA's website and on local sites hosted by our RBAs.

After we see how the guidelines work, we'll consider whether to formally adopt them. In the meantime, we're going to make it easy and affordable to get an EN-1150 certified vest. RUSA's store will be stocking compliant vests with the RUSA brand for as little as \$15.

Paris Brest Paris

We hope you are one of the hundreds of RUSA members planning a trip to France in 2015 for Paris Brest Paris. There is no finer celebration of our sport than this fabled event. It will be just you and 6,000 of your closest friends cycling for

four straight days through the brilliant landscape and historic villages of Normandy and Brittany. You can find official information about PBP at paris-brest-paris.org/. Remember that your ability to preregister in 2015 is keyed to the events you ride in 2014. The longer the 2014 event that you ride, the earlier you'll be able to preregister. Preregistration opens on April 26, 2015, for riders who have completed a 1200K or 1000K event in 2014. One week after that, on May 3, riders who completed an ACP 600K in 2014 will be eligible for preregistration. Preregistration will be one week later for each of the consecutively shorter events, with riders of 200Ks in 2014 eligible to preregister on May 24. Please note that PBP preregistration is not required; it simply assures you a place in line for registration. Even if you're not planning any rides this year, PBP may still be an option, assuming places are still available after the preregistration period closes. In 2011, there was room for all RUSA riders who wanted to join in the fun.

Number 10,000

After just 16 years of existence, RUSA is getting ready to reach an historic milestone and issue RUSA #10,000. On any given ride, it's possible that you'll be joined by a member whose number dates back to RUSA's founding in 1998 or a rider whose five-digit membership number was freshly minted in 2014. We currently have about 3,500 active members, or about one of every three riders who have ever joined RUSA. That makes us one of the largest cycling organizations in the country. Sweet 16 indeed!

Route Committee Shuffles

After several years at the helm of our Routes Committee, Dan Wallace is stepping down because of other commitments. Dan has been a respected voice on that committee and his leadership will be sorely missed. Thank you, Dan, for your service. Houston rider Craig Mathews, who has been serving on the Routes Committee with Dan, has agreed to step up as chair. The next time you see Craig, be sure to congratulate him on his new role. We've also added a new member. Keith Sutton, the RBA for Tidewater, VA, has graciously volunteered to help out with East Coast route reviews.

—Mike Dayton
RUSA President

Janice Chernehoff

I'M STILL NEW TO THIS JOB, BUT WHAT I REALIZE FROM working on the summer edition of *AR* is that each issue has a distinctiveness. The season, events in the randonneur community, maybe some sort of confluence of rando energies and purposes, all of these elements affect what appears on the pages of an issue of *AR*.

Unfortunately, it has been a notable year already due to serious accidents involving randonneurs. In conversations with friends during early season brevets, we reviewed what we knew about DC/Maryland riders Lynn Kristianson and Maile Neel. Lynn remains in our thoughts. Then, we learned of the death of Ohio randonneur Joe Giampapa, killed by a car during a brevet. Sympathies go out to Joe's family and randonneuring friends. We must be careful and do everything we can to protect ourselves and each other, but occasionally that is not enough. This knowledge, always in our minds, has been painfully reaffirmed this year.

While this will not comfort the families and friends of those who have died or been seriously injured while riding, the safety report in this issue reassures us that, given as many miles as we collectively cover, our accident rate is not high. The report suggests that we know how to be as careful as we can be, and I urge us all to continue to take safety seriously.

For this issue, I solicited articles on mid- to late-summer longish rides to encourage randonneurs to try a longer event this year. So you will find reports about two unique 1000K events: the Lap Of the Lake (LOL) that visits both the U.S. and Canada, and the Crater Lake 1000K that not only visits the scenic west coast coastline but also climbs to the lip of Crater Lake whose water is a color blue not to be found anywhere else.

The summer issue also benefits greatly from the contributions of randonneurs volunteering to write about their experiences and knowledge. Bill Watts, for example, asked if I had any interest in an essay about his 2013 summer cycling adventures. Bill's story tells how he combined LEL, cycle-touring adventures through Europe, and the Super Brevet Scandinavia out of Denmark, all in one summer. Burnley Willis asked about writing a report on the challenging Denali 300K Permanent. Honestly, after reading his narrative, it's not a ride that I think I could complete within

the time limits, but it sounds amazing. Finally, as a result of randomly clicking through blogs one day, I contacted Jake Kassen about doing a piece on creating permanents. He countered with an idea about an article on how to safely have music on rides. I'm always happy to hear from folks who want to write about their rando adventures and knowledge (Hint! Hint!).

I've also begun to think about helping riders prepare for PBP so wanted to provide reports of a few early season rides that people might consider next year. Vickie Backman's report of the San Luis Obispo 300K, and Kevin Kaiser's report of the Atlanta 300K, provide two possibilities for getting an early start to the PBP qualifying series.

In future issues and as we draw closer to PBP, I will feature articles about a number of questions that Paris-bound randonneurs will be considering. Some of the topics I'm thinking about include the following: PBP by tandem, traveling with a bike, communications with loved ones while on the ride, accommodation options, local history, and "things I'll do differently this time." If you're willing to contribute an article on one of these issues or another related to PBP, please contact me at editor@rusa.org.

Meanwhile, the brevet season is just really starting as I write this sentence. I'm wishing us a safe, fun, and satisfying summer of riding. Take care out there. 🚴🏍️

Accident Report Summary

Lois Springsteen,
RUSA #8

SINCE WE ROLLED OUT OUR NEW VOLUNTARY ACCIDENT reporting system in 2013, we've received a total of 17 reports; six from 2010, one from 2011, four from 2012, and six from 2013.

Six or seven of these accidents were the result of bad drivers, three were caused by dogs, four or five were caused by rider error, one was attributed to a recumbent, one caused by a medical problem, one caused by a mechanical failure, and one due to a wet, slippery road. One rider was involved in two accidents and two of the reports related to the same incident.

The injuries varied from relatively minor to the worst possible as we had a fatality in 2012.

To put this in perspective, RUSA members have ridden 13,305,689 kilometers during the time span of these accident reports.

I've created a table below that summarizes all of the reports that we have received since we rolled out this accident reporting system. If you would like to make a report you may do so online at rusa.org/cgi-bin/accidentreport_GF.pl

#	Gender	Age	Region	Date	Time	Distance	Bicycle	Description	Injuries	Factors
1	M	47	PA	8/25/10	05:45	1000	Single	Hit from behind by car	Broken bones	Driver changing radio channel
2*	F	56	FL	10/15/10	11:00	1000	Single	Hit from behind by car	Broken bones	Driver Texting
3*	M	64	FL	10/15/10	11:00	1000	Single	Hit from behind by car	Sprains, bruises, abrasions	Driver Texting
4	M	55	TX	7/26/10	08:20	102	Single	Hit by car turning left at intersection while riding straight	Multiple	Driver failed to yield at traffic light
5	M	58	NY	7/09/10	16:00	1000	Single	Hit by car turning left while riding straight	Fractured Hip	Driver blamed blind spot in car
6**	M	58	VA	5/28/11	03:15	600	Single	Loose dogs	Broken bones	Two riders missed dogs, third rider not alert
7**	M	59	NC	8/29/12	22:45	1200	Single	Hit a pothole	Laceration, abrasions, bruises	Rider fatigue
8	M	52	TX	10/20/12	07:30	206	Single	Loose dogs	Broken rib	Two riders drafting, second rider crossed wheel
9	M	70	WA	12/1/12	18:30	205	Single	Hit a small branch	Broken bones	Tired, wet, cold rider didn't see branch
10	M	31	WA	5/27/12	00:30	400	Single	Hit by car while changing flat	Fatal	Driver charged with DUI—going 75 mph
11	M	50	AZ	1/12/13	11:15	200	Recum	Front wheel wedged in seam of road	Abrasions	Rider blamed recumbent steering
12	M	32	CA	9/11/10	21:00	400	Single	Hit median	Concussion	Rider blamed fatigue, inexperience, poor road design and maybe a driver
13	M	51	PA	1/5/13	14:00	200	Single	Chain jammed	Broken bones	Defective front derailleur
14	F	57	LA	5/18/13	14:30	200	Single	Wheel touched another rider's wheel	Broken bone	Rider blamed fatigue and following another rider too closely
15	F	61	TX	11/9/13	09:20	300	Single	Lost consciousness	Broken bone	Medical issue
16	M	57	NJ	11/16/13	15:15	200	Tandem	Fell on a wet, misty day	Stoker broken bone	Captain blamed chemistry of paint on the roadway
17	M	65	KY	8/12/13	15:00	200	Single	Rider hit a dog	Broken bone	Rider said he was being stupid—saw only two dogs running at him but hit a third

*same incident **same rider

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C to C Jersey is included in the registration fee

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More information at **Bike-Ohio.com/CtoC**



New RUSA Members

RUSA No.	Name	City	Loc.	RUSA No.	Name	City	Loc.	RUSA No.	Name	City	Loc.
9346	David Brule	Vista	CA	9405	Toby Jones	Tucson	AZ	9463	Roger Barth	Dunnellon	FL
9347	Julien Rhodes	San Francisco	CA	9406	Lee Penn	Hyattsville	MD	9464	Grant Haidinyak	San Leandro	CA
9348	Jeff Miller	San Diego	CA	9407	Susan OBryan	Santa Monica	CA	9465	Maria Mathers	Miami	FL
9349	Cassie Thornton	San Francisco	CA	9408	Benge Ambrogi	Manchester	NH	9466	Dan Sherry	Holland	MI
9350	H McCoy	Melbourne	FL	9409	Creed Mcpherson	Temecula	CA	9467	Gandhi Bhattarai	Wethersfield	CT
9351	Ana Martins	Seattle	WA	9410	Carrie Morton	Waukee	IA	9468	Ramon Morffi	Davie	FL
9352	Jason Barksdale	Birmingham	AL	9411	“John Mathias, Jr”	Olathe	KS	9469	L Santa Barbara	Boca Raton	FL
9353	David Dubowitz	Del Mar	CA	9412	Paul Toigo	Kansas City	MO	9470	Tom Alperin	Fresno	CA
9354	Lori Grob	Saratoga	CA	9413	Emily Ranson	Ellicott City	MD	9471	Sharon Edwards	Fresno	CA
9355	Caitlin Harvey	San Francisco	CA	9414	Mark Nichols	Oakland	CA	9472	Ted Shwartz	Providence	RI
9356	Zach Heffner	Oakland	CA	9415	Phillip Kim	San Jose	CA	9473	Andy Sattazahn	Boca Raton	FL
9357	Joe Rosenbaum	San Francisco	CA	9416	Tracy Lane	Clovis	CA	9474	Itzel Alvarez	Boca Raton	FL
9358	Gary Epple	Austin	TX	9417	Dylan Stagner	Arlington	VA	9475	Jeremy Young	Lexington	KY
9359	Linda Welch	Denison	TX	9418	Scott Duimstra	Holt	MI	9476	Jennifer Curts	Montrose	MI
9360	John Rivara	Jupiter	FL	9419	Lisa Johnson	Citrus Heights	CA	9477	Fred Klingbeil	Johnston	IA
9361	Theressa Borden	Denton	TX	9420	Anthony Johnson	Citrus Heights	CA	9478	Lark Gerry	Rancho Cucamonga	CA
9362	Almdena Bernabeu	San Francisco	CA	9421	John Read	Malden	MA	9479	Keith Gilmore	Vanleer	TN
9363	Donald Wagner	Helotes	TX	9422	Matt Johnson	Napa	CA	9480	Sarah Rice	Chicago	IL
9364	Gilles Bouchard	Los Altos	CA	9423	Christopher Cossounet	Kincardine	ON CAN	9481	Michael Moerk	Colorado Springs	CO
9365	Julie Heimbach	Orlando	FL	9424	Anthony Diaz	Deland	FL	9482	Zachary Karman	Chicago	IL
9366	Christopher Blatcher	Wellington	FL	9425	Didier Ryser	Irvine	CA	9483	Al Brown	Miami	FL
9367	Gustavo Artega	Weston	FL	9426	Bob Clegg	New Market	MD	9484	Marsha Brown	Miami	FL
9368	Michael Burkett	Rochester	NY	9427	Andrew Froberg	Brooklyn	NY	9485	Marcus Lempel	San Diego	CA
9369	Daniel Bennett	Longwood	FL	9428	Alan Ross	Seattle	WA	9486	Scott Davis	Lafayette	IN
9370	Sean Flanagan	Maitland	FL	9429	William Warnock	Park Ridge	IL	9487	William Bruce II	Eaton Rapids	MI
9371	Justin Radcliffe	College Station	TX	9430	John Warnock	Park Ridge	IL	9488	Michele Neri	Lake Forest	CA
9372	Khuyen Huynh	Sunnyvale	CA	9431	Caroline Kessler	San Francisco	CA	9489	Paras Bedmutha	Bellevue	WA
9373	Robert Mardell	Santa Clara	CA	9432	David Robinson	Leesburg	VA	9490	Benjamin Benson	Durant	OK
9374	Jason Fergusonson	Geneva	IL	9433	Kent Rinker	Lecanto	FL	9491	Simon Hornby	Wilton	CT
9375	Qasim Meskienyar	Castro Valley	CA	9434	Joseph Cafferata	Washington	DC	9492	Steve Lambert	Banner Elk	NC
9376	Kathy Black	Winter Park	FL	9435	Bernhard Schelling	San Francisco	CA	9493	Mark Bernhardt	Fresh Meadows	NY
9377	Robin Kraft	San Francisco	CA	9436	Peter Skarzenski	Dallas	TX	9494	R Bayly	Santa Barbara	CA
9378	James Young	Lynnwood	WA	9437	Dan Smalley	Columbus	OH	9495	Kari Obermeyer	Durham	NC
9379	Barkin Aygun	Mountain View	CA	9438	Dan DeKalb	Norman	OK	9496	“Thomas Nance, Jr”	Louisville	KY
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9386	Paul Lugo	Oakland	CA	9445	Bill Speed	Cullowhee	NC	9503	Kevin Walsh	Lancaster	CA
9387	Isaiah Kramer	San Francisco	CA	9446	John Cox	Litchfield Park	AZ	9504	Zachary Schreckengost	West Decatur	PA
9388	Erik Ahrens	Clovis	CA	9447	David Purves	Madison	AL	9505	H Cowan	San Francisco	CA
9389	Joel Niemi	Snohomish	WA	9448	Sharon Purves	Madison	AL	9506	Jon Laye	Boca Raton	FL
9390	Michael Allen	San Francisco	CA	9449	Christopher Purves	Madison	AL	9507	Andrew Francis	Seattle	WA
9391	Adam Wilson	Vancouver	WA	9450	Yianni Doulis	Portland	OR	9508	Kim Strang	Seattle	WA
9392	Kirstin Corris	Washington	DC	9451	Neil Martin	Santa Rosa	CA	9509	David Kasanof	Fort Lauderdale	FL
9393	Tom Corris	Washington	DC	9452	Erik Nohlin	San Francisco	CA	9510	Eduardo Viladevall	Kirkland	WA
9394	Michael Villalonga	Weston	FL	9453	Jeffery Dunning	Kirkland	WA	9511	Matthew Liggett	Mountain View	CA
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9522	Pam Plemmons	Hamilton City	CA	9579	Mitchell Potter	Arlington	VA	9639	Joseph Hylkema	Seattle	WA
9523	Carter Wall	Everett	WA	9580	David Murray	Fort Worth	TX	9640	Robert Conklin	Asheville	NC
9524	William Medcalf	Papillion	NE	9581	D Tubbs	Ticonderoga	NY	9641	Thomas Coolidge	Anchorage	AK
9525	Gary Felkner	Overland Park	KS	9582	Jon Erwin	Dillsburg	PA	9642	Shelley Coolidge	Anchorage	AK
9526	Alessandro Muknicka	Gainesville	FL	9583	"Robert Berg, Jr"	Palmer	AK	9643	Jim Fosler	Anchorage	AK
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9561	Cheryl Lynch	Vancouver	BC CAN	9618	Jeremiah Lindsay	Seattle	WA	9678	Duane Blassl	Worthing	SD
9562	Nigel Press	Vancouver	BC CAN	9619	Paul Gotz	Seattle	WA	9679	Stephen Livingston	Anchorage	AK
9563	Kenneth Bowers	Raleigh	NC	9620	Todd Vandermoon	Everett	WA	9680	Dan Schwartz	Anchorage	AK
9564	Lloyd Brown	Lexington	NC	9621	Stewart Osgood	Anchorage	AK	9681	Zach Carter	Otis Orchards	WA
9565	Charles Arayata	Downingtown	PA	9622	Hugh Walsh	Cincinnati	OH	9682	Tom Reimbolt	Boise	ID
9566	Erik Rath	Seattle	WA	9623	George Holroyd	Redmond	WA	9683	Bruce Newell	Helena	MT
9567	Douglas Reid	Seattle	WA	9624	Glenn Sturchio	Rochester	MN	9684	Justin Lowe	Dover	TN
9568	Chris Willink	San Francisco	CA	9625	Mark Fincham	Ashburn	VA	9685	Greig Davis	Farmington Hills	MI
9569	Ed Vander Pol	Beaverton	OR	9626	Santosh Ahuja	Richardson	TX	9686	Brendan Andree	Eagle River	AK
9570	Gil Lebron	Perth Amboy	NJ	9627	John Gibson	Brooklyn	NY	9687	Kingston Smith	Lake Forest	IL
9571	Sarah Mclean	Austin	TX	9628	Mark Reyes	Dublin	CA	9688	Donald McKee II	Sewickley	PA
9572	Timothy Erickson	Portland	OR	9629	Erik Hetzner	Oakland	CA	9689	Janice Koval	Anchorage	AK
9573	Christian Byar	Spring Lake	MI	9630	Bradley Cole	Bloomington	MN	9690	Tim Leffew	Cleveland	TN
9574	John Cook	Fishers	IN	9631	Barbara Greening	El Cerrito	CA	9691	Debra Pfaff	Springfield	MO
9575	Mark Richards	Newtown	CT	9632	Randy Ayers	Edgerton	MO	9692	David Rick	Longmont	CO
9576	Michael Zhang	Louisville	KY	9633	Charlie Camp	Anchorage	AK	9693	Chris Turner	Anchorage	AK
9577	J Supnick	Rochester	NY	9634	Robert Werner	Anchorage	AK	9694	"Ralph Wesser, Jr"	Wasilla	AK
				9635	Jeanne Schaaf	Anchorage	AK	9695	Douglas Ferris	Fitchburg	WI
				9636	Joanne Snow	Madison	WI	9696	Patricia Pinkston	Temple	TX
				9637	Michael Shreve	Cherry Hill	NJ				

Music for

“Music Is A Crutch!” That was jokingly said at the pre-ride talk before the Furnace Creek 508 in 2005 to an audience of riders and support crews. I was there to crew for my partner Emily O’Brien as she was about to ride her first endurance event. At the time I hardly knew what randonneuring was, but by the time I flew back to Boston two things stuck in my head: I wanted to ride long distances, and I needed to figure out some way of listening to music while on a bike. (Emily went on to win the fixed gear category in part from the encouragement of the *Canadian Brass* being played from a speaker mounted to the roof of the minivan as she rode through the desert.)



Music Playing Sunglasses on NER’s RBA. The speakers are far enough from the ears as to not block any outside sound. Photo: Scott Lovejoy.

Music and bikes don’t traditionally mix: irrespective of their questionable legality, earbuds are uncomfortable and potentially damaging to one’s hearing. Large headphones don’t work with a helmet, and even if they did, some ambient sounds are useful. Strapping a boom box to the handlebars lost its charm along with the accompanying BMX bike in the 4th grade. But there are solutions. Below are my suggestions for music while riding, something I’d consider as effective as EPO.

But before you ask why someone would want to “destroy the serenity of the open road,” keep in mind to each his own. Short of an engaging conversation, nothing works as well to keep me awake, focused, and happy in the saddle as music. I wouldn’t encourage music when riding with others and never at a loud volume, but when alone a soundtrack can be invigorating.

When discussing music and bicycles, the real question is speaker placement: do you want something mounted on

the Ride

Jake Kassen, RUSA #3598



Dill Pickle Gear strap holding speaker on front of steerer tube. Photo: Jake Kassen

the bike or closer to your ears. Below is my review of products for the two positions.

For the “near the ears” style of speaker placement the solution is a pair of knock-off Oakley MP3 sunglasses. Some will remember the original Oakley version being well publicized in the late 1990s by a certain cyclist who was known for wearing them while training for a PBP alternative. (As it turns out, music wasn’t his only drug.)

Find these by doing an Amazon.com search for “mp3 sunglasses”; they are imported under a variety of brand names and retail for \$10-25 depending on features. You should buy the type where the earbud is attached via a bar, not a wire. They can then be positioned so that the small speakers stay 1/2” away from the ears. You will be able to hear what is being played without missing the sound of an

approaching vehicle or the words of a fellow rider. You’ll control the volume and playback via the three buttons on the frame.

The negative is that they’re uncomfortable after more than a few hours and sunglass quality is lacking. I’ve taken to just removing the flip-up lenses entirely, leaving just the frame. Battery life isn’t bad—five hours depending on the temperature. I often keep a pair in my saddlebag for times when it’s thirty miles to the next control and I need something more stimulating than a generic Bar Of Food.

The next solution I’ve found is a candy-bar sized “Bike Speaker” purchased from Amazon for around \$10-40. Find these by doing an Amazon.com search for “bike mp3 speaker.” The best are the small aluminum versions, with buttons on one side and the speaker on the other. (Avoid the all-plastic or rubber-coated ones.)

These come with useless handlebar mounts, but thankfully Emily (aka Dill Pickle Gear) designed a simple strap to attach it parallel to the steerer tube where it stays out of the way. The battery lasts about six to eight hours, again depending on temperature and volume.

With both of these products, one connects their computer to the device via a USB cable to charge the internal battery and copy over the mp3 files for playback. (Use them like a USB thumb drive.) Keep in mind these devices are cheap and simple with only three to four buttons to control basic playback with no display so you might not want to copy over your entire library lest you spend an hour skipping through tracks. Think of them like a portable CD player; you only have the ability to start/stop, adjust the volume, and skip to the next track. For this reason I like to listen to archived radio shows—someone else can be the DJ.

The more expensive “Bike Speakers” and MP3 Sunglasses even allow connectivity via Bluetooth, so if you’re already riding with a smartphone you could use that device to manage your music library or even stream live internet radio if you don’t mind draining your battery between controls. But now you’re getting complex with multiple devices that need recharging and constant attention. Isn’t the point of randonneuring to just enjoy the tranquility of the countryside? 🚴

Crater Lake 1000K

Kerin Huber, Rusa #2060



I love the 1000K distance, and I love riding in the beautiful, green Pacific Northwest, so how could I resist traveling up to Seattle to do the Crater Lake 1000K last August? This is a point-to-point ride that starts in Bremerton, WA, and heads south to Klamath Falls, OR, with a little jaunt up to Crater Lake on the third day. Apparently I wasn't the only rider who couldn't resist this epic route

as seven other riders from California plus one from Arizona joined the riders from the Northwest. Our gracious SIR organizer was Gary Prince, who took great care of us.

POINT-TO-POINT RIDES ALWAYS take a bit of transportation planning, especially if you are not a local. On my trip up to Seattle I scored a quintet of transportation modes. (Shouldn't there be a RUSA award for this?) I drove to the airport, flew from Burbank to Seattle, hopped on the train to downtown, took a city bus to Gary's house for the wonderful pre-ride dinner, and lastly took the ferry over to Bremerton. Ironically, the only thing I didn't do that day was ride my bike, since it was all cozy in the S&S case.

The ride started at 10:30pm on Thursday, a time calculated to make sure everybody was at Crater Lake National Park during the daylight on Sunday. The beginning was a mostly flat trip along the Hood Canal. It was a nice night with moderate temperatures, a bit of fog, and very little car traffic after 10pm. I had the pleasure

of riding that first night and much of the next three days with Asta from Portland. She was strong and cheerful, an ideal riding companion. By the time dawn broke on Friday we were near the coast, where we would ride for most of the day. One highlight was crossing the four-mile bridge across the Columbia River into Astoria. Asta and I got to Pacific City, the first overnight control, in the late afternoon. Since there was still plenty of daylight, we kept going to Lincoln City, twenty miles further down the coast. That turned out to be a great plan because it allowed us to ride beautiful Slab Creek Road in the light.

On Saturday morning we left Lincoln City well before dawn and headed out into a drizzly morning. At dawn we stopped in Newport at the local coffee shop for a real breakfast. Nothing like some eggs, potatoes and coffee to warm the body and pick up

the spirits. We continued our journey along the beautiful Oregon coast. Unfortunately, some of the spectacular views were obscured by clouds and drizzle, but I guess that's to be expected in the Northwest. We turned away from the coast at midday and began the long, gradual climb up the Umpqua River to the second overnight at Roseberg.

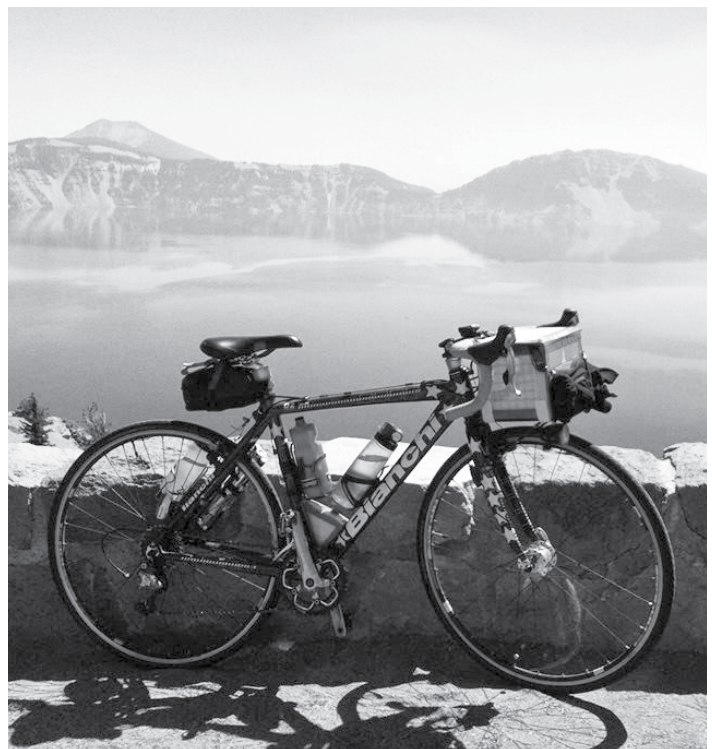
The third day was definitely the Tapa Reina. We left Roseberg in the wee hours and essentially climbed for 100 straight miles up to the lodge at Crater Lake. This was a true test of my fitness. By the time I got near the lake it was midday, quite hot, and I was out of water. If I were to do the ride again I would bring a Camelback. It was a memorable moment to crest one of the last climbs and catch the first view of the lake although I don't know if it was joy or relief I was feeling. When I finally got to the control



Photos: Asta Chastain

at the Crater Lake Lodge, I drank lots of fluid and scarfed down two overpriced, but oh-so-yummy peanut butter sandwiches from the snack bar. After a few pictures at the lake, I left the control with Asta and Mark to ride the final 60 miles to Klamath Falls. There was an awesome descent followed by many flat miles near Klamath Lake. We rode easy, but still made good time, and arrived at the finish control at about 6:30 in the evening, where we were greeted with cold beer and hot pizza. I had plenty of time to enjoy chatting with the other riders before heading off to the Amtrak station to catch the 8:30 train back to Los Angeles.

Many thanks are due to Gary and the other SIR volunteers who helped out with the ride. Two spouses, Julia and Cynthia, made our rides much easier by helping out with drop bags and support. This is a wonderful, scenic ride that is definitely worth the bit of planning and travel required to make it happen. 🚴



This year the Crater Lake 1000K will begin on August 14.

A WINTER 300K

THE RBA SIDE OF THINGS

Kevin Kaiser, RUSA #1599

Photos: Don Appel, William Cooper

AUDAX ATLANTA RUNS QUITE A FEW BREVETS EVERY YEAR and attempts to give riders a good chance at completing an R-12 without having to ride too many permanents. However, winter weather can be variable, unlike summer weather which is always hot. During the winter, temperatures can range from 25-70 degrees, with or without wind, rain, sleet, and snow. The recent ice storm pretty much shut down Atlanta, but biking was excellent just a few days after.

As an RBA, I like to ride as many of my brevets as possible. However, between my work schedule and my RBA duties—researching routes, printing brevet cards and cue sheets, updating the website, and posting results—my cycling fitness level has really suffered. I had a DNF on my flat January 1st 200K and a tough finish on our 200K a couple weeks later. Our 300K on February 1st reminded me what new riders must think before their first long ride. It had been a long time, and I was actually a little scared that I couldn't cover the distance. Regardless, it was time to get back a little of my "mojo" if I want to be prepared for PBP next year.

For me to do these brevets, it is imperative that that I get riders to the start on time. I've never had much trouble with this, but correct start times on the cue sheet and website are just as important as providing proper turn directions. Finding a way to hear my phone over the wind while riding is also a priority. Last of all, now that I'm one of the slower riders, I need to make sure that everyone knows what to do when they get to the finish and I'm not there.

On the morning of the 300K, Don Appel was supporting riders on course, having done the pre-ride the day before, and I took care of RBA duties at the start. I begin this ride at 6:00am (just before sunrise) so I can be sure that everyone has good lights. I don't want riders to get 150 miles into an event before realizing that their lights don't work properly. My biggest mistake of the day was that an old cue sheet was posted to the website showing a 7am start. One of my riders got off to a late start because of this error and never caught up to the other riders. It was no doubt a long and lonely day for him, but to his credit he persevered despite my mistake.

Our 300K route is designed to be rider friendly; I make it a habit of saving all the hard climbing for later in the

year. There are a couple tough hills we call "Pig-Pen Gap" and "White Oak Gap," but they are only short eye openers amongst a lot of easy rollers. Low traffic is of course my highest priority. My favorite sections are on the scenic roads connecting the almost deserted towns of Linton, Powelton, and Wrightsboro: rural Georgia at its finest. Fast riders miss out if they don't slow down enough to take in the surroundings.

The toughest section of the route can be the Fall Line Freeway, which is a 30-mile stretch between controls along a four lane road. The road has great shoulders and little traffic, but the wind can be challenging. If it's at your back it becomes a fast 1.5-hour trip, but if it is in your face, the journey seems to take forever.

I rode with my brother Chris as well as with Bill Cooper for the first 90 miles, but I knew my limits and begged to be dropped at that point. Fortunately, I found a nice group to stay with for the final 100 miles. Gary Carter, William Holden, Doyce Johnson (fresh off a broken hip), and Gator Cochran (on his 37-pound touring bike) all make for good company. I was not the alpha dog in this group, but they didn't punish me as bad as they could have. Additionally, we had one new rider completing her longest ride (Betty Jean Jordan), and one local rider blowing the rest of us away (David Perry). 🚴🏍️



Betty Jean half way through her first 300k. Left to right: Kevin Kaiser #1599, Betty Jean Jordan #9026, Jeff Dilcher #8036, Chris Kaiser#1742.



Dueling recumbents, or: Who's about to get dropped in this photo?
Left to right: Doyce Johnson#1983, the author, Gary Carter #2922

The San Luis Obispo 300km Brevet

February 16, 2014

By Vickie Backman, ride organizer
for Pacific Coast Highway
Randonneurs

CALIFORNIA IS NOT CROWDED. SAN LUIS OBISPO (SLO) IS the biggest city in a very large rural county, but the sidewalks are still rolled up just after dark. The Central Coast has beaches, wine regions, cattle ranches and strawberry farms, Cal Poly University and Hearst Castle. Towns are small and separated by oak-covered rolling hills, and you are never far from the Pacific coast. With a Mediterranean climate, most of the time it's "just another beautiful day in paradise," even in the winter.

The San Luis Obispo 300k brevet begins and ends close to home, in my driveway. The route makes a big loop to the south, reaching as far as Lompoc and Solvang before returning. It's a great ride with 9000 vertical feet, using many local favorite roads. This year's ride was on President's Weekend. With motels booked up, the usual offer went out: free rando camping at my house. Bring your sleeping bag and pad, there's room for you. Three riders stayed over; it's always nice to meet old friends and new riders.

The weather forecast before the ride was for a 30% chance of morning showers. Happily, when I opened the garage door at 5:15, the sky was clear, the ground was dry, and all thirty-three riders showed up before the 6 a.m. start. Most riders came from Northern and Southern California, making an overnight trip of it, but we also welcomed Ivan Cornell from England, Scott Cone from Maryland, and Grant McAlister from Seattle.

Off they went, into the dark with a full moon, for a quick loop around sleeping SLO and down the Pacific coast through Pismo Beach, just after dawn. I headed to a secret control 35 miles out on the Arroyo Grande mesa in a rural area with backyard horses, golf courses, and no traffic. There were lots of smiles coming into the secret control, well stocked with red (licorice) vines and Chris Farmer's super oatmeal cookies, which quickly evaporated.

From there, riders headed south on the only flat section, through vineyards and farms to tiny Los Alamos. Experienced riders quickly stocked up, knowing that the faster they could get to Lompoc, the less wind they would face. But first, they headed for rough but beautiful Drum Canyon Road directly south of town. Drum climbs upwards for three miles with no traffic before a long downhill run. Drivers don't like the worn and patched pavement, so it's good for something! The headwind westbound into Lompoc became a great tailwind eastbound on empty Santa Rosa Road for 17 miles of farms and vineyards. Roger Prasser volunteered at the info control, raising spirits with snacks and drinks.

After a control in "Danish" Solvang, riders headed north on a long isolated stretch on Foxen Canyon Road climbing and rolling through miles of ranches and vineyards. There is always a headwind in the afternoon, the only real question being how strong is it going to be. This year, there is just a wee breeze of 15-20 mph, and the riders have a great



Getting ready for sunset at the old Sisquoc Store control, where Brad Opstad made a lot of people happy with warm food and drink.

Photo: Roland Bevan

day. A new RUSA member, Brad Opstad, volunteered and ran a great control at Sisquoc, far from anywhere. Two riders tangled on Foxen, Kim Fuess taking the worst of it with a nasty hematoma and road rash. Brad and Roger helped bring in the wounded, unhappy at having to abandon so far into the ride.

The rest crossed the brand new Santa Maria River Bridge, on a dedicated and separated cycling lane on the way back home, rolling through more hills into the dark of night in small groups with new friends. Edina Fuzesi, Grant McAlister, and Shai Shprung on his fixie came in first, in 12 hours, 55 minutes. By evening's end, 30 of the 33 riders who started the ride finished. All were treated to Nicole Honda's banana bread, the ever-popular mac n'cheese, lasagna, and chili for dinner at Vickie's house, the traditional end to the ride. 🍷

RIDER COMMENTS

- Thank you for organizing the best supported unsupported ride. I really felt like I belonged to a community of cyclists. *Edina Fuzesi*
- Although it was my first 300K brevet it will not be my last....I'm now fully motivated to complete a 400K and 600K.....*Terri Boykins*
- Achieving Lantern Rouge was on my bucket list ;-)
Chris Farmer (awesome cookie man)
- Vickie fully rocketh!!!! *Jack Holmgren*
- The controls were placed well and the cue sheet was correct with good details and the roads were scenic with little traffic and your warm hospitality made the whole experience memorable. Wish to thank Roger and Brad for taking care of us at Controls
Manny Brahman

A Room at the Inn

BREVET SEASON IS NOW FULLY UPON us and one of the things to remember, learn, or re-learn is that a fully rested body is one of the most valuable assets to have at your disposal when you start a long ride. Absent that you may find that somewhere along the way you may need to pull to the side of the road for a brief nap.

“When people ask me what randonneur means, I tell them it’s French for “sleep in ditches.”

That’s a quote from an internet discussion among a group of avid cyclists. They were talking about the variety of accommodations offered on a recent multiday charity ride. Some had taken advantage of the proffered high school gym floor, others had chosen the tent camping opportunity, while a few had ‘upgraded’ to warm beds in nearby motels. Shortly the discussion turned to a comparison of randonneuring and ‘luxury cycling.’ That’s when someone made the comment above.

As I monitored the chat it occurred to me that the options for sleeping arrangements in randonneuring are no less varied than those available on paid and supported club rides. The Cascade 1200 was cited as an example of a ‘plush’ rando event, though it was mentioned that some gym floor sleeping was involved. I thought back to when I rode the C-1200 and recalled the wonderful

soft bed and down comforter at the Mazama control. I also remembered dozing in a booth at a McDonald’s just a few miles from the finish.

I think we would all agree that adequate sleep is just as important to a successful ride as sufficient nutrition and a bike that is up to the task. Sometimes however, circumstances require that you revert to plan B and that cozy motel room must be forgone for a brief rest on a park bench, a picnic table, a bus shelter or the floor of a rural post office. All will do in a pinch but don’t ask me how I know this.

It’s true that almost any place will do; however, there are a few guidelines which make for a better experience:

Be safe! Don’t sleep out in the middle of the road, on the edge of a precipice, or in the middle of a turn-out or side road where other riders or autos might come upon you unexpectedly. Behind a guard rail is better than in front of the guard rail. Not only do you risk being run over in some of these situations, but you can also expect to be awakened frequently by well intentioned passersby concerned about your situation. If you find yourself falling asleep on the bike there is really not much to decide. Getting off the bike is a safety measure. You need to either get off and walk, or get off and sleep. Falling while riding is usually disastrous.

Research also suggests that sleeping partially upright might make it easier to re-awaken. Get comfortable, but not too comfortable. When ditch napping, too comfortable is rarely a problem.

Be prepared. Even if you don’t plan to sleep out, have at least a modicum of preparation for the unexpected. No one takes a pump and patch kit along because they *plan* to have a flat, but it pays to be prepared. In the case of sleep, that little bitty Space Blanket can actually make a big difference. This is one piece of ‘equipment’ which I think has a very high potential ROI. The thing will help you conserve heat on a cool night, and it is also effective at warding off creeping, crawling, flying enemies of sleep. It keeps the dew off as well. It’s impossible to get them to fold up teeny tiny like that once they’ve been used, but almost anyone can get the thing wadded up sufficiently to stuff into a zip loc sandwich bag. You do carry spare zip loc bags don’t you?

Be strategic. You will have to decide if sleeping now will get you to the finish line sooner than riding on at a (probably) reduced speed. If you know you will have to sleep along the side of the road somewhere, watch for the idea location and try to time it right.

The ‘right’ time varies for everyone. Timing and duration can have a big impact on how effective your nap can be. In my experience, and

from discussions with other veterans of the ditch nap, I have found that those darkest hours just before the sky begins to lighten are ideal. If you have been riding through the night, you are probably feeling some combination of exhaustion and sleep deprivation, and the longer you ride through the night, the worse it gets. A nap just before dawn means you'll be waking up to a sky that continues to get lighter as you ride, providing a more familiar scenario than waking up in the middle of a dark night with no prospect of daylight for hours.

Research also suggests that a 10 to 20 minute nap may be more effective for you than a 30 plus minute nap. A study found that the 10- to 20-minute nappers often awoke more alert than those who napped past 30 minutes. The 30+ minute nappers tended

to feel groggy for the first 30 minutes after their nap. Of course this was a study of 'normal' people, and if you have been riding a bike for 20 plus hours you are not normal.

Another suggestion is to ingest some caffeine just *before* your nap. The stimulant effect will kick in and help you reawaken with more alertness.

I can attest to this as a successful strategy. When I rode PBP in 2003 I had been riding for nearly 24 hours and still had a way to go before arriving at my overnight stop, Loudeac. I was really sleepy and decided to pull over for a short nap. I found a nice cushy stone wall and sidewalk (abundant in rural France) next to the road. I propped my bike up against the wall, downed a caffeinated gel, and immediately nodded off. About 30 minutes

later my eyes popped open. That comfy, cushy granite wall had turned decidedly hard and the caffeine not only helped to wake me up, it also helped get my achy legs to turn over. I felt refreshed and ready to resume my quest.

If you think that PBP 2015 may be on your calendar, then this is the year for you to try different things, and perhaps there is a ditch by the side of the road on your next long brevet that is calling your name. 🚲



Dr. Codfish, aka Paul Johnson (RUSA #1168), lives and rides in the Pacific Northwest.

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Denali 300K

Permanent

Burnley Willis, RUSA #8711

In some ways, you could consider the Denali Park Road to be the Holy Grail of Alaska Randonneuring. Set in the epic backcountry of Denali National Park, the Park Road is the gateway for Park visitors to see and experience Denali, North America's highest peak. Denali is masked by perpetual clouds and misty self-formed 'local' weather that thwarts most Park visitors' efforts to see it. In the words of Monty Python, "It's so hugely big," that this idea of 'local' weather is both logical and strangely counter-intuitive. I've been out and back on the Park Road a few times now and have yet to see Denali on a clear day.

THE PARK ROAD ITSELF IS A MIX OF GRAVEL AND HARD-pan, not exactly the ideal riding surface for a time-restricted randonneuring experience. There are long, undulating rollers that meander up and over and around the terrain; there are moose, caribou, ptarmigan, black bears, brown bears, dall sheep, and wolves. Two years ago, near Sable Pass, I came across a rise and saw two Park buses stopped ahead. Generally this means something awesome is happening, and so it was that I spied a small brown and white wolf trotting my way. I stepped off of my bicycle, putting it between the wolf and me as she strolled by. She looked at me sideways, less than ten feet away, but never stopped moving. She slowed to a walk after she had passed me by, sniffed the air, and then continued on her way.

That's what can happen on the Park Road.

The weather can change on a dime: beautiful and sunny, to overcast and misty, to rainy and frigid, and then back to sunny again.

For this ride, 305 kilometers in 20:20 would be a challenge.

Course Details

Alaska randonneur's RBA Kevin Turinsky has thoughtfully started and ended the ride at a 24-hour sandwich shop, one and one half miles outside the Park. There are exactly three navigational points for your 189-mile trek: one right turn

near the start, a u-turn at the halfway point, and one left near the very end. The first and last fifteen miles are paved, but that initial fifteen is probably the steepest of the whole ride. There are several moderate climbs, impressive downhill bombs, and from mile sixty-seven to mile ninety-three a sustained mostly downhill stretch where you can actually relax a little. The flip side is you have to immediately turn around and hold on as you climb two thousand, five hundred gravelly feet over that same twenty-six miles.

My Ride

I rode my hardtail 29er with 2-inch Race Kings, although I'm sure it could be done on any number of bicycles. I packed my standard repair kit (with a few extra bits), wet and cold weather gear, emergency bivy, water purifier, food to last the whole ride, and powdered sports drink.

July 27, 2013--I started at 0700 sharp. The sandwich shop line was out the door, air heavy with French and Spanish accents as tourists from all over the world swarmed the two employees who were gamely putting sandwiches out as fast they could make them. Soon enough I was riding away, wondering just what I had gotten myself into.

The first eleven miles climbs one thousand, five hundred feet. While I felt good, I always start slow, a habit from running long distances where you know you can't win a marathon in the first five miles, but you sure can lose one.



Polychrome Pass

The slow start had me a fair bit off the pace: only nine mph after eleven miles. It wasn't time to panic--not yet--but it's safe to say I was slightly concerned.

This ride is all about the elevation profile. Do your homework. Know where and how long the climbs are. Most climbs aren't too severe--they accommodate tour bus traffic, after all--but they come at you, one after the other, and can weigh heavily if you don't have a good attitude.

Knowing there was a big downhill ahead, I couldn't help but smile as I rode past Savage River Campground and spied the twisty downward-sloping bit of road that meant the smooth paved riding would soon come to an end. After a grinning-like-a-fool downhill that brought my pace back up to eleven mph, I rode across the Savage River bridge and left pavement behind. The true ride would begin.

(It should also be noted that privately owned vehicles are prohibited from this point on. Your only companions will be the random tour bus and, occasionally, another cyclist or hiker.)

The second control is Igloo Camp, around mile thirty-five. I made it with less than an hour to spare, treated some water and got back on the bicycle. After climbing Sable Pass and bombing down to Toklat River (where a caribou joined me, trotting alongside for a few hundred meters), I was met with an unpleasant headwind. I watched my speed slow and felt the nagging doubt start to creep into my mind that it was just possible my ride would be derailed before I even made it to the third control. At mile fifty I actually felt a sharp pang of panic; I was pulling four and one half mph, and knew there was no way I could make the Eielson Visitor Center at the allotted time if this was the best I could do. I made myself breathe, continued to spin out the hill, and a funny thing happened. I double clicked to smaller cogs, stood up, and started pulling the hill. This became a recurrent theme throughout the day.

With renewed focus and fierce determination I made Eielson, with about fifteen minutes to spare. With so little time in the bank, I rushed inside and refilled my water,



The Park Road just climbs and twists along.

updated my permanent card, and made for Kantishna Airstrip, twenty six miles away.

It was a breeze, twenty six miles downhill, a welcome relief from the hours of climbing and rolling. I gained forty-five minutes on that leg. Suddenly I had enough time for a few photos in front of the End of the Road sign!

THE PARK ROAD LOOKS different coming back. Denali is splayed out on your right, covered mostly with clouds and mist but now and then peaking out enough to make you literally gasp in wonder. I lost a quarter hour going back to Eielson but still had about forty minutes in the bank, so I had a bowl of cereal, re-stocked water, charged my GPS for ten minutes, and then was back on the road.

Fatigue started to creep in, mostly from the mental pressure of chasing the minute hand all day. I lost myself in the steady cadence of churning legs, of alternating positions on the aero bars, of standing and attacking the steep section of

a hill and the eye-watering descents that were sure to follow. There is something primal about asking your body to do this thing, to set before it a task so immense, and then realizing the methodical, even ruthless, execution of that task. Your mind becomes a one-way street, narrowly focused.

You are, in that moment, free. That's why I ride.

I made it to Igloo Camp without losing any more time. The sun was setting, lowering a cool veil over the road that surprises you with its bite. I turned on my lights, put on my arm and leg warmers, refilled, restocked, and got back to spinning along. I now felt very confident about finishing the ride on time, and that gave me a little extra pop as I rode up and over and back around to the pavement. Fifteen miles to go, and most of it downhill!

After climbing up to Savage River campground and checking the time--almost an hour in the bank--I stopped long enough to put on the last of my cold weather gear for the long blistering downhill to the finish.



End of the Road, halfway done.

Photos: Burnley Willis

And then it was done.

Walking through the doors of the final control to order my sandwich, I felt tired for the first time all day. A look at the gps told me I finished in eighteen hours and forty-three minutes, and I tried to understand how time could pass by so slowly and yet, somehow, disappear with such efficiency. A long day in the saddle, time gone but not forgotten.

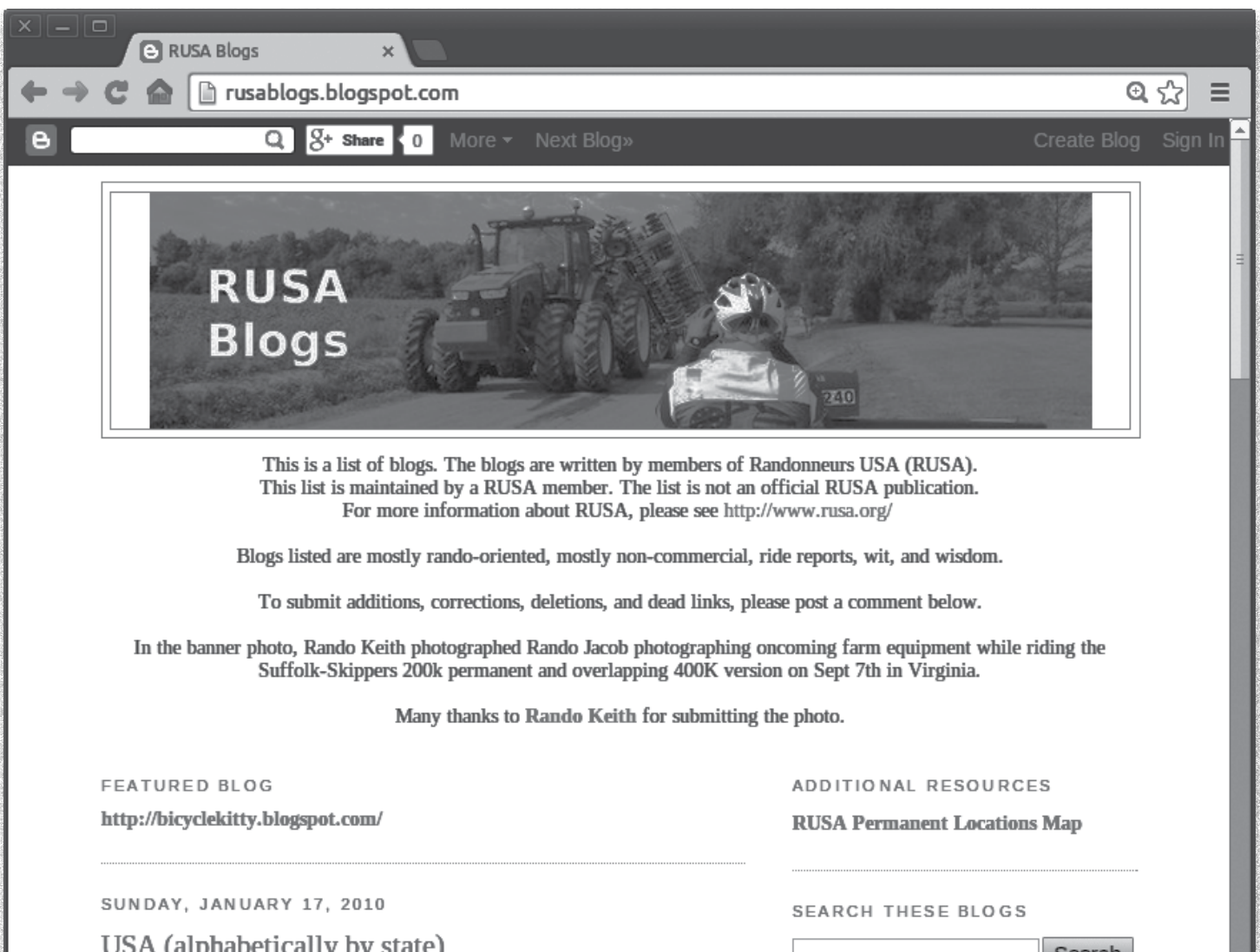
I ordered a foot-long sub, lots of pickles, and a big macadamia nut cookie. Receipt in hand I wolfed down my food, got back on the bicycle one last time and headed back to Denali National Park and the tent that was calling my name. I could barely stay on the bicycle long enough to ride the impossibly short one and one half miles to camp, where I promptly climbed into my tent, zipped my bag, and closed my eyes. I crashed, hard, and dreamed of a great many things, but what I remember most about those dreams were the hills. So many hills... 🚲



RUSA blogs

When I first discovered randonneuring, I was inspired by articles written by randonneurs on their blogs. Most articles were ride reports describing the strong camaraderie, beautiful scenery, and thrilling descents, along with the trials and tribulations encountered. Other articles gave advice on perennial topics such as tires, saddles, and frame materials. More than any other source of information, these first-person articles were responsible for attracting me to the hobby.

Here are several of my favorite blogs:



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying "rusablogs.blogspot.com". The page features a banner image of a tractor and a motorcycle. Below the banner, there is a paragraph of text explaining the purpose of the blog list and providing a link to the RUSA website. Further down, there are sections for "FEATURED BLOG" and "ADDITIONAL RESOURCES", along with a search bar for the blogs.

RUSA Blogs

This is a list of blogs. The blogs are written by members of Randonneurs USA (RUSA). This list is maintained by a RUSA member. The list is not an official RUSA publication. For more information about RUSA, please see <http://www.rusa.org/>

Blogs listed are mostly rando-oriented, mostly non-commercial, ride reports, wit, and wisdom.

To submit additions, corrections, deletions, and dead links, please post a comment below.

In the banner photo, Rando Keith photographed Rando Jacob photographing oncoming farm equipment while riding the Suffolk-Skippers 200k permanent and overlapping 400K version on Sept 7th in Virginia.

Many thanks to Rando Keith for submitting the photo.

FEATURED BLOG
<http://bicyclekitty.blogspot.com/>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
[RUSA Permanent Locations Map](#)

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17, 2010

USA (alphabetically by state)

SEARCH THESE BLOGS

Resources for Randonneurs—The RUSA Blogs List

Andy Dingsor, RUSA #5448

Most humorous and snarky

randoboy.blogspot.com. I always laugh out loud at his ride reports, covering Florida, Tennessee, and the west coast.

Most unflinching positive riding spirit

janheine.wordpress.com. This blog mixes business with pleasure. I like the great ride reports and rigorous engineering evaluations of tires, frames, and gear.

Most motivational

chasingmailboxes.com. In a class by herself, MG reports on brevets and tours, runs her own contests, and hypes other bloggers.

Favorite travelogue

coloradobrevets.blogspot.com. The gorgeous photos of Colorado make me want to visit.

I CREATED AN ONLINE list of rando blogs to make it easy to find them, as well as to make it easy to find the most recent postings. RUSA Blogs can be found at: *rusablogs.blogspot.com*. My list is not an official RUSA publication, but it does present blogs written by RUSA members. Doing minimal curation, I list blogs which are ‘mostly rando-oriented and mostly non-commercial.’

Here is how the blog list is organized:

- **The main column on the left** lists blogs by location of the blog author, according to US state. I find the

location information useful when I am reading a blog, since most authors don’t list their location. It also helps prospective new members find randos in their areas.

- **The main column on the right** sorts the list according to the most recent posts across all blogs. This helps to quickly find the newest articles, and to avoid re-reading older articles.

TWO OTHER WHIMSICAL FEATURES are intended to keep the list fresh and interesting: the banner photo and featured blog.

- **The banner photo at the top** is intended to portray some unique or snarky aspect of randonneuring, such as sleeping in post offices or feeding money into vending machines at night. I change the photo every few months, or more frequently when other randos submit photos. (I welcome clever contributions.) One of my favorite banners showed a fellow North Carolina rando in the summer heat cooling his head in an ice machine.
- **The ‘Featured Blog’** is simply one blog I found interesting or unusual on one particular day. The current blog is *bicyclekitty.blogspot.com*. Don’t be fooled; the author has been randonneuring for several years and has earned an R-12.

IF YOU ENJOY FIRST-PERSON accounts written by inspiring authors, then I encourage you spend some time reading the blogs of our fellow randos. Or if you are recruiting a possible rando candidate, give them the link. Either way, enjoy learning what other randos are doing in your neighborhood and across the country. 🚴🗺️

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Photo : Justin Thiessen

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— Hammer Nutrition-sponsored athlete Eric Bruce
Photo : E. Bruce

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LAP OF THE LAKE 1000K

WHEN ONE COUNTRY ISN'T ENOUGH TO HOLD A BREVET

Pete Dusel, RUSA #25



What is it?

LOL, or Lap Of Lake (Ontario), is a 1000K brevet sanctioned by RUSA and ACP that loops around Lake Ontario. The route is jointly used and developed by Randonneurs Ontario, CA, as well as the Central/Western NY region of RUSA. Riding this year's LOL counts for both ACP and RUSA awards, as well as toward early registration preference for PBP 2015.

When is it?

This year LOL will start on the evening of July 9. Start time is 19:00, subject to confirmation of the Glenora Ferry schedule.

Where does it go?

The LOL brevet starts in Ontario, NY, and circles Lake Ontario, the easternmost of the Great Lakes, in a counter clockwise direction. The route hugs the shoreline of Lake Ontario as much as is practical and is often at the water's edge. In addition to the scenery, it passes many historic sites from the War of 1812. Cyclists from both sides of the border can spend the miles debating who won, or lost, that campaign. In the US the ride is mostly on the Seaway Trail, a signposted, designated scenic route, with the occasional

detour to avoid heavy traffic. The route goes into the scenic Thousand Islands region before crossing the St. Lawrence River into Canada on the Thousand Islands Bridge, where I-81 meets the Canadian border. In Canada we generally follow the Waterfront Trail, catching a ride across the Bay of Quint on the Glenora Ferry, down the shoreline to Newcastle, then head north around Toronto to avoid the big city congestion.

The route rejoins the Lake Ontario shoreline just west of Mississauga. It then continues around the western end of Lake Ontario past Hamilton harbor and crosses the Welland Canal, where you can see ocean freighters to Niagara on the Lake, also known as NOTL. At this junction of river and lake, the brevet follows the Niagara River south on the quiet, scenic Niagara Parkway along the edge of the Niagara River Gorge to cross the border back into the US adjacent to Niagara Falls via the Rainbow Bridge in Niagara Falls. We then rejoin the Seaway trail, following the Niagara River north back to Lake Ontario. The route follows the shoreline through small picturesque villages, picking up the Lake Ontario Parkway to Rochester, around Irondequoit Bay and back to the start in Ontario, NY.

What's the terrain like?

The terrain is generally, by Western NY standards, pretty mild, gently rolling to flat. Total climbing is on the order of 50% of PBP in about 85% of the distance. The roads are generally lightly travelled. However, the difficulty level is upped a notch by dealing with two border crossings, two countries with two currencies, and lake shore winds that can either be a delight or make for a really bad day. Of course, nobody likes walking across the Thousand Islands bridges.



Above: Niagara Falls from the Rainbow bridge. Maid of the Mist boats on the river. Below: Lake Road, near the start



Here is what Jon Levitt, a multiple LOL ancien has to say about why he keeps coming back:

Other than Abbot's Frozen Custard?

I simply love the route. I find the range of scenery beautiful: the orchards and farms along the lake east of Rochester, the Thousand Islands, going through Kingston, the Tory symbolism along the Loyalist Parkway,

the rollers above the lake in Ontario, the circuit around Toronto, the vineyards around Niagara Falls, the views along the Niagara River. I can even (just about) tolerate the long slog along the Lake Ontario State Parkway. It is not an entirely flat route, but is mild enough to allow one to enjoy a 1000K brevet as a cyclotourist. Or maybe it is just NY state jingoism...

Cheers, Jon



Glenora Ferry



Dick Felton on Lake Road, near the start



What makes it unusual?

Several things make this ride unusual and memorable. Pick up even the smallest globe, and you can see Lake Ontario. You can point to that vast expanse of water and proudly say you spent a three-day weekend biking around it. Visiting such well-known places as the Thousand Islands and Niagara Falls also make the ride notable. Few brevets include ferry rides, you will cross the St. Lawrence Sea Way twice, and you will likely see ocean freighters 1200K from the ocean. And how often do you need to show your passport at a bike check? Crossing the borders on a bike is always interesting, too. And I'm not aware of any other RUSA brevet where you can stop at the chip truck for a plate of Poutine! Another thing that makes the ride a bit out of the ordinary is that the route is shared between Randonneurs

MORE INFORMATION

The ride is being run from the Western/Central New York RUSA region.

The RBA may be contacted at:

RBA@distancerider.net

Maps, cue sheet, FAQ, registration information, etc. may be found at:

distancerider.net/LOL/LOLIndex.html

The Randonneurs Ontario version may be found at:

randonneursontario.ca/

Tourist Information

Seaway Trail: seawaytrail.com/

Thousand Islands: visit1000islands.com/visitorinfo/

Thousand Islands: 1000islands.com/

Antique Boat Museum: abm.org/

Boldt Castle: boldtcastle.com

Thousand Islands Bridge: tibridge.com/wp/

Waterfront Trail: waterfronttrail.org/

Welland Canal: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Welland_Canal

NOTL: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niagara-on-the-Lake

NOTL: shawfest.com/

Niagara Falls: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niagara_Falls

Rainbow Bridge: niagarafallsbridges.com/

Ontario, CA, which starts the ride near Toronto, and the Central/Western NY region of RUSA, which starts the ride near Rochester, NY.

Two Ontarios, in two countries, two border crossings, one major world city, a route that includes Mexico and Texas (both small towns in NY), and then Canada, a ferry ride and a scenic route on mostly quiet roads past wonders known around the world. What could be better for a brevet!

If you've never cycled in a foreign country, and are considering your first PBP next year, I believe you'll find this ride an excellent training experience for cycling in France, but without the language issue!

Weather

The average July temperatures in the region run from a low of 60 to a high of 80. Of course, actual temperatures can exceed those averages. 🚴

RUSA Awards

Ultra Awards

3 Riders Earn Ultra Randonneur Award

Three honorees have earned the Ultra Randonneur Award, given to RUSA members who have ridden ten (10) Super Randonneur series. The Super Randonneur (SR) series of brevets (200K, 300K, 400K and 600K in a calendar year) needed to qualify for the Ultra Randonneur Award need not be in consecutive years, nor is there a time limit on how long it takes to accumulate the ten SR series. Riders can apply with ACP brevets, RUSA brevets, or RM-sanctioned 1200K events.

RUSA congratulates these riders who are the latest to earn this prestigious award.

2014/03/18	Jeff Newberry	Austin, TX
2014/03/23	Tim Lucas	Wilson, NC
2014/04/22	Jack Twitchell	Pomona, CA

10 Members Earn Mondial Award

The Mondial Award is for RUSA members who have successfully completed at least 40,000KM in RUSA events.

The name “Mondial” comes from the French adjective meaning worldwide or global. The name relates to the fact that the circumference of the Earth is approximately 40,000KM.

This award can be earned just once by a member and is automatically awarded upon completion of the required distance (no application or purchase required).

The qualifying distance for this award is based on all events on RUSA’s calendar (ACP brevets and Flèches, RUSA brevets, populaires, arrows and darts), RUSA permanents, and 1200KM events held in the United States after 1999. Foreign events (including PBP) are not counted.

RUSA congratulates the riders who have just earned this prestigious award.

2014/01/01	Greg Courtney	Ames, IA
2014/01/18	Christopher Kaiser	McDonough, GA
2014/01/25	Alan Gosart	Murfreesboro, TN
2014/03/15	Mary J Florian	Lumberton, NC
2014/03/15	Mike Richeson	Seattle, WA
2014/03/22	Becky Berka	Dublin, CA
2014/03/23	Charles Jenkins	Denison, TX
2014/03/23	Patricia Jenkins	Denison, TX
2014/04/05	Joe Llona	Lynnwood, WA
2014/04/19	Del Scharffenberg	Milwaukie, OR

Driscoll Receives First Ultra R-12 Award



Dallas RBA Dan Driscoll is the first person to receive a new RUSA award, the Ultra R-12, which is earned by completing ten R-12 series.

Driscoll rode his first qualifying event in 2005, shortly after the R-12 Award was established. He finished his 10th R-12 series in April.

A hearty congratulations to Dan, and a tip of the hat to the many other R-12 enthusiasts who will soon join him as Ultra R-12 recipients.

RUSA Awards

R-12 Award Recipients

The R-12 Award is earned by riding a 200K (or longer) randonneuring event in each of 12 consecutive months. The counting sequence can commence during any month of the year but must continue uninterrupted for another 11 months.



Events that count toward the R-12 Award

- Any event on the RUSA calendar of 200K or longer.
- Foreign ACP-sanctioned brevets and team events (Flèches), Paris-Brest-Paris, and RM-sanctioned events of 1200K or longer.
- RUSA permanents—a particular permanent route may be ridden more than once during the twelve-month period for R-12 credit. The applicant must be a RUSA member during each of the twelve months. RUSA congratulates the latest honorees, listed below.

Approved	Name	City, State
2014/01/17	Keith Sherrick [4]	Winter Garden, FL
2014/01/18	Steven McCarthy	St. Petersburg, FL
2014/01/18	Steve Phillips [2]	Kimberly, AL
2014/01/19	Vance Eaddy	St Petersburg, FL
2014/01/19	Daniel Tuchyner [2]	South Weber, UT
2014/01/21	Catherine Shenk [6]	Boulder, CO
2014/01/22	Suzy Bone	Hollywood, FL
2014/01/22	Rob Ercolano	Hollywood, FL
2014/01/25	Gintautas Budvytis [5]	Castro Valley, CA
2014/01/26	Charles J Adams [2]	Midland, TX
2014/01/28	John Lee Ellis [8]	Lafayette, CO
2014/01/30	Mark W Dennin [2]	Cooper City, FL
2014/02/02	Ted Durant	Milwaukee, WI
2014/02/02	Jeff Sammons [7]	Brentwood, TN
2014/02/03	Kurt Giesa	Whitefish Bay, WI
2014/02/04	Jeffery Alan Medlin	Hanford, CA
2014/02/05	W David Thompson [5]	New Smyrna Beach, FL
2014/02/07	Gabrielle Friedly [2]	Menlo Park, CA
2014/02/07	Don Wayne Gramling, Jr	Jacksonville, FL
2014/02/07	Greg Merritt [2]	Berkeley, CA
2014/02/08	William Olsen [7]	Califon, NJ
2014/02/09	Lawrence A Midura	East Syracuse, NY

Approved	Name	City, State
2014/02/10	Werner Huss [3]	West Palm Beach, FL
2014/02/16	Narayan Krishnamoorthy [6]	Kirkland, WA
2014/02/16	Joe Llona [5]	Lynnwood, WA
2014/02/16	William Reagan [2]	Egg Harbor City, NJ
2014/02/17	Theodore Roffe [2]	Portland, OR
2014/02/19	Brian Terhark	Clive, IA
2014/02/20	Denise Primrose	Oakland, CA
2014/02/22	Kelly DeBoer [4]	San Marcos, CA
2014/02/22	Christopher Maglieri	Weatogue, CT
2014/02/23	Makoto Miwa [3]	Commerce Township, MI
2014/02/24	Richard G Carpenter [7]	Wilmington, NC
2014/02/24	Sora Chong	San Francisco, CA
2014/02/26	Jan Bent	Rochester, NY
2014/02/27	Ned Williams [3]	Columbus, OH
2014/02/28	Kevin Lais	Hillsboro, OR
2014/03/04	Daniel Oldale [4]	Arnold, MD
2014/03/06	Charles A Witsman [4]	Pana, IL
2014/03/07	Andy Dingsor [5]	Durham, NC
2014/03/09	Mike Myers [6]	Baxter Springs, KS
2014/03/09	Nancy Myers [6]	Baxter Springs, KS
2014/03/09	Keith N Olsen	San Diego, CA
2014/03/12	Patrick Chin-Hong [3]	Forest Hills, NY
2014/03/12	Ian Shopland [6]	Olympia, WA

Approved	Name	City, State
2014/03/14	William Larson [4]	Davis, CA
2014/03/15	George Brandt [2]	Glendora, NJ
2014/03/18	Tom Haggerty [3]	San Francisco, CA
2014/03/18	Jerry L Phelps [8]	Durham, NC
2014/03/19	Rudy Hewitt [2]	Wheaton, MD
2014/03/20	Ruth Ann D'Aiuto [2]	Clermont, FL
2014/03/21	Jenny Hatfield	Oakland, CA
2014/03/21	Richard Grant McCaw [5]	San Jose, CA
2014/03/21	Sharon E Picolo	Plantation, FL
2014/03/21	Graham A Ross	Portland, OR
2014/03/23	Jeffery S Butt	Harrisburg, PA
2014/03/24	Christine Newman [4]	Skillman, NJ

Approved	Name	City, State
2014/03/25	Robert D Allen [2]	Reynoldsburg, OH
2014/03/26	John D. Walsh	Northfield, NJ
2014/04/01	Wayne Alan King	Stockbridge, GA
2014/04/03	Joel Dechter	Olney, MD
2014/04/07	Susan Otcenas [3]	Portland, OR
2014/04/11	Joe Kratovil [5]	Hillsborough, NJ
2014/04/14	Dan Driscoll [10]	Arlington, TX
2014/04/14	Jason Pierce [4]	Oakland, CA
2014/04/16	Dieter Loibner	Portland, OR
2014/04/21	William Beck [8]	Woodbine, MD
2014/04/23	Ian Page Hands [4]	Raleigh, NC
2014/04/25	William H Hague	Bloomington, MN

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RUSA Awards



P-12 Award Recipients

The P-12 Award is earned by riding a sub-200k randonneuring event in each of 12 consecutive months. The counting sequence can commence during any month of the year but must continue uninterrupted for another 11 months.

Events that count toward the P-12 Award

- Any populaire (100k–199k) on the RUSA calendar.
- Any RUSA permanent of 100k–199k. A particular permanent route may be ridden more than once during the twelve-month period for P-12 credit.
- Any dart of less than 200k.

Approved	Name	City, State
2014/01/16	Bradley J. Waffa	Raleigh, NC
2014/01/20	Karen Easterday	Des Moines, WA
2014/01/25	Ken Knutson	Tracy, CA
2014/01/26	W. Gifford Hayward III	Tracy, CA
2014/01/26	Keith Moore	Woodinville, WA
2014/01/27	Christopher Heg [2]	Seattle, WA
2014/01/27	Deena Heg [2]	Seattle, WA
2014/01/28	John Lee Ellis [2]	Lafayette, CO
2014/01/31	Patrick Chin-Hong	Forest Hills, NY
2014/02/02	Raymond Ogilvie [3]	North Plains, OR
2014/02/02	Mike Wallace	Iowa City, IA
2014/02/03	Craig Sleight	Enumclaw, WA
2014/02/07	Gabrielle Friedly	Menlo Park, CA
2014/02/15	Ron Alexander [3]	Overland Park, KS
2014/02/21	Paul H Selden [2]	Portage, MI
2014/02/23	Charles J Adams	Midland, TX
2014/02/23	Spencer Klaassen [3]	Saint Joseph, MO
2014/02/25	Jonathan F. L. Gray [2]	Santa Barbara, CA
2014/02/27	Greg M Emanuele	Raleigh, NC
2014/03/01	David I Wynne	Virginia Beach, VA
2014/03/09	Mike Myers [3]	Baxter Springs, KS
2014/03/09	Nancy Myers [3]	Baxter Springs, KS
2014/03/11	Lisa Cummings	Spring, TX
2014/03/14	Eddie Bishop	Lacey, WA
2014/03/19	Rudy Hewitt	Wheaton, MD
2014/03/24	Christine Newman [3]	Skillman, NJ
2014/04/01	Daniel Sanchez [2]	Katy, TX
2014/04/06	Darby Cavin [2]	Cosmopolis, WA
2014/04/14	Dan Driscoll [5]	Arlington, TX
2014/04/15	W Thomas Reeder [2]	Alexandria, VA
2014/04/17	Keith N Olsen	San Diego, CA

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Nominations to the Board

Two positions on the RUSA Board of Directors will become available at the end of the year — the terms of Rob Hawks and Eric Vigoren are expiring (Hawks is eligible for re-election; Vigoren is not). Members may nominate two current RUSA members to run for those two positions. The General Membership List is available for viewing online at www.rusa.org. Please use this form to submit your nominations.

Nominee # 1 _____ RUSA # _____

Nominee # 2 _____ RUSA # _____

Your Name _____ RUSA # _____

Nominations for RBA Representative to the RUSA Board

Under RUSA's Constitution the Regional Brevet Administrators appoint one of the current RBAs to serve as an elected Director on RUSA's board. The elected RBA may not already be serving on the board. Only RBAs can nominate other RBAs. The term of office for the Director is one year. Omaha, NE RBA Spencer Klaassen currently holds the office and is eligible for reelection.

The list of current RBAs is available for viewing online at www.rusa.org. Please use this form to submit your nominations for RBA representative on the RUSA Board.

Nominee _____ RUSA # _____

Your Name _____ RUSA # _____

Please send this form to:

Mike Dayton
RUSA President
2266 The Circle
Raleigh, NC 27608

or e-mail: president@rusa.org

All nomination forms must be postmarked by August 15.



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Lon Haldeman and Susan Notorangelo

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info@pactour.com

Coming Events in 2014

Three New Tours in Vermont and Upstate New York

Our 2014 summer weeklong tours are based out of the great city of Burlington, Vermont. Burlington is only 200 miles from Boston, 300 miles from New York City and under 400 miles from Philly. This makes joining PAC Tour on a summer cycling trip convenient for veterans that reside on the east coast.

Week 1 July 12-19

The Kingdom and the White Mountains Week

This unique part of New England offers some of the finest cycling roads in the eastern US--complete with challenging climbs, brake free descents, moose spotting opportunities, and jaw dropping scenery. The riding is complimented by visits to some great towns and villages where you can sample bake goods, local beers and brews and creamies.

Week 2 July 19-26

Lakes and the Seaway Week

This week one tour begins by crossing Lake Champlain heading into the beautiful Adirondack Mountains. Then we head north all the way to the shores of Lake Ontario and along the St Lawrence Seaway. During our final few days we ride passed the 1000 islands region, across the farmlands and conclude with a final ferry ride back into downtown Burlington.

Week 3 July 26 - August 2

Seven Gaps and Terrible Mountain Week

How many ways can you say "climb"? Ride the incredible ridge of the Green Mountains and auto roads up to Ski areas! Highlights include historic Woodstock, Sugar Bush Ski Resort, Mt. Ascutney and the climbing The Terrible Mountain and 7 Gaps. Warning: This is a climbers tour!

Recycle your old bike parts, clothing and equipment. We always need more items for our cycling projects in Peru and Africa. Send to PAC Tour, P.O. Box 303, 202 Prairie Pedal Lane, Sharon, WI 53585

PAC Tour History and Support

PAC Tour has crossed the country 80 times in the past 30 years. We have a 75% return rate of riders for each tour. We consistently offer the best support to make sure riders are safe and successful tour. All tours include full technical support, rest stops, motels, breakfast, lunches, commemorative clothing and many other nice things. Prices could vary contingent on group size. Visit the PAC Tour web site for full details and services offered for each tour.

Ridge of the Rockies

September 1-19

Kalispell, Montana to Albuquerque, NM

1,900 miles, 18 days (2 rest days)

Our route will zigzag across the Continental Divide several times on our way across, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado and New Mexico. This is a tour with lots of climbing while viewing the best scenery of the Rocky Mountains. We will have a stay over day near Yellowstone National Park and near the Grand Teton National Park where riders can make a loop tour on their own or rest day near those interesting areas.

Ride to the Grand Canyon (and back)

Sunday, Sept. 21 to Sunday, Oct. 5

1,100 miles, 11 riding days, 2 hiking days

Beginning in Albuquerque, NM we will ride 500 miles to the Grand Canyon in 5 days. We have a stay over day hiking at the Canyon. Our return trip will stay one day hiking at Canyon de Chelly before returning to Albuquerque. This is a popular tour including plenty of southwest culture with a good mix of cycling and hiking in some beautiful areas of New Mexico and Arizona.

Going to Ghana, Africa

Late October, 14 days, 9 riding days, 500 miles,

Ghana is located along the southern coast of Africa near the equator on the Atlantic Ocean. It is a tropical area with a diverse landscape. Our bicycle tour will ride 40-60 miles per day around the Volta Region which is a mountainous area in eastern Ghana. The roads will be 70% paved with some gravel sections. We will ride used mountain bikes and donate our bikes to the Ghana Girl's Cycling Team when we are finished with the tour. We will stay in hotels and nice lodges along the way. This is a beautiful area where the people are friendly and speak English. More updates on the PAC Tour website in March.

PAC Tour, helping make good riders better since 1981

www.pactour.com

TOP 10 ENDINGS TO THE SENTENCE THAT STARTS,

“You Know You’re In Trouble On A Brevet When...”

By Nick Bull

1

You see a “for sale” sign on a rider lawnmower, and wonder if it can make it back to the ride start.

2

You’re bonking so reach for your last energy bar, and then realize you ate it two hours ago.

3

Ditto for water bottle.

4

You think to yourself, “I am not going to walk this mountain,” and the next thing you know, you’re standing next to your bike pushing it uphill.

5

Flags are standing out straight and pointed right toward you. Large objects are blowing down the road.

6

The next cue is for a turn onto a road that has “Hill” or “Mountain” in the name.

7

Whoosh, whooosh, whoooooosh, flump.

8

Name your favorite repair that you forgot to do last night.

9

After half an hour of trying to melt your freezing water bottle under your jersey, next to your skin, you get just one sip of slushy gatorade.

10

Your ice sock melted so long ago it has dried out.

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Super Brevet Summer

Bill Watts, RUSA #5365

WHEN I DESCRIBED MY cycling plans for the summer of 2013 to my friends, they politely said that they sounded “fun” and “challenging.” My friends probably also thought that I was crazy, but they did not say so to my face.

After completing my Super Randonneur series in Kentucky, Ohio and Georgia, my plan was to do two overseas grandes randonnées. The first was the London-Edinburgh-London (LEL), a 1400-kilometer ride that would take place from July 28 to August 2, 2013. Then, two weeks later, I planned to do the Super Brevet Scandinavia (SBS), a 1200-kilometer ride that was to begin in Frederikshavn, Denmark on August 16, and would end at midnight on August 19 in Kristiansand, Norway.

But my plan was not simply to complete these two rides. I would also ride my bicycle from the end of LEL to the beginning of SBS. Thus, after riding 880 miles from London to Edinburgh and back, I would load my camping gear onto my bike and travel about 850 miles to Skagen, the resort city at the northernmost tip of Denmark. After a few days of rest in Skagen, I would ride about 25 miles south to Frederikshavn, and then about 745 miles over the next four days to Kristiansand, Norway. After completing the second grand randonnée, I would rest for a day, and then ride about 220 miles to Oslo, where I would board a plane back to Indianapolis. In total, then, my plan was to ride about 2800 miles over the course of one month, from late July to late August.

I had several reasons for wanting to pull off this elaborate plan. I completed Paris-Brest-Paris in 2011 (see my



account in the Winter, 2011 issue of *American Randonneur*), but I had never undertaken two *grandes randonnées* in a year. I looked forward to the challenge. Secondly, even as I have taken up randonneuring, I have continued to enjoy touring, and I go on several loaded trips each year.

I looked forward to the two-week tour that would take me from London to the tip of Denmark, and I liked the idea of combining randonneuring with touring in this way. Finally, I enjoy the self-sufficiency of bicycle travel. I commute and do most of my daily travel by bicycle, and I wanted to see how far I could go on my own. I relished the idea of covering a good swath of northern Europe by bicycle, unaided by the internal combustion engine or other machinery.

So, at the end of July, I uncoupled my couplers, packed my bike, and boarded a plane from Indianapolis to London. Once I arrived, I took the underground from Heathrow Airport to a hotel in a northern suburb of London, where I reassembled my bicycle. I shipped my bike bag, via Royal Mail, to a hotel in Oslo, where I would end my four-week ride.

The organizers of LEL had made arrangements for participants to stay at a campground near the start, so I rode there, and pitched my tent for the week. This would give me a place to rest before and after the ride, as well as a place to store my belongings. I registered, and then I rode back into London, where I spent the night in a cheap hotel so that I could take part in the Prologue, which went from Buckingham Palace to the start in Loughton.

The ride itself was brilliant. Like Paris-Brest-Paris, food and sleeping facilities were available at each of the controls,



The author at the beginning of the journey, in the Prologue to London Edinburgh London.
Photo: Charlotte Barnes

which were spaced 50 to 90 kilometers apart. Unlike PBP, the registration fee—which was a very modest 219 pounds, or about \$360—covered all of the food and services on the ride. This meant that I and the other 1000 riders on LEL were well fed and sheltered for five days. The scenery on the ride was also varied and wonderful. Once we crossed the massive bridge over the Humber River, the land turned lumpy, first in modest doses through Yorkshire, and then in more dramatic fashion as we climbed Yad Moss and entered Scotland. The Devil’s Beeftub, just outside of Moffat, Scotland was one of the more memorable and memorably named climbs on the ride. And while there were not crowds cheering us along the route, as there are on PBP, there was an army of cheerful and ever-attentive volunteers at the controls. At one point, I needed to replace a brake pad, and

I was helped by a volunteer mechanic, who turned out to be Dave Yates, a well-known frame builder in England. The spirit of the ride was incredible, and while it was quite different from PBP, it was equally memorable. I finished the ride just after midnight on Friday morning with several hours to spare.

At noon on Saturday, I loaded my bike again, and rode 70 miles north to Harwich, arriving just in time to board the ferry to Holland. This was one of my few luxuries on the trip—I booked a sleeping berth, and purchased a three-course dinner and a big breakfast for the morning of our arrival. Thus, I arrived at Hoek van Holland, near Rotterdam, feeling well rested and well fed, ready to begin the continental portion of my journey.

One of the pleasures of touring in Europe is that many areas have municipal campgrounds, allowing you to enjoy the pleasures of the city while camping outdoors. I stayed two nights at a very nice campground within the city limits of Amsterdam, paying about \$15 per night. I visited the Van Gogh House and other sites, and enjoyed two very pleasant summer days in Amsterdam. In Germany, I stopped for two nights at what must be the most immaculate and meticulously maintained campground in the world, in the city of Bremen, and enjoyed several walks in that delightful city. Approaching the Danish border one night, I could not find a convenient campground. So I rode through the night, stopping, rando-style, for a three-hour nap during a pouring rain in a German bus stop. German bus stops, I found, were better set up for sleeping than many of the Super 8s I have stayed in during North American brevets.

Camping in Denmark was also fabulous. Every small town had a small campground, and with only 20 or 30 kilometers between towns, I did not have to decide in advance where I would stop for the night. I knew that, whenever I was tired and wanted to settle down for the night, I would find a campsite. And Danish campgrounds, like German ones, were clean and well equipped. Not only did they have kitchens with stoves, pots and refrigerators, but they also had baby baths. I did not have any babies with me, but I was happy to be in campgrounds that addressed everyone’s needs so well.



Like LEL, the SBS was very well organized but also very different in character. There were about 90 of us on SBS, and we stopped each night at the same hotel, and left each morning at the same time. This meant that the fast and slow riders came together every day, and this created a special camaraderie among the riders.

Unlike my experience on LEL, I had some mechanical problems on SBS. At one point, my chain over-shifted and got stuck in that inconvenient gap between my spokes and my cassette; it took a very kind Dane about an hour to coax it out with a screwdriver and hammer. He broke a spoke in the process. Then, on the second night of the ride, my front light quit working, and I had lost my back-up light on LEL (this was one problem with doing back-to-back rides—I did not have the chance to replenish my equipment). This meant that I was stuck in the darkest corner of Sweden without a way forward. But fellow riders soon came along and lit the way for me during that night, and, the following night, another rider lent me his back-up light. On the final day of the ride, my GPS stopped working (a fate that seems to befall all Garmin Edge users at some point) just when the

navigation got complicated in Norway. Luckily, though, I was able to join up with some Danish riders, and we managed to finish, with just 30 minutes to spare.

I had been an exchange student in Norway when I was 16 years old, and I had not been back in 38 years. It was thrilling to return, and I enjoyed trying out my very rusty Norwegian each time I stopped for food or directions. I was surprised, though, to discover that Norway had grown some massive hills in my absence. I knew, of course, that there were mountains in the north and in the center of Norway, and I had been to some of them, but I was unprepared for the long, long climbs of 8 to 10 percent grade on the road to Kristiansand.

Because of the difficult climbs, I did not completely fulfill my plan by riding 220 miles to Oslo. I was tired and I could not bear the thought of climbing some of the same hills I had done on SBS. So I took a train for about 100 miles, thereby avoiding some of the most difficult hills. Nevertheless, I managed to get to Oslo under my own steam, and was reunited with the bike bag I had sent from London. I went to the Munch Museum, Vigeland Park, and some



Waiting for a ferry in Denmark with Mitsuaki Inagaki . Photo: Bill Watts



My bicycle loaded for touring in Skagen, Denmark, still sporting the frame plate for LEL. Photo: Bill Watts

other places I remembered from my exchange student days. Then I packed up my bike, and flew home to Indianapolis.

My summer adventures brought me many rewards. I was able to complete two great randonneuring events, and I made many new friends and had many great experiences along the way. I rode about 2700 miles on my bicycle, and enjoyed the independence and freedom that come with such a long trip. I also enjoyed crossing boundaries on my bike, watching England become Scotland, the Netherlands become Germany, and Germany become Denmark. In one way, borders are fixed and absolute; you can identify the exact moment when you leave Sweden and enter Norway. As I experienced them on my bicycle, however, borders were much more fuzzy, and it was fun to track the gradual and sometimes subtle changes in language, food and street design that signaled that I was leaving one country and entering another.

My trip also allowed me to experience some of the best cycling infrastructure in the world. I have cycled through the Netherlands several times, and have always enjoyed the completely separate set of paths for cyclists throughout that country. Cycling in the Netherlands is rather slow, however, because you have to stop at many intersections and ask for permission to cross the street by pressing a button.

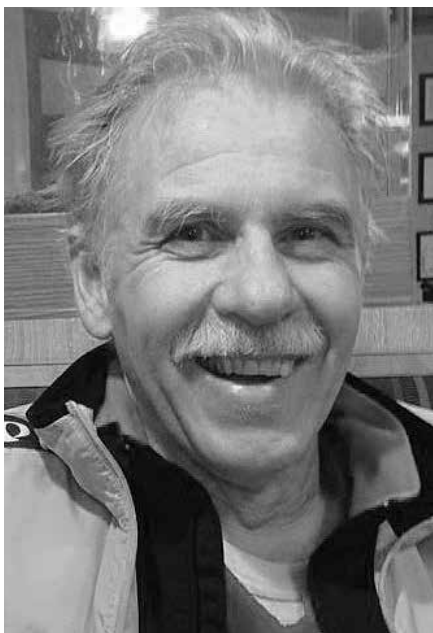
I was surprised at how well cyclists were accommodated in Germany, and at how many Germans used their bicycles for shopping and for errands. In many places in Germany, I traveled on cycle tracks far out into the countryside. But I found the cycling infrastructure in Denmark to be the absolute best. While cyclists are generally separated from cars, as in the Netherlands, they are also on equal footing with cars, and you do not have to press buttons at intersections to get permission to cross. The Danish system for cyclists is fast, efficient and safe.

I also found great pleasure in connecting randonneuring with touring on my trip. As Jan Heine has shown in an excellent four-part history of randonneuring (*Bicycle Quarterly*, vols. 8-10), the origins of the sport lie in bicycle touring in late nineteenth-century France. And, of course, Paris-Brest-Paris is still operated under the auspices of the Fédération Française de Cyclotourisme. In my trip, I combined two styles of riding that seem to belong together.

I enjoyed every part of my trip, but I doubt that I will try to repeat it in 2017, when LEL and SBS come up again. Instead, I will continue to look for new and different opportunities for combining randonneuring events, and for combining randonneuring with touring. 🚲

Detroit, MI RBA

RUSA Member #7688



How did you get involved with randonneur cycling?

About four years ago, I went to a 200K brevet in Windsor, Ontario hosted by Randonneurs Ontario. I had a great time and was hooked.

What made you want to be a RUSA RBA?

For the last few years, I have been working on an event called the Green Cruise, hosted by my local Sierra Club group. I really enjoyed planning the bike routes and promoting the event. So becoming an RBA was an easy progression. I am honored to be part of RUSA.

When did you start hosting RUSA events?

I became RBA of the Detroit Randonneurs last year, and hosted two 200K rides and a 300K ride.

What is the most popular (well-attended) ride in your area?

The 3rd ride last year had 26 entries, and all were successful in completing the brevet. There is a growing interest in randonneuring nationally, as well as locally, so I expect the numbers will continue to grow. There is a casual 30-mile annual ride in Detroit every year, called "Tour de Troit" that draws over six thousand riders.

What is the most popular (well-attended) brevet distance in your area?

The 200K.

What is the most rewarding part of being an RBA?

Planning a successful ride and introducing people to randonneuring.

What's the most difficult part of being an RBA?

It is surprising how difficult it is to make a good route. Getting the distance just right, finding controls in the right spots, keeping the route safe, scenic and simple enough to follow, while making sure it can't be shortcut. I really enjoy it when I get it just right, and get compliments from the riders.

What attracts riders to your region to do a brevet? (Weather? Terrain? Camaraderie?)

Unique routes and themes for the rides. I try to make them interesting and memorable. My 300K ride is a circumnavigation of Detroit, held on the Summer Solstice, called the Longest Day. Having unique rides keeps riders coming back. I am getting riders from Canada, Ohio and Indiana, who participate in their own region and like to travel to nearby states and countries. I am currently planning a 200K brevet with Randonneurs Ontario that crosses the border into Canada.

RBA Questionnaire

What does the future hold for randonneuring in your region?

I hope to continue with many more events and a large group of volunteers to help make them successful. The more others get involved, the better the club will be. One of our members has just created a 200K route that I hope to add as a brevet later this year.

Who is the cyclist you most admire?

Greg LeMond, who overcame great obstacles to win the Tour de France three times. His first win involved battling his teammate, Bernard Hinault, and without any support from his team. Greg came back from a near fatal hunting accident, to win the final stage of the 1989 Tour de France by 58 seconds, and take the overall win by just 8 seconds.

What is your greatest randonneur cycling achievement?

Starting the Detroit Randonneurs.

What is your favorite bike ride?

Any ride that starts and ends at my house.

What is your motto?

Enjoy yourself and have fun.



Photos: Stuart Vandenbrink (L), Tom Dusky (R)





Photos : Chris Newman.

A Rando's Progress

THIS YEAR, AS I APPROACH THE 13TH anniversary of my 39th birthday, I find myself sometimes looking at the youngsters around me and wondering, “*Are they paying attention? Do they appreciate this unique time in their lives? Probably not, is my cynical conclusion. If they only knew what I now know, I am certain they would be making a determined effort to live in the moment and embed the memories for retrieval later in life.*”

Recently, I have become aware that even from the lofty position afforded by my impending anniversary, I also am guilty of not sufficiently appreciating my own life experiences, of not consciously creating a mental scrapbook while my hippocampus is still functioning relatively well.

The miserable polar vortex winter we experienced in the Northeast afforded me a surfeit of time to reflect on cycling, destinations and journeys.

I became more aware, on some cold winter rides, that I think a great deal more about the destination than the journey. This is reasonable when it is 20 degrees, the wind is picking up and there is snow in the forecast—again. But I am quite certain that these deliberations distract me on most brevets. And if I manage to keep thoughts of the arrivee in check, I am predictably counting the miles until the next controle, the next chance to eat, stretch

and enjoy un petit respite from the saddle. Such unconstructive musings unquestionably undermine the spirit of randonneuring. The goal shouldn't only be the glory, the accolades and the prize money, as I explain to anyone who asks why I do this. No, the essence should be the journey on both literal and metaphorical levels.

To be clear, there are many aspects of a ride which I do appreciate in the moment: the quiet stillness of a 4 a.m. start, the promise of sunrise heralded by avian choirs, a beautiful fall moon, a sunrise over a Pennsylvania mountain and the sounds of frogs singing, which to me is the true harbinger of spring. Yet in spite of the many pleasures riding a brevet affords me, I have an unsettled feeling that I am oftentimes more focused on the steepness of a climb, the monotonous length of a flat road or the pain in my left knee.

Over the past few seasons, I have discovered that one secret to savoring the journey is sharing it with like-minded companions. During my first several years in randonneuring I inevitably rode the majority of any given route solo. I was not swift enough to keep up with the speedy randos through the steep rollers of PA and I frequently was the lonely lanterne rouge. Riding 12 to 25 hours by oneself allows way too much time to get into your own head and I assure you I did not waste any of that time savoring the experience. By midnight on a chilly 300K I was all about destination. Then a few years ago, I was invited by my friend Katie to join her fleche team which I viewed as an honor (I was so naïve) and I happily accepted. That first fleche was a meteorological

disaster with constant driving rain and wind that caused us to bail at mile 80. But it was a revelation to me. If I hadn't been in a group, I wouldn't have made it 20 miles in that weather let alone 80 and I certainly would not have enjoyed myself under such dismal conditions.

Figuratively, randonneuring is just a series of journeys strung together, many not involving a single pedal stroke. Sometimes, especially from the comfort of a warm bed, I think the act of just starting the ride is a destination in itself. I experience a marginal sense of accomplishment while quietly shivering with my slightly dazed and sleep deprived friends at the early morning departure of an early season 400K.

This past winter was a long, cold slog to spring and summer when rides are numerous and the weather has divine potential. And this brevet season and next are the starts of the pilgrimages many will be undertaking to arrive in Paris in August, 2015. The breadth and types of journeys appears limitless; expeditions back from illness or injury, feats of endurance heretofore unimagined and travels to unexplored regions both internal and external.

Last October I was on a local 200K when I grabbed onto the tail end of a moderately swift peloton. I was pedaling along, head down, pleased with myself that I was able to maintain a relatively fast pace. I started doing the magical rando math of how fast I could finish if I maintained this speed for the next 120 miles. When we reached the first controle, I realized I had missed most of the scenery, had not taken one photo

and although my average speed was great, I wasn't really enjoying myself. Some folks can ride fast and appreciate their environs but I am not one of them. I loitered at the controle long enough for the others to depart and then continued on my own at a slower pace, snapping photos and stopping to enjoy the incredible views and the stunning route on a perfect fall day. Maybe there is hope for me yet... 🚴📷



Wau-i Maui

The Hana Hiatus in Hawaii



“YOU DON’T DO RELAX WELL, DO YOU?” THESE WORDS OF rebuke, offered by a fellow cyclist several years ago, kept reverberating through my brain as I headed up the Haleakala Highway at 5:00am. While friends lay sleeping in the warmth of a quiet island breeze on this January 21, 2014, I was pounding my pedals climbing from sea level to around 3,000’ on the side of an extinct volcano on the island of Maui. Why does someone do something as crazy as this when in paradise? Only a randonneur would understand.

It all started after I had completed PBP in 2011. Let’s just say that I was burned out after riding 1200K in 66 hours with about 3-4 hours of sleep. After a year of slouching, I decided I needed to get back to serious riding again, so I completed a

Super Randonneur Series in the summer of 2013 and then decided that doing an R-12 series would motivate me to adhere to my long term riding goals. Riding in Colorado in the summer and early fall is a joy, and early November can bring some beautiful Indian summer weather, but the “Gales of November” can make 200K winter riding cold and challenging. I managed to do the rides in November and December 2013, but it was looking like a ride in January 2014 was not going to happen. However, I was scheduled to go to a conference in Maui in the middle of the month and finally had the thought: “Maybe someone has actually set up a 200K permanent ride on Maui. Wouldn’t that be something?” Hmmm. Visiting the

RUSA website, I discovered the “Hana Hiatus,” AKA the “East Maui Loop,” created by who else but John Lee Ellis, my fearless Rocky Mountain Cycling Club RBA.

The next step was to figure out what bike to ride. I have an S&S-coupled titanium bike that I rode in France and also on a 600k in Arizona. I love my bike, but packing it into its case and then having the TSA folks open the case and rummage through it was not a welcome thought. Off I went to my computer and found Boss Frogs Cycles. I called and spoke with a guy there who was a bit skeptical at first. This was, by the way, after the concierge at my hotel flipped out when I mentioned what I wanted to do. Her opinion was that this ride was nothing short of suicidal, and she quoted scary statistics like “the treacherous road to Hana has 680 hairpin curves and 57 one lane bridges,” and, “by car, it’s an 8- to 10- hour trip.” Uh oh! Well if it is that dangerous by car and I might die anyway, then what the heck, it might as well be on a bike. My

enthusiasm was bolstered when my bike shop wrench told me that I would probably be going as fast as most of the cars and that I did not need to worry.

My now supportive bike shop friend did offer a few valuable suggestions, however, about riding the Hana Hiatus. One suggestion was to do the ride counter clockwise rather than clockwise as laid out in the permanent. His reasoning was that I could get through a significant part of the total elevation gain on good roads with fresh legs, rather than doing a lot of climbing on marginal roads with tired legs. Plus, I would be going from Hana to Kahului instead of the other way around and maybe the drivers on their way back from that side of the island would be better with those hairpin turns or wouldn’t be as interested in the scenery they had just seen on the way there! I checked with John Ellis and he okayed it, so I went with this suggestion.

Over the phone, I rented a Cannondale Evo full carbon bike with Ultegra shifters. The day before the ride, I



showed up at the bike shop and found my bike waiting there. I wound up choosing a smaller version than the one I had rented and I was glad that I made this choice. I had brought my own pedals and seat, and the bike shop guy was kind enough to put them on for me. The 24-hour rental cost was just \$41. This might have been the least expensive thing on the entire island or in the entire state for that matter. I put my bike in my rented car and went back to my hotel to have a \$42 glass of scotch.

The next morning, I awoke at 3:30am after a fitful partial night of sleep. Even though I was in one of the few cars on the road, it still took me 45 minutes to get to the starting point. I actually drove past it because the road signs were not very good and hard to see in the dark. At 4:45am, I left my car and headed north towards Kahului, then turned back south and headed towards Pukalani. It was windy, but after only 15 minutes I found myself unzipping my jersey (you've got to love January in Hawaii). The whole ride thus far was an uphill climb, but it was fairly gradual and straight and the shoulder was very good. Most of the traffic at that time was coming down Haleakala and consisted of local folks heading to work. As daylight arrived, I began to see the sea and I knew I was in for a scenic treat. A mountain boy like me found it somewhat surreal to look out from a mountain and see an ocean several thousand feet below. At about this time, I entered the town of Kula at an elevation of about 3000' and situated on the west side of the Haleakala Crater. It seemed like Kula went on forever as I rode through several small communities within it. Just past the next town, Keokea, I started to "summit" and the next thing I knew I was on a very narrow, well-paved road that was more like a bike path. Here the road was a series of small, quick rollers that were both fun and a little scary. I wanted to let the bike "go," but as soon as I started there would be a local workman in his truck coming over the next small hill. Never mind, though, because I had "the view," the one from the side of a 10,000' mountain containing an extinct volcano and

A mountain boy
like me found it
somewhat surreal
to look out from a
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below.

looking out over an ocean that goes on forever. It's hard to focus on the ride, but what a dilemma to have!

Next I arrived in Ulupalukua, wine country. No stores were open at 7:00am, but I took notice of the little general store and wine tasting center for those who get there later in the day. From here, I descended through eucalyptus forests for a few miles until I crossed lava flows. I was coasting through small rollers again and looking out over the ocean to small islands and the ships that were coursing between them. I was now heading mostly downhill, making good time, and thinking that I was the luckiest guy in the world and that surely the rest of the road to Hana in this direction had been paved. I was going to get to Hana in no time at all! And then I saw it: the first glimpse of what was to come. Suddenly, the road had turned into old pavement that looked like someone had used grenades to blow it up every 2 feet then patched it with old cracked asphalt. I couldn't remember riding on cobblestones in France, but I figured that this must be what it feels like. Initially it was downhill, but eventually the road headed uphill and some of the stretches were very steep. This went on for 10 miles.

By this time, I was getting very dehydrated because there were no open stores and there had been no water sources since I left Pukalani. When I finally made it to Hana, it was a little after 10:30am. I felt good about my trip so far since the general store owner was impressed that I had ridden from Kihei. After leaving Hana, I headed towards Kahului on what one might call "the road back from Hana." The traffic wasn't bad and I was thinking that either the tourists were still driving to Hana or they were sightseeing in Hana. Unfortunately, the typical trade winds that come from the northeast and should have provided me with a nice tailwind (thus another reason to do the ride counter clockwise), were replaced that day by a "Kona Wind." A "Kona Wind" comes from the southwest, usually provides rain, and is anathema for surfers. While I was getting used to the idea of a headwind, I realized that I had incorrectly recalled the "Hana Road" being relatively flat. I

Edelux II



Wilfried Schmidt's latest creation uses Busch & Müller's new IQ Premium mirror, which projects a beam that's about twice the width of the original *Edelux* headlight. The beam is also taller, providing better illumination of the road close to the rider. The illumination of the road surface is uniform, near to far, so you can see better on fast descents, as well as slow climbs. Most of the LED's output is concentrated at the very top of the beam where it illuminates the road furthest from the rider. If you liked the *Edelux*, you'll love the *Edelux II*.

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