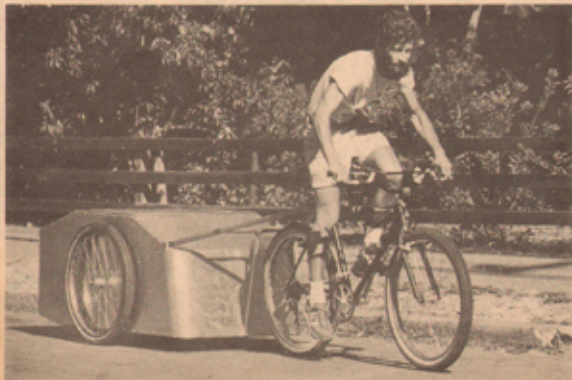


# ***Fat Tire Flyer***

BOX 757 FAIRFAX, CA. 94930

January/February 1982

\$1



The Fat Tire Flyer is written, edited, laid out, addressed, mailed, folded, stapled and mutilated by Denise Caramagno and Charles Kelly.

Artistic assistance is provided by such luminaries as Dave Bohn, Kevin Coffey, Anthony Martin (now and then), Joe Murray, and Pete Kloonbako Barrett. We tried to get Pablo Picasso, but unfortunately, he is deceased.

## EIGHT IS LATE, BUT GREAT

Excuse us, but as we were hurrying to meet our deadline, we tripped right over our new format. But here it is at last, the bigger, better and more beautiful Fat Tire Flyer. The only problem we have now is that we've created all this extra space to fill, which means that we have to run off at the typewriter even more than before. If you think it's easy writing the Flyer, you try it.

Please.

Which cleverly leads us into our next subject. Our pleas for input from readers have not met with the desired level of response. Where is that creative spark? Wherever it is, spark it up and send it in!

We want those race results, ride reports, reader responses, and rare remarks, for those of you who believe in alliteration. The rest of you just send us the good stuff (translation: da kine), which may now include black and white photos (if you send us the negatives we'll try to send them back), jokes ("How many Fat Tire Riders does it take to screw in a light bulb?..."), cartoons, stories, whatever it takes to fill all this newsprint.

### READER REITERATES

Dear Fat Tire Folks:

I've been reading the FAT TIRE FLYER since its inception. The newsletter is a great idea and it really fills a need for mountain bike fanatics as far as information is concerned.

I know that there is more that can be done with a newsletter like the FLYER but it can't be done without more writers and staff. I noticed that in the latest FLYER you have some volunteers helping put it together. I don't know how you folks entice people to help but if you need any more assistance in writing, pasting up, or distributing in the East Bay, I'd be happy to volunteer some time...

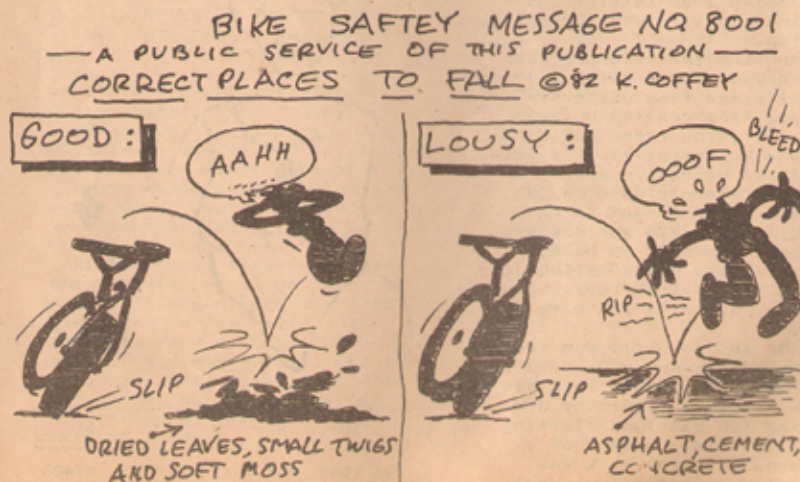
Keep up the good work.

Reed Sato

FTF responds: Thanks, Reed. See above.

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The 1981 edition of the annual (sixth annual, fifth actual) Crested Butte to Aspen Bicycle Tour in Colorado was undoubtedly the high point on this year's Fat Tire Calendar. Organized and promoted by Neil Murdock of Bicycles, Etc. of Crested Butte, the tour (it's not a race) took 120 Fat, Tired participants a total of 40 miles in two days, over the remote fastness of 12,700' Pearl Pass. A race in Crested Butte the day before the Tour (it's not a race) provided fast remoteness for those needing it, and with nothing left to be proved, participants in the Tour (it's not a race) toured in a leisurely fashion, rather than racing (it's a tour).

The real story of the Tour began a week earlier than the actual Tour, which was on September 26 and 27. Twenty Fat, Tired Types from California, including your intrepid co-responder, arrived via funky chartered bus in Crested Butte and set up a small tent village on the outskirts of town. The rain began immediately, and continued until...just keep reading.

During the week previous to the Tour (it's not a...) informal rides took off every morning from Crested Butte. Typically, the rides would climb a beautiful glacier valley to an elevation over 11,000', where riders would collapse long enough to eat lunch, appreciate the scenery, and pant for half an hour. Then everyone would collect the reward for their efforts with a killer downhill run back to town.

On the downhill run from appropriately-named Oh-be-Joyful canyon one sharp rock set a new Fat Tire record by destroying two rims and flattening four tires in a matter of a few seconds. The rock was summarily dispatched without

a trial.

In contrast to the weather in the last four years, skies were cloudy every day leading up to the Tour, and it rained every night with snow in the higher elevations. Preparing for the worst, some participants started a regular program of adding antifreeze to their systems via "Margarita Night" at the Elk Mountain Lodge.

Saturday, September 26, the first day of the Tour, dawned clear, warm, and perfect for cycling; this demonstrates the power of prayer when it is delivered by 120 Fat Tire Fanciers. At the bike shop all was organized confusion as latecomers registered and paid their tour fee of \$20, and everyone piled their camping gear for the trucks that would bring it to camp.



\$10 S M L XL

VVA 1982 BOX 701 VAN NUYS 91408

--Crested Butte to Aspen, con't

In order to continue a tradition established from previous tours, the entire group moved up Elk Avenue (one of three paved streets in Crested Butte) to the area in front of the Grubstake Saloon, original sponsors of the tour. Riders mugged for the cameras for a few minutes, then some spectator muttered, "Go," and the mob took off. Hundreds of knobby tires made a sound like a swarm of angry bees, punctuated by shouts and hoots from the assembled multitudes as the group swept out of town.

The first mile or so of the route followed the main road out of town, and as the pack stretched out it made a colorful sight for those unfortunates whose only transportation was motorized vehicles. A short distance out of town the ride turned onto the dirt road to Pearl Pass; speed went down and exhilaration went up.

The two-stage race held the day before left nothing to be proved, and with the competitive energy blunted the tour took the appearance of a stately procession or a mobile picnic. Every prominent feature of the landscape, such as stream crossings, hill tops, vista points, beaver dams, large rocks, small rocks, and so on, was sufficient to gather a crowd, and every quarter mile a group would be assembled for rest, food, admiration (bikes or scenery), drying out, or breathing exercises.

The first riders reached the campsite at 11,000' in the early afternoon, and the rest struggled in for hours. A cooking crew had been there since the night before, and the delicious odors of dinner drifted across the valley as the riders tapped the first of four kegs of Watneys.

Tents of every known shape sprang up, the first in the few level areas and the rest on increasingly sloping areas as the prime spots disappeared. Dinner was served by one of three large campfires as the sun sank behind the towering walls of the valley.

The next morning after breakfast riders piled gear by the trucks for the return to Crested Butte, and in small groups drifted up the rough trail toward Pearl Pass. Walking was the order of the day on the extremely rocky and steep 3½ miles of bad road to the top. Even on the less steep places, the absence of breathable air kept riders plodding along.

Finally, the top, and a crowd gathered on the rugged, bare outcroppings, bikes thrown haphazardly on the ground. With what is probably the largest group ever assembled at this remote point, things got decidedly crowded, and the first arrivals were forced by the lack of standing room to take off for Aspen as the latecomers showed up.

The seven miles of downhill from the summit deserves a place of honor in the Fat Tire annals as possibly the roughest ride available anywhere. Loose rocks the size of roofing tiles and embedded ones with chisel edges, running water, and a steep drop make this a real challenge to ride at all for novices and the world's most intense downhill for experts.

The vibration on the bike is so extreme that most riders are forced to stop and recover the feeling from the elbows down. One bike sheared a fork here and the rider retired to the sagwagon, a four-wheeler that had clawed its way over the pass; most bikes bent, loosened or punctured something along this stretch.



Finally, pavement, and in small groups riders blazed the remaining 12 miles to Aspen down a winding, golden valley. In the middle of town the Jerome Hotel looked like a subway station in Tokyo, with bikes piled up six deep as thirsty riders cashed in on two hours of free beer at the hotel bar.

Thirst quenched, resourceful expeditionaries quickly located a "Grand Opening" party with beer, barbecue (free steaks) and a live C & W band. Fat Tire focus centered on the opening, which was grand until the steaks ran out, whereupon the bikies did likewise.

At dusk a large flatbed truck arrived and most of the bikes were loaded; then chartered buses showed up and the party broke up as they were loaded. 30 or 40 riders had other plans, some staying at the Jerome to ride back to Crested Butte the next day, others with their own transportation. As the buses circled the block those remaining shared a last cheer with the passengers, and the 1981 Crested Butte-to-Aspen Bicycle Tour was over.



--Crested Butte to Aspen, con't

During the week before the Crested Butte-to-Aspen Tour, the town of Crested Butte filled up with eager and energetic Fat Tire Riders. Their energy couldn't be contained, and by Friday of that week a race had been organized by the local element, chiefly the Cook Brothers, Don and Steve.

The race format was two stages, a cross-country race of 23 miles, up Washington Gulch and over a ridge top at 11,000', then down the Slate Creek back to Crested Butte. This was followed a few hours later by a criterium run on the rocky, pitted streets of C.B.

In order to avoid the complexities of scoring by time, a point system was devised that included points for first over the top of the ridge, as well as for overall placing.

Due to the elevation, which went from 9,000' to over 11,000' the locals had the edge in breathing equipment and most of the out-of-towners were expecting a tough duel between Don and Steve Cook. Unfortunately, Steve crashed on Wednesday while returning from Oh-Be-Joyful canyon and fractured his clavicle. For Steve a broken bone only means a week lay-off, but it was enough to keep him out of the race.

Don Cook dominated both events, leading the way out of Washington Gulch with nearly a five-minute lead. Chasing determinedly, Gary Fisher and Tom Ritchey closed the gap to just about a minute on the outskirts of Crested Butte. Due to his careful inspection of the route the day before, Tim Rysdale was able to take a short cut and sneak by Fisher and Ritchey. The latter were not impressed with Tim's boy-scout skills

--continued on page 13

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## Trailering With Trail Bikes

As most of our readers have no doubt noticed, Fat Tire bikes are much more than recreational vehicles. The components and concepts that make them true off-road vehicles also make them impervious to the worst hazards found in urban cycling. In fact, many people who take up Fat Tire riding give up their skinny tire bikes entirely.

People who ride entirely for pleasure have the option of not riding during inclement weather; those who use their bikes as primary transportation must be able to ride in rain or snow, and for these riders Fat Tire bikes are less subject to loss of traction during braking or cornering on wet pavement.

The utility value of Fat Tire bicycles makes them ideal for one application that has far-reaching implications. In the last few years a number of companies have begun manufacturing small trailers for use with bicycles; at last count there were eight on the market. The good brakes and low gears that make off-road riding possible are also ideal for trailering, since the extra weight of the trailer can make hill climbing difficult, and can mean disaster on the descent for a bike with inadequate brakes.

At least one enterprising Fat Tire-ite is capitalizing on the low operating cost of a bicycle trailer. Marc Horwitz of Fairfax, California is the founder and guiding genius of the aptly named "Quick-as-a-Witz Natural Foods Delivery Service." Using a trailer designed and built by Horwitz, riders make daily deliveries of several hundred pounds of natural foods from Wildwood Natural Foods in Fairfax to a

number of stores and delicatessens in the Ross Valley, an area that includes seven small communities.

Marc uses one bike with a semi-permanent attachment for towing, having made a few concessions to the 300 pound weight of the loaded trailer. The bike is a Pro Cruiser; the rear brake has been disconnected and replaced by a caliper trailer braking system. In early tests the bicycle brakes alone were found to be inadequate to stop the trailer when it was fully loaded.

The daily delivery run takes a strong rider about three hours, and for this Marc pays his delivery pilots \$20. This puts them in very select group: professional Fat Tire Fliers! Riders are continually attempting to lower the record time for delivering the entire route, and for people along the way the huge, blue and green "Tofumobile" is a familiar sight, rumbling along and keeping up with the flow of cars and trucks.

As a heavy-duty freight vehicle, the Tofumobile is Marc's most ambitious trailer project, but his stable includes several other designs, such as his small, aerodynamic "personal use" trailer as well as previous designs of freight vehicles.

In addition to use for carrying groceries or laundry, most commercial trailers have provision for carrying children, a more satisfactory solution than carrying them on the bike, since the trailer affects handling much less than the weight of a child in a carrier; also, even if the bike falls over, a child in a trailer won't be hurt.

From here it looks like the future of trailers is fat.



## ROUGH-STUFF FELLOWSHIP

The Rough-Stuff Fellowship is an English organization for off-road riders that has been going strong since the 'fifties. The English Rough-Stuffers prefer to ride more traditionally European cycling equipment than most American Fat Tire Fans, but don't get the wrong impression; they are totally into crossing impossible terrain.

Members of the RSF receive a bi-monthly publication, the Rough-Stuff Journal, as well as being eligible to purchase an assortment of patches, badges, and decals with the RSF logo.

We recommend the Journal to all Fat Tire types; in many respects it is similar to the Flyer but Much More (and charmingly) British as well as being a lot older. The catch is that the Journal is available only to members, and accepts articles only from members.

(Peripheral note: the story of the Crested Butte-to-Aspen Tour will appear in a forthcoming edition of the Journal.)

Having read this far, most Fat Tire riders will have decided that a membership is essential to continued good health, have already changed their dollars for pounds sterling, and are now wondering how many to peel off and where to send it. Full (that is, adult) membership is four pounds sterling, however much that is this week, per year and two pounds for junior membership. Applications should be sent to: Membership Secretary, A. John Matthews, 9 Liverpool Avenue, Ainsdale, Southport, Lancashire, PR8 3NE. Oh, yeah, England.

Tell 'em the Flyer sent you.

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## COLUMBUS DAY CRUISE

On October 12 the not-at-all annual Columbus Day ride organized itself loosely in the Fairfax Theater parking lot, then piled itself tightly into a moving van and several lesser vehicles for the trip out to Point Reyes.

From the parking lot at the Bear Valley trailhead the group of twenty riders ascended to the peak of Mount Whittenberg, elevation 1400' via hiking trail. Two casualties recorded themselves immediately, the first when a rider washed out on the first turnoff and bloodied her knee. The second was the self-destruction of a derailleur, which required that the bike be converted to one speed by the removal of part of the chain

After suitable time on peak for reflection and lunch, the group turned its attention and front wheels downhill toward the coast. Wild huckleberries growing along the trail caused a total breakdown of the otherwise tightly disciplined ride as participants repeatedly dived headfirst into the brush, gobbling the fat, juicy berries with both hands. Only the perseverance of the ride leadership prevented it from becoming a campout.

The downhill conditions were perfect, gradually descending trail with a smooth, moist surface and good visibility on the turns. The last quarter mile before the Coast Trail featured a steep drop and rough surface that served to homogenize everyone's lunch while getting rid of those troublesome loose parts that are such a bother.

At the junction of the Coast Trail a new casualty turned up, a cracked frame on a bike only recently put together from a \$5 flea market special. The lesson was not lost on the owner, who vowed that next time he would spend \$10.

The party continued to and at Arch Rock, about two miles down the Coast Trail. From this point one faction wanted to add an assault on another peak, Firtop, but by this time the hour was growing late due to time lost during various repair and berry stops, so the group reluctantly abandoned the sea and returned to the parking lot via the shortest and easiest rout, the Bear Valley trail.

Since it would be redundant to describe how the group piled bikes and selves into vehicles to return to Fairfax we shall dispense with that part of the report and just say that the ride ended at that point.





## SEVENTH ANNUAL APPETITE SEMINAR

Ah, Fall, and the traditional American harvest celebration, Thanksgiving. And in Northern California, what better way to celebrate the harvest than by working up a killer appetite at the Seventh Annual Appetite Seminar.

Accordingly, on November 26 at 10:00 a.m., fifty of the Fat Tire Faithful assembled in Fairfax for this Fall festivity. This number was down from a high of sixty at last year's ride, no doubt due to the threatening weather.

From here one small group, known as the Hard Corps, took an off-road route up the mountain to the beginning of the Pine Mountain Fire Road. Most of the group, however, was content to risk life and limb by dangling forty or so bodies and bikes all over a motly collection of trucks, a la Third World migration, for the two-mile paved uphill.

From the beginning of the fire road the riders followed a traditional route first described in the Old Testament (FTF #1), over the top of Pine Mountain. Recent rainy weather had left the road very muddy, and in some areas thick clay could and did clog tires to the point where they wouldn't turn. One rider who tempted the gods by riding a skinny-tire touring bike with fenders, was forced to remove his wheel to unclog his "mudguards." Bikes with caliper brakes seemed to have the most severe clogging problems due to the close clearance. One rider, however, whose bike was equipped with cantilever brakes, extra-long cranks, and a microscopic low gear, churned his way up every single uphill without dismounts, just to demonstrate that impossible is a state of mind.

In spite of the cloudy skies the rain held off. The threat, however, was enough to keep the traditional stop at the "grassy knoll" brief. Once the stragglers had caught up, everyone blasted onto the downhill, about three miles. Almost inaccessible to anyone but Fat Tire-ites, the Pine Mountain downhill is one of those classic rips where it is possible to remain perfectly calm while totally out of control.

From the base of the mountain a grueling climb for about four miles separated the small knots of riders as everyone settled into his or her own pace. Near the highest point of Woodacre Ridge an enterprising faction had stashed a case of beer the day before, and the first to happen along were greeted by a Frosty One at the top of Repack.

Repack, the Bonneville Salt Flats of the balloon movement, is in excellent condition for most of its distance, having been graded during the summer. Near the bottom, and on some critical corners, deep drainage ditches limit performance possibilities, and the last of these, on a particularly steep section, inspired at least a half-dozen Mud Gainers.

Back in Fairfax, about 3000 calories short, riders wasted no time before heading off for warm dryness. At last sight they all appeared to be happy. There was mud all over their teeth.



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# --Crested Butte

con't

and they were pleased even less, so they caught him and cooked him in the sprint.

In the criterium stage Don Cook once again pulled away easily; after a few laps the field was so spread out that it became difficult to tell who was where. Evidently the results of the road race were no fluke, because the first four places came in the same.

Here are the results:

## Road Race

1. Don Cook
2. Gary Fisher
3. Tom Ritchey
4. Tim Rysdale
5. Joe Breeze
6. Jack Panek
7. Jeff Day
8. Scott Rysdale
9. Jim Harlow
10. Kevin Montgomery
11. Scot Nicol
12. Sandy Haghe
13. Kurt Brown
14. Wes Williams
15. Randy Chapman

## Criterium

1. Don Cook
2. Gary Fisher
3. Tom Ritchey
4. Tim Rysdale
5. Scott Rysdale
6. Jeff Day
7. Joe Breeze
8. Jim Harlow
9. Scot Nicol
10. Steve Potts
11. Kurt Brown
12. Bob Godfrey
13. Sandy Haghe
14. Tim Thulin
15. Cindy Petito



In the main event, the results followed the repetitive placings on the individual contests. The Stage Race Final Tally:

1. Don Cook
2. Gary Fisher
3. Tom Ritchey
4. Tim Rysdale
5. Joe Breeze
6. Jeff Day
7. Scott Rysdale
8. Jim Harlow
9. Jack Panek
10. Scot Nicol
11. Kurt Brown
12. Kevin Montgomery
13. Sandy Haghe
14. Steve Potts
15. Wes Williams

## Women's Final

1. Cindy Petito
2. Bubbles

## Veteran's

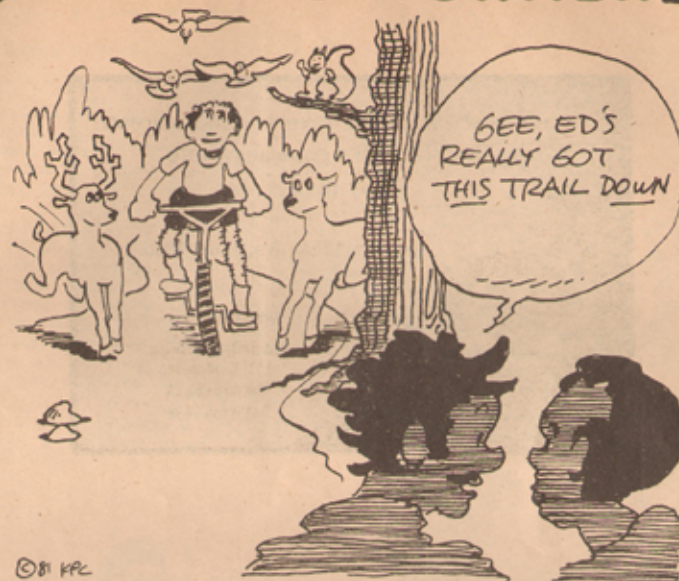
1. Bob Godfrey
2. Chris Carroll

Iron Man (One-Speed)  
Larry Souza

Puking Award  
Steve Potts

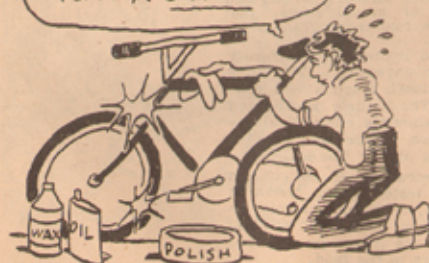
Best Dressed  
Mike Jarschke

# KEVIN'S KORNER



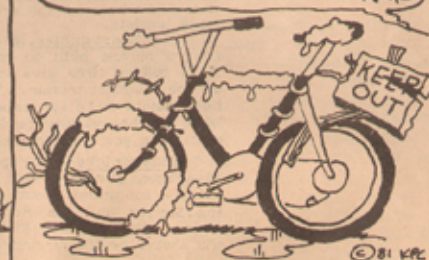
## AFTER THE FIRST RIDE:

OH MAN I HOPE THAT  
AIN'T A SCRATCH



## AFTER THE TWENTY-FIRST RIDE:

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## How to Cross a Creek Without Taking a Dive

Eventually your mountain riding will bring you to a creek. It is inevitable that you will get wet—how wet depends on your method for getting to the other side.

As you approach the creek, eyeball it for a reasonably smooth line of entry and exit. If the creek is too muddy or deep for you to check out the bottom, the best you can hope for is that it's less than eyeball deep and not harboring any rocks bigger than your wheels.



Shift down before you enter, hang onto the bars, and follow your line. A fast approach leads to a dampening, as the spray will get you if the creek doesn't. Since the effect of hitting water at speed is a rapid deceleration, shift your weight back and try to lift the front wheel.

A slow crossing will throw less water around, but you risk a bog-down and at least one muddy foot. However, if the thought of getting wet or muddy offends you, perhaps you should take up miniature golf.



## PUERCO RACE RESULTS

Without risking embarrassment to ourselves by relating the drama of Puerco '80, since we weren't there, we hereby provide you with a list of the results. After all, what else matters?

### Southern California Hillclimb Championships (3 mi.)

1. Jim Harlow 28:49
2. Kurt Brown 30:32
3. VVA 31:13
4. Dan Duffy
5. Gary Tourtillotte

### Santa Monica Downhill

1. Mike Waldman 7:39
2. Kram Jacob
3. Randy Smith
4. Jim Harlow
5. (tie) Brian Skinner  
Rye Sharp
7. Eric Odner
8. VVA
9. Kent Shelbourne
10. Kent Beach

KURT BROWN, consistently stronger, 2nd at Sespe '81, here high in the Santa Monica Mountains Pt. Hugo State Park, during a memorable training ride



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### MONTANA CALLING

Up at U of M in Missoula, Tony Brown is preparing a paper on "Off-Road Bicycling Impact and Mitigation Strategies." Translated, this means he is doing research on what we do to the environment (hopefully very little) and how we can best get along with other users of wilderness areas. In a future issue we hope to carry excerpts from this paper.

## NOTES FROM THE SOUTHWEST

From Jim Stein at the High Gear bike shop in Prescott, Arizona, we hear that a regular contingent of off-road riders has been quietly assembling itself. One recent ride saw a turnout of seventeen riders, a good number considering the area. While Jim claims that most of the Fat Tire converts are more interested in touring than in any form of racing, he concedes that very few make an effort to be last down a hill.

Jim is getting into some custom off-road frame building, in what he says is an attempt to bring down the cost of good equipment.

And in Flagstaff, Elson Miles at Cosmic Cycles wants to form a national group of Fat Tire riders, possibly as a racing league, and certainly as a voice for Fat Tire interests. Anyone interested should call Elson at 602-779-1092.

## RACE PROMOTERS!

The Fat Tire Flyer has the connections to round up participants for your event. Our mailing list is your best vehicle for reaching the often elusive Fat Tire Rider, but as usual, there's a catch. In the interest of protecting our subscribers from receiving all kinds of unwanted literature, we do not sell our list. Instead, we will print labels and mail your race announcements for you, for only 3¢ each.

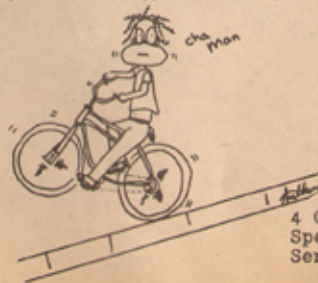
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