

Fat Tire Flyer™

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1984 • VOLUME 4, NO. 5

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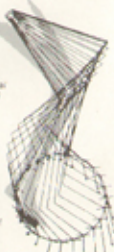
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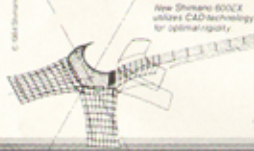
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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1984 • VOL. 4, NO. 5

FLYER JETS TO JAPAN

as guests of a Japanese magazine, Be-Pal, to cover the story on the first mountain bike race to be held anywhere in Asia.



Charles Kelly

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Editorial

There has been a recent trend toward events that cover many of the different possibilities of mountain bikes with a series of contests that may include a timed downhill, a cross-country race, observed trials and other events which are unique unto themselves. Positive benefits of such a format are that top prizes can be determined for riders who display competence in every aspect of the sport, and at the same time those who are weak at some aspects get a chance to display their strengths in the contests that are suited to their abilities.

We see a loophole in the current rules that specify that competitors must ride the same bike from start to finish in any event, but which don't address the possibility of a rider using several machines for the different types of contests in a series. If prizes depend on a rider's score in several events, we suggest that the rule be extended to say that the rider must use the same bike throughout. The reason for this is that the use by anyone of several bikes would give that rider a significant advantage, and would also put pressure on others to bring several machines each. This would swing all advantage to those who could afford such luxuries. Such a trend flies in the face of the goals of off-road racing, which are in part to develop the best all around machinery rather than a group of machines each built for a different application of off-road racing.

There is no reason for competitors in one or another type of single event not to have bikes set up specifically to deal with conditions. Bikes are now made or rebuilt especially for downhill races or observed trials, but these machines would likely be ineffective on a long cross-country jaunt. For the sake of the average racer who rides the same bike every day, the rule should be "one prize, one bike."



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LAURENCE MALONE leads an unidentified rider past an unusual obstacle at the High Road to China Camp race.

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Fat Feedback

Howdy--

Keep up the great magazine. Excellent article in the May/June issue on the Point Reyes area. To Livingston and Castelli I say, "Amen!" They've got the right attitude. Around here Mt. Biking has finally just "exploded," with too many people on 'em for just the fast ride down. Let's try to prevent motorcycle mentality from tarnishing trail riders' reputation among hikers and non-bikers. Now more than ever we need to present a clean image (and I don't mean "Lycra-mania" that the Ross team displays). Use those sub-20" gears to earn that ride down.

Happy Trails,
Jim King
Rock Creek Lake, CA

Dear FTF,

Just finished reading Tech Tips in May/June '84, and thought some mention should be made of Mott's Mounts as a way of retrofitting to cantilevers. Mine have given me a year of great service even while crashing down Rocky Mountaintides. And

they were on the bike ridden to NORBA victory by Steve Tilford.
Keep up the good work.

Yours truly,
Mark Hayward
Winnipeg, Canada

Dear Fat Tire Folks;

I would like to find some Fat Tire enthusiasts in central Florida. I have located an old sinkhole (old enough that it's not going to do any more sinking) with several small streams and a multitude of trails winding through the woods. These trails run up and down some fairly steep hills and are a welcome change from Florida's endless flatlands. I would like to find some folks who want to do informal off-road riding. Any interested parties can contact me, Troy Conner, at:

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Thank you,
Troy Conner

To all concerned wilderness cyclists,

The Department of the Interior has informed all National Parks on the status of bicycles on wilderness area trails. The government attorneys have arbitrarily decided to include bicycles as a form of mechanical transport prohibited from using trails within a designated wilderness area. This is an interpretation of a clause in the Wilderness Act of 1964 (section 4(c)) written before mountain bikes existed and obviously directed at motorized vehicles.

Point Reyes National Seashore immediately complied with this D. of I. directive and banned bicycles from wilderness trails without public hearings or fair warning to users and local businesses. They have published a map of bicycle trails remaining in the park that looks good on paper but actually are all short, deadends, rough, windy

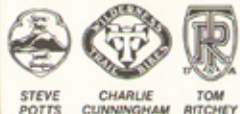
and otherwise worthless to any serious cyclist. They have not taken into consideration which trails would be most appropriate for bikes and have outlawed one of the back country's major users and protectors. This directive will affect all wilderness trails within the National Parks system. All concerned cyclists should write their congresspeople and others with influence in the Federal government and demand public hearings and due process before the ban should take effect.

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Coming Events

September 17-23, four and races: "Fat Tire Bike Week," Crested Butte, CO. Contact: Neil Murdock 303-349-6761

September 22, 23, race: "Canaan Mountain Series," Davis, WV. Contact: Land Knight 304-259-6606

September 23, race: "Gant Challenge," Chicago, IL. Contact: Joe Sailing 215-967-5171

September 23, triathlon: "Tri-Cross Off-Road Triathlon," Santa Rosa, CA. Contact: Lynn Woznicki 800-556-6650 or 707-527-5225

September 29, 30, race: "N.O.R.B.A. National Championships" (Site to be announced.) Contact: Glenn Odell 805-688-2325

September 30, race: "Gant Challenge," Los Angeles, CA. Contact: Joe Sailing 215-967-5171

September 30, race: "Gant Challenge," New York City. Contact: Joe Sailing 215-967-5171

September 30: "Road Apple Rally," Farmington, NM. Contact: Clifford Clark 505-327-0376

October 6, tour: "Ruff Stuff Rendezvous," Missoula, MT. Contact: Norm Gibat 406-721-0090

October 6, 7, tour: "Buffalo Stampede," Fort Collins, CO. Contact: Dennis Stenson 303-482-3448

October 7, race-tour: "Tour de Bluff," Groton, CT. Contact: Bob Harrington 203-443-8250

October 7, race: "Gant Challenge," Atlanta, GA. Contact: Joe Sailing 215-967-5171

October 13, race: "Gant Challenge," Miami, FL. Contact: Joe Sailing 215-967-5171

October 14, race: "Gant Challenge," Tampa, FL. Contact: Joe Sailing 215-967-5171

October 14, race: "Rock Hopper 4-Lungs," Santa Rosa, CA. Contact: Lynn Woznicki 800-556-6650 or 707-527-5864

October 14, race: "Kelly Flats Ain't Flat," Fort Collins, CO. Contact: Thom Parks 303-221-2669

October 21, race: "Mount Lowe," Los Angeles, CA. Contact: Brian Skinner 213-347-0115

October 27, 28, tour and race: "1st Columbus Mountainbike Rendezvous." Sat-tour, Sun-race. Contact: Mike at The Bike Shop, Columbus, Georgia 404-324-4567

Observed trials series: "Koenig's Mountain Madness," Helen, GA. Contact: Joe Koenig 404-678-2851

Dates: June 17, July 22, August 19, September 23, October 21, November 18

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FLYER JETS TO JAPAN

by SeeKay

During the first week in August your hardworking Flyer staff jammed over to Japan to cover the story on the first mountain bike race to be held anywhere in Asia. The things we do for our readers. In order to properly research the race we had to have a wonderful time, but that was only a side-effect unrelated to our main purpose. Really.

WE (SEEKAY AND DENISE) were guests of a Japanese magazine, *Be-Pal*, as were Tom Ritchey, Dale and Anne Stetina. Our mission, as we understood it, was to help them introduce the concept of mountain bike racing to Japan.

We won't bore you with details of plane flight, met at airport by hosts, Tokyo, nice hotel, tea ceremony, big dinner, interview, hot/humid, subway everywhere, spend three days, finally Bullet Train, 150 miles north, mountains, Minakami. There, that sentence saved you three days.

WE ARRIVED IN MINAKAMI on the afternoon of Friday, August 3. The town is major enough to have the Bullet Train stop there, but it is still a rural area where small farms and truck gardens sprout out of nearly every level or semi-level space. On the steep hillsides there are cleared lanes in the thick forest, where ski lift towers are visible on the steep mountainsides. There is thick, lush grass five feet deep on some slopes, and even though this is a ski area, it is hot and humid. The heat, thick grass, and the gentle singing of one insect in particular that made a chain saw sound like Mozart by comparison, were reminiscent of every jungle movie ever released.

But we digress. We'll skip the accounts of the hot spring baths behind the inn where we stayed or the views from our rooms of the imposing mountains lowering over the valley. Our hotel was a mile or so up the hill from town, where the road narrows to one lane and then turns to a path. The inn was a Ryokan, a more traditional kind of lodging than the hotel in Tokyo. Guests parked all their shoes beside the front door, then wore slippers which were stacked near the door, one size fits all (too small).

SATURDAY MORNING GAVE US our first opportunity to really ride our bikes. Dale and I took advantage of our lingering jet-lag which had us all jumping out of bed at five and six in the morning, and took off on the trail leading uphill from the inn. It turned into a stairway to a house and we retraced our path, taking instead the paved road toward Minakami. One

pedal their one-speeds slowly around the towns. No wonder mountain bikers in Japan were ready for a race where the only obstacles were natural.

The last road we explored was a service road for a ski lift line, and we pushed our bikes uphill until the trail petered out. Turning around, we found an excellent trail that had been recently maintained and was perfectly groomed for the quick trip down, evidently a ski trail. At the bottom Dale kept me from becoming a hood ornament by reminding me which side of the road I should be riding on, and sure enough, a car came zooming by seconds after I switched to the proper side. With no shoulder on the road, and lush growth



Photo by Charles Kelly

right to the edge of the pavement there isn't much room to dodge.

Breakfast back at the hotel was not the ham'n'eggs American style we had been having in Tokyo. Here it was a traditional meal with fish, rice, a raw egg, pickles, and so on. I'll bet you would rather I talked about bikes.

AFTER BREAKFAST we got together with several engineers and designers from the 3Rensho company, who wanted our opinions on some new and experimental designs they had built. At the same time we were checking out bikes, we were to check out the race course that they were planning to use.

The site was only a half-mile from the inn, on a road Dale and I hadn't tried. When we got there we asked a few questions about how long the race was, and we were more or less surprised to find that it was a downhill event only, with a dual slalom afterward. Total distance, less than two miles.

WE WERE ASKED by our hosts, "How far do you race?" They were surprised to hear that we raced twenty to thirty miles, having heard mostly of our downhill events. Dale in particular is a distance specialist, having won the Coors Classic recently, and one who considers his mountain bike handling ability a shorter suit for him than strength, was not thrilled by the format, since by this time he was looking for some real exercise, about fifty miles of hard riding.

The bikes we looked at were for the most part not as high-performance as the ones we had brought, three of Tom Ritchey's bikes. Although there were a number of new ideas, some seemed to be elaborate cures for non-existent problems. A couple of good ones: bash-plate under bottom bracket, shield to keep chain from bouncing down between chainstay and tire. A couple of bad ones: strange structural bracings, weird frame designs.

WE TRIED TO BE CIRCUMSPECT about our criticisms. After all, these people were our hosts. We took each bike for a ride before making any comments about the equipment, but we had to confess eventually that we liked our reasonably simple bikes, and as the saying goes, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

We tested bikes and checked out the downhill course for an hour or so, then the temperature and humidity reached a point where we felt less and less like testing bikes, so we adjourned for lunch in Minakami. Over noodles and fruit in a small restaurant we decided to spend the afternoon sightseeing in the mountains above the town.

We rode in a van up the hill, on a road that became progressively narrower, winding through lush forests. At an area where a ski tram was running we parked the truck and bought tickets to the top of the mountain, a twenty minute ride in a small car dangling from a cable.

The first thing we saw at the top of the tram was a small group of three mountain bikers riding down a hill to the tram station, and we hailed them when they approached. Through Suzuki, our translator, we introduced ourselves, and at the sound of Tom Ritchey's name their eyes widened. These were some of the riders who would be participating the next day, and they had already seen publicity with our names.

It turned out that the three had found on a top map what looked to be a passable road from the tramway down to our inn, and they had explored it only to find it washed out and impassable. Now they were folding their bikes up into nylon bags to take back down on the tram.

We abandoned the hilltop when it began to rain, and headed back to the inn for another round of baths before the party that was scheduled for that evening.

At this point I had not yet been issued a bike to use in the races, and late that afternoon Tom and I went to the place a

Continued next page

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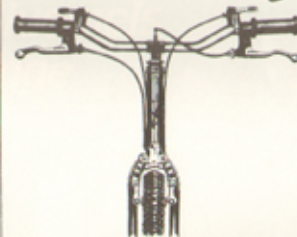
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mile or so from our inn where most of the cyclists were camped. Arriving at another small inn next to the river, we saw a crowd of mountain bikers that would have done justice to any event in the U.S.A., at least a hundred with more arriving. The bike I was to use was on a stand being attended to by no fewer than three mechanics, and as I inspected it, Tom was surrounded by admiring fans.

The mechanics pronounced the bike ready, so I jumped on it for a test spin, and immediately found four or five things that needed adjusting. I returned it with my comments, and once again the mechanics pounced on it. The frame was custom built for Suntour, and the bike was primarily for display purposes. The brakes were the new Suntour/Cunningham power cam, thoroughly adequate to the task, and all the

other equipment was first-rate. I missed my Hite-Rite spring though; in only a few months of using it I had become attached. By now Tom was autographing t-shirts, and I even had to do one (I am by association, no doubt).

ONE THING WE NOTICED at the gathering was the remarkable diversity of bikes; there were more different designs on display than I had ever seen at an off-road event, and it almost looked as though there were no two bikes alike. Although they bore names of manufacturers that were familiar to American riders, many of the bikes were like nothing in the States. Because there are more Japanese riders with short legs they had come up with interesting designs for small bikes; other bikes featured unusual frame bracing or custom treatments.

That night there was a party for all the participants in the MTB Meeting, featuring a Japanese band playing only American hits, and as an extra attraction, the introduction of Five Famous Mountainbikers to the local riders. The band, all wearing cowboy hats and boots, played one last Creedence Clearwater hit, and took a break while we greeted our public. Tom, whose name translates roughly as "To-mu Ritchey-san," was obviously the only name familiar to the crowd, but each of us in turn stepped up and made a brief speech, speaking quickly so that even those in the audience who understood English would not be able to catch the embarrassed mumbblings. "Thank-you-very-much, we're very honored, win one for the Gipper, it's not whether you win or lose... it's the thought that counts, do you know me? This Bud's for you, good night." Wild applause.

The party was still going strong when we left for the short van ride back to the inn and one more dip in the hot spring.

Breakfast was early the next morning because the race began at nine. When we rode up to the race area there were start and finish banners stretched across the road in several places, and more than a hundred riders in a wild variety of fat attire milled about the finish line or trudged up the hill toward the starting line.

A TRAIL HAD BEEN CHOPPED in the thick grass on the steep hillside above the start area, and like ants or perhaps Sherpas struggling up Everest, dozens of people hiked (with and without bikes) toward a flat area several hundred feet above. We didn't know what was up, but everyone seemed to be headed that way, and we joined them. Tom and I carrying our bikes up. The steep climb and the heat and humidity instantly had our shirts wringing wet. When we reached the plateau we found the reason for the gathering: the pre-race speech was given here by one of our hosts, a Mr. Hiraki, then photos were taken, with our small group pushed into the front row for a long series of shots.

After the photo session everyone who had a bike attempted to ride it down to the starting line, with very few successfully negotiating the steep trail. Near the bottom where it was steepest, riders would now and then disappear with a yell into the tall grass, where a rear wheel would surface briefly like the flukes of a sounding whale.

BECAUSE WE WERE EXPECTED to win, we had been told that we would not be awarded any prizes. (The trip was a pretty nice prize anyway.) However, in the event one of us killed himself/herself, they wanted everyone to see it, so we started first. Tom Ritchey drew the first shot, and when he took off down the first steep straightaway the starter almost swallowed his whistle. Dale was supposed to go second, but he was still on his way up the hill, so I lined up for the second start, thirty seconds behind Tom.

The starter was still watching Tom though, and then he looked at his clock

and said "Go," with no countdown or warning.

"Huh?"
"Five, four, three, ni, ichi... go!"
As I took off I knew I wasn't going to match Tom's derring-do, but with the ability we sometimes have to think about two things at once, I remembered that I wasn't wearing a helmet, gloves, long sleeves or pants, and that I wouldn't get a prize anyway. In spite of not feeling any pressure to perform I managed to spin out on the first sharp turn, which is a slow way to take the turn but looks great in photos. A couple more sharp turns, a few ruts and rocks, a lashing from the plants overhanging the inside lines on the curves, then a stretch of pavement and... wait a minute! Uphill! My mother didn't raise me this!

The climb was perhaps a quarter of a mile or a little farther. En route to the finish banner I met a truck that filled the little dirt road, then weaved my way between a few hikers before scrambling up the last pitch. At the finish line I collapsed in a sweating, panting heap, and a dozen cameras recorded the results of my poor anaerobic conditioning. In a moment someone procured for me a dry t-shirt, and I used my wet one to wipe clean my face and body of the mud of dust mixed with sweat.

Dale needed three attempts to get off the line, as first one thing then another went wrong with his bike. Finally he got a clean run, and his uphill ability made up



for any lack of confidence he might have had in this downhill. Denise came in some two minutes ahead of the next woman.

THE DUAL SLALOM started while the downhill was still in progress. Two at a time, riders maneuvered through the cones, and after it became known that one side was faster than the other, one line became twice as long as the other.

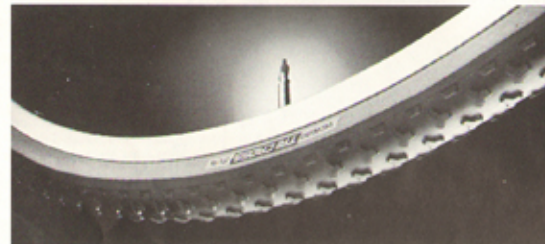
An announcer gave the times for the downhill over the P.A. system, and Tom Ritchey was fastest at 4:04. Next was Dale in 4:21, then the first Japanese rider in 4:33. I was sixth, a comfortable half-minute and change back from Tom's mark, and in Slalom I was fifth. By virtue of his convincing time in the downhill and a second in the slalom by only .02 second, Ritchey had the crowd chanting, "Ritchey-san, ichiban" (Mr. Ritchey is number one).

THERE WERE TWO EVENTS at the MTB meeting that probably won't be found at American mountain bike rallies. One was fire-starting using a wooden friction drill or flint and steel, and the other was a contest for maximum time aloft for hand-spun propeller toys. The winners of these were presented to the crowd along with the winners of the races, with appropriate fanfare.

Anne, Denise and I decided that we needed to train more, so that afternoon we boarded the train back to Tokyo. Tom and Dale were falling behind on their weekly minimum mileage, so they decided to ride the 150 mile back over two days. They rolled out of the mountains in the sticky heat of the late afternoon, bound for Honjo, seventy-five miles away.

The next morning at about ten o'clock, Dale and Tom stroled into the hotel at Tokyo. They were forced to take a \$40 taxi ride the last thirty miles because even though they rose early and got on the road by five a.m., the traffic and the heat on the outskirts of the city made it impossible to continue. Suffice to say we didn't see any recreational cyclists in the city during our stay.

TO MAKE A LONG STORY only one paragraph longer, imagine if you will rapid succession: shuttle bus, customs, airport, plane ride (lousy movie), airport, customs, shuttle bus, jetlag. Home sweet deadline!



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Editor's note: We like to give our readers the latest results, and this one is pretty late. About a year late. But it's a good story and an example of how first-time promoters can put on a successful event if they plan it adequately. We look forward to learning how to pronounce "Chequamegon," and in exchange for lessons we will teach someone to pronounce our native words, such as "Tamelpati," or "Heinken."

Some things in life are inevitable. So it seemed when the first Chequamegon Fat Tire Festival turned knobby-tired bicycles loose on the logging roads and cross-country ski trails of Wisconsin last September.

I had been bombing around the Chequamegon National Forest for the past ten years on a 50's vintage Peugeot with fat tires. When mountain bikes appeared on the scene it was a new world. With half a dozen local riders tearing around the woods we knew a race had to happen.

In the town of Hayward most important decisions are made in the Moose Cafe. Race Director Dan Hunt called the meeting together there because the cook was Norm Cooper, who had been running cross-country horse races for years. Choosing a tough route between Hayward and Lakewoods Resort in Cable would not be a problem. We wanted to use the American Birkebeiner Trail, one of the world's toughest marathon cross-country ski courses, for part of the route, but to do that we had to get the riders across the Namekagon River. Norm pointed out the locations.

CHEQUAMEGON FAT TIRE FESTIVAL

by Phil Van Valkenberg

"There's the old railroad bridge, or you can try the place where we ford the horses." As chief of the course I was assigned to check them out.

Our media expert, Tom Kelly, had lined up a local brewery as a sponsor as well as Specialized and Bikes Ltd. in La Crosse. Other bike shops got behind the event with more prizes. The Hayward Lions volunteered to handle the first food stop, and the members of the Chequamegon Mamas Bicycle Club who had not yet gotten mountain bikes would take care of the other two. The only bad news was the printing bill for the brochures, \$300, but there was no time left to do anything about it and at least the promotional piece looked great.

We still had to find a way across the river, so Dan and I got on our bikes and headed down the railroad grade. Ahead the rusting iron framework of the bridge grew steadily larger, until we could see a plaque reading "Chicago and Northwestern 1901" along with some rather formidable obsta-

cles. Barricades resembling squat goalposts had been erected at each end to keep the snowmobiles off. On the bridge the rushing river showed through wide gaps where the ties had been pulled out just in case one of the beelers discovered that the barricades were not chainsaw-proof.

And then there was the Troll. At the far end of the bridge we could see a small figure with a cane, leaning across the barricade. Leaving the bikes, we picked our ways across, stepping from tie to tie and balancing on the stringers over the gaps.



The character of the course got a little shot in the arm a little further up the railroad grade; at Mosquito Brook a bike could easily get around the barricades and all the ties were still in place on the trestle. Alongside the bridge there was a path, and the bottom of the shallow stream was smooth enough for a rider to get across. With two good ways to get across we decided to put up arrows pointing both ways and let the riders decide.

On race day as competitors lined up for the start of the Chequamegon 40, the question on everyone's mind was not who would cross the finish line first, but what

kind of bike would he be on. Most of the riders were astride mountain bikes, but a few were on cyclo-cross bikes, including Minneapolis' Gregory Barkley, winner of the 90 mile Tour de Courte Oreilles road race that spring. The course and forty miles would answer the question.

A few minutes at a Hayward City Council meeting had secured us permission to close down the main street for the start. The clear morning witnessed a lineup of lean, well-muscled bicyclists from four states at the start in front of Hayward's antique storefronts. Police stopped traffic on the highway, and the pack rolled out escorted by a squad car to the edge of town and the riders' first taste of dirt.

At Mosquito Brook only one rider opted for the water crossing, and as he struggled back onto the grade he found himself next to the same rider he had been with when he headed for the stream. The pack riding and drafting was about to end as the racers swung onto the matted clover and dry grass surface of the Birkebeiner Trail. Up ahead the Hayward Lions scrambled to get the first food stop ready before the leaders shot out of the woods.

The race had become a shoulder-to-shoulder duel between Barkley and Jeff Peterson, a former motorcycle racer. The drafting and careful meeting of energy had given way to a contest with the final sprint to an ever further finish line, an all-out anaerobic struggle with riders trading half-wheel advantages until Barkley found himself on the ground after his first fall of the day.

I was using a Honda ATV three-wheeler as a pace vehicle and this one-man break became a two-man contest again at times as his relentless drive made it tough for me to stay ahead. Peterson was never off his 38-tooth middle chainwheel and only off the bike once on a steep and sandy slope. Toe clips helped his stay-with-the-bike commitment.

After working steadily higher the route left the Birkie trail and funneled down a narrow fire lane, giving the racers their ration of mud followed by long, fast, cobbled downhill with sand washouts at the bottom making for some excited fish-tailing. Up the other side there were more cobbles, this time a rocky maze to be picked through by riders grunting along in low gear. After losing all the altitude that had been gained the course turned back onto the Birkie trail climbing up to the top of the fire tower hill. After a full-bellied descent under a canopy of trees the riders turned onto another sandy, cobbled fire road for the last miles to the finish at Lakewoods.



The way Peterson was riding only a calamity could have kept him from taking home the first prize. His astounding 2:54:10 was climaxed by a triumphant wheeleie across the finish line. Five minutes later mountain bike-equipped Shannon Reitan crossed the line, followed another seven minutes back by Barkley. Barkley had counted five falls, and announced that he would be back on a fat-tire bike in '84.

The top fifteen riders finished within an hour of Peterson's time. In the closest finish of the day Mark Sturtgen, who had just returned from a 65th place in Paris-Brest-Paris the week before, edged Steve Chase and Dennis Kruse out of seventh place by a two-second margin. His performance was made more dramatic by his method of arrival. Sturtgen had been running and coasting since his chain had broken five miles from the finish. The cheering that began when he came running into sight turned into yelling and screaming when the two other racers wheeled around the corner. Sturtgen's sprint held up and he crossed the line in 3:31:20. Jill Scott, a professional ice skater from Duluth, Minnesota, was the first woman to finish in 4:49:53. Scott Caldwell, who had set out to tour the course and enjoy the ride did just that and picked up the last place finisher award in 6:30:19.

While the last riders trickled in and the beer began to flow, competitors prepared for the Lakewoods Critterium, a six lap, two mile event featuring a jump. The mood of the crowd turned from passive to rowdy when I did a demonstration lap and landed head-first coming off the jump. Chris Rogers, a victim of chain failure who had not finished the 40, made up for his previous showing by taking the race in 11:05. He was followed by Jeff Peterson, 34 seconds behind in a popular performance, and by fourth-place 40 finisher Bill Kraemer, another 20 seconds back. Rogers went home with the first place prize, but wished he had invested a little more money in metallurgy, as six times over the jump had given his bike a new fork rake.

The finale of the Fat Tire Bike Festival took place the next morning with the Rough Stuff Rendezvous, a bicycle orienteering event. Competitors were started at one-minute intervals on a maze of National Forest roads, fire lanes, X-C ski and snowmobile trails, using a map and compass to locate four checkpoints. The event produced some great "blind leading the blind" pack riding and Keystone Kops scenes with riders shooting past each other in different directions. Mike Gerke of De Pere, Wisconsin, got it right the first time to win with a time of 52:04, and Georgia Shaw of Seeley, Wisconsin, took the women's division in 2:06:56.

At the awards ceremony we got a chance to get acquainted with some of the competitors and ask them what motivated them to come all the way out here for the Fat Tire Festival. Many responded that at first they hadn't believed it was for real, but the brochure looked so good that they thought the race would be too! The brochures may have been expensive, but it was money well spent.

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JOE MURRAY GOT HIS MOJO working, and he was mo' Joe than anyone could handle at the Suntour Pacific States Series Championship held at Briones Park in the Berkeley Hills. Four laps of a 6.6 mile course, 1600 feet of climbing a lap for the Pro-Ams, going for a share of \$2000 cash, as in spending, money. The course included every kind of technical climbing and descending, and the weather was perfect for racing, a cool overcast as can only happen in the Bay Area in the summer and a relief from the 100 degree heat at some of points races held on previous weekends.

One section of the race course especially separated bikes from riders and reduced the pace to a trudge; the infamous "Wall," where the course climbs some 350 feet in less than half a mile. Downhill sections were fast and steep, varying from narrow trails to wide-open, fast roads.

Joe Murray exhibited patience and poise while he allowed others to push the pace, content to stay with the lead group as it steadily diminished. On the first lap it was Gavin Chilcott, Steve Cook, Roger Marquis, Ned Overend, and Murray in the lead group. On the second lap Marquis fell back on the climb, and on the third lap Overend, then Cook lost contact. Murray and Chilcott rode into the last lap with Chilcott ahead by a few seconds.

Joe Murray describes what happened on the Wall. "We were both pushing our bikes, and Gavin was just ahead of me. We were catching a lapped rider from the Novice race, and Gavin yelled for him to get out of the way; the guy moved over, but when Gavin went by, he hit his knee on the pedal of the other bike. I don't think it really hurt him, but it kind of shook him up, and that's when I went past."

JOE KEPT ON "GOING PAST," and at the finish he held nearly a two-

minute lead over Chilcott. Another minute and change back was Overend, who re-passed Cook and nipped him at the line by two seconds. Marquis rolled in fifth, four and a half minutes off the winning pace.

Although Murray was the winner of the Championship event, Overend was the winner in points standing for the series, which also included eight preliminary races held the two previous weekends. His eighteen points for third place in the main event, plus thirty-nine earned with three firsts and a second in the preliminaries, gave him 57, two ahead of Gavin Chilcott, who won two preliminaries with a second and a fourth place. Murray won one preliminary, and had appeared to win another but was disqualified for taking a teammate's bike when he had a flat tire.

Joe did all right at the box office though, collecting \$1000 for riding Suntour equipment in the big race, with another \$190 in other prizes. Second place money finisher was Overend with \$800 in earnings, then Chilcott with \$600.

BY MOST ACCOUNTS the Fresno qualifier for the Series was one of the most disorganized events ever, and most of the riders got lost on the course. The race was finally shortened because so many were lost. Others of the qualifying events received high marks from riders, especially the Redding race, organized by Whiskeytowners Gary and Bonnie Larsen.

Suntour Pacific States Series Overall Points Standings

		Points
1. Ned Overend	Unatt.	57
2. Gavin Chilcott	Team Stumpjumper	55
3. Lawrence Malone	Team Stumpjumper	47
4. Roger Marquis	Team Ritchey	35
5. Todd DeAngelis	Unatt.	32
6. Joe Murray	Fisher MtnBikes	30
7. Jim Deaton	Unatt.	26
8. Jim Harlow	Ross Indians	25
9. Steve Cook	Suntour	25
10. Kye Sharp	Unatt.	23

Championship Race (28 miles)

1. Joe Murray	Fisher MtnBikes	2:05:31
2. Gavin Chilcott	Team Stumpjumper	2:05:33
3. Ned Overend	Unatt.	2:06:46
4. Steve Cook	Suntour	2:06:48
5. Roger Marquis	Team Ritchey	2:08:03
6. Lawrence Malone	Team Stumpjumper	2:09:43
7. Sean Storm	Ross Indians	2:11:00
8. Kye Sharp	Unatt.	2:11:28
9. Todd DeAngelis	Unatt.	2:12:50
10. Casey Kesselman	His Cycles	2:13:14

Race Reports

This is a pretty dry area of the FLYER: race statistics with none of the drama and agony we know went on. If you've read this far without falling asleep, we'll reward you with a quote from David Copperfield. We'd bet you didn't know Dickens was an off-road rider.

"Ride on! Rough-shod if need be, smooth-shod if that will do, but ride on! Ride on over all obstacles, and win the race!"

Sunshine's Off-Road Series, Anchorage, AK, June 14, 1984

20 KM	
1. Brent Trimble	47:11
2. Scott Oberbeckling	48:24
3. John Anderson	50:03
4. Raymond Clayton	51:34
5. John Pennington	52:21
10. Debbie Strand	60:07
12. Michael Ridgeway	64:41
13. Jennifer Newell	66:03
10 KM	
1. Mike Roebuck	26:22
2. Tom Crenshaw	26:28
3. Tim Neale	27:10
4. Brad Egan	27:36
5. Jeff Owens	27:47
6. John Newell	27:54
7. Paul Herbert	29:32
9. Beth Bereman	30:34
10. Julie Sievert	30:35

Sun Mountain 25 Mile Race, Winthrop, WA, June 16, 1984

20 RIDERS	
1. Rob Collins	2:08:30
2. Don Poyman	2:10:24
3. Jay Lucan	2:16:36
4. Neil Whitman	2:18:00
5. Jim Kitchell	2:19:26
6. Pat Stearns	2:20:26
7. Mike Goss	2:20:25
8. Ted Reese	2:20:42
9. Jim Devine	2:15:33
10. Don Schmidt	2:16:40
17 MILES	
1. Sara Laney	2:31:33
2. Alicia Simmons	2:37:08

Mountain Madness Tray Hill Race, Helen, GA, June 28, 1984

15 MILES	
1. Russell Hall	1:16:04
2. Gary Robertson	1:18:37
3. Gene Dixon	1:21:53
4. Michele Fain	1:29:43
5. Chris Fahy	1:31:32
6. David Schaefer	1:31:39

Rage in the Sage, Crested Butte, CO, June 14, 1984

2 LAPS	
1. Steve Cook	1:38:25
2. Dave Meyer	1:41:15
3. Tracy Smith	1:42:11
4. Tom Belfield	1:45:09
5. Wes Williams	1:46:46
6. Scott Brown	1:50:34
1 LAP	
1. John Armstrong	56:16
2. Mark O'Neill	58:18
3. Pete Barbagallo	59:46
4. Jeff Pflieger	1:00:33
5. Joe Smith	1:02:12
Jill Barr	1:14:20

Kincaid Challenge, Anchorage, AK, June 28, 1984

18 KM	
1. Les Matz	42:43
2. Brent Trimble	44:20
3. Scott Oberbeckling	44:39
4. Tim Kelley	46:01
5. Ray Clayton	46:38
10. Julie Sievert	56:33
11. Debbie Strand	58:40

10 KM	
1. Tom Crenshaw	23:30
2. Stace Moon	23:31
3. Tim Neale	24:48
4. Don Sage	26:07
5. Dennis Gallen	26:29
6. Ken Blue	26:30
7. Larry Muchhausen	26:39
8. Beth Bereman	27:55
9. Kristen Wilson	29:10
10. Marsha Bandy	30:07
11. Barbara Newell	35:06

Whiskeytown Downhill, Redding, CA, June 3, 1984

1. Joe Murray (Fisher MtnBikes)	2:54:56	Pro-Am
2. Steve Cook (Suntour)	2:55:55	Pro-Am
3. Gavin Chilcott (Team Stumpjumper)	3:05:06	Pro-Am
4. Todd DeAngelis	3:05:58	M Expt
5. Mark Michel (Team Stumpjumper)	3:08:55	Pro-Am
6. Dave McLaughlin (Team Stumpjumper)	3:09:38	Pro-Am
8. Charlie Cunningham	3:13:41	M Vet
21. Jeff Gilmore	3:24:10	M Nov
54. Jacques Phelan	3:51:53	W Expt
70. Lea Brooks	4:05:39	W Expt
95. Lynne Cooper	4:31:04	W Nov

Lake Tahoe State Park Mountain Bicycle Race, Incline Village, NV, August 11, 1984

24 MILES	
1. Joe Murray (Fisher MtnBikes)	2:03:35
2. Robber Marquis (Team Ritchey)	2:06:22
3. John Loomis (Fisher MtnBikes)	2:09:03
4. Max Jones	2:13:51
5. Chris Mahanna	2:14:52
6. George Thorndike	2:17:07
7. Don Davis (Ross Indians)	2:18:29
8. Kurt Kalkan	2:21:07
9. Rob Nilson	2:25:30
10. Joe Breeze (Breeze Industries)	2:31:01

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*XC-III Handlebar Stem
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feature, quick release
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construction provide
maximum strength.*

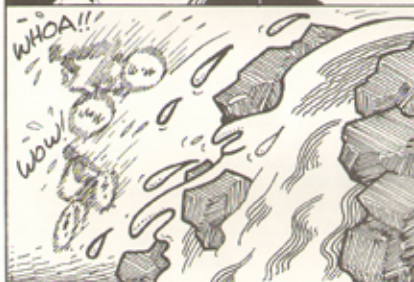


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LET'S TIE THE PONIES UP A MINUTE, O'TOOLE - I WANNA CHECK OUT THAT BIKE SHOP ACROSS THE STREET -



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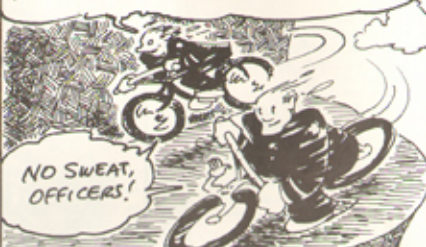
Y'KNOW, THE CHIEF WOULDN'T BELIEVE THIS!



I'M TELLIN' YA, GOAT, IF BIZNESS DOESN'T PICK UP SOON I GOTTA GET ANOTHER GIG!



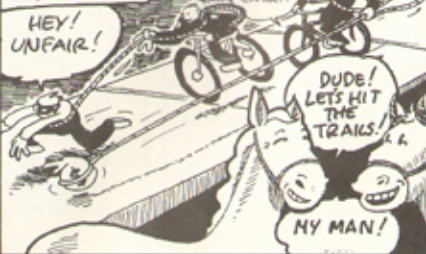
WHEW! STEADY NOW, BOYS!



TOO MUCH!



DAYS LATER:



TO THE TOP DOWN UNDER

Editor's note: Treadley Trev organizes mountain bike adventures in the north (or top bit) of Australia. He can be contacted at P.O. Box 5092, Cairns 4870, Australia.

Someone from the land of hotdogs, apple pie and ketchup said that Australia is a lot like America, only the clocks have been turned back thirty years. (Expletive deleted!) We just do things a bit differently Down Under. For a start there are no Fat Tire Flyers. Tire is what happens if you ride too far or too fast, which doesn't happen all that often here. The pace of life is on the slow side. More Fat Tyre Ramblers than Flyers. Most of us leave the racing to the yachtsmen (Our fellas can thrash your fellas any day!). We use the other side of the road here, which is only of academic interest to any dinkum Fat Tyre Rambler.

But you blokes take the cake with your mountain bikes. We don't even have any proper mountains. The biggest pimple on our landscape is only 7000 odd feet high. But we aren't overclouded with freeways either. Most of our highways make skinny tires an endangered species. There are ruts in our roads that make the Grand Canyon look like a gum tree shadow.

And while we're doing the geography lesson: Australia is a fairly big place, about 8.62835 zillion times the area of Marin County. Most Aussies live in the bottom right corner, leaving the rest of the country for the kangaroos, cattle, and Fat Tyre Ramblers. The north (or top bit) has some pretty wild terrain, as eight FTR's recently discovered.

These intrepid adventurers pedaled through 700 miles of tropical rain forests, swamps, and semi-desert to Cape York, Australia's northerly tip.

From Cairns we turned our mountain bikes inland to the abandoned Palmer River gold fields. A century ago 100,000 gold-hungry miners flocked from the four corners of the globe to make their fortunes. Many left their bones instead, victims of fever, cannibalistic aborigines, and rum. The only traces of all their blood, sweat and tears are a few ghost towns, some rusting mine machinery, and our track, hand-bewn from naked granite. What men do for gold! Few have ventured here since the last bullock team struggled through. We saw no one for three days. Where once there was gold in them thar hills, now there are just ghosts.

Up and over the rugged Great Dividing Range to the sandstone gorges of Quinkan Reserve and its ancient aboriginal rock art galleries. Countless generations painted ochre murals of themselves, the animals they hunted, their totemic and spiritual beings. A poignant relic of a decimated culture. Another triumph for western civilization.

Continuing northward we pedaled into Lakefield National Park, 20,000 square miles of coastal swamp and lagoons teeming with bird life. And crocodiles! Eight dusty cyclists reluctantly postponed their swimming program.

The track led us through antihills and eucalyptus forests, by shady billabongs and crystal-clear creeks, the life-blood of a sun-burnt land. Many times we slung our bikes



PRE-MOUNTAIN BIKE



by Treadley Trev

over our shoulders to cross fast moving streams before stripping off and diving in. While the pioneers sought to keep their gunpowder dry (cannibals!) we were more concerned with wheel bearings. We need not have worried. While four-wheel-drives fell by the wayside, our mountain bikes ramblod on regardless.

An old weather-worn stockman offered to trade his horse. "I reckon these newfangled machines would go all right mustering cattle. No straying at night, either." But what would a FTR do with a hayburner?

Progress was finally halted by the Torres Strait. We had run out of Australia, we were ON TOP DOWN UNDER.

Occasionally I renege on not riding in the summer, and since I can't stay off the ATB for an entire season anyway, that brings me to the subject of my incident (or accident, depending on one's point of view).

There aren't any mountains down here in Spanish Fort, Alabama, but there are plenty of hills. Someone has written that we're the highest land mass above sea level on the southern or Eastern Seaboard until one hits the mountain range somewhere in Georgia or South Carolina. Suffice it to say, we have some pretty steep little hills.

My drive train consists of a Sugino AT 26-36-46 chainwheel, 180 mm cranks, a five-speed 13-28 Suntour New Winner freewheel, and a D.I.D. Lancer chain. I've found that even on steep hills, I usually go up in third gear (19 teeth), stand on the pedals, and hump on up. First and second obviously have better mechanical advantage, but traction or wheelies become a problem. Needless to say, the 19 tooth cog gets most of the action.

There's a trail that runs out of the back of my subdivision and snakes through the woods before crossing Interstate 10. From there it goes on for another mile and connects with several clay roads and some other trash pile trails. When the trail leaves I-10 it goes almost straight up for about 20 yards. I was halfway up this sucker when my chain broke. I was standing up on the pedals, pumping with all my might... the chain broke. Wow, does that XC-1 smart when it bites into the back of that unprotected leg? Believe me, that hurt worse than the whack in the crotch from the top tube that rushed up to meet me. Guess who now carries a chain tool in his bike bag, next to the orthopedic jock.

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Continued

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Occasionally I renege on not riding in the summer, and since I can't stay off the ATB for an entire season anyway, that brings me to the subject of my incident (or accident, depending on one's point of view).

There aren't any mountains down here in Spanish Fort, Alabama, but there are plenty of hills. Someone has written that we're the highest land mass above sea level on the southern or Eastern Seaboard until one hits the mountain range somewhere in Georgia or South Carolina. Suffice it to say, we have some pretty steep little hills.

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CROSS-COUNTRY ADVENTURE BY SARACEN MOUNTAIN BIKE: LATEST

To quote Perry Como (who?), "Letters, we get letters . . ." but most of them are press releases, which we ignore because they are generally advertising something like a solar-powered automatic gear shifter. We never print them verbatim, in their entirety, but as James Bond says, "Never say never . . ." What would we do without people to quote from? Now, and to quote P.T. Barnum (or someone like him), "Without further ado . . ." we present this bit of press fluff from Saracen Cycles in England.

British students Bruce Simpson (22) and Tania Adams (19), both from Glasgow, Scotland, have now cycled well over 1,000 miles across China from Peking, and are now heading south to Canton. They will have cycled at least 2,000 miles by the time they reach Hong Kong in mid-August, riding English hand-built mountain bikes manufactured by Saracen Cycles Ltd. of Coventry.

On the second of August they telephoned from Changsha (south of the Yangtze River) in Hunan Province, prior to appearing on regional television and being interviewed by the local paper.

While completing his International Law studies at Cambridge University, his proposal for this journey won Bruce a much-coveted Winston Churchill Travel Scholarship, and he was also sponsored by American Express, the local Cambridge Evening News, and Abbott Travel Agency. The purpose of his journey was "to pave the way for future small scale, low-budget expeditions, which have the best chance of communication with the Chinese."

Saracen Cycles was delighted to present him with the mountain bike he needed. Assistance was also provided by London and Glasgow cycle dealers W.F. Evans and Dale's (Cycles). Author Richard Ballantine presented them with a signed copy of "Richard's Bicycle Book," and Bruce spent a day at the Coventry premises of Saracen Cycles learning how to strip down and rebuild a mountain bike.

The planned route was discarded on arrival in Peking, and Bruce and Tania chose even wilder terrain, travelling west to cross the Great Wall into Inner Mongolia. They made for Tibet across the mountains, crossing two major passes (one 14,500 feet high) never before crossed by bicycle. During three weeks in Tibet they visited areas inaccessible to any other form of transport. Often they had to cross up to eight major landfills in a day, and the bikes took a real beating on the dirt tracks. In many places the local people, who always gave them a marvelous reception, had never seen a westerner before.



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The Saracen mountain bikes are performing excellently despite extremely difficult cycling conditions. On one occasion they had to cross a river on wire ropes, and haul the bikes after them.

There had been a minor accident, however, when a rock was caught in the gear mechanism, and once back in China they relexed Saracen requesting detailers and guide wheels to be sent to Chungking, where they expected to arrive in twelve days. The parts reached Chungking in time enabling Bruce to repair the damage.

They say the Chinese people have been "absolutely marvelous." News travels fast on the grapevine, and as Bruce and Tania arrive in the villages, streets are lined with people clapping and cheering, and fascinated by the mountain bikes, which have generated great interest. They have been given all the food they need. Everywhere they are offered generous hospitality, spending most evenings with local people in their villages, and being treated as "honored guests."

Bruce summed up the telephone conversation by saying that so far the whole adventure has been a tremendous success. Travelling by bicycle has enabled them to see many places they could not have reached in any other way, and the novelty of the mountain bikes has immediately broken the ice among local people who themselves use bicycles as a standard method of transport.

(End of quote)

FAT NOTES continued

In another race, which was billed as a major event, so many of the competitors got lost that anyone who found the finish line was likely to be declared the winner. If the object is pathfinding, riders should at least be issued a map; otherwise if turns are not clearly marked, course marshalls should be stationed at junctions. In this event the problem was that the truck being used to mark the course broke down, but even so it appears that this vital piece of organization was left until it was so late that nothing could be done when the truck went belly-up.

Granted, this off-road racing is supposed to be good, dirty fun and we shouldn't take things so seriously that we forget that. But when somebody drives a few hundred miles for an event, he or she has already made a major commitment to the race and expects at the minimum a fair shake. Enough promoters have pulled off their first off-road event with style and organization that inexperience should not be an excuse for sloppy promotion. Imagination and hard work can be just as effective as experience.



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COLORADO Suburban Sports-Aspen. Pinedale-Parkersburg. Chromium Bike Shop-Colorado Springs. Paradise Bike & Ski-Crested Butte. Life Cycle-Denver. The Spoke-Denver. Pines Bike & Ski-Dillon. Cycle Transport-Fort Collins. Cycle Sports-Vail.

FLORIDA Rainbow Cycles-Tallahassee.
GEORGIA Karpis Mountain-Madison-Henri.
HAWAII The Bike Shop-Honolulu. Bicycles Plus-Kapa.
IDaho Georges Lightweight Cycles-Boise. The Elphinstone-Peach-Ketchikan. Spoke & Wheel-Two Falls. All Bikes-Prosser.

MAINE Portland Bicycle Exchange-Portland.
MASSACHUSETTS Naugatuck Cycle-Oxford.
MARYLAND College Park Bike Shop-College Park.
MONTANA The Spoke Shop-Big Sky. Bangor Bicycles-Bozeman. The Great Divide-Hebena. New Era Bicycles-Missoula.

MICHIGAN Alfred E. Bikes-Kalamazoo. Motorcycles-Motom-Mt. Pleasant.
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WISCONSIN Zucchini Bikes-Delton. The Yellow Jersey-Madison.
WEST VIRGINIA Bike Barn-Buchanan.
WYOMING All Family Sports-Casper. Teton Cycles-Jackson.

IN CANADA

BRITISH COLUMBIA Rayburn Bicycles-Vancouver. Black's Cycle-Comox. Bikes on Broadway-Vancouver. Deep Cove Bike Shop-Deep Cove. Stevenson Cycle-Richmond. Suwest Cycles-Victoria.
QUEBEC Velo Cameroun-Quebec City.
ALBERTA Bike City-Calgary. George's Cycle-Edmonton. Ritchey's Cycle-Calgary. Park N. Pedal-Banff.
MANITOBA Lighthouse-Winnipeg.
NOVA SCOTIA The Total Shop-Halifax.
ONTARIO Maple Cycles-Dundas. Bear Cycle-Toronto. Bannery-Toronto. The Bike Shop-Ottawa.

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