

APRIL • MAY 1985 VOLUME 5, NUMBER 2 \$2.00

# ***Fat Tire Flyer***

MAGAZINE



# Fat Tire Flyer<sup>TM</sup>

MAGAZINE

APRIL • MAY 1985 VOLUME 5, NUMBER 2

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Steve Meyer

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Shimano offers 28, 36, 44, 48 and 50 tooth Biopace chainrings. New 600EX crank arms heights are 165, 170, 175 and 180 mm, each with asymmetry or as a complete crankset with Biopace chainrings.



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# Editorial

While we are a national publication, there is an issue that is local to the FLYER that has national implications and deserves a mention here. By now most off-road riders are aware of the issues regarding bicycle access to areas designated as Wilderness. While we are willing to concede that there are Wilderness Areas in which bicycles might not be appropriate, we believe that a blanket policy excluding them is unwise and that the local administrations should have some say in the matter.

The Point Reyes National Seashore is located in a rural but populated area close to the metropolitan San Francisco Bay Area; in fact it is unique among Wilderness areas because of its proximity to urban areas. Point Reyes has been used for farming and recreational purposes since the area was first settled, and one of the conditions insisted upon by the local citizens when the area was being considered for Wilderness designation was the permanent establishment of a system of protection roads to be used in controlling fires which have the potential of spreading beyond the Wilderness area. (In general, the wilderness policy is not to attempt to control such fires.) This system of roads, according to the Congressional Act which designated the area as Wilderness, may be maintained by use of heavy equipment, such as a bulldozer, and in fact many of the "hiking trails" in the area are twenty feet wide and immaculately groomed by such equipment.

In recent months the administrators of the Point Reyes Wilderness Area have been directed by their superiors in Washington to exclude bicycles, and in spite of widespread protests by local cyclists, the order has not been rescinded.

During the years of public meetings, discussions and public hearing that preceded the establishment of Point Reyes as a Wilderness Area, bicyclists were specifically mentioned as a recreational group that would continue to use the area. Certainly much of the public support for the designation as Wilderness came from cyclists who felt they had been sanctioned as users of the area.

It is just such hypocrisy that makes our blood boil. On the one hand, trail maintenance by bulldozer is considered to be in keeping with the "wilderness experience," but bicyclists who helped preserve the area from development have no place on these same trails. We would like to suggest that the wilderness experience might be better served if the trails were maintained by workers on bicycles, and bulldozers were kept out entirely.

Although the local administrators of Point Reyes are open minded with regard to bicycles (one ranger patrols on a bike), their hands are tied on this issue because their orders come from Washington. We urge readers in all areas to write their congressional representatives suggesting that local administrations be given some authority in dealing with Wilderness matters.

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Write or call us for more information.

## NOTICE

To any and all Fat-Tired, creative persons! In order to provide a complete, well-rounded and objective publication, we need your help. Photographers, writers or just plain readers/riders, send us your stuff! Unsolicited manuscripts and photographs are always welcome as are letters or comments. Photographs should be in black and white.

We cannot return any material that is not accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope, so if you need it back...S.A.S.E.

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# Fat Feedback

## DEAR FTF AND READERS:

I don't know how to start this letter, so I'll just tell what a neat experience I had. I ride this short trail on my way to work. I ride uphill until I hit the steep, fast part of the fire road heading down again. I've been riding trails for five years (since age 15) and have always survived my high-speed smashups with the usual minimum of cuts, etc., but never anything major. Until I came around a corner to see two horses running uphill taking up the majority of the fire road. The last memory is of putting on the brakes. I came to with two horse riders, a bicyclist, two joggers, two county rangers, and a Midpeninsula Open Space District ranger standing over me. I didn't know what day or time it was, where I was on the trail, or what direction I faced. All this was due to a cerebral concussion, I was told later. I couldn't move my legs or sit up, so an ambulance was called in case I had injured my back or neck.

I didn't break any bones, but I walked painfully with a cane for a month. I destroyed the back rim and broke three spokes with one spoke broken on the front wheel. The bill for all this fun hovers around an uninsured \$900 for ambulance, x-rays, and the doctor.

I was on a legal trail and the horse riders readily admitted that they were mostly to blame, although I had to admit to high speed.

To all you Fat Tire Flyers, wear your helmet, and even though you control yourself at high speeds, take it easy where you can't see what's ahead. Also, remember that horses weigh in at around 2000 pounds (no, the horse didn't get hurt).

Ride safely and expect the unexpected.

Sincerely and always helmeted,  
Ray Bones

## HEY FTF:

You give us lots of race coverage, never enough tech tips, and a few product reviews, but we also want to know of great areas to ride while on vacation outside our area here in eastern Washington, trick riding tips that may be helpful on the trail and any other weird ideas that might come up.

I have a game that would fit into the weird ideas category and I would like to share it with you. We have a low-speed trials type game that we play for points, low points wins. The game usually starts on boring safe stretches of trail by someone yelling, "Cinzano" (after Team Cinzano in *Breaking Away*) and the game is on.

What happens then is that you try to get in front of someone and then slow down until the opponent behind you has to put a foot down (1 point, dismounts 2 points), but it isn't always the other guy who puts the foot down.

## There are a few rules:

1. No contact; death is discouraged and drive trains are expensive.
2. Never initiate play with someone who isn't aware of the game, and you should probably yell, "Cinzano!" before each attack.

I have one more comment about a new product that you advertise, the splash guard that fits on the down tube. It's a good idea, but here's a better one that I've been using for about two years. Take a common frisbee and make a removable mount for the down tube out of some stiff wire, such as a coat hanger, and there you have it, a multiple use tool: plate, cup, dog bowl, ash tray in the tent, snow shovel, great toy and exerciser, rolling trail, fender (main purpose), and in the last resort it burns with black smoke as a signal fire!

## Happy trails,

Bob of Team RASTA (Rough And Steep Trailing Associates)

P.S. Does anyone make a better brake for the rear of the Cannondale ATB? The stock one can get you killed! Cinzano!

## FAT TIRE FLYER:

We are a bunch of fun loving mountain bikers here in the North Country! Even though our season is short, we have been known to extend the thrill of mountain biking into the winter. Last week we went on a cruise into the hills on a snowmobile and 3-wheeler trail with the temperature high of five degrees fahrenheit. This sport can be converted into ice-cycling very easily.

I am writing...to invite you to recognize Mountain Bikes of Alaska in an upcoming issue of your publication covering Mountain Biking-Alaska style!

Dan Bull, Mountain Bikers of Alaska

## DEAR FAT TIRE "BUFFS,"

Any Fat Tire buffs in the Lake Erie region should be made aware of Kelly's Island. It has many public hunting area roads through woods and quarries providing some pretty fair off-road riding. Just avoid them during the hunting season, okay?

Thanks and "Keep on Cruizin'"  
Mike Carney

Continued page 8

## 1985 MOUNTAIN BIKE CATALOG

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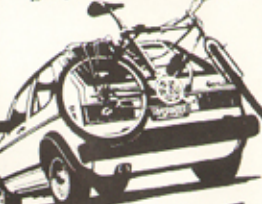


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## BACK ISSUES

Some issues are out of print and out of stock, never to be seen again except by the fortunate few who subscribed early. We do have available copies of some of our back issues. You will be relieved to know that the price of \$2.50 includes postage, which costs us more than the bulk rate we use for your subscription copy. Outside the U.S., add \$1.50 (U.S.) for each copy.



MARCH-APRIL 1982  
(Cycle-Cross, Rocky Cha, MudPup)



MAY-JUNE 1982  
(Riesed to the Sea, Coyote Derby, San Anselmo Race, Rocky Cha, MudPup)



JULY-AUGUST 1982  
(Race Reports, Carmel Valley, Claret Tour, Here Come the Kids, Rocky Cha, MudPup)



JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1983  
(The Wheel Thing, Crested Butte, Toe, Lee Vinger Show, Tech Tips, Fat Tire Explode in America)



MARCH-APRIL 1983  
(Gearing, NGRBA, Glossary, Gummy the Frog, Tech Tips, Products)



JULY-AUGUST 1983  
(Of Bikes and Men... and One Crazy Lady, Brake Review, Tech Tips, Frames... Why Cusper, MudPup, Shimano Grand Prix, Poetry Corner)



JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1984  
(Crested Butte, Race Results, NGRBA vs. USOC, Wheel Tips, Tech Tips, Race Reports, Trail Etiquette, MudPup)



JULY-AUGUST 1984  
(Use Mating Interview, MudPup, Tech Tips, Wheel Tips, Whiskey-Town Downhill, Tecate to Ensenada, Block Review)



SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1984  
(Flyer goes to Japan, MudPup's Bicycle Cheshamington Fat Tire Festival, Get These Behind Me, MudPup, Tech Tips, To the Top Down Under)



NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1984  
(An Elder of the Off-Road Tribe, Mountain Bikes in Mountain State, Uncommon Options, Point Reyes Update, Tech Tips, NGRBA Nationals)



February/March 1985  
Call to Perspective, Poetry Corner, Race Reports, Tech Tips, Uncommon Options, Fat Notes



In the past five years the introduction of high-quality fat tire cycling equipment has expanded the range of bicycle tourists to include any area where there are roads good enough for oxcarts. A number of tour operators have begun offering off-road tours either as an extension of previous service or as an exclusive service. Such package tours may or may not include sag support, guide, mechanic and bike rental. Costs vary from a minimum of a few dollars a day to hundreds of bucks including plane fare to exotic locations. In addition to the touring companies, there are touring events which have become popular. The best known of these is the annual Crested Butte to Aspen ride in Colorado. Here is the latest rundown on what is available for fat tire tourists.

### TOURING COMPANIES

**WILDERNESS BICYCLE TOURS** This is one of the first off-road touring companies, run by the impressive Casey Patterson. Tours are one to several days, prices from \$35 to \$400 depending on trip. Popular excursions are to Catalina and Santa Cruz Islands off the California coast.

Wilderness Bicycle Tours  
P.O. Box 692  
Topanga, CA 90290  
215-455-2544

**SAN DIEGO MOUNTAIN BICYCLE TOURS** Half day to several day long tours in Southern California, with a package trip offered to Crested Butte in the fall. Costs start at about \$20, with longer tour costs subject to location and length of ride.

San Diego Mountain Bicycle Tours  
1851 Missouri Street  
San Diego, CA 92109  
619-270-0914

**NEPALESE MOUNTAIN BIKE TOURS** This is one of the more exotic and expensive of the tour packages, but what could be more exciting than the highest mountains in the world? Prices not available.

Nepalese Mountain Bike Tours  
P.O. Box 76007  
Washington, DC 20015  
202-545-2004

**TOURING EXCHANGE** Bonnie Wong has a unique concept, a company that offers road bike, mountain bike and sea kayak tours. Fat tire riders will appreciate the "Tough Stuff Tours" to Baja California. These are all self-contained with no sag support. Other tours cover areas of the Cascade Mountains, Montana, Utah, and Southern California. Costs vary with trip.

Touring Exchange  
P.O. Box 265  
Port Townsend, WA 98368  
206-385-0667

**MOUNTAIN RAMBLES** This service organizes tours in northern Pennsylvania. Formats include either camping or "inn-to-inn" trips. Day trips start at \$55, with the luxury weekend or midweek trips including lodging starting at \$120.

Mountain Rambles  
RD 1, Box 308  
Hughesville, PA 17337  
717-584-2806

**KOENIG'S MOUNTAIN MADNESS** Located on the edge of the 700,000 acre Chatsahoochee National Forest, Koenig's will sell you or rent you a bike for trips ranging from the 10 mile "shuttle downhill" to a two day, three night luxury tour. Prices start at about \$15 including bike.

Koenig's Mountain Madness  
P.O. Box 155 (Highway 156)  
Helen, GA 30545  
404-878-2851

**BICYCLE DETOURS THE GREAT SOUTHWEST** This is definitely one of the luxury tour services. Packages include everything possible to make cycling life comfortable, and trips range from one-week trips in the Southwest to Peruvian expeditions in the Andes. This is also one of the more expensive services, starting at \$600 for a week. One of the more innovative trips takes riders to an archeological site off the beaten track, where

the guide, who helped with the excavation, lectures on the former inhabitants.

Bicycle Tours of the Great Southwest  
P.O. Box 44078  
Tucson, AZ 85735  
609-326-1624

**BIKECENTENNIAL** This company started in 1976 as a road touring company, but it has recently branched out off-road with "Puff Stuff" tours. Bikes are not supplied, but sag support is. Tours from one to two weeks in the Rocky Mountains, starting at \$345.

Bikecentennial  
P.O. Box 8308  
Missoula, MT 59807  
406-721-1776

**TROPICAL BICYCLE ODYSSEYS** The "Land Down Under" offers exciting off-road adventure, and anyone ready to spring for the air fare to Australia should check with owner Trevor Strickland. Trip ranges from eight to 26 days, fully supported. Rental bikes are available, but Americans should consider taking a bike and sell it there, since American off-road equipment is at a premium in Australia.

Tropical Bicycle Odysseys  
c/o Going Places  
P.O. Box 2097  
Cairns 4870, Australia  
(070) 51 4055

**ULTIMATE ESCAPES, LTD.** This Colorado based company has several innovative approaches to tours. From a ranch in the Sangre de Cristo mountains they run five-day supported tours, starting at \$349 including bike. For those with more than one interest there is Mountain Sports Week at the ranch: three days of horseback riding, one day rock climbing, two days mountain biking, and two days of whitewater rafting. Wheel in a joint venture with Bicycle Detours they offer a twelve-day package including air fare to and from Miami to Machu Picchu in the Peruvian Andes for \$1485. Finally, this year they plan to take on the Amazon Basin in an attempt to be the first mountain bikers there.

Ultimate Escapes, Ltd.  
P.O. Box 6445  
Colorado Springs, CO 80934  
303-578-8583

**OVERLAND BICYCLE ADVENTURES** This Southern California company runs weekend day tours in several state parks, supplying rental bikes, sag support, and so on. Popular rides are in Crystal Cove State Park and Caspers State Park. This summer they plan to start a schedule of overnight tours. Prices start at \$55 for days and \$80 for overnights (including food).

Overland Bicycle Adventures  
P.O. Box 363  
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# DEAR PEOPLE

I live on the eastern side of Death Valley, and I am the only bicycle enthusiast within a radius of 85 miles. The last five years I've become a Fat Tire enthusiast, and have rebuilt many old balloon tire bikes. I now have five cruisers and two mountain bikes. Guess you can see that I like bikes.

There are literally hundreds of miles of dirt roads criss-crossing this area of the desert, a fat tire paradise! The land is anything but flat. It is a real wilderness here; it's 56 miles south to the next town, and it only has 350 people (Baker). I'd like to hear from you, but mainly I'd like to subscribe to your magazine. Being the only bike around, it's a bit lonely here in paradise, but I wouldn't trade it for anything.

Mike Lawrence  
Box 118  
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# PUBLISHER:

New Zealand is just becoming interested in fat tired bicycles and indications are that a boom is about to begin.

New Zealand has a lot of potential for off-road riding. We have numerous quiet roads and many remote tracks. Indeed, the northern half of the South Island is at present being mapped for off-road cycling by an enthusiast from Nelson.

Unfortunately we are lagging behind on equipment. Our best local off-roader is a "Shogun" which until devaluation of the NZ\$ last year sold for NZ\$850. The devaluation of the NZ\$ has made American products almost beyond reach of NZ consumers. The New Zealand \$ is now worth only 40 cents U.S.

New Zealand enthusiasts' best chances of obtaining top equipment is to purchase it from travellers. I am very keen to buy a reliable off-road bicycle suitable for my 6'5" frame. I cannot buy any frame size above 22 1/2" locally.

Should you ever wish to visit our country please contact us first in order that I can introduce you to as many enthusiasts as possible.

Neil Newman  
Living Simply, Ltd.  
Cable Car Lane  
Wellington, New Zealand

# FAT TIRE FRIENDS:

I am planning a trip to Ladakh in the summer of '85 or '86, and would like a companion (male or female). I have ridden through Nepal and Kashmir but succumbed to illness before getting to Ladakh. Only the serious and fit cyclists need inquire as this is very high altitude cycling in a remote and beautiful area.

A tip: the worst problem I have is grit clogging the brake pads whenever the rims get muddy. My solution is to carry a rag and wipe the rims clean whenever I get to an easy stretch of trail (while riding). But even this is not enough. My pads have little chunks of aluminum embedded and holes where other chunks had been and my rims have new grooves. The problem is so bad that the trails are not rideable until a few consecutive days without rain.

In reference to a letter about breaking teeth on freewheel cogs. A friend used to break teeth on New Winner cogs after only 4000 road miles. Since his chain had also stretched as to be unusable on a new freewheel, he bought new chains and freewheels every 4000 miles. He was an animal (state 25 mile TT champ). Most of my friends have broken cranks, cogs, frames, wheels, chains and so on. So it goes.

Thanks,  
Bruce French  
Box 233  
Cremery, PA 19430

# GREETINGS AND SALUTATIONS!

In May of 1984 we (off-road riders) were summarily banned from all trails in Missouri State Parks. After several months of "working with the system" we reached a compromise. The state Department of Natural Resources will allow ATBs in two parks (which two is still to be determined). State DNR people will monitor trail conditions to see if erosion is increased over other forms of trail use. We are also going to monitor whether or not mixed use trails are practical. A real scientific study! Some light to go along with the heat of argument! I freely admit to using the article in the May/June issue of FTF on Point Reyes by John Ross in my pleadings. Thanks. More info to follow.

Mike McClain  
Richmond Heights, MO



Who is Al Farrell? Why do we care? These are just a couple of questions that crop immediately when his name is mentioned.

To begin with, Al is a fanatic mountain biker. "So what?" you ask, "So am I!" Yes, but were you fanatical enough to put up the prizes for the NORBA nationals? I thought not. Yes, the cash money awards totaling \$700 for first man and woman finishers at Lake Eldora, Colorado came from none other than the above-mentioned Mr. Farrell. (The day before the race, Schwinn added more funds so the number of cash awards could be increased.) Now are you interested?

At first glance you might not pick Al out as the rabid mountain biker he is. Even when he is hanging around with his favorite folks, i.e. other mountain bikers, he stands out. He is a little older than most of his companions, and there is a lot of him. Al is tall, well over six feet, and at 260 lbs., he does not run to skinny. If fun were poisonous, he would be dead. A pair of glasses with thick black rims competes with a huge smile for dominance of his broad face. Get the picture? He's happy.

Now Al may not owe it all to mountain bikes. The truth is, he has a few shakels to rub together when he makes a wish. A college economics professor in South Dakota at one time, he abandoned the hallowed halls sixteen years ago to deal municipal bonds at Dean Witter Reynolds in Beverly Hills. The latter endeavor has made it possible for him to take a series of trips that all read like the first prize in a "Win A Mountain Bike Vac-

# Who is AL FARRELL?

tion" contest. He has ridden in the Far East, Europe, Canada, and the Andes, taking several mountain bike vacations each year. A former traditional tourist with a Schwinn Paramount, he now rides a custom Schwinn mountain bike built for him at the Beverly Hills Bike Shop.

Al puts in more than just prize money to NORBA; he puts in another two cents as a member of the Advisory Board for that organization. In light of the conflicts and growing pains that are accompanying the emergence of both NORBA and fat tire racing in general, it is evident that the movement needs in addition to great racers, people like Al who are avid riders but not racers, and who have the drive and experience to deal with increasingly complex and important dialogues with all the people and agencies who are suddenly affected by our rapidly growing sport.

As a Beverly Hills financial wiz, one might not expect Al to rough it when the occasion demands, but he is just as crazy as the rest of us. Al has sent us a diary that covers three days of riding in the Andes, in which he details his assault on 16,000 foot high Tiklio Pass. Al's travelling philosophy is to get by as inexpensively as possible; here is a quote from his diary:



"...one of the aspects of biking is being able to accept squalid conditions. It is not compatible to spend one's day exercising vigorously then take time out to dine in the best places and wallow in the fanciest rooms. That would make one hesitate to venture out the next day. You can be assured that I look forward to leaving my rooms to get on the bike. The nicer places do not look with favor upon a biker trekking into their lobbies seeking shelter either. I found that out when I roller skated into the New York Waldorf Astoria; after two days and twice being checked by security, I ventured over to the Westside YMCA where I could move around in comfort. One of the challenges to these treks is to see how reasonably one can get by. There is no glamour to a biker who lives high off the hog."

# MARIN'S MOUNTAIN BIKE HEADQUARTERS

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By Michael Smith

I have some philosophical problems with this topic, but I feel that the process of rating mountain bike rides have advantages. On rides, the convention is that the lead rider not point out difficulties so that following riders can have as close to a lead experience as possible. Giving a rating to a particular trail or course takes away from the experiential novelty of the event. However, an overall rating can be valuable to riders who are not familiar with an area, who want an idea of the difficulty of a possible MBR (mountain bike ride).

The proposed Blue Ridge MBR Rating System consists of three parts. The concept is loosely based on the Yosemite grading system for rock climbing. A rating is made up of a letter, A, B, or C, a number, 1 to 5, and another number, 1 to 9. Proposed rankings are as follows:

#### Degree of Fun

- A: Extremely fun, with beautiful scenery, a classic ride.

- B: Moderately fun, a ride which is enjoyable enough to be repeated.  
C: Little or no fun, something ridden for training, for transportation, or a mistake.

#### Degree of Effort

- 1: Easy, short, flat.
- 2: Less easy, off pavement, rolling.
- 3: Hills, aerobic effort.
- 4: Difficult, serious climbing, either steepness or length.
- 5: Long, steep, requiring commitment.

#### Degree of Difficulty

- 1: Paved, flat roads.
- 2: Gravel roads.
- 3: Surfaces requiring concentration, good bike handling skills.
- 4: Occasional surprises, hidden rocks or logs.
- 5 to 9: Increasing level of skill required.

#### Example:

The Tubes, Bent Creek National Forest, near Asheville, NC, Rating A3.5. This ride takes an hour to an hour and a half, starting with a half mile weenie-ring climb to a gravel road, three or four miles climbing on the road and about thirty minutes of continuous downhill on smooth, interesting trails in beautiful woodlands. This is the ride we use to start new riders like.

Tony Michaels Parkway to Turtle Soup Trail, Bent Creek, Rating A5.8. Three hours with a long steep climb along a ridge with excellent mountain views. Turtle Soup is a very steep, narrow trail with sharp turns, hidden rocks, logs, and erosion tunnels. This ride requires stamina and excellent riding skills.

The Blue Ridge System is simply a proposal. Like all ratings it is highly subjective and may be useless or needlessly complicated. Climbers and boaters use and find useful such ratings, and this is an attempt to compare MBRs from different parts of the country. If the idea sparks debate or sparks controversy, it is worthwhile. Keep those bikes muddy.

Editor's Note: Here's another view of the same subject from a Swiss subscriber.

#### By Arnfinn Vigerust

I would suggest authors of articles about new off-road bicycling routes divide their articles into three clear sections: Route Description, Material Used, and Personal Accounts.

#### Route Description

Telegram style. Indicate which maps you used. I would suggest a grading system for the description of road condition and difficulty.

- Grade 1: Smooth road, paved.  
Grade 2: Paved road with patches.  
Grade 3: Paved road, eroded, with potholes.  
Grade 4: Gravel road, rather smooth.  
Grade 5: Gravel road, medium roughness.  
Grade 6: Gravel road, rough, eroded, small obstacles (branches, roots, etc.)

Grade 7: Narrow trail, very rough, bigger obstacles.

- E: Exposed road; beware of falls!  
R: River crossings; no bridges!  
M: Road muddy; especially during and after rainfalls.  
P: Bikes must be pushed, because impossible or senseless to ride.  
C: Bikes must be carried because impossible or senseless to ride.

Approximate maximum inclination is given by the gearing used (teeth front/teeth rear). Average inclination, in brackets, is given by the gearing you use most frequently.

#### Example:

G4.28/24(40/180).E.4P Read: rather smooth where we used no smaller gear than 28/24 but mostly 40/18. The road is sometimes exposed (beware of falls), and four times the bicycle had to be pushed because it is senseless to bicycle these intervals. Indicate availability of specifically important resources such as water, food, and so on.

#### Material Used:

Telegram style. State which gear performed, and which failed. Describe primarily the bicycle equipment, but don't hesitate to report about clothing, camping equipment, or anything that contributed to the success of your tour. Tell us how you managed to fix uncommon breakdowns.

#### Personal Accounts:

Last but not least, this is your very personal section: how you felt, how you coped with the weather, cold, heat, snow, rain, fear, and so on. Beware of heroic style! Give the reader the impression of specific geography, flora and fauna. Don't make a superficial summary of all events, rather pick out a few topics to form a thematic entity.

The aim is to have an international off-road bicycling chronicle that is clearly organized. The ITF with the help of active readers could gain international reputation for off-road bicycling; it shouldn't miss the chance.

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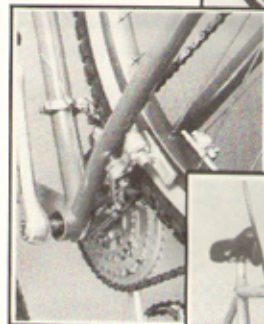
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By Tom Reed

The Punk Bike Enduro has been called the oldest annual mountain bike event in the known world. There are other races, notably the Repack Downhill, that are older, but that has not always been an annual event. The Punk Rock Enduro, or PBE as it is known locally, began nine years ago with a motley collection of riders and cyclocrossers, klunkers, and BMX bikes. The skinny-tire group considered BMX bikes or anything with fat tires to be inferior, and viewed the riders of such unsavory vehicles to be a bunch of punks (but not necessarily wimps). Hence the name came to be the Punk Bike Enduro.

*Punk Bike Enduro*



Philly Group



SCOTT watches while TOM tallies the score.



SCOTT NICOT catches the determination which made him a winner.

# Race Reports

The format of the race is loosely organized by a leader appointed by the assembled group. It is divided into several stages to give each type of rider a chance to excel. Points are awarded at each stage and the rider with the highest point total is the overall winner. At first considerable discussion was frequently necessary to determine where each of the stages would start and finish but in recent years a race director has been appointed several weeks in advance of the race. This person determines the course, trying to avoid duplicating past races. The stages are not announced until race day, just to keep everybody loose.

The PBE has traditionally been held in mid-winter and is frequently accompanied by water in several of its various forms: mist, fog, rain and mud, the latter being the most important ingredient. This year's race, the 1985 Punk Bike Enduro, was held on January 27, in Annadel State Park near Santa Rosa.

The skies were clear and sunny with temperatures in the mid 50's. In spite of the lack of rain and gloom, we had a great race, and even managed to find some thick, gooey, shoe-sucking mud. Over twenty racers started and nearly all finished. We even picked up two or three riders who didn't know about the event, but joined in the fun along the way.

The total distance was twelve miles, about average for the PBE, although it has been significantly longer or shorter in the past. There were eight stages. Each stage was carefully selected to fully test the riders' skill. The intensity of racing each stage separately guaranteed a thorough workout. Riders who pushed too hard in the beginning would be unable to ride competitively in the latter stages. Racers who didn't push hard enough wouldn't accumulate enough points to be serious contenders later on.

Points were awarded as follows: first, 10 points; second, 7 points; third, 5 points; 4th, 4 points; fifth, 3 points; sixth, 2 points; seventh, 1 point. In the past, last place would occasionally have one point deducted, and in a few races riders finished with negative totals. Here is a listing of the stages:

**STAGE 1:** a 2.6 mile uphill section on Canyon Trail, the start of the famous Rockhopper course.

**STAGE 2:** rolling .8 miles to the spillway of the dam at Lake Ilanjo.

**STAGE 3:** a 1.3 mile time trial around Lake Ilanjo and back to the dam.

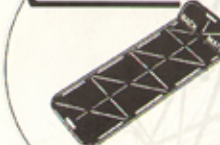
**STAGE 4:** rolling .6 miles of steadily steepening uphill to the junction of Lake and South Burma trails.

**STAGE 5:** the last and most demanding uphill stage, 1.5 miles with two false summits that could demoralize the unwitting racer.

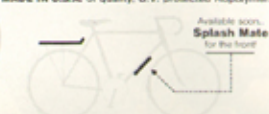
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STAGE 6: a short but steep .5 mile downhill with an off-camber section leading into a slightly banked 150-degree right turn called "collar-bone corner."

STAGE 7: a downhill 1.6 mile downhill trail. The first .4 mile was very smooth and fast, then it turned sharply downhill to the right on the middle section of Sieve's S trail, considered by many to be the nastiest downhill in the park. Crashes were frequent on this section, including the race director (who wasn't even racing). The R.D. performed a spectacular, classical ender after not quite hopping a log. His broken finger was the only significant injury of the day, if you ignore the multiple cases of sub-terminal road rash.

STAGE 8: an extremely fast 2.3 downhill on treacherous Spring Creek trail. The trail is along the wall of a canyon, 40 to 60 feet above a rocky creek bed. A small mistake here could launch the racer through huge volumes of air punctuated with manzanita branches and wild blackberries.

Scott Nicol of Ibis Bicycles, Joe Breeze of Breezer Bicycle and Hite-Rite, and Wes Williams of Crested Butte, Colorado dominated the race from the beginning. Often the trio would finish within seconds of each other with a large gap until the next riders came in. Halfway through the race Nicol had a slight lead, but a poor finish or a crash would obliterate it.

The outcome was decided on the gnarly seventh stage when Breeze couldn't keep the rubber side down while trying to pass a slower racer on the nasty downhill time trial. No major damage was done, but the thirty seconds lost in the crash put Nicol's lead out of reach. Scott hammered away on the eighth stage to extend his point total.

### RESULTS, PUNK BIKE ENDURO

1. Scott Nicol (Ibis)	74 Points
2. Joe Breeze (Breezer/Hite-Rite)	54
3. Wes Williams	43
4. Michael Fallon	25
5. Argos Maserati	17
6. Gordon Burns	12
7. Martin Parroy	10
8. Kris Worden	9
9. Seohoon	9
10. Rude Girl	4
11. Mandy Cohen	2

The PBE has always been a funky, low-key club ride for locals and their invited guests. It has remained small and informal, and there has been no attempt to make it into a large sanctioned event, since bigness would take away from its peculiar down-home flavor. It can serve as a model for any group of racers who wish to put on their own event with a minimum of such fussing as course marking, aid stations, and the like. All that is required is a supply of riders and someone with enthusiasm and imagination to set it up and act as race director. For advice on how to stage your own Fat Tire Enduro, write:

Gordon Burns or Tom Hillard  
The Bike Peddler  
530 McConnell Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95405



# COMING EVENTS

## APRIL

April 21: race: "Spring Mountain Bike Classic," Port Chester, NY. Contact: Port Chester Cycles 914-959-6685

April 21: rally: "Rough Road Bike Rally," Roslyn, NY. Contact: Boy Scouts 516-246-0282

April 27, 28: race: "Spring Runoff," Sacramento, CA. Contact: Bob Edwards 916-759-6951

## MAY

May 4, 5: race, trials: "Mountain Madness Southeastern Spring Classic," Holon, GA. Contact: John Hoeng 404-878-2851

May 18, 19: race, trials: "Canaan Mountain Series," Davis, WV. Contact: Laird Knight 304-259-5606

May 18, 19: tour: "Mountain Bike Madness," AZ. Contact: Enrol 602-622-0200

May 26, 27: race, tour: "Iron Horse Bicycle Classic," Durango, CO. Contact: John Oliver 303-247-4066

## JUNE

June 2: race: "Whiskeytown Downhill," Redding, CA. Contact: Gary Larson 916-263-7101

June 9: race: "Santitas/Winning Pacific States Series," Los Angeles, CA. Contact: Brian Skinner 213-572-2151

June 16: race: "25-Miler," Winthrop, WA. Contact: Ted Reese 360-996-2411

June 16: race: "Pacific States Series," San Luis Obispo, CA. Contact: Brian Skinner 213-572-2151

June 25: race: "Pacific States Series," Eugene, OR. Contact: Brian Skinner 213-572-2151

June 30: race: "Pacific States Series," Seattle, WA. Contact: Brian Skinner 213-572-2151

June 30: race: "Carlsbad Grand Prix," Carlsbad, CA. Contact: Bob Hadley 714-624-5593

## JULY

July 7: race: "Pacific States Series," San Francisco, CA. Contact: Brian Skinner 213-572-2151

July 14: race/trials: "Rings of the Siskiyous," Ashland, OR. Contact: Sehyou Cycles 503-482-1997

July 14: race: "THORSA Rocky Mountain Series," Ft. Collins, CO. Contact: Glenn Odell 800-688-2323

July 20, 21: race, trials: "Canaan Mountain Series," Boulder, CO. Contact: Laird Knight 304-259-5606

July 21: race: "The Great Plume Race," Incline Village, NV. Contact: Max Jones 702-852-0726

July 21: race: "THORSA Rocky Mountain Series," Boulder, CO. Contact: Glenn Odell 800-688-2323

July 25: race: "THORSA Rocky Mountain Series," CO Springs, CO. Contact: Chris Count 303-475-0149

July 28: race: "Tour of the Laurel Highlands," Somerset, PA. Contact: S.A.S.E. to Dave Willard, 1530 Victoria Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15227.

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## Arizona Bicycle Sports Association

The Arizona Bicycle Sports Association has announced its willingness to serve as an all-Arizona clearing house for news of Southwest Fat Tire events through its newsletter. Arizona riders and promoters should give them a call at 602-326-4652 or write to: Arizona Bicycle Sports Association, 2918 East Grant Road, Tucson, AZ 85716.

Other news from the ABSA is good. They plan a full schedule of events, including a statewide NORBA-sanctioned series with individual and team prizes. Not to slight the other off-road factions, they encourage tourists and touring groups to keep them posted on events.

## Georgia on My Bumper

Koenig's Mountain Madness in Helen, Georgia has switched from a selection of merchandise that included the best-known West Coast custom and production off-road, and now carries one line exclusively from an Eastern (but not Oriental) builder. Along with this new policy they have printed bumper stickers that say, "I don't care how the hell they do it in Marin County." Not surprisingly, these are hot items in Marin County, CA!

The bumper sticker wars are heating up, though. Marin riders are plotting a series along the lines of, "I don't care how the hell they do it in Helen, GA, because I've never heard of the place!" "Who is Helen Georgia?" and "Go to Helen Georgia!"

## New England Bike Map

Anyone planning to Fat-Tire cycle in New England is advised to check with White Mountain Cycles in Plymouth, New Hampshire. These enterprising folks have put out the "Preliminary Edition" of a little booklet called "Fat Tire Rides in the White Mountains," available for \$2 from either White Mt. Cycles or Waumbek Books in Ashland, NH. Rides are graded as to degree of difficulty, from easy to hard. Easy rides are on abandoned railroad grades, moderate rides are on logging roads, and difficult routes are on trails in the mountains.

## Can't Lick 'Em, Make 'Em Join Us

Fisher Mountain Bikes of Marin County has taken an interesting step in dealing with those who have the power to restrict access to certain areas. In Marin one of the prime parcels for riding is land that supports a system of lakes used for the water supply, and those who administer the land have to consider what level of bicycle use is appropriate on a parcel whose main function is not recreational. Their attitude has been mixed at best, but in an effort to enlist support from within, the Fisher shop has made

# FAT NOTES

available at a good price a number of bikes for use in patrolling the area. The theory is that once these guys get hooked, they'll want to keep riding out there, which will help remove the stigma of the bikes being used strictly for downhill gonzo purposes.

## Record Response

Our "Uncommon Options" feature in the November/December issue has proved to be one of the most popular articles we've done yet. Glenn Odell of NORBA tells us that he was so amused he called his typesetter and held the presses while he composed a quick plug for the Flyer in his newsletter. We'll return the favor here by saying that everyone who rides off-road should join NORBA. In addition to the usual membership cards, newsletter, rule book and Secret Decoder ring, members are covered against cycling injury by a \$250 deductible, \$5000 medical policy. (This is only in effect for riders wearing helmets.) Also, NORBA provides the insurance that makes off-road racing possible.

The NORBA membership fee is \$18 per year. For information just write or call:



National Off-Road  
Bicycle Association  
2175 Holly Lane  
Solvang, CA 93463  
805-688-2325

...And remember to tell 'em who sent you.

## Gant What?

We have to wonder what ever happened to the Gant Challenge. This series surfaced last year with a major fanfare and flourish of publicity trumpets, a joint venture by the Gant Sportswear people and Bicycling magazine. The idea was to introduce off-road racing, or a version of it anyway, to the general public by supplying everything the novice needed to try out the sport. By some token, it was a success, and the huge turnouts of amateurs for the races validated at least that part of the promotion.

But somewhere the idea got lost. There were grumblings from riders that the NORBA rules were only partially in force. The premise of a points series with races all over the country made it impossible for an unseasoned rider to make any kind of showing, so the top prize was really only available to about twenty riders whose sponsors were willing to pick up thousands of bucks in travel expenses. And finally, the series seemed to have sunk without a ripple to mark its passing. We never received any results here at the Flyer, and even the sponsor, Bicycling magazine, failed to cover it.

## Management Study

We are anxiously awaiting our copy of "Mountain Bicycles, A Management Dilemma." According to the National Trails Council newsletter this is a 35-page treatise by Todd Campbell. It says here that it is available for copying costs from Vic Obern, 4140 Marina Drive, Santa Barbara, CA 93110. We would estimate said costs at about \$5 including postage, handling, mailing and destruction by the Post Office (just kidding fellas), so if you're interested in this hot subject send check, cash, money order or envelope to that address and tell 'em who told you.

## Repack Attack

The Repack Downhill may not be the biggest off-road race in the world, but it is one of the oldest and best known due to international exposure in a number of publications and at least one national TV program. We at the FLYER have given it plenty of ink because we (ahem) promote the darn thing. Now it may be a thing of the past, for reasons that have chilling implications for the future of off-road racing.

Because the course crosses land belonging to the Marin County Open Space District, a permit for the event from that body is required ever since the race came out of the closet, so to speak. Recently the District announced that future event applications would be turned down, although it appeared that no one could agree on the reason for the action. Some members of the District claim that the race damages the environment (a four-wheel-drive road), while others objected to the amount of epidemics that is left on the road. Hey, we never said this was safe.

The issue was appealed to the Marin County Board of Supervisors who boiled it down to one question: is the county liable for damages in spite of signed waivers and the huge NORBA liability policy? The precedent is the so-called "deep pockets" lawsuit, in which the party with the most money is sued whether or not it is responsible for conditions causing injury. If it is found that the county may still be liable we may see a domino effect which would severely limit the ability of promoters to put on races in any area. Needless to say, NORBA is watching this situation carefully.

The issue was tabled until another meeting scheduled for March 27. Unfortunately our press deadlines make it impossible to get the results of that meeting into this issue, but fear not, we will keep you informed.

## Mount Kilimanjaro Bicycle Expedition

Although the English riders seem to have picked up only recently on mountain biking, they are making up for lost time by contributing some of the more exotic rides to the history of the sport.

Now for the first time, cyclists on mountain bikes are going to attempt to climb Mount Kilimanjaro. *Continued next page*





## JT Mountain Bike Pants

Mountain bikers have been talking for years about pants designed for the more rugged aspects of the sport, with padding at key points. The first clothing of this type to hit the market comes from a BMX company, JT Racing; with a rare display of corporate imagination, they call them Mountain Bike Pants. The knees and hips are padded with "articulated molded foam padding" according to the company hype, and if we believe everything else we read, they are "comfortable and durable, while offering excellent fit and mobility." Comes in a smashing combination of blue and white, sizes 28-36, from JT Racing in the heart of metropolitan Chula Vista, California.

## Sespe Gaiter



Believe it or not, gaiters are the way to go with mountain biking in rough country with thick brush, stream crossings and mud. Until now bikers had to use the ones made for cross country skiing, but now the Plumline folks have the Sespe Gaiter. This tough nylon gaiter has a web buckle to secure it under the foot.

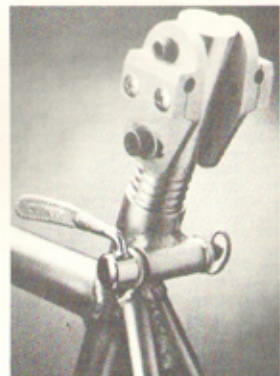
## Bush Wacker

Ever ride through nettles without gloves? If you have you might appreciate these little shields for the grip area. And if you live in the desert, they'll keep your knuckles from getting sunburned. Is this Uncommon Options or what? From the Winkel Wheel Corp out of Seattle.



## Outback Seatpost

Here's the latest in saddle support from Speed and Research in Bend, Oregon. The S&R seatpost is over-engineered to keep things from slipping, tilting or breaking off. It comes with a lifetime guarantee, whatever that means, in lengths up to 18". For custom applications they can be made in any length. Three stars. Check it out.



## FAT NOTES Continued

tain bikes have reached the summit of 20,000' Mount Kilimanjaro. A pair of British cousins, Nick and Dick Crane, rode and carried their English Saracen mountain bikes to this remarkable point, the top of the world's most isolated peak, on December 31, 1984 as part of a fund-raising project to buy a pump to supply water to a TB hospital in northeast Kenya. According to the report there were no mechanical problems, although the two suffered slightly from altitude sickness.

The patients at the TB hospital currently have to carry their own water, and the funds raised go toward a windmill that will cost about \$8000. The Cranes' efforts netted over a third of that sum. If you care to donate, send contributions to:

Intermediate Technology  
9 King Street  
London WC2E 8HW, England

## Gant Fallout

We received a call from Mike Malekoff at BICYCLING magazine protesting some of our treatment of the Gant Challenge. In our last issue Gavin Chilcott took the Challenge to task for bending or reinterpreting the rules regarding bike switches. In his defense Mr. Malekoff pointed out that the relegation of Steve Tilford to seventh place at the Chicago Gant was the result of a proposal made by the race director and a vote taken among the riders as to whether the placing should stand. Malekoff points out that Gavin Chilcott, who later criticized the decision on the grounds that Tilford's tainted points cost Roger Marquis fourth place in the series, was a party to the decision to award Tilford the placing.

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by SeeKay

## DEAR EDITOR:

I ride a Locus Pegasus and along with several other people we try and get together every Saturday morning. As I live in Connecticut the winters can be very cold. So my first question to you is: what type of shoe/boots are recommended in cold weather? I've been using my insulated leather work boots which are warm but heavy. I've looked at several light weight hiking boots but most are either not insulated or not waterproof.

Second, the woods around here are known for the prickles. Needless to say, I have already become proficient at patching a tube. I ride with knobby tires. What can I do to prevent punctures? Are there steel-belted tires or liners to put inside the basic tire?

Third, one guy I ride with has shortened his handlebars. He cut about 2 1/2 inches on each side. He claims he has more control and can get through tighter spots. What should the ideal length of bars be?

And finally, I drive a full sized Ford Bronco and I have been putting my bike into the back. The reason for this is because I haven't been able to find a good bike rack to attach to the Bronco. Any suggestions?  
Vinny Melisko  
East Lyme, CT

**SEEKAY REPLIES:** For starters, thanks for the excellent questions. An excellent question is one we can answer without a trip to the library.

**Boots:** Although we are not from the part of the country where frozen feet are a problem for riders, the California ski areas are seeing a new winter sport called snowboarding. Snowboards are sort of surfboard-cum-ski devices, and the standup riders need good grip and warmth from their boots, along with flexibility. The one problem is that the insulation makes the boot too large for toeclips, but this is likely with any insulated boot. You might look into these, although they are a bit expensive at about \$75. Try Outdoor Skates, 923 Sir Francis Drake Blvd., Kentfield, CA 94904 (415) 456-6277, and tell 'em the Flyer sent you.

**Tires:** There are several methods of dealing with prickles, most of which involve a weight penalty. Knobby tires are rugged looking, but the spaces between the knobs are thin-walled and vulnerable to thorns. One solution is so-called "thorn-proof" tubes, but these should be a last resort, because they are extremely heavy, especially in the 2.125 size. Try "Mr. Tufty," which is a liner made of tough, flexible material that can be placed between the outer surface of the tube and the tire. A similar product is called "Tire-Gard." Also, see our last issue for a solution to the same problem from Clyde Grover of Utah.

**Handlebars:** Not to digress, but your inquiry on handlebars brings to mind an interesting incident that took place during our

trip to Japan last year. Tom Ritchey was also on the trip, and one of the Japanese bike company people showed him a Ritchey mountain bike that they had imported when he was first producing them. The most striking feature of the bike was the width of the bars, which appeared enormous to us. They were the triangulated "Bullmoose" design that Ritchey had designed years before, but they were wider than any he had done in years. Tom asked our hosts why they hadn't cut them down, and they replied with surprise that they thought they were supposed to be that wide! Perhaps this set of bars influenced the Japanese makers of handlebars, but whatever the reason, they are usually too wide for normal people. This isn't all bad, since it is easier to shorten bars that are too long than it is to lengthen bars that are too short, but the problem is that no one does it because they think these things are supposed to be this wide.

Extra-wide bars mean that the rider must lean further over to reach the ends, and this position can contribute to muscle pain if it is extreme. Also, wide bars can make an uncomfortable bend in the arms.

The exact right length is subjective, and depends on the rider's body characteristics.

The best thing to do is find a length that is comfortable for you. Start by removing the grips. Then move the controls in a bit, and ride a little to see how it feels. When you are satisfied, cut the bar ends, but don't get excited and cut off a lot before you try things out; better to take off a little at a time. Although you can do this with a hacksaw, a tubing cutter does a neater job. If the cut-down bar has sharp burrs protruding from it, file them a little, since they can cut through your grips and become dangerous. (Parenthetical techie: always use an end plug on your handlebars. If you use grips that cover the end of the handlebar an inserted steel plug will keep the bar from chipping the end off the grip. Some grips that leave the end of the handlebar exposed come with little slipover covers for the bar ends. Throw these away and use real plugs, either rubber, plastic, or steel.)

Don't feel like the Lone Ranger in regard to wondering about handlebar length. In a recent review of off-road bikes in Another Publication, the author stated about one bike "...some feel that the handlebars are too wide at 30 inches..." I'll say they are! Mine measure 24 1/2", and I'm a big guy. Okay, this is a hacksaw, and this is how it works...

Continued next page



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**Bike Racks:** Your bike transport problem seems easy to take care of: sell the Bronco and get a Volkswagen with a rack. Okay, kidding aside, it sounds as though you need a roof rack so you can access the back (as the computer folks say). Try a Yakima LoadWarrior, which is a little expensive, but can be adapted to carry just about anything including an off-roader. Just don't drive into the garage with it on there. You can try your bike shop for the rack, or call or write Yakima, 820 N Street, Arcata, CA 95521, (707) 822-2908. (Tell 'em the FLYER sent you.)

## RACING FORM

You've probably seen bicycle rollers, stationary training devices that allow the rider to train or warm up without going anywhere. These come in basically two varieties, the kind that clamps the bike into a stand, and the type that requires a certain amount of skill to ride because the rider must steer a straight path to stay on them. I will be the first to admit that roller riding is a boring exercise invented for long winter days when there is six feet of snow on the ground.

But rollers have a definite use to those riders who are looking to improve their form. As an exercise device roller are of limited value only because very few people can stand the boredom long enough to get a serious workout. Form is another matter. You can improve your cycling form dramatically with short roller sessions.

The first order of business is just learning



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to ride rollers. For the purposes of developing form you don't want to use the clamp-on type of rollers. Find a set of the kind with three turning drums that you can fall off of if you mess up. The only problem with these is that they are designed for road bikes with wheelbases shorter than those of mountain bikes, so it can be a real challenge to ride a mountain bike on them. In this case it is all right to use a road bike. The purpose of this exercise is to develop a smooth, high-speed spin.

We won't go into the details of learning to ride rollers here; suffice to say that most people can learn. Because there is little resistance, most riders will immediately shift into the highest gear and try to get the wheels spinning as fast as possible, but that doesn't necessarily help form.

Once you get on them and get "rolling," see what happens when you increase your

pedal speed (irrespective of the gear you are in). At some point as you increase your spin, the rear wheel will begin to hop around because you are not keeping your weight still. Back off a little, and concentrate on smoothing out the stroke. Now speed up again to the fastest smooth spin you can manage comfortably and hold it for a while. In this case, the lower the gear the better, because the absence of resistance actually makes it more difficult to be smooth.

After a few roller sessions you will find that you can spin at a much higher rate than you could before, without wasting energy by bouncing around on the bike. Now it's time to see what this does for you under riding conditions.

Your increased spin rate means that you have widened the speed range of each gear; as an analogy, consider a highly tuned engine whose "red line" or maximum rpm has been raised by 1000 rpm. You will find your acceleration dramatically increased when you "wind it up."

But the most noticeable benefit is the effect on climbing. In order to get the best traction a rider should stay in the saddle and use a low gear to prevent power peaks that break the rear wheel loose. You will find that you can use a lower gear than before, but you can make it go up the hill even faster.

Don't just take my word for this. Sooner or later someone else will write about it and you can take their word. Or you could try it.



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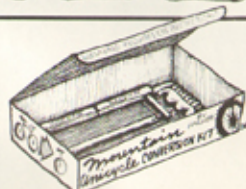
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