

# AMERICAN RANDONNEUR



Volume Eight Issue #3

August 2005

## Message From the President

This year I'm celebrating an important anniversary. Ten years ago I was blessed to start riding with Team Girlene and my enjoyment of our regional brevets has increased dramatically. Our "team" is a really a group of friends who gather to do brevets, centuries, double-centuries, and tours together. But I do think the word *team* applies to us; you'll rarely see such loyalty and camaraderie elsewhere. Originally formed by my wife Lois and three other randonneuses who found themselves doing brevets at similar pace, they rode much of the 1995 Paris-Brest-Paris together. Enduring such trials have a way of forming life-long friendships. Other members have joined since then, including a few other guys and myself. The Girlenes stick together because riding with friends makes the long hours go by better than cycling alone. (It is also a joy to follow a familiar, trusted wheel in a paceline for hours on end.) If someone is suffering unduly the pace is slowed a little, or if someone is feeling strong, they stay at the front longer. If someone punctures, we all stop to assist. Everyone helps in his or her own way—if only with a joke to keep spirits up. With such long rides there are many opportunities to contribute before the finish line is reached. Occasionally I think I could have ridden a particular brevet faster without some of the group stops, but at other times I know I was faster because of others helping pull into a headwind. In the end, it all balances out. More importantly, my *finishing time* doesn't matter much to me anymore; it is *how good a time I had with my friends* that counts most.



BILL BRYANT

The reason I bring all this up is that I often see other randonneurs riding alone for most of the day during a brevet, even though there are the same few other riders nearby most of the time. Of course one can ride alone if they like, that is all part of our sport. But sometimes I wonder if part of the rider turnover we see in randonneuring each season comes from too many riders cycling alone for too long. If you are doing a lot of solo cycling at brevets but are seeing the same familiar faces at the checkpoints, perhaps this is something worth considering. The "Girlene Formula" can work for any group of riders, no matter the speed they ride. We have several other long-term informal groups on our Davis brevets, including the fastest riders. With alphabetical finishing lists and identical medals for each brevet finisher, it makes sense, doesn't it?

Now, the size of our brevet series is part of why we have several identifiable groups among the field. Often we have a hundred or more starters and finding riders of similar speed is easy. But it could work at other brevet series too—including yours. It might take a little more effort to find another rider going your pace, but take a chance and introduce yourself. Maybe you'll have to slow down a slight bit from time to time, but a handful of

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## American Randonneur

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## American Randonneur

# RUSA Welcomes Its New Members!

#	First Name	Last Name	City	State	#	First Name	Last Name	City	State
3049	John	Riggs	Bellaire	TX	3081	William	Legere	Kingston	ON, CAN
3050	Mike	Junco	Houston	TX	3082	Christine	Leininger	Kingston	ON, CAN
3051	Michael	Cole	Houston	TX	3083	Rob	Lucas	Colorado Springs	CO
3052	John	Dilsaver	Sparta	MO	3084	Peter	Merrill	Sunnyvale	CA
3053	Al	West	Holden	MO	3085	Charles	Blankenship	Nashville	TN
3054	Kelley	Behrens	Mystic	CT	3086	Thomas	Faust	Columbia	MO
3055	John	Mazzola	Cedar Crest	NM	3087	Roger W	Lehman	Evanston	IL
3056	Steve	Sikkenga	North Muskegon	MI	3088	Michael	Mester	Riverside	IL
3057	Michael	Boersma	Kalamazoo	MI	3089	Charles O	Kolthoff	Rochester	NY
3058	Greg	Poulsen	Lake Villa	IL	3090	Michael	Palm	River Grove	IL
3059	Melanie Young	Keefe	Chapel Hill	NC	3091	Dan	Wilkinson	Raleigh	NC
3060	Jim	York	Arlington	VA	3092	Phil	Hartman	Honolulu	HI
3061	Warren H	Smith	Rockwall	TX	3093	Michael H	Miller	Augusta	GA
3062	Roger	Wilbur Jr	Walpole	NH	3094	Michael	Kresser	Monte Sereno	CA
3063	John F	Meyer Jr	Venice	FL	3095	Wes	Johnson	Chapel Hill	NC
3064	Joel	Meyer	Saint Cloud	MN	3096	Franklin Clair	Jensen	Cedar City	UT
3065	Catherine	Babin	Stanhope	NJ	3097	Thai	Nguyen	Kirkland	WA
3066	Edward C	Williams	Deltona	FL	3098	Mark	Nutini	San Bruno	CA
3067	John	Ingold	Anchorage	AK	3099	Charles	Lathe	Tumwater	WA
3068	Tom	Flugun	Glenview	IL	3100	Lonnie	Wolff	Cedar City	UT
3069	Samuel B	French	Rapid City	SD	3101	Willy Cruz	OShaughnessy	Stonybrook	NY
3070	Anthony	Buck	Davenport	IA	3102	Sebastian	Maurer	New York	NY
3071	Vincent	Dominguez-Schugt	Saint Paul	MN	3103	Barbara	Dallis	Wellesley	MA
3072	Knox	Gardner	Brookline	MA	3104	Chaim	Caron	New York	NY
3073	Victor	Chudnovsky	Brookline	MA	3105	Neil	Ross	New York	NY
3074	Steve	Weintraub	Saint Louis	MO	3106	Katie	Sayers	New York	NY
3075	Kenneth	Myszkewicz	Whitewater	WI	3107	Tim	Miller	Lakewood	CO
3076	Celin	Feliciano	Browns Mills	NJ	3108	Catherine	Shenk	Boulder	CO
3077	January	Coulter	Sebastopol	CA	3109	March	Witkes	Durango	CO
3078	Jonathan	Fussa	Waltham	MA	3110	Ted	Thomas	San Francisco	CA
3079	Thomas J	Dembinski	Hamden	CT	3111	Brian	Lentrichia	Acton	MA
3080	Heather H	OConnor	Doylestown	PA	3112	Ray T	Rupel	Centennial	CO



Stalwart Audax Club Parisien members Jean-Gualbert and Genevieve Faburel recently had a baby girl, Cleonie. We hope Cleonie and older brother Antonin will be out riding ACP brevets in a few years with mom and dad—look for them at the 2023 Paris-Brest-Paris. Randonneurs USA sends best wishes to them all. *Bonne route!*

## President's Message (continued)

Continued from page 1

minutes isn't *that* important is it? Find another rider or two as the day unfolds—and be sure to stop to help if there is a puncture—and you've got the makings of a good group. (You'll be really popular if you carry a few extra ibuprofen pills or a spare tire boot on the brevets; a well-timed pat on the back to give encouragement is even better.) Probably the biggest hurdle to overcome is the thought that others might have to wait for you for some reason; none of us wants to be a burden to others during a brevet. But in my experience this sort of thing happens to everyone once in a while and good friends don't mind because they know their turn will come around too. Indeed, this type of shared suffering can build lasting friendships that will make your randonneuring very rewarding. Even though you may all go home to different towns and cities when the ride is done, e-mail makes staying in touch between brevets a snap. Give it a try, okay? You might be surprised, and pleased, at what you discover.

—Bill Bryant

American Randonneur

## Online Randonneuring Lists Are Growing

Most of you know about RANDON—the online randonneur list found at <http://lists.topica.com/lists/randon>—but did you know that there are a number of local lists flourishing around the country?

“These lists are good place for arranging car pools and training rides, or for exclaiming about all the altitude gain on the brevet,” says RUSA president Bill Bryant.

An informal survey by RUSA board member Mark Thomas turned up several sites (see table).

In addition, there are some local cycling lists that are not dedicated to randonneuring but are used by local randonneurs to exchange information.

California (Davis) - <http://dbclist.org/mailman/listinfo/dbc>.

New York (upstate) - <http://lists.topica.com/lists/rbcultra>.

## Online Randonneuring Sites

California (San Diego)	<a href="http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/sdbrevet/">http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/sdbrevet/</a>
California (Santa Cruz)	<a href="http://lists.topica.com/lists/scr">http://lists.topica.com/lists/scr</a>
DC	<a href="http://lists.topica.com/lists/DC-Brevet/">http://lists.topica.com/lists/DC-Brevet/</a>
Florida	<a href="http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/Fla-Randon/">http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/Fla-Randon/</a>
Georgia	<a href="http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/garandon/">http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/garandon/</a>
Mass. (Boston)	<a href="http://lists.topica.com/lists/bbs">http://lists.topica.com/lists/bbs</a>
New Jersey	<a href="http://lists.topica.com/lists/njrandonneurs/">http://lists.topica.com/lists/njrandonneurs/</a>
Oregon	<a href="http://tire.patch.com/mailman/listinfo/orrando">http://tire.patch.com/mailman/listinfo/orrando</a>
Texas (Dallas)	<a href="http://lists.topica.com/lists/lonestarrandon/">http://lists.topica.com/lists/lonestarrandon/</a>
Texas (Houston)	<a href="http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/HoustonRandonneurs/">http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/HoustonRandonneurs/</a>
Washington	<a href="http://www.phred.org/mailman/listinfo/sir">http://www.phred.org/mailman/listinfo/sir</a>



## Help Wanted

The RUSA Volunteers need another hard-working person to be the BRM Award Coordinator. This person would distribute ACP brevet medals to RBAs and coordinate the yearly Super

Randonneur and Randonneur-5000 Award submissions to Paris. Reading/Writing French is not essential, but being an organized, detail-oriented person willing to invest a few hours per week to help RUSA is. For full details, contact Don Hamilton at [Dhamilton@Copper.net](mailto:Dhamilton@Copper.net) or Bill Bryant at [bill\\_bryant@prodigy.net](mailto:bill_bryant@prodigy.net).

## Letter: Thanks To Local RBA

I would like to publicly thank Susan Plonsky for being our local RBA. Having set up a permanent I know a little of how much effort goes into making a route, much less supporting 20-30 riders along it. Then add to that three more rides of progressing complexity and length (not to mention doing all this as a new RBA by yourself!).

Susan did an excellent job of organizing this inaugural brevet season here in Arizona and I wanted to thank her for it. Susan was always there on each ride to check in and see if you needed help or how things were going, she had an extra \$20 for a tired absent-minded randonneur who at the last manned control on a 400k realized he didn't have his wallet (I know, a little late to discover something like that but the stops were so well stocked I hadn't needed it until 130 miles into the ride). She was there at the controls and on the road of a very rainy 300k to give support and a positive word or two. In essence, it is nice to have someone there to run the brevet scene here in Arizona and bring these ultra-distance rides here on a more permanent basis.

Before the season began I had started making a permanent as the Desert Double that used to be held seems to have died out the year before I was ready to give it a go. It was a very pleasant surprise to bring up the RUSA Web page one day and find an RBA for Arizona (not to mention that now I had someone local to submit my permanent to). Thanks Susan.

Paul Layton  
RUSA No. 2408  
Mesa, AZ

American Randonneur



## Randonneur-5000 Regulations Modified

BY BILL BRYANT

The Audax Club Parisien has announced a minor change to the qualifying criteria for its prestigious Randonneur-5000 award.

As always, one needs to ride a series of five ACP brevets: 200k, 300k, 400k, 600k, and 1000k; plus a Paris-Brest-Paris event; plus a Flèche-Velocio (or its equivalent; in our country it is the Flèches-USA). These events add up to 4060 kms; the balance of kilometers to reach

5000 can come from other ACP brevets.

The new addition is that a Randonneurs Mondiaux 1200k, such as BMB, can now be counted too. (Note, however, that the RM 1200k cannot take the place of the ACP 1000k.) Riders have a four-year period to ride these events.

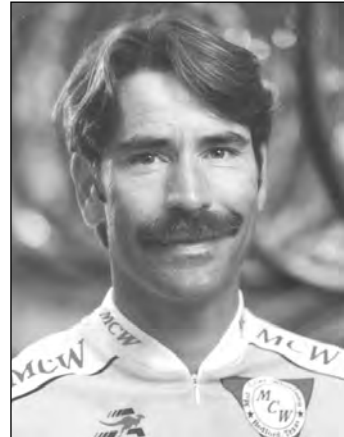
Applications for the R-5000 are due to RUSA each year by Sept. 15.

Full details can be found on the RUSA web site at: <http://www.rusa.org/r5000.html>.

## Driscoll Earns Ultra-Randonneur Award

*2nd member to get honor*

By riding 10 Super Randonneur series of brevets Dan Driscoll has become the second recipient of the Ultra-Randonneur award.



Driscoll

In addition to being the hard-working RBA in the Dallas-Fort Worth region, the Arlington, Texas resident rode his counting events between 1998 and 2005, including twice riding double SR series in a season.

Driscoll joins Ron Himschoot of Washington on the list of Ultra-Randonneur laureates.

Randonneurs USA sends hearty congratulations to the leader of the Lone Star Randonneurs for earning this prestigious award.

## Nominations to the Board

Two positions on the RUSA Board of Directors will become available at the end of the year. Members may nominate two current RUSA members to run for those two positions. The General Membership List is available for viewing online at [www.rusa.org](http://www.rusa.org). Please use this form to submit your nominations.

Nominee # 1 \_\_\_\_\_ RUSA # \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee # 2 \_\_\_\_\_ RUSA # \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ RUSA # \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form to:

Don Hamilton  
RUSA Secretary  
3078 Wakeshire Drive  
Dublin, OH 43017

**All nomination forms must be postmarked by October 1.**

# Book Review

## *The Golden Age of Handbuilt Bicycles*

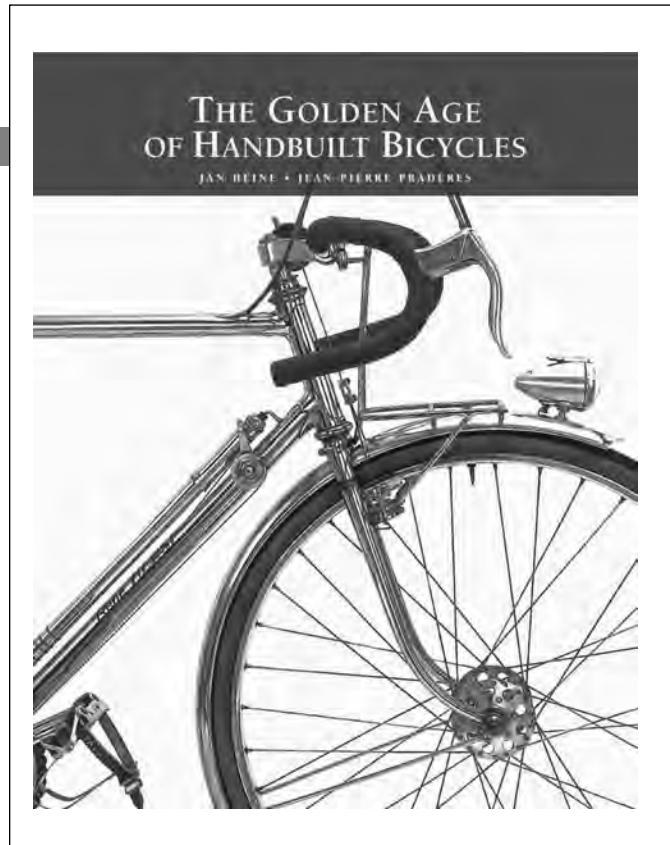
By Jan Heine & Jean-Pierre Pradères

Vintage Bicycle Press  
www.vintagebicyclepress.com

REVIEWED BY BILL BRYANT

One of the nice developments in the American randonneuring scene in recent years has been the arrival of Jan Heine's Vintage Bicycle Quarterly. As the title suggests, it encompasses a wide range of old bicycles, riders, and events, but Heine's passion for randonneuring gives a strong emphasis on our favorite kind of cycling too. There have been many useful and interesting topics in VBQ the modern randonneur will want to read about, such as articles on generator lighting, fenders and touring bicycle steering geometry. Now comes a fine new book from Heine that is sure to become a favorite of VBQ readers and other randonneurs. *The Golden Age of Handbuilt Bicycles* is a rich compendium of French touring bicycles, many of which were used by our elders during the halcyon days of the French randonneuring scene in the middle part of the 20th century. The book displays 50 classic bikes in detail; the photography by Jean-Pierre Pradères is quite good and compliments Heine's commentary well.

The book has three main sections. "The Formative Years 1910-1939" shows some of the earliest touring bicycles, and how the technology evolved in those years. Some standouts are one of Vélocio's La Gauloise "Bi-Chaîne" bikes from 1909-1910, an interesting attempt at multiple gearing before derailleur technology took over, and three different Reyhand randonneur machines from the 1930s. "The Classic Age 1940-1959" includes wonderful bicycles a contemporary rider wouldn't mind using. Some of the craftsmanship on these bikes is exquisite; unlike most racing bikes of the time which tended to be a little more crude, these touring rigs were among the very



Spread from René Herse pages

best bicycles of their day. The various bicycles and tandems presented here by Alex Singer, René Herse, André Maury, Louis Pitard—among others—are simply outstanding. "The Tradition Continues 1960-2005" shows how the basic form established in the previous era stabilized and gradual refinement continued into our times. This was, alas, also the end of an era. Many of the master builders either retired or went out of business. The book takes a loving look at the workshop of the sole survivor, Cycles Alex Singer, run by Ernest Csuka and his son Oliver. This section also has a very special Paris-Brest-Paris bicycle worth seeing: One of the two René Herse machines that arrived back in Paris first after a little over 44 hours is here. To view Maurice Macaudière's 1966 PBP bike in such detail is a real treat. All in all, the 50 different touring, randonneuring, tandem and work bicycles shown in *The Golden Age of Handbuilt Bicycles* are a feast for the eyes and the intellect.

Contemporary riders raised on a steady diet of nothing but Treks, Cannondales, Litespeeds, and the like might not find these old machines interesting, but this book is, in my

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## If you ride a lot, you might like a Rivendell catalogue

**We design, make, and sell rare, unique, gut-wrenchingly smart gear for tourists, randonneurs, and lifelong cyclers who are aware of racing, but don't worship the riders, the look, the values, or the gear of it. A small selection is shown below. We also publish the *Rivendell Reader*, a cycling quarterly that's as special as our gear. The current issue has a 13,000-word interview with Kozo Shimano. There's a lot more in it, too.**



**The Saluki.** A 650B road, brevet, and fire trail bike that will make you rethink all you think you know about comfort. It comes in sizes 47 through 62cm, with cantilevers or centerpulls. We are always well-stocked in 650B tires, rims, tubes, and complete wheels. Many of these items are made just for us. And the Saluki, like all of our bicycle frames, is hand-made using our own designed investment-cast lugs, fork crown, and bottom bracket shell. Frames from \$1,500; bikes, about \$2,800, depending on the parts you put on on them. We have those, too.



**The Rambouillet.** Our idea of what a road bike ought to be. It has long-reach sidepulls, and fits tires up to 38mm without a fender, or 30mm with. If you break a spoke, the wheel still rolls. The frame is designed to let you raise the handlebar level with and even slightly above the saddle height, so you can ride longer in more comfort. Like all of our bikes, it is hand-made in Japan, and all the parts on it (when you buy a complete bike) are Japanese. We offer this in sizes 50 through 68. Lugged steel. Superb quality. Frames, \$1,400; bikes, \$2,200.



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## American Randonneur

# Bob Breedlove: 1952-2005

## RAAM Legend Killed During 2005 Race

The 2005 Race Across America suffered the second fatality in its 24-year history when 53-year-old solo rider Dr. Bob Breedlove was killed in a collision with a pick-up truck 28 miles west of Trinidad, Colo.

Breedlove was more than 1,000 miles into the race and had just climbed the 9,941-foot high Cuchara Pass. He was in 12th place and leading the 50+ division at the time of the accident, attempting to break his own 50+ transcontinental record average speed of 12.26 mph, which he set in 2002.

The incident took place on a section of road that sloped gently downhill. According to a RAAM press release, Breedlove appeared to slump on his bicycle and swerved into the path of the oncoming vehicle. The driver attempted to avoid Breedlove but was unable to do so.

Paramedics pronounced Breedlove dead at the accident scene.

Dan Chew, an ultracyclist and RAAM commentator, called Breedlove "the greatest RAAM rider to never win the solo men's race."

Breedlove placed 7th in his rookie RAAM in 1988 and twice won the tandem division—in 1990 with Roger Charleville and in 1992 with Lon Haldeman. He finished second in the solo division in 1994.

In his "Chew's Views" column, Chew listed another of the many cycling accomplishments of Breedlove.

"In 1989, Breedlove set the still standing double transcontinental record of 22 days, 13 hours, 36 minutes by first riding from his home in Des Moines, IA to Irvine, CA as a warm-up for a 3rd place finish in RAAM that year, followed by a cool-down ride back home afterwards," Chew wrote.

A four-time finisher of Paris Brest Paris on tandems, Breedlove said his most cherished athletic feat was his 1999 Elite PAC Tour on a tandem with his

then 14-year-old son.

In his RAAM bio, Breedlove said he was attracted to ultracycling as "a means to challenge mind and body." His ultimate goal was "to be able to keep riding a bicycle at 80." He said the aspects of RAAM that intimidated him most was the possibility of "illness, injury or death."

Shortly after Breedlove's death, the Executive Committee of the UltraMarathon Cycling Association elected him posthumously to the Hall of Fame. The UMCA also named the Ultracyclist of the Year award after him.

Breedlove was born on Feb. 29, 1952 in Kewanee, Illinois. An orthopedic surgeon, Breedlove was married to wife Gretchen for 30 years. They had four children: Molly Wince, 27; Ann Brown, 25; Erika Breedlove, 21; and Bill Breedlove, 20.

In lieu of flowers, the family has selected to honor Bob by requesting memorial contributions be made to organizations of extreme importance to him: Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, Dowling Catholic High School, Des Moines Parks and Recreation Trail Improvement Project, and the Bob Breedlove Memorial Kewanee Athletic Fund.

### Remembering Dr. Bob Breedlove

Upon learning of Breedlove's death, cyclists posted fond memories of him on an ultracycling listserv.

Chuck Bramwell recalled his first glimpse of Breedlove in 1990 "when I watched Pete & Lon's Tandem Transcon Video and noticed this character with a fireman's hat and a blinking red light to escort Pete & Lon down the road. Sure enough, that was Dr. Bob Breedlove! Later that year when I called Dr. Bob, I was amazed by how helpful he was as I was getting ready for my first PAC Tour. He even wrote me a letter answering



Dr. Bob Breedlove at PBP 2003

every question I had. I was so impressed that this busy orthopedic surgeon would take time to help a rookie like me...."

In a note to American Randonneur, "Pirate Bob" Friend of Flossmoor, Illinois, recalled his memories of Dr. Bob Breedlove.

"I stayed in a three-man, dormitory-style room on the outskirts of Paris before and after my first Paris-Brest-Paris 'randonneur' cycling attempt in 1987. For the uninitiated, I might add here that 'P-B-P' is a 750-mile virtually non-stop event from Paris to the Brittany coast—and back. My roommates were ultramarathon legend Lon Haldeman and a young up-and-coming cyclist named Bob Breedlove, an orthopedic surgeon from Iowa. Lon and Bob would go on to win the men's tandem division that year, setting a new record, as I recall. (I would end up having to abandon at the 600-mile mark with a blown left knee and a lump on my left Achilles tendon the size of a duck's egg.)

"I liked Bob immediately," Friend wrote. "In our room one night I asked him if he might follow Lon's footsteps

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## American Randonneur

### Bob Breedlove (continued)

and do the Race Across America (RAAM). He shook his head, smiling, and said, 'Oh, well, I don't know about THAT!' Maybe it was winning the PBP tandem division with Lon that upped his confidence, but at any rate it would not be long before Dr. Bob was doing some amazing things on a bicycle.

"In June 1989, the Central Double Century + was held in and around Litchfield, Illinois," recalled Friend. "Conditions were nearly perfect: Seventies, not much wind — VERY unusual for Central Illinois that time of year. But still, 500+ miles in 24 hours on a non-restricted road course? That's what Dr. Bob and one or two fellow

'maniacs' were able to amass. Incredible!

"I rode with that group for a while—a SHORT while. Some of you are scratching your heads, I know—so let me explain: Sometime in late afternoon on that marvelous June day, I was starting my night loops, the out-&-backs at around 20 miles round-trip, which we repeated on old Rte. 66. Of course, he and his friend(s) were already on their umpteenth loop! I did 389 miles that day, still my personal best—not too bad, I guess, but still a 'century' and a quarter short of Dr. Bob's mileage during the same timeframe.

"I have enjoyed telling many people

about Bob's accomplishments, e.g., the famous double-crossing of the U.S. in '89," Friend wrote. "Regarding the latter, as I remember it, he rode solo (with support) from the East Coast to the West Coast, then rested a day or so (maybe) before competing in RAAM (which always goes from west to east). Just FINISHING such an undertaking would be a grand enough effort, but I think Bob also finished respectfully in that particular RAAM.

"Should the moniker 'Man of Steel' ever be bestowed upon any cyclist, my vote would go to Dr. Bob Breedlove. He was, is, and will always be an inspiration to all of us," Friend said.

## Florida Motorist Gets 15 Years for Deaths of Brevet Riders

An Alachua, Fla. driver who killed two bicyclists participating in a 300K brevet has been sentenced to a 15-year prison sentence, according to a newspaper report.

According to an article in the *Gainesville Sun*, toxicology results showed that Charles Ray Porter was driving under the influence of five prescription medications at 8:55 a.m. on Feb. 7, 2004 when his 1979 Chevy pickup truck drifted onto the shoulder of a road near High Springs, fatally striking Gustavo Antonini, 66, of Gainesville, and his stepson William Cupples, 46, of Jupiter.

Their deaths marked the first casualties during a sanctioned RUSA brevet in the organization's six-year history.

Porter fled the accident scene but was caught 3.5 miles up the road after he hit a sign and flipped his vehicle.

Porter pleaded no contest

to two counts of DUI manslaughter, the *Gainesville Sun* reported.

Porter faced up to 60 years in prison, but at the request of the victims' families was sentenced to the shorter period agreed to in a plea arrangement.

A letter written by Cupples' sister,

Deborah Cupples, and his mother, Victorina Antonini, was read during the sentencing proceeding, the *Sun* reported. Cupples wrote that the family's faith in God had helped them overcome their loss and allowed them to forgive Porter.

Porter apologized to the families in court.

Antonini, a retired professor from the University of Florida, was an expert in water management and the creator of Florida Sea Grant's nationally recognized urban boating and waterways management program.

Cupples, a U.S. Navy veteran and an instructor of Isshinryu Karate, worked for Florida Power & Light and regularly commuted 20 miles by bicycle to work.

For the complete obituaries of Cupples and Antonini, see the May 2004 issue of *American Randonneur*.



Gustavo Antonini (left) and William Cupples

## American Randonneur

# a beginner's brevet

*Two newcomers to randonneuring describe their first full series*

**E**ditor's Note: I had the great pleasure of riding several brevets with two newcomers: Caroline Atkins and Wes Johnson. Both completed a full series and both exhibited remarkable energy, endurance and enthusiasm, traits that are key to success in our sport. I watched them suffer through many of the same rookie mistakes I made, and I was part of their unabashed celebration when each successively longer distance marked a new milestone in their riding careers. In an e-mail Q&A, Caroline and Wes described their cycling pasts, the paths that brought them into randonneuring, and the highs and lows of their first series. One bit of background: On our local series, several riders, including myself and riding buddy Rich Bruner, make sport out of the "county line sprints." It's a point of honor to win them, and as you'll see from Wes' account, he took the final two contests as the three of us headed back to the barn on our 600K. A quick study indeed.

—Mike Dayton

## Wes Johnson

**Q:** How long have you been cycling? Describe a bit about your cycling background.

**A:** I decided back in 2001 that I wanted to ride the week-long Cycle North Carolina. I just decided to go buy a touring bike that summer and just started riding all the time. I've done some week-long loaded tours on the Blue Ridge Parkway and all around N.C.

**Q:** How do you learn about randonneuring — and what got you interested in trying it?

**A:** Some of the folks I was riding with talked me into doing the



WES JOHNSON

■Continued on page 12

## Caroline Atkins

**Q:** How long have you been cycling? Describe a bit about your cycling background.

**A:** I started cycling in an obsessive, maniacal way in 2001. Prior to that, I was a long-distance runner and dabbled in triathlons.

**Q:** How do you learn about randonneuring — and what got you interested in trying it?

**A:** Mike Davis, proprietor of the Bicycle Inn in Bakersville, N.C., completed many brevet series, BMB, and PBP. Knowing someone

personally who has achieved this sparked my interest to read more, and I was attracted to the challenge of long distances, plus the camaraderie amongst randonneurs.

**Q:** What was your most pleasurable moment during the brevets?

**A:** Riding at dusk—between 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. during the summer months. There's something magical about that time—everything looks beautiful, and the light is constantly changing.

**Q:** Which event (200/300/400/600) did you find to be the most challenging — and why?

**A:** The 400 was the toughest for me. I went out too hard, and failed to fuel properly as the sun went down, leading to some dizzy night riding!

**Q:** What was your biggest "rookie" mistake?

**A:** See above. Primarily, going out too hard. Also, I packed WAY too much, loading my bike down with about 20 extra pounds, on the 300k.

**Q:** Were there any surprises or revelations during the ride?

**A:** I was surprised that I could maintain a decent speed while keeping a relatively low HR, too. One can conserve a lot of energy without the speed-up, slow-down of crits and road racing!



CAROLINE ATKINS

■Continued on page 12

## American Randonneur

**Lon Haldeman and Susan Notorangelo's**

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For more information and an application please contact the PAC Tour website [www.pactour.com](http://www.pactour.com) or call us!



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## American Randonneur

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### a beginner's brevet (continued)

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#### Wes Johnson

brevets. So last year I rode the 200k and this year my plan was to finish the 2, 3, 4 and 600k rides. I really wanted to use the rides to push myself and see how I did.

**Q:** What was your most pleasurable moment during the brevets?

**A:** Winning the final two county line sprints against Mike and Rich on the 600k. Unfortunately I suffered the last 10 miles of the ride because of the sprints.

**Q:** Which event (200/300/400/600) did you find to be the most challenging — and why?

**A:** The 400k was really tough. It was pretty warm and the climbs weren't easy. My feet ended up going numb and it took about 3 weeks to return to normal.

**Q:** What was your biggest "rookie" mistake?

Drinking Gatorade for the first couple rides. My stomach was really messed up for the 2, 3 and 400.

**Q:** Were there any surprises or revelations during the ride?

**A:** Flat roads are the devil. Not being able to coast for 600k is really painful. I'll take the climbs and descents any day.

**Q:** What did the brevets teach you about your physical or mental abilities?

**A:** With each longer ride the previous distance was a little easier. So the first 200k of the 300k was easier than the 200k. I am actually getting stronger.

**Q:** Did you have any mental tricks to share that got you through the hard times?

**A:** I was just trying to get to each turn on the queue sheet. I just kept looking to see us moving down the list of turns.

**Q:** Is there anything you wish you'd done differently on the rides?

**A:** I'm going to eat differently on the bike, more real food instead of Clif bars and stuff. I'm also going to know where the county lines signs are.

**Q:** Will you be back next year?

**A:** Yep, I'm going to get a generator and some fenders for my touring bike and I'll be ready to go.

#### Caroline Atkins

**Q:** What did the brevets teach you about your physical or mental abilities?

**A:** The brevets taught me that I'm physically capable of much more than I'd ever imagined. Being able to tap into these capabilities depends heavily on one's mental abilities.

**Q:** Did you have any mental tricks to share that got you through the hard times?

**A:** I have a couple. First, the practical: I apply something that I teach my Spin class—to keep a running tape loop in the back of my mind: Relax my facial muscles, soften the back of my neck, drop my shoulders down away from my ears, surrender my weight to the saddle and take it out of my arms and legs, loosen the grip on the handlebar, unweight the pedals (no stomping), pull up with my knees, scrape the mud off the balls of my feet at the bottoms of the pedal strokes, and back to the beginning, over and over. Bottom line for mental toughness is a positive attitude. Also, for this particular event (600k), I made a personal commitment/dedication to my brother, who in the 2-3 weeks prior to the event was diagnosed with colon cancer and was about to undergo a 10-12 hour surgery the next day (Monday). I decided that if he could withstand such mental, emotional, and physical trauma, I could certainly pedal a bike for 600k! He continues to recover

Next, I personally need to keep a focus outside myself, also. Whether it involves a spiritual faith, an appreciation of the natural beauty I'm riding through, being thankful for the health, strength, and determination to ride, or focusing on the love of my spouse, family, and friends, I've found it very important to focus on something much larger than my own little internal world.

**Q:** Is there anything you wish you'd done differently on the rides?

**A:** 1) I wish I would not have gone out so hard early on a few of the rides. 2) I look forward to dialing my riding setup in further.

**Q:** Will you be back next year?

**A:** YES!!

---

## American Randonneur



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American Randonneur

# Arrgh! Blackbeard's Permanent

## A How-To On Planning Your Own Route

BY MIKE DAYTON

In many parts of the country, the regular brevet season is winding down. But the relatively new RUSA Permanents program allows members to continuing racking up official miles.

I've been interested in Permanents ever since RUSA established the program, and I decided to set up the first Permanent in my home state of North Carolina. I'm delighted to announce that my route, Blackbeard's Permanent, won approval in June.

My route draws its name from Edward Teach, aka Blackbeard, dubbed "the most notorious pirate in the history of seafaring," who rose to dubious fame during the Golden Age of Piracy (1689 to 1718).

Randonneurs can appreciate one of Blackbeard's skills — he was apparently an early pioneer in nighttime visibility. Wrote one historian, "[H]e would strike terror into the hearts of his victims, according to some early accounts, by weaving wicks laced with gunpowder into his hair, and lighting them during battle. A big man, he added to his menacing appearance by wearing a crimson coat, two swords at his waist, and bandoleers stuffed with numerous pistols and knives across his chest."

Blackbeard's Permanent passes through one of Blackbeard's haunts and ends a short ferry ride from another.

- The historic town of Bath, where Blackbeard

IMAGE FROM NC DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL RESOURCES



Blackbeard: Hip to nighttime visibility?

routes can start and finish in the same location, but they can also run point-to-point and can be any distance of 200 kilometers or more. Routes of 100 to 199 kilometers are known as Permanent Populaires.

Organizers tout permanents as a way to train for the brevet season, explore new

scenery or work toward RUSA awards, such as the newly established R-12.

Explains RUSA's Permanents Coordinator Robert Fry: "The primary purpose of the Permanents program is to give RUSA members additional opportunities to undertake challenging rides in a structured brevet format, and in a way that can conveniently be fitted into almost anyone's schedule. They mirror a long tradition of similar rides in Europe, notably in France and the UK."

Fry, a native of England, was instrumental in launching the Permanents program here.

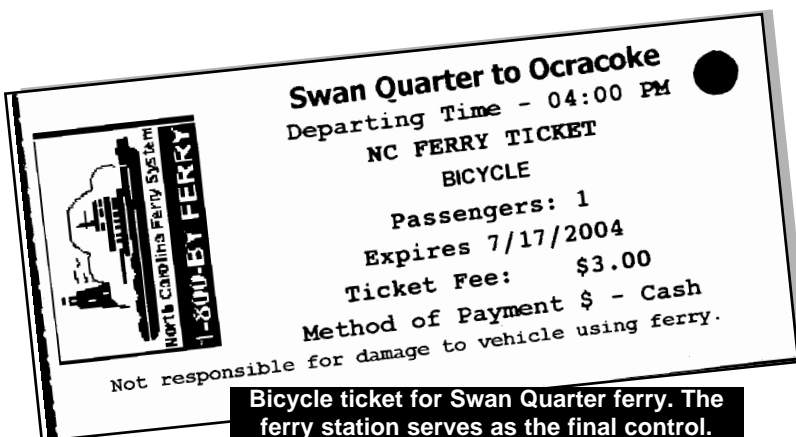
socialized with North Carolina Governor Charles Eden. Governor Eden was widely rumored to look the other way regarding Blackbeard's illegal exploits in exchange for a share of the booty.

- The quaint village of Ocracoke on Ocracoke Island, where Blackbeard was rumored to have a house. Blackbeard met his demise in Ocracoke Inlet on Nov. 22, 1718.

### A PERMANENT DEFINED

A Permanent is akin to a brevet but in theory can be ridden at any time, not just on one specific date. Like brevets,

■ Continued on page 16



Bicycle ticket for Swan Quarter ferry. The ferry station serves as the final control.

American Randonneur

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**1999 RACE ACROSS AMERICA - SOLO DIVISION**  
1st Place - Danny Chew - 8 days, 7 hours, 34 minutes

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## Blackbeard's Permanent (continued)

"I first spoke to [former RUSA president] Jennifer Wise about the possibility of Permanents in the USA when I met her in France at Paris-Brest-Paris in 1999," Fry said. "In 2001 I contacted Jennifer again, and offered to help set up the program. Things had to wait a little longer while other necessary steps were taken by the Board, such as setting up liability insurance and establishing a domestic validation program."

Fry was accepted by the RUSA Board as Permanents Coordinator in 2003 and immediately got to work.

"The first routes were submitted to me in the Fall and Winter of 2003," he said. "Permanents officially became available on Jan. 1, 2004. The first ride took place March 29, 2004, in the Dallas region."

At press time, the RUSA Permanents page listed more than 60 routes in a dozen states: Alabama, Arizona, California, Iowa, Maine, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin.

Many of the current routes were developed by Fry. Another big contributor is Dan Driscoll, one of the Texas RBAs.

Some of the routes carry colorful titles—the Moss Beach Ramble, the Full Monty Populaire, the Possum Pedal and the Space Shot.

### ROUTE PROFILE

I began riding my own Permanent route about 10 years ago, long before I dis-

## A Primer On Permanents

- Better known in France and England, Permanents are a new addition to US randonneuring and the list of routes is steadily growing.
- Like brevets, Permanents have strict pace and checkpoint requirements.
- A Permanent is like a brevet but can be ridden at any time, not just on one specific date.
- Like brevets, routes can start and finish in the same location, but they can also run point-to-point, and can be any distance of 200 km or more.
- Routes of 100-199 km are called *Permanent Populaires*.
- Permanents are open to any RUSA member.
- Permanents can be ridden alone or with a group.
- Permanent rides in the US are validated by RUSA and do not count toward any ACP awards or PBP qualifying.
- Permanent routes can count once toward your yearly RUSA brevet kilometer totals. The one exception is that the same route can be ridden multiple times for the R-12.
- There are no "rain dates." You must use the permanent date you sign up for.
- One type of permanent, the Free-Route Permanent, is an individual ride over a given distance on an agreed date, like a normal Permanent. However, only certain basic route parameters are pre-defined. The exact route is by agreement between the rider and organizer.
- Unlike regular brevets, which are organized by RBAs, any RUSA member can organize a permanent. Go to [www.rusa.org](http://www.rusa.org) for more information.

covered randonneuring.

Every summer, I spend a week with my family on the Outer Banks, a four-hour car trip from my home in Raleigh. After growing bored with that long drive, I began biking out to our vacation. Initially, I did the trip in two days, spending the night at the 110-mile mark in "Little Washington," a waterfront town on North Carolina's Tar and Pamlico rivers, then finishing with a 60-mile ride to the Swan Quarter ferry on day 2.

Now, inspired by my brevet riding, I make it a single-day event. The trick is to time the ride to catch the 4 p.m. ferry in Swan Quarter. Make it and you'll enjoy a serene two-hour ferry ride to Ocracoke Island. Miss it and you're either stuck overnight in a local motel or forced to take an extra 100-mile loop to the north.

I leave my home in Raleigh in the small hours of the night and head through the eastern edge of the

Piedmont, with its slight rolling hills, then drop into the coastal plain where wind, heat, humidity and the afternoon thunderstorm are likely to be the primary summer-time obstacles.

North Carolina's eastern region is largely rural, dappled with tobacco and corn and cotton fields, finally giving way to immense swamps and wetlands where bear sightings are common. The final 60

■ Continued on next page



## American Randonneur

# Blackbeard's Permanent (continued)

miles of my Permanent traces North Carolina's Bike Route 2, a ribbon of road that begins in the mountain town of Murphy, nearly 600 miles to the west.

The endpoint of my Permanent is the ferry stop in Swan Quarter, which has three daily ferries to Ocracoke Island. Normally, the ferry ride is simply a brief interlude, a two-hour respite where I catch a nap before traversing the 13-mile highway on Ocracoke. Then I catch a second ferry to Hatteras Island, my ultimate destination. The full route is right at a double century.

I originally planned to end my route at the historic Hatteras lighthouse, but after discussions with Fry, I settled

on Swan Quarter because of time considerations. Permanents follow the same time cut-offs as normal brevets, and the two-hour ferry ride might unfairly penalize some riders. The ferry station also provides an easy control because bicyclists crossing to Ocracoke Island must buy a \$3 ticket.

### PLANNING MY ROUTE

Step one in planning my route was to go to RUSA's website ([www.RUSA.org](http://www.RUSA.org)) and read the rules for setting up a Permanent. I also downloaded a Permanent application and corresponded with Fry by e-mail when questions arose.

Even though I've been riding the Raleigh-Swan Quarter route for years, I still

"wing" the middle 70 miles or so. My method was simple: I copied pages from a county road map book and roughed out an approximate "straight-line" route in yellow marker through towns with inspired names—Black Creek, Black Jack, Leechville, Grimesland. I took pains to minimize traffic by skirting two of the bigger cities, Wilson and Greenville, in eastern North Carolina.

For my Permanent, I needed to precisely define the route, much like a brevet, and set up some controls. With an eye toward setting up other Permanents, I purchased two mapping programs: DeLorme's Topo USA Version 5 for around \$50 and Microsoft's Streets & Trips

2005 for \$30 after a hefty rebate.

I initially thought DeLorme would be the better of the two programs. After all, it's the company that publishes the topographic county maps that I use, and it has precise details on terrain and elevation changes. However, it proved frustratingly clunky for my use. It had limits on the number of "points" that could be used to define a course, and the program, when given a chance, sometimes drew nearly circular routes based on the type of roads (for instance, secondary roads) that were set as a preference.

Ultimately, I switched to the Microsoft program. It had

■ Continued on next page



Photo by Mike Dayton

**"Ash" crop:** You're likely to see rows of tobacco on any summertime ride through eastern North Carolina.

## American Randonneur

### Blackbeard's Permanent (continued)

some similar weaknesses—including the selection of bizarre routing when given even the slightest opportunity for input—but its marking system was easier to use, maps were easier to print and the program including services along the way, such as gas stations and restaurants, with phone numbers.

I made the final route by breaking the course down into segments of 40 miles or so per leg, then importing the directions from each into a spreadsheet and manually

adjusting the mileage.

A word of caution: both the DeLorme and Microsoft programs misnamed or misnumbered roads, particularly when the route crossed county lines. In some cases, the programs even misspelled road names—not exactly the kind of precision a randonneur is looking for on a 170-mile trek.

In the end, I used the Microsoft maps and route as a preliminary course, then drove the middle portion of the route to firm up turns and

road names. I also lined up two stores that agreed to serve as controls, and I found a few interesting signs and sights along the way for “secret” questions that must be answered by Permanent participants.

#### BURIED TREASURE?

This month, I'll ride the route again as I head down for a week of fun and sun.

In the meantime, I highly recommend Blackbeard's Permanent to any randonneur who wants to mix a little rid-

ing with a little romance. Ocracoke is the perfect destination for a weekend getaway at one of the island's quiet bed-and-breakfasts. The local restaurants serve up superb seafood. And who knows—you and your loved one might dig up a bit of Blackbeard's buried treasure on Ocracoke's deserted beaches.

Interested in a Permanent ride? Visit [www.RUSA.org](http://www.RUSA.org) to see if one exists in your area, or to establish a permanent route of your own.

### Book Review (continued from page 6)

opinion, worth a look nonetheless. Randonneurs in the modern era still need racks and bags for carrying some extra clothes, lights for night riding, and fenders for enduring wet weather. These machines were designed to do all those things from the start; they weren't afterthoughts bolted onto racing bikes, as is the unfortunate custom these days. And even if the reader isn't inclined to emulate an older randonneuring machine, woven throughout the narrative accompanying the photos is a solid portrait of the French cycling scene that our sport came of age in. Randonneuring has been around as long as the bicycle itself, but many of the regulations and practices we still ride by today

were formed in the decades the bikes of the 1940s & 50s personify. When randonneurs take the road on a brevet in 2005, a rider from 50 or 60 years ago would instantly recognize the format of the event and the reasons why we do it. This book gives a wonderful visual portrait of the machines of that bygone era as well as some action shots of brevets and tours of the time with some of the people who did them. So, when someone reads *The Golden Age of Handbuilt Bicycles*, they are seeing the origins of our sport too. I found it comforting that whatever sporting challenges we face on brevets today, they have been faced—and overcome—in the past too.

Overall, this is a fine book and I have few complaints about it. Probably not a fault of the photographer but more that of the printer, some of the color photographs seem a little washed out or off-tone and that is a disappointment. But that shouldn't detract from what *The Golden Age of Handbuilt Bicycles* offers us. Here modern readers can see the types of bicycles that formed the sport of randonneuring and that is worth a lot. Jan Heine ably reminds us that our elders pursued randonneuring with the same passion and determination that we do, and that we carry on a wonderful cycling tradition. At \$60 it is not an inexpensive book, but this randonneur found it well worth the price and has gotten many happy hours from reading it. In addition, anyone contemplating ordering a custom randonneuring bicycle would do well to loan a copy to his or her frame-builder; some of the features on these classic machines are timeless.



**Trico Sports** offers RUSA members a 43% discount off the suggested retail price of their hardside Iron Case bike

carrier. It's the best bike case on the market and is approved by all airlines for bike travel. To apply for the **Iron Case** discount coupon email your request to Jennifer Wise ([otherwise@att.net](mailto:otherwise@att.net)) with your name and RUSA member number. Offer expires November 1, 2005.

# The Role Of RBAs: A Balancing Act

BY JENNIFER BARBER

Over the past few years there has been an explosion of interest in extreme sports. A byproduct of this seems to be an increasing interest in distance cycling. Throughout the United States riders have participated in a record number of randonneuring events. RUSA and ACP sanctioned events in the United States now span the calendar year. To support this activity your local RBA puts in many hours to develop quality events.

RBAs have had a wide range of reasons for their interest in organizing events, from wanting to ride events closer to home to a desire to share the scenic beauty of their area. All RBAs have a strong interest in seeing distance cycling thrive. Our sport serves a wide variety of abilities and attracts interesting people. This is often a driving force for an RBA's continuance.

After becoming an RBA, organizers must develop rides and maintain various records. All RBAs must secure insurance and ensure there is a structure in place to allow brevets to continue in the event that they must step down from the position.

Most RBAs develop a website and create entry forms and advertising materials to

*Jennifer Barber serves on RUSA's board of directors and is also RUSA's RBA Liaison.*

promote their rides. For some with extensive computer experience this is easy. For others, it is a large time or financial commitment. For all RBAs, maintaining their websites

takes time, especially during the season. It is definitely time well spent as it is an extremely cost effective means of advertising.



Barber

try to meet various riders' desires: flat vs. hilly, main vs. rural roads, services vs. scenic. It's always a balancing act. For example, in the Northeast it is easier to find 24-hour services but difficult to find direct routes. In the Southwest it is hard to avoid main routes due to the low population.

RBAs must set their calen-

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**RBAs try to meet various riders' desires: flat vs. hilly, main vs. rural roads, services vs. scenic. It's always a balancing act.**

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Most randonneurs find events through the Internet.

Creating cue sheets is likely one of the most important and challenging aspects of an RBA's job. A minor typo can send riders off into the wilds for hours. Developing clear directions for interesting routes is the most time-consuming, yet can be the most enjoyable, activity in which RBAs engage. Long hours are spent scouting routes via bike and car. RBAs

dars with RUSA and the ACP by October 1st, far in advance of the season. All RBAs in the United States struggle with climate when scheduling their events. In the South, events are held earlier in the season to avoid the hot summer days. In the North, events are scheduled as late as possible to avoid cold nights and freezing rain common in April.

The scale of ride organization varies across the country.

Some series serve 10-15 riders per year, while others serve close to 1,000 riders per year. The larger series require more volunteers but have a wider base from which to pull. Some of the smaller series organize their events with one or two people carrying the load. All RBAs work hard to ensure the events are run in a professional manner.

After each event, RBAs submit results through the RUSA website to allow riders to receive credit for their rides. This is the last step in the process, but is very important for riders wishing to qualify for the 1200km events and various awards. RBAs wait for the matriculation stickers from France to complete the control cards for return to the riders.

Being an RBA is akin to running a small business. Not one of the RBAs does this for a living. Only a handful of the RBAs are directly involved in the cycling industry. All RBAs organize these rides with little or no compensation and do so year after year to the high standards demanded by RUSA and the ACP. These dedicated individuals form the backbone of our organization. Next time you see your RBA don't forget to thank them for their efforts. And please remember that comments regarding your RBA to the Board are always welcome and appreciated.

## American Randonneur

# 2005 RUSA Event Schedule

*Table lists remaining events for 2005 Season*

Region	200 km	300 km	400 km	600 km	1000 km	1200 km	flèche	other
CA: Santa Cruz	9/4							
CO: Boulder	9/16 9/24	8/20			9/13	9/13		(129 km) 10/2*
DC: Washington	9/24*							(100 km) 9/24*
FL: Northwest					10/7			
GA: Atlanta	9/10							
IA: Cedar Valley								(208 km) 8/27* (130 km) 8/27*
LA: New Orleans	11/19*	9/17						
MA: Boston-Montreal-Boston	8/21				8/18	8/18		
MA: Westfield								(100 km) 8/27* (161 km) 8/27* (170 km) 10/9*
NJ: Princeton	10/15							
NY: Western		8/6						
OR: Portland	8/20* 9/10*							
TX: Dallas	8/20 9/17	8/20 9/17	8/20 9/17	9/17				
WA: Seattle			8/27	9/17				(100 km) 10/8*

\* Items marked with an asterisk indicate domestically sanctioned brevets.

# The David Holmes Memorial 200km

BY ROBERT FRY AND DAVE PARKER

As everyone knows by now, David Holmes, director of Iowa Ultra Events, was killed while out cycling on July 14, 2004 (see August 2004 *American Randonneur*). Dave had been a tireless volunteer for the sport of ultramarathon cycling. He was a former RBA for International Randonneurs and later for Randonneurs USA, the organizer of the UMCA 24-hour Championship for the last 15 years, and also the organizer of the Firecracker 500 RAAM qualifier.

Cedar Valley Cyclists decided to honor his memory with a special brevet, to give all of us in the cycling community who knew Dave, either personally or by reputation, the opportunity to pay our respects to him in a way that he would surely have appreciated. We decided to hold the ride in the spring to enable us to list it in the calendar as an official ACP brevet. This also gave us time to design and procure commemorative lapel pins for participants. The ride was planned to start in Dave's hometown of Eldridge, just outside the Quad Cities, and follow the old 200km route that he used until retiring as an RBA in 2003.

As May 7 approached, it looked like Dave must have had some pull with the weather gods! After a couple of decidedly chilly weeks, the Saturday forecast finally came up trumps, with temperatures



**Riders and family gather at the David Holmes Memorial 200km Brevet:** John Thier, Deanna (Dee) Holmes, Robert Fry, Donald (Don) Holmes, Bryce Holmes, Tom McCarthy, Tessa (Courtney's friend), Courtney Holmes, Tami Holmes, Brittini Holmes, Joe Jamison.

Photos courtesy Merry Vander Linden

expected in the high 70s, and the threat of thunderstorms receding. The weather blessed us with a good number of day-of-ride registrations. We had to scramble to copy extra cue sheets and brevet cards for the final few. Riders were mainly from the tri-state area as expected, but one or two came from further afield, notably RUSA member Robert Rich, who traveled up from Cincinnati, OH, to be with us for the day. Dave's wife, Tami, his children, Brittini, Courtney and Bryce, and his parents, Donald and Deanna Holmes, were there to greet riders at the start.

After a few words of tribute to Dave, highlighting

the pivotal role he played in establishing endurance cycling in the region, a field of 45 riders set off on what for many was a familiar route from years past. Dave Parker of Big Dogs Endurance Cycling was one of them, and he offered the following memories of the ride:

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“There were quite a few faces I knew from past years—Merry Vander Linden and Claudio Vacas, Tom Buckley and Paul Pierce, Jeff and Lynn Pierce, Bob Breedlove, Lisa Paulos, Johnny O Thier, Father Tom and the Pretty Dog (Joe Jamison)—to say nothing of the many riders whom I did not recognize or knew only by

sight. In fact, I spotted a few riders with Big Dogs jerseys whom I did not know!

“As we rode through McCausland and north into the hills that make up much of the middle section of the 200K, the sun appeared and the prospects of getting soaked decreased. By the time I neared Bellevue, the turnaround, the field had spread out. I met Bob Breedlove—first one on the way back—Landon Beachy and Joe Camp, and several others who waved as they made their way back to Eldridge.

“In Bellevue a group from the Des Moines cycling club—six or more who had earlier passed us in a double

■ Continued on next page



## David Holmes Memorial 200Km (continued)

As May 7 approached, it looked like Dave must have had some pull with the weather gods! After a couple of decidedly chilly weeks, the Saturday forecast finally came up trumps, with temperatures expected in the high 70s, and the threat of thunderstorms receding.

line—milled around the control, talking to the Bellevueans and each other. The sun was definitely staying out now, and the wind had been growing in strength as the day progressed, but at this point it seemed that it was coming from the east, which raised hopes that we might get something of a tailwind on the return.

“But by the time I got back to Miles it became obvious that was not to be. In fact the wind had picked up and was coming from the southwest. This was a bit of a disappointment, but that is the prevailing wind direction in the area, and may have been a factor in Dave’s plotting of the 200 K. Hills, heat and headwinds—what more could you ask for?”

“Back at the hotel, a few lingered in the checkout taking advantage of the soda, sandwiches and cookies that Dave’s family had graciously provided for the riders. Talk of the day’s ride, past rides and rides yet to come were the main topic, along with memories of Dave Holmes. In the parking lot a few riders were still pulling in while vans were loaded for the ride home.

“It was a fitting memorial...”

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Overall, 35 riders finished successfully. I thought it quite a tribute to Dave that most of the DNF riders had come along to remember him anyway, even though they could plan to spend only part of the day with us. Our commiserations go to Joe Mann, who DNFed because he broke a spoke near the turnaround at Bellevue, and chose to shortcut the return leg to minimize his risk of being stranded. Joe still rode more than 200km as the full route was quite a bit over distance.

We did not plan this ride as a charity event. However, some friends and riders made extra donations, and the brevet itself made a modest surplus, which we



Robert Fry mans the registration desk. A photo of Dave Holmes is in the foreground.

thought would be appropriate to give to a worthy cause. After consulting with Tami Holmes on the best recipient, I am pleased to report that CVC has donated \$320 to the Lance Armstrong Foundation.

We offer our thanks to all who helped make this brevet a special one:

- First and foremost, to the Holmes family, thank you for agreeing to let us hold this event, for supporting us with your presence, and for your generous contribution of refreshments for the riders. Our thoughts remain with you all.
- A special thank you to Dr. Bob Breedlove, who donated t-shirts to all the riders.
- Thanks to the folks at OS Performance Nutrition for sachets of OS Endurance, OS Pre-load and OS Re-load.
- Thank you to everyone who showed up to support the ride, whether you finished or not.
- And finally of course, we cannot end without saying a heartfelt thank you to the man himself:

“Thank you, David Holmes, for everything you accomplished for our great sport!”

# A FISTFUL OF FLATS

*(or A Series of Unfortunate Events)*

BY PAUL LAYTON

Just finished the Desert Mountain Permanent (1/4/05 started at 5:00 AM on 1/3/05). What an experience. I woke up late at 20 minutes to 5:00. I filled in 5:00 on the control card so that was my start time. After I had all my preparations done I rode my bike the half mile to the start and by the time I got the clerk to sign my card it was 5:18. Hmm, 20 minutes late but I still should have plenty of time right? After all, how long can a double century / 319k ride take, huh? I have 22 hours to finish. Who would ever need 22 hours? Even a first time double century rider like me should be able to do that!

The ride started out with light rain in the parking lot of Albertsons in East Mesa (corner of Power and Broadway). Rain gear and fenders were working like a charm. Nice easy climb for the first 4 miles up to McDowell road. I really enjoy riding in the predawn hours as everything is quiet and the cars are at a minimum. This morning was a wonderful experience slicing through the rainy predawn darkness as I descended McDowell Road across north Mesa. After awhile I left the lights of the city and entered the unlit roads of the Gila Indian reservation. I

yelled at a couple of dogs that fortunately couldn't keep up with me. I was happy they were lazy dogs as I was trying to keep the speed easy knowing I had a long ways

to go. Fortunately I did not connect with any lurking potholes under the puddles (this portion of road is known for potholes).

The rain was pretty steady into Tempe. One of the highlights of the ride came as I was riding along the side of Tempe Town lake. The lake is basically formed by two large rubber dams at each end of the lake which lies in the bed of the Salt River (The Salt River is completely consumed by the Phoenix Metro area these days and the river bed is usually dry). As I was passing the lower dam I heard a roar and noticed a large flow of water going over the top. This river that usually is just dry stones was rivaling the Colorado this morning from the rains we had been having. The river bed is 1/4 mile wide here and moving water stretched shore to shore. This was the first time I had seen the Salt running this high. Pretty cool.

Right after the lake I checked into the first control with 40 minutes to spare.



The clerk was pretty impressed with what I was doing, not to mention the weather I was doing it in. I quickly got my stuff together and headed south. I was keeping an average

of about 15 mph in the dark. Not too bad considering the lights and various turns and navigation required for the last segment. The next segment was one of the most beautiful of the trip because it followed a bike path next to South Mountain.

The sky started to brighten as I went under US 60 and made my way over to South Mountain. The rain had really turned the desert green and foliage around the bike path was beautiful. I was starting to get a knee twinge though and raised my seat up a touch as this was something that had plagued me on my last ride. It seems to have worked as the knee didn't bug me again until the very end. From the bike path I made my way up to Dobbins Road passing the Boy Scout camp and headed out to the rural roads of Laveen.

Laveen brought cotton fields on the side of the road (either harvested or with ruined cotton due to the extra rain we have been having). One section of road

had a nice golf course and a nice old brick corner store that looked more like it should be on a corner in New England than on a corner on the edge of nowhere in the Southwest.

Everywhere the ground was green due to the recent rains. Most people won't think green is a big thing but out here in the desert it doesn't happen very often for us, so it is cool when it does. Rounding the west end of South Mountain the road passes between two mountain ranges. Both had peaks obscured in mist as I passed.

The second control had a laundromat but I was still dry so I didn't utilize it except for the facilities in the back. I also bought a disposable camera here as I had forgotten my digital camera at home. It was here that the rain started to get a bit harder and I was dry for the last time on the trip. Upon leaving the control my rain gear slowly succumbed to the wetness of the day. The next few hours were spent traversing the flat desert down to Maricopa. After turning onto Maricopa Road my speed went from 15 mph up to 20+ which was a nice perk of changing direction. It was amazing as most of the day I had tailwinds. They just seemed to keep shifting

■ Continued on next page

## American Randonneur

# A Fistful of Flats (continued)

with me as I rode. I had to fight very few headwinds for the day overall (wish all rides were like that!).

I had to refuel at Maricopa and refill my Platypus. Got really cold as I think I stopped a little long (that came from waiting for them to reopen the bathrooms). Once I got going again, I warmed right up. The stretch down to the next control was a little long and wet. I did pass some beautiful mountains on the way. Light wispy clouds hung around the craggy peak in a mysterious fashion. I crossed the Gila River in this segment and unlike the Salt it was not flowing (couldn't say dry as nothing on this part of the trip was dry). This had originally been an information control but as I found a store open I got a receipt and had the clerk sign. After some comments from anonymous strangers about being careful not to get wet I was on my way again. The ride into Casa Grande was good for the most part. Some sections had a shoulder which was a little bumpy but overall it was good. Thank goodness for rearview mirrors (I was able to use the trick of riding the good pavement when no cars were near). I stopped on the outskirts of Casa Grand to celebrate the halfway point. I was feeling good. But that would soon change!

I originally had planned on eating lunch in Casa Grande but decided to push

on to Eloy and get a bite at the truck stop. This section was a most notable for being next to the train tracks and I was amazed at the frequency of trains. It reminded me a lot of Flagstaff where I grew up. Anyway, that was the bright side of this segment. The most memorable part of this section was that the evil god Panku, lord of flat tires, decided to frown upon my endeavor. I was a few miles outside of Eloy, feeling pretty good, when BAM. I had a blow-out. Tire didn't look bad, must have just been a puncture so I changed the tube and was on my way. It wasn't too far down the road before I started to feel the wheel go a little spongy on me, so I stopped again, put in my second tube, and after much delay was on my bike again heading for the control. I thought I had done my flat penance for the day and shouldn't have any more problems. How wrong I was.

The control was a truck stop and I took the opportunity to get some warm food in me in the form of a sausage egg muffin. Under the circumstances it didn't taste too bad. I bought a pack of honey-coated cashews and was on my way to meet the fate of the late afternoon.

I had just passed the southernmost tip of the route, a corner I have dubbed Tierra del Fuego for its ominous repercussions because this is the area where my main challenges of

the day started. I hadn't gone half a mile from the corner when BAM. Another blow-out. Upon closer inspection of the tire I found a hole that was the culprit. Booting the tire with a piece of plastic from the side of the road, I had the tire fixed but still had three tubes with holes in them.

"No problem," I thought. "I still have a patch kit left. Plenty of patches in there, it is brand new! There must be 10 or twelve patches in there".

So, I patched the tube and put the tire back together. This setup worked real well for about 4 or 5 miles and then the annoyingly familiar feeling of a low back tire stopped me. I knew Coolidge was about 10 miles away and resolved to take a long stop at Wal-Mart and buy some new tubes and tires if I could. So I rode, pumped, rode some more, pumped some more, rode more, and pumped more, ad nauseum. At the same time the skies took this opportunity to darken considerably and soon the rain was falling in full force. My schedule was starting to fall by the wayside. As I entered Coolidge I discovered their lovely streets/lakes which were not very efficient at shedding water. I was forced to take the left part of the lane as a pinch flat in a pot-hole would be particularly nasty. After one more pump and ride I finally arrived at Wal-Mart several hours behind where I thought I

would be.

I must have been getting a little tired as I actually believed I would find bike supplies for my bike there. I forgot they only sell Schraeder valve tubes which was a real pity as I could have really used those self-healing tubes that night. I got my sheet signed and downed another bag of honey-roasted cashews and bought some Hershey snack bars. I also took the time to reload my platypus for the last time and to mend two inner tubes. I trashed the back tire and put my spare folding tire on the back. Tire seemed to be holding air so I gave the tubes I had bought to a Wal-Mart worker who made me go get my money back. I don't think she understood I was in a bit of a rush and didn't care about the \$10, I just wanted to get home! Anyway, I am thankful for her good intentions, I guess.

Off into the night and my next flat! I had not gone two miles when the tire lost air. I stopped and put in my other tube, chatted with a would-be good Samaritan, and was off. One mile down the road I had another flat. I was getting a little ticked now. I had been checking the tires each time for sharp objects and finding nothing. Besides the flats were occurring in different locations anyway so the only explanation to all this was that I must have angered the evil

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## American Randonneur

### A Fistful of Flats (continued)

god of flat tires. I was beginning to believe that this ride might just be doomed (easy to do when it is dark, you are on your seventh flat, and the wind and rain are soaking you). My wife kept offering to pick me up but I was determined not to say die until the last patch was gone.

Amazingly enough the next tire patch job held up for a whole four miles. I was

just starting to feel good again when that spongy feeling reared its despicable, reproachable, evil, nasty, head again. So I started working on my bike, another patch. While fixing this tube two police cars came zooming up asking me about an injured bicyclist. Hmmm, nope just fixing my bike, thanks! This was not to be the last of these encounters,

by the end of the night I would be annoyed at even good Samaritans. When you have one flat it is nice that someone stops and shows concern. Two flats and it is still nice. But as the flats move up into the double digits the lost time spent talking to good Samaritans who offer free advice gets rather annoying. Not that I would have them change, but for

the very unfortunate recipient of repeat flats it just adds to the frustration when help is not needed. That newest patch lasted two miles, by the way.

When I stopped to patch again, I pulled further off the road to avoid incidents such as the aforementioned. This however meant

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## The Right Way Up Left Hand Canyon?

**E**ditor's note: RUSA Vice-President John Lee Ellis forwarded this ride account from Alan Nunsel of Colorado. "I think Alan's tale below really shows the randonneur spirit—always finding a way, and always giving himself a chance to go on," Ellis said. "I love the phrase, 'Seemed like I found new ways to suffer up Left Hand Canyon.'"

John Lee,

Thanks for putting together yesterday's 400k.

It was one of those really beautiful days for cycling, but those days can still be interesting or you might say "a tad bit sporting." I broke a spoke on Highway 52 just before 287. I opened up the brakes with some thoughts of well I will just try to keep going. It was still rubbing so I decided the day was over. As I was riding back to the start, one of those plans began to emerge. I decided I would drive to Boulder and see about fixing the wheel and then maybe continuing to ride. Drove up to Excel

Sports, not open till 10 and it was 8. Thought about going to getting a bagel and then maybe just ride up Left Hand Canyon. Went around the corner and there was Bicycle Village. They didn't open till 9, but were more than willing to help. Thanks to Dan for getting me into the rest of the story. They had a spoke for my Mavic Ksyrium wheel. In 15 minutes he had the wheel ready. Even in the Internet Age, not enough can be said for the local bike shop. Now I am doing the time math in my head. I had figured I would finish in daylight or only a little of night riding. So what, a great cycling day—I will just riding a few more hours in the night. After about 3 and one-half hours, I am back at 95 and 52.

On a good day Left Hand Canyon can be punishing. Seemed like I found new ways to suffer up Left Hand Canyon. I was starting at the bottom after 100 miles, and not really adequately fueled. Heading down 7 into Lyons, I thought I would head out 66 and see how I was feeling—go right at 75th to go



home or continue. Felt good so continued. Heading out of Wellington, felt good and began

studying the clouds to see if the weather was going to hold. Wind began to blow out of south. Put the lights on in Windsor. Still looking good. Joined up with Rod and Marty. My pace was a little stronger, but for night riding decided to ride with them. Looking good from Johnstown and south down the frontage road. On CR7 it began to rain. What a miserable ride to the finish. It took forever in the night and rain. Now those 3 and one-half hours meant something. Sometimes you don't realize how cold you are until you stop. Probably pushed hypothermia a little more than intended. In the end, one of those interesting days.

## American Randonneur

### A Fistful of Flats (continued)

sitting in the mud. I eventually got the patch to take and put all my stuff away and proceeded to take the caps off my cleats when I discovered the caps had been sucked off in the mud. My Speedplays were thoroughly clogged with mud. Well, after much weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth I was able to clip in again and surprisingly my tires held air for a surprisingly long amount of time. I think they made it a whole 10 miles. I rounded the corner onto the Florence Hwy. and proceeded to get a flat.

At this location I decided to stay a little closer to the shoulder to keep my cleats clean. Soon, however, I was instructed by a police officer (sent here to investigate an injured bicyclist of course, only thing injured was my will I am afraid) to get further off the road. A mile up the road I was chastised by a good Samaritan for looking injured when I was not and that I should do something with my bike to make it look like I was not injured as I fixed yet another flat (sometimes everybody has something to say, it seems).

They say necessity is the mother of invention and on the most recent stop a light went on in my head. All my flats had been on the back tire where my foldable tire was. On my front wheel I had a Bontrager race lite with kevlar protection. I almost kicked myself for not thinking about it before. I

moved the front tire to the back and the back to the front as front tires have less tendency to flat in my experience. Lo and behold, I ride the next 20 blissful miles flat-free. This part of the ride had a couple of really good zen moments. Probably due to the readiness of my mind from the aforementioned affliction, I guess. Anyway, the bike hummed along the road, the sky opened a window into the starry heavens and the tailwinds blew. I savored the moment.

I can't remember this stretch of road ever having been so pleasant in past rides. Of course, I had never ridden it at night, and I had never been so grateful just to have a wheel hold air. Seems so commonplace usually but after so many flats I was grateful for the little things at this point. At US 60 I put the new batteries I bought at Wal-Mart into the lights (wasn't originally expecting to ride 8+ hours in the dark) and headed west. I took it slow as I knew there was one shoulder that would get you going down the first hill.

Sure enough there was the guardrail that forces bikes slightly into the lane for a short section (or down into a small gorge, your choice). I checked for cars and negotiated it. Not too far after that my tire went flat again. I was determined to do the pump and ride until I got to Apache Jct. This worked. After three

cycles I was on the outskirts of Apache Jct. Where the freeway starts and the route turns north. Sure enough a mile or two up the road the wheel flats and I determined this was a good place to fix the tube. Tube is fixed, pump is now starting to have problems. I can't blame the good old pump, It had been forced to do industrial duty tonight. I got the tire pumped up at last. On to control 5! After climbing a few of the foothills on the front range of the Superstition Mts. I arrived at control 5 at 11:40 p.m. (and to think I moved my start time up to 5:00 a.m. so I would be able to easily get to this control while it was open!). This store had long since closed meaning I would have to mail a postcard. Hmm, no mailbox around. Luckily I found one on one of my detours off of Brown road (it was flooding in several locations) not too far away.

Well, I thought smugly, I have one patch left! Imagine going through all but one patch out of a full patch kit (including the goofy long patches). I was soon to find out I would need every last one of those patches (after another blow-out) plus the one more I didn't have and a new pump. I sat on the curb and weighed my possibilities. I might be able to walk it in time. Could call my wife and she could get all the kids out of bed and come with a floor pump. Could blubber

like an idiot. All viable alternatives, however, necessity is the mother of invention and as I was only 3 miles from the end of a 200 mile permanent with a little over an hour left to finish. I got creative. Using water from a nearby puddle I was able to get the piston in the pump sliding freely again and I selected the least damaged of my tubes and pumped it up and did the ride-and-pump routine to the finish with just an hour to spare. The store that was the finish control had even closed It was so late (it was 1:00 in the morning and Albertsons closed at midnight; fortunately, I still had an hour before the actual control time was up). So, time for another postcard. I got the gas station across the street to sign and give me a receipt just in case that was better. The mushy tire even got across the half mile to home after I had my sheet signed so it was not a bad end to a mostly good day (Mr. Tuffy is going to be my new best friend).

- Moral #1: You can never have too many patches and better be nice to your pump. (Have you lubed the piston lately?)

- Moral #2: Never scoff at the closing time of a control. You may be thankful that it is so long someday.

- Moral #3: Sometimes you just need to never say die, and with this don't be afraid to sit back, think, and wait for inspiration to blossom when all seems hopeless.

# 400 Kilometers of Fun—or Not

By JILL MACKEY

On Saturday, May 28 at 5:00 in the morning, Dan Clinkinbeard, Karen Bataille, and I rode out of Edwardsville, Illinois. Twenty-three hours and 37 minutes later, we rode back in. My first and last 400 km brevet began for me in a spirit of desperation. I desperately did *not* want to do this. For the first 50 or so miles of our 250-mile trek, I looked for an escape route back to Edwardsville and the Comfort Inn, a nice bed, my book, and a day spent loafing about this lovely college town. I could make myself available to Karen and Danny if they got in trouble, couldn't I?

It's not that I doubted either my bicycle or my physical capability to complete the ride. Karen and I had been training all year for our brevet series. At the longer distances, the challenge becomes mental. Traversing a variation of the same routes we had covered in our 200 and 300 km brevets, I knew what I'd be facing and when. I just couldn't wrap my mind around spending the next 24 hours on my bike. I actually prefer to sleep at night.

Karen treated the day as a fun adventure. "Gee! Let's see how far I can go on my bicycle!" Dan was the grizzled veteran of Paris-Brest-Paris. A mere 400 was nothing to him. I, on the other hand, lapsed

Catholic if not outright agnostic, was taking no chances. I had dug out my old scapular medal and put it around my neck the day before departing for Edwardsville. And as a backup, I was wearing a Navajo-made silver bracelet. I had Jesus, Mary, and Joseph to invoke, and if that didn't suffice, well, hoka-hey.

I grumbled and grouched for several hours as the morning wore on. A hot sandwich in a Subway in Okawville helped lift my spirits; GU packets and Fig Newtons go only so far. But it wasn't until about a hundred miles or so into the ride that I began to get into the spirit of the event. At that distance, it made no sense to think about turning around—just as well to push on.

It is no overstatement to call southern Illinois a delight. Narrow yet paved county roads through gently rolling hills made for pleasant viewing. At one point, on the colorfully named Indian Trail Road, a road so narrow you could picture its being traveled by a horse and wagon, we stopped for a break. In every direction I saw postcard-appropriate vistas. Stands of hardwood trees gave way to fields of new corn and green, waving wheat. Tall grasses lined the sides of the road, and the only sound

was the wind sighing through the seed-tops. The setting demanded a rest period of lying in the grass and staring at the few white clouds lazily drifting across the sky, but we had a long way to go.

If you're going to ride a bicycle at night, this is the place to do it. What little traffic we faced gave us plenty of room. The wind had dropped, and a gibbous moon played hide-and-seek behind a few ragged clouds as rain moved into the area north of us. Our speed might have lessened as we rode through the long night, but curiously, my strength increased. I was actually enjoying the ride and the quiet companionship. Sometimes miles passed in silence, broken only by the comforting whish of our smoothly-running machines. As we neared Edwardsville, the familiar roads and the prospect of finishing buoyed my spirits.

Turning onto Main St. in downtown Edwardsville, I let



out a loud "woo-hoo!"—something I had done upon finishing the 200 and the 300. The sky was just beginning to lighten, and the whoop echoed off the marble walls of the Madison County

courthouse, the brick walkways and empty streets. This was a dawn that I was going to enjoy. As we had done before, we dropped off our brevet cards at the Edwardsville Police Station and rode one more block to the parking lot where we quickly dismantled our bicycles, took off our cycling shoes (what a relief!), threw everything into our vehicles and beat a hasty path to the Comfort Inn some miles away for some Zees.

The 400 under my belt, I realized that my randonneuring was over for this year. Karen, I knew, was contemplating the 600, two short weeks away. Danny, of course, was gearing up for a 1200 in Seattle in June. And more power to them. Don't get me wrong; I love my bicycle. I just don't want to live on it.



## Attention Members

The RUSA newsletter is mailed via third class mail to the address on file of all current members. It is critical that you inform the membership office of any change of address, so that your newsletter will reach you in a timely fashion.

Please send notification of change of address to Don Hamilton at [dhamilton@copper.net](mailto:dhamilton@copper.net).

# Cascade 1200

## 4 Days of Peace, Love & Cycling

Call it ride amnesia. For a full week after the inaugural Cascade 1200, I could not recall the second climb of Day 1, or the control, Northwoods, immediately before it.

I think I can explain that memory lapse. My body either shifted precious blood from my head to my legs — where it was in desperately short supply — or my brain mercifully wiped the gray slate clean of the pain from a 12-mile grind up the 3,100-foot Oldman Pass.

For the next three days, and nights, the climbs would continue, with hills of all shapes and sizes, from the deadly “Rattlesnake Hills” in eastern Washington to the steep grades of the 4,020-foot Loup Loup Pass, to the 5,400-foot Washington Pass, the last serious uphill stretch on Day 4.

The Cascade Web site stated that the course’s “overall elevation gain was similar to BMB.” Not even close. BMB’s official numbers lists 30,000 feet of climbing. The altimeter of riding buddy Cap’n John Ende put the total Cascade elevation gain at 43,200 feet, a figure confirmed by other riders.

The Cascade course circled the rugged mountain range from which it draws its name, skirting Mt. St. Helens and Mt. Rainier before dropping into the Columbia River Gorge, then heading through the Horse Heaven Hills and Rattlesnake Hills of eastern Washington and into the jagged peaks of the North Cascades.

A tough course? You bet. Brutal is a better word. Even the locals thought so. Halfway through the ride, I caught up with Seattle RBA Mark Thomas at the Vernita Rest Area, a water stop. Mark was one of the route designers. Imagine my surprise when Mark leaned in and said, “I think the course is too hard.”

That admission came just moments before this ominous legend on the cue sheet: “RIGHT onto Road L SW (first right on SR-243; yes, up



Photo by Mike Dayton

**Blow out!** Volcano evacuation sign on the Cascades 1200 route.



# Cascade 1200: Special Report



Photo by Mike Dayton

## Seattle RBA and route planner Mark Thomas: "Too hard?"

unteers manned the controls, food stations and overnight stops or swept the course, offering encouragement to the weary riders bringing up the rear.

In a format designed to encourage collegiality, the Cascade cyclists regrouped each evening at three overnight controls. For the swiftest riders, and there were many, the format allowed as many as eight hours of coveted sleep each night.

For those less fleet of foot, myself included, the overnight controls at least provided a predetermined goal to shoot for each day. I pared my objective down to the bone: finish by midnight. Sometimes I met that goal. Sometimes I fell short.

When I told Mark Thomas I was doing a short write-up for RUSA's newsletter, he e-mailed: "Be sure to mention 'four days of peace, love, and cycling!'" — the very phrase I used when I sent in my post-ride questionnaire. And so it was: four days

of peace, love and cycling—with a little suffering to boot.

My memory is not to be trusted on the finer details of the event, but several others have catalogued the various twists and turns of the ride.

A lengthy account by an exceptionally talented rider, David Huelsbeck, appears at the Bicycling Long-Distance Forum (<http://forums.bicycling.com>).

Three of my favorite accounts come from Tim Dodge, one of the riders at the front of the pack, as well as two fellows who helped secure the back: Andy Akard, a hardy randonneur who persevered through nearly endless days and sleepless nights; and my good friend John Ende, who had his own struggles with sleep deprivation. Their stories are reprinted on the following pages.

Sit back, put your feet up and enjoy these selected Ride Reports from the Inaugural Cascade 1200.

—Mike Dayton

THAT hill)."

Road L SW was not a hill. It was a wall.

Whether the route was too hard is a debate I'll leave to the historians, but there is no question that the toughness made a successful completion that much sweeter.

The Cascade 1200 was sponsored by the Seattle International Randonneurs, an enthusiastic and motivated club. Under the expert leadership of Mark, Terry Zmrhal and Paul Johnson, as many as 40 SIR vol-

Photo by John Ende



A stand of trees at the Vernita water stop. A pleasant distraction before "The Wall."



# Cascade 1200: Special Report

## Sleepless in Seattle

BY CAP'N JOHN ENDE

Well, I committed (see February 2005 *American Randonneur*). I signed up and showed up for the inaugural Cascade 1200.

The ride was organized by the active and experienced Seattle International Randonneurs. I became interested in the event as a way to see the Pacific Northwest. A second major draw was the way that the ride was to be conducted with group riding and common overnight stops.

Ultimately why I did the ride is still up for discussion. The why part of long distance riding is something that puzzles many supportive families and riders themselves. Are we trying to prove something? Are we searching for a label or identity? Is it a challenge that skirts the possibility of failure that draws some? I suppose that we have a variety of reasons, but one of them for me is meeting the people that are drawn to such madness.

The ride started from Monroe, a town 20 minutes to the northeast of Seattle. Of course, I lined up for the start with no sleep. Why can't I sleep before these events? I know that this pre-ride sleeplessness plagues other riders as well. Maybe it is my November birthday. Researchers have found that babies born in winter months have a tough time getting to sleep.

Terry Zmrhal gave us a quick pep talk and Mark Thomas led the peloton out of the sleepy town of Monroe, all 82 of us: 73 riders doing the 1200 and nine signed up for the 1000. The ride would be

the same for both groups until the third day, when the courses diverged. It is thus impossible to do a consecutive 1000 and a 200 to complete the 1200 course as is an option at BMB.

The first day headed down the western front of the Cascades with two major climbs at the end. This was the day that really caught my attention on the route profile sheet. The first 30 or so miles were basically flat. My smile extended. Then some hills came. Then the rain started. The tricky thing when hills come 30 miles into a 750-mile ride is controlling your desire to fire up them. I particularly noticed Mark Thomas riding "his" pace. Mark was not trying to stay with anyone except himself. Wise example from a very experienced rider. I, on the other hand, tried to stay with my group up hills and would later suffer for it. Another lesson learned by my group was don't follow John Ende 60 miles into the ride when he misses a turn because he will take you three miles off course for an early bonus six.

After returning to the course we had a most unusual encounter with a parade in Buckley. The road we crossed was hosting the parade. We split the crowd and passed just in front of the marching band. I fumbled for my camera but missed this once-in-a-lifetime shot. We split the crowd on the far side and rode straight through the concessions. I



**Insomniac:** Cap'n Ende, self-portrait, Day 4. A study in sleep deprivation.

thought about having a go at the ring toss but continued with my group instead.

Along this next section we were caught by Tim Sullivan and Linda Valadez who were in the process of riding back onto the main group after an early flat. Tim was hammering along and pulled all of us into the second control.

Our first feed stop came at the alternate control, Truly Scrumptious Bakery and Cafe, in Eatonville. Since our takeover and feeding frenzy at the bakery the town has been renamed to Eatingville. Fresh bacon quiche and homemade white bean soup, along with a side of fresh fruit, two large chocolate chip cookies and Pepsi—just what the doctor

■ Continued on next page

## American Randonneur

Photos by John Ende



**Day 2: Sunrise and early morning along the Columbia Gorge. One interesting feature on that section: buttons near the entrance of five tunnels could be activated to alert motorists that cyclists were passing through.**

ordered. My lipid loading group at this point consisted of myself, Mike Dayton and Dan Wilkinson. Both are good friends also from North Carolina. Both were in better shape than I and would continue to punish me throughout the event. I had talked Mike into signing up and he had in turn enlisted Dan. When my training did not go according to plan in the spring I thought about backing out. Unfortunately, by the time that I had decided to withdraw Mike and Dan had already purchased plane tickets and threatened me quite convincingly.

After the bakery stop Mike noticed that we were on a volcano escape route. This was both intriguing and concerning at the same time for a group of riders from North Carolina. In case anyone is wondering, we don't have volcanoes in the Tar Heel state. This section proved to be a low point for Mike. When pressed for what was bothering him, Mike responded, "Only everything physical and mental." He was pondering thoughts like, "Why am I here?" and "I feel this bad and there are still 650 miles to go, I'll never make it. Where is the van?" These fluctuations in performance and mental state are very interesting to me. A rider can suffer on one section and then on the very next perform well. This is exactly what happened to Mike.

Dan and I were hammering for our lives behind a rider named Scott Gater from Richmond, B.C., who would later attempt to set the Guinness Book records

for most broken spokes in one event (4) and most number of kilometers ridden on a knobby mountain bike tire during a road event (85). Mike was behind us having some quiet time. He eventually caught up to us in quaint Morton before we turned left to head along beautiful Alder Lake. At this point all hint of rain and serious cloud cover was gone and the sun danced off the ripples of the lake.

At Randle we met our support crew at the control. This stop was particularly festive because in addition to our trusted sherpas, Mike's son Daniel and good friend Joe Ray Hollingsworth, we also met my family for the only time on the course. My supporters consisted of my three kids, Clare (8), Patrick (7) and Abbey (4) as well as my wife Amy. Seeing this crew gave us a real mental boost. We sat down in the grass for turkey sandwiches, strawberries, Red Bull, peanut butter and Ensure. This was the 140-mile mark and we knew that serious climbing was in our immediate future.

We said goodbye to the support and headed into the mountains. The section is basically broken into 26 miles up and 20 miles down. This first climb to Elk Pass (aka Windy Pass) was in daylight and passed through a lush green forest blanketed in moss with beautiful viewpoints overlooking Mt. Rainier. Mt. Hood and Mt. St. Helens came into view on the descent. The scenery was jaw-dropping spectacular.

We dropped off the backside for a

12-mile tiered descent and cruised into the Northwoods control. SIR is an experienced randonneuring group. They know how to conduct controls. They saved their best each day for the last control before the sleep stops. Northwoods was my first encounter with volunteer Don Smith. He showed me to a comfy seat and took my drink and sandwich order. He plopped an ice cold Coke into my armrest drinkholder and proceeded to construct my made-to-order turkey, lettuce, tomato, cheese and mayo sandwich—complete with pickle—on the tailgate of a pickup truck. I was completely astonished at the number of volunteers and at their enthusiasm and know-how. While Don was playing short-order cook, Michael Rasmussen and Peter McKay had opened up a bicycle repair shop and were tending to riders' machines. Those guys were fantastic.

We left Northwoods in the twilight sporting our reflective gear. The sky was providing a deep blue background for the silhouettes of the towering fir trees. From the Northwoods control to Oldman Pass is 13.5 miles. The road immediately climbs mildly out of the control but this is only a taste of what lies ahead. After a right onto Wind River Road, the road turns into the sky and punishes riders for the next four miles before turning right again to a more gentle gradient leading to the summit. The

■ Continued on next page

## American Randonneur

# Sleepless in Seattle (continued)

Photos by John Ende



**Photo op:** On every brevet there are places that define a ride and hold a special magic for the riders. On the Cascade 1200, it was the 5,477-foot Washington Pass, the highest point on the four-day trek and the last significant climb. Ende snapped photos of several jubilant cyclists who paused to take a breather and put on warmer gear. From left to right: Wayne Phelps, Mark Roehrig, Owen Richards and Art Fuoco.

gradient of the last climb proved to be more severe than the first but the length was less.

Before long we were at the top and grouping together for the dark descent into Carson. I spotted a deer on the descent but it stayed out of our path and we had an uneventful coast down, then a flat 15-mile spin into Carson. It was just after midnight when we arrived in Carson for the first of the common overnight stops. SIR had arranged for us to stay in the Carson Middle School. Our drop bags were laid out along with a rider-friendly food spread.

We showered, ate lasagna and were shown to our places on the gym floor. Riders without sleeping mats were on the school wrestling mats, while the rest of us were on the floor. The arrangements were quite satisfactory but for some reason I could not sleep, AGAIN! I could not understand it. I didn't sleep last night, then spent 18 hours on the bike and now couldn't sleep again. "Maybe I'm not cut

out for this stuff," I thought. We had wake-up calls for 6 a.m. but I got up at 4 a.m. and ate, packed my drop bag and got ready to leave. Just as I was leaving Mike and Dan were waking and I told them that I would soft pedal until they caught me.

### DAY 2

Directly out of the school we dropped down to the Columbia River. It was a spectacular sight at sunrise heading along the river, wind-aided, into the sun. I enjoyed this immensely and within an hour had been reeled in by Mike and Dan. When we left the river we began a series of climbs that would take us up into the high desert. We stopped at a secret control and proceeded on to the Goldendale control, where we munched fruit and sandwiches along with JoJos. We don't have JoJos back in N.C. but I noticed quite a few of the SIR riders getting them from time to time. They are like thick-cut homefries and, when buried

in ketchup, make for a satisfying dose of sodium, carbohydrate and fat.

The next section had a bit of climbing over Satus Pass and with every gain in elevation the surroundings became more desert-like. The day was becoming hotter and the wind began picking up. In fact after several long climbs my most difficult time into the next control at Toppenish was toward the end on a relatively flat section that was into a headwind. Dan and Mike had left me to the vultures but I arrived at the next control un-pecked while they were still there grazing.

I tried to regroup quickly and we left together into the Rattlesnake Hills. There are no major climbs listed on this section on the cue sheet. No elevations marked. I had convinced myself that this would be a relatively easy section. How wrong can one be. I was bitten severely. The cue sheet should have had a skull and cross-

■ Continued on next page



Photo by John Ende



Oregon randonneur John Spurgeon (l), riding a fixed gear, and Dan Fuoco of Florida head up Washington Pass.

## Sleepless in Seattle (continued)

bones on it for this section. The physical beating was only outdone by the mental anguish of riding at full throttle on what appeared to be a flat road at 6-7 miles per hour. At least four riders that I spoke with had stopped to check their bikes on this section. Surely a brake was rubbing. Did I have a flat tire? Had gravity been turned up over this godforsaken dust-

bin? If the mind bend didn't get you then there was the sun baking your shorts off without a tree for miles. If nothing else stopped you then tumbleweeds would be sent crashing into you or your bike. The gods were against us. The crosswind was vicious. It was a hot, dry unrelenting wind.

As I started to transform into cycling

beef jerky, up ahead I saw a tent being dismantled. Was this a mirage? No it was Mark Thomas' family. They were providing a secret support and they could not have been a more welcome sight. I enjoyed talking with Mark's wife and two kids and felt re-energized after their

■ Continued on next page

## American Randonneur

### Sleepless in Seattle (continued)

most-needed support. Mark's wife even filled up my empty water bottles while I ate and rested. As I rode off I felt great admiration for Mark's family to give up their day a far way from home and sit in the middle of the desert playing guardian angel to a bunch of screwballs on bicycles. I know that they had a hundred other things they should have been doing. Mark's wife suggested that I look back and I finally realized that I had been climbing for miles.

The peak of this section was not far away and once I crested the top it was the fastest descent of my life. I was feeling quite proud of my near 50 mph when a rocket shot by, a tandem. The tandem topped out at 57 mph. The tandem was ridden by Charles Feaux and Davy Haynes. I caught them at the next turn. We began chatting and were quite pleased to realize that we were being blown uphill at 20 mph without pedaling. That, my friends, is the devil wind that I spoke of earlier.

By the time we reached the next control, Mike and Dan were polishing off a sit-down Mexican feast. I opted for the roadside feed since a rider's best friend, Don Smith, was manning the control. Melissa Friesen was Don's sous chef and served up a mean cup of noodles. To the soup noodles I added a Don special sandwich and Coke and was feeling fine by the time we left the control near darkness.

We left the control with Landon Beachy. After a short descent, Landon flattened twice. He had also flattened coming into the control. Landon had been struck by the rare but dreaded flatitis, not to be confused with flatus, which all of us had

been overwhelmed by for days. We couldn't find any glass but there was an 8 mm through-and-through tear which we booted. After Mike finished playing in the stinging nettles we proceeded with forward motion. The boot held until near the next sleep control when Landon flattened for the third time on that section. Dan and I were down the road with the tandem but Mike stopped and gave Landon a spare tube.

The second sleep control was set up in the Quincy high school. I showered, ate delicious homemade chili and rice and then proceeded to the gym floor.



Photos by John Ende



Heading for higher ground: Danny Clinkinbeard (l) and Rani Freeman climbing on Day 4.

Hallelujah, sleep came. I fell into a cavernous sleep state and slumbered for a luxurious 4 and 1/2 hours. When I awoke I was informed that Mike didn't sleep well and was leaving shortly. I understood completely. I was also informed that Dan was dropping out of the 1000 due to sore saddle syndrome—one of the most dangerous disorders to afflict long-distance riders. I had a fine breakfast but by the time I left, 7 a.m., I realized that I was nearly riding sweep for this event.

#### DAY 3

The first part of the third day was flat and through farmland; however, this level section was spoiled by a resurfacing project that had us following a pilot car through several miles of brand new chip-and-seal. I rode through the quiet town of

Ephrata and then along Sagebrush Flats, a most enjoyable road through Moses Coulee. The Coulee has a prehistoric feel to it. I felt as if I were devolving. The sides are sheer rock walls and I felt as if we were riding along an ancient riverbed. We crossed four cattle guards and then climbed into Farmer.

Farmer may be named so simply because it consists of one farmer. As far as I could tell the whole of the town consisted of one building manned by SIR volunteers serving as our control. I munched sandwiches and chips and refilled the water bottles. Joe Ray and

Daniel were there and told me that I had missed Mike by a half-hour. This would continue throughout the day. The support team at this point had been enlarged by one as Dan was now riding shotgun. I looked at his comfy position in the minivan and envied him. When I

had suggested that I join the support crew on the previous day I was told there was no room. Now Dan was there riding shotgun and sipping Jack Daniels. No lie. He told me of his secret desire to consume hard liquor the night before coming into the Quincy control, but I had written that off to a delirious desire that often hits during the doldrums. Now he was living his dream. He was living it up and I was out here suffering.

Along the next section there was a series of rolling climbs that gained elevation before dropping off a wicked descent into the Columbia River gorge once more. On the rain-slick road of this most severe descent a Great Dane came bounding into the road while I was trav-

■ Continued on next page

American Randonneur

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## American Randonneur

# Sleepless in Seattle (continued)

eling 30 MPH. I braked to let him cross in front of me and then he ran alongside before I accelerated away. Major disaster averted. Along this section I began chatting with Ken Krichman. He was riding a beautiful Mariposa and told me that he lived in North Seattle. He has done quite a bit of long-distance riding, including PBP three times. He mentioned to me that at least one reason that he continues to do these events was that he wanted to see if he could finish. He has another reason for PBP: he loves France. I agreed with him completely. I asked him if he rode with anyone in particular and he told me that he had several riding buddies but that if they were on a ride together they would not necessarily ride together the whole time. He said they ride roughly the same pace and they know that they will see each other at various times during a ride but that each of them was helped by riding their own particular pace, not someone else's.

During this section shortly after leaving Farmer, we saw a rider heading back toward the control. I thought that he might have left his card, but as it turned out he was heading back to retrieve his water bottles. This rider turned out to be Scott Gater of broken-spoke fame. To give you some idea about our pace, Scott rode back onto us within 10 miles after retrieving his water bottles three miles back at the control.

We all had a nice break at a store along the river that Ken knew about. All three of us ordered JoJos and refueled for our next section, which was mainly flat. Along this section I also periodically rode with Dave Huggins-Daines from Pittsburgh, who had taken a train across the country to get to the event. Dave, I believe, was the one rider that I saw all four days of the ride. We finished within five minutes of each other. He dressed in black, rode a steady pace and made it a habit never to touch his brakes.

We cruised into the Malott control separately but dined together. This was another of the next-to-last controls and my man Don was there whipping up orders of sandwiches and chips. We chowed down and discussed the upcoming Loup Loup pass.

Loup Loup, I learned, would grab my attention early and hold it for a while. I was informed that Mike had passed through one-half hour earlier. He left me a message but no one could quite remember what the message was. I headed out just before Ken but then decided to wait on him as he was already readying his bike. This was a wise decision on my part since I would have ridden off in the absolute wrong direction. Ken and Dave got me on the right path up to Loup Loup and I started to feel good. No, not good, great. I was ingesting packets of Clif Shots every 20-30 minutes on the climb. I could literally feel the boost of each packet and also the slowing of my motor as the shots wore off. I imagined myself climbing up Highway 181 back in North Carolina and flew up the pass. One-third of the way up the rain began to fall and by the time I reached the top it was raining quite hard. I stopped very briefly, donned everything that I was carrying and began the dark rainy descent off the back side into the Methow valley. The descent was cold and hand-numbing but overall not as bad as I had expected.

After the descent, the ride continued through the Methow valley and through Winthrop, where we were encouraged to get dinner before proceeding to the overnight control in Mazama. The only problem for me was that by the time I cruised through all establishments were closed except for one biker bar. The wrong type of biker bar; in fact, I haven't come across the right kind



Photo by John Ende

**In the money:** RUSA Treasurer Tim Sullivan making it look easy on Day 4.

■ Continued on next page

## American Randonneur

### Sleepless in Seattle (continued)

yet. I made my way through the deer and into the control around 1 a.m. Several riders had just arrived after missing a turn in Winthrop and extending their adventure into the night. They were not happy.

My family had dropped off a bag of goodies earlier in the day and I really enjoyed seeing the pictures drawn by my kids. I was shown to my room along with my roommate, Bernie. In Mazama our accommodations were upgraded to an inn and we all had real beds. Extremely cushy, especially for a brevet.

I had intended to sleep until 5:30 a.m., when breakfast was laid out, but Bernie's wake up call came at 4 a.m. and thus I was awakened also. I got my things together, packed up my bags and located Mike. He had asked that I be placed in his room once I arrived but the message never got through to me. He was still sleeping soundly at 5:30.

I headed to breakfast. It was an opulent spread. Fresh fruit, pancakes, egg casserole, sausage, coffee, oatmeal, etc. It really outdid anything that I have ever encountered on a bicycle ride. I told Mike that I intended to soft pedal up the only remaining major climb and take plenty of pictures on our last day.

I was out earlier than most of the riders and therefore was able to photograph many of the participants as they rose up the last major climb heading to Washington and Rainy passes. The scenery was epic. The North Cascades are stunning with their sharp, snow-covered peaks and numerous waterfalls. The road was amazingly quiet except for the cyclists. Despite the climb, most of the riders wore smiles on their faces. Last days are like that: smile-inducing.

When I reached the pass I paused to take a series of photos. Just as I was packing up to leave, Mike arrived. We posed for a photo together and dropped off the pass for a short descent before finishing off the last climb of the event up to Rainy Pass. This one lived up to its name. Chris Ragsdale had told me earlier that

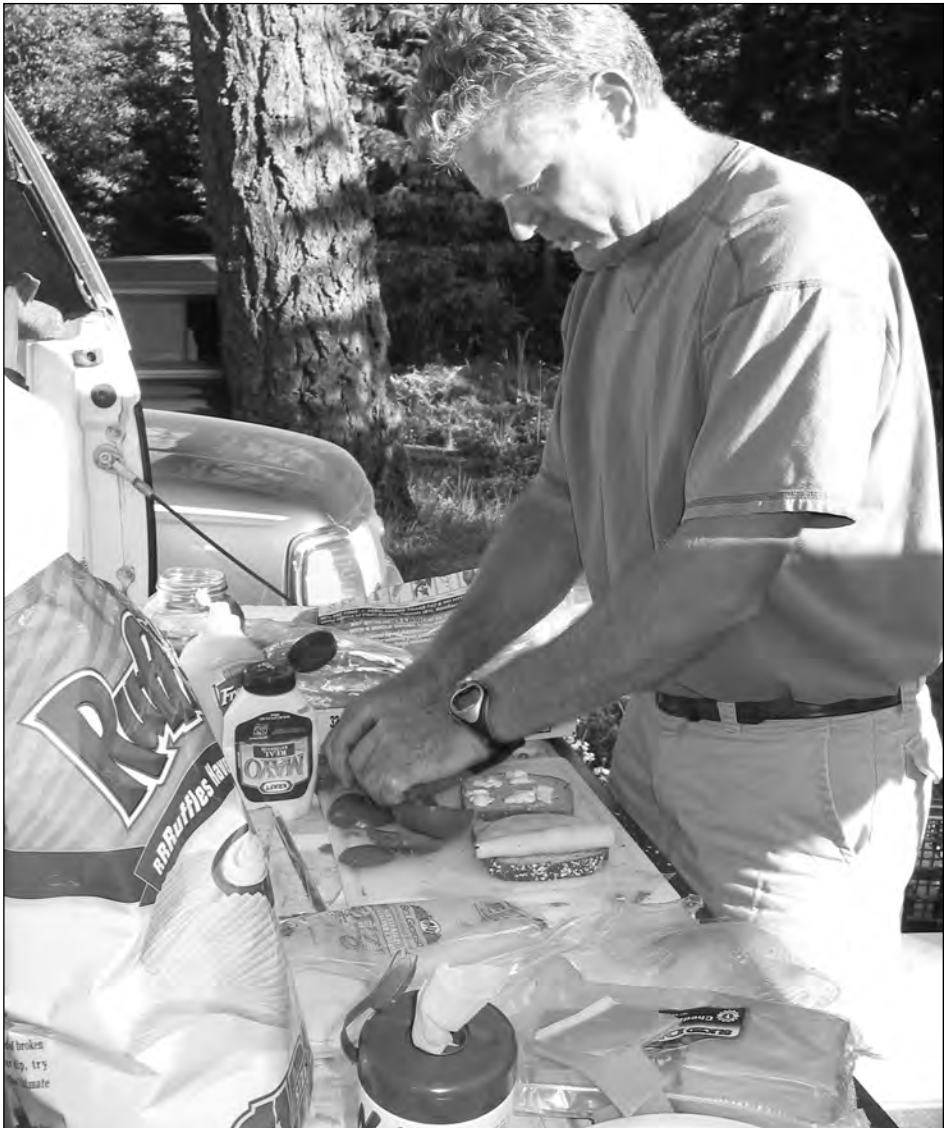


Photo by Michael Rasmussen

**Sandwich hero:** Don Smith whipping up another tailgate treat at the Northwoods control.

morning that after Rainy Pass we basically had a 30-mile descent, followed by a flat century into the finish.

A few miles into this cold, rainy 30-mile descent there they were: SIR volunteers by the side of the road fixing up hot chocolates and cups of soup noodles. Best hot chocolate I've ever had. Interestingly, they also had a low-fat hot chocolate option although I saw no takers. At this stop we spoke with SIR rider Jim Sprague who was piloting a Raleigh Super Course which was painted a maroon similar to Mike's Silk Hope. The

bike, as it turns out, was purchased for \$5 at a sort of bike junkyard. This definitely won the award for least expensive steed in the herd.

As we continued our drop out of the North Cascades we were treated to some more breathtaking scenery. The wind began to pick up and we hammered into the Marblemount control.

This last bit of fast riding finished me off. Two days of no sleep followed by last night's less than two hours, in combi-

■ Continued on next page

## American Randonneur



Photo by John Ende

**What rain?** One of the many sunny stretches along the Cascade 1200. However, the chance of hills remained at 100 percent for the entire ride.

## Sleepless in Seattle (continued)

nation with all the climbing, finally dropped my tank to zero. When I say zero I am actually exaggerating because I wasn't even functioning as high as a zero level. I was falling off of Mike's wheel at 12-14 MPH in a dead flat. Sleepiness was overwhelming me. All circuits were shutting down.

I told Mike that I had to stop. I had planned on eating something at our stop but the cool green grass cried to me. "Come sleep," it said. I lay down and immediately was asleep. I was awakened one minute later by a conversation Mike was having with the owner of my grassy bed, who had wandered out to check her mail. She asked a few brief questions

about my condition and then casually retrieved a few letters and headed back into her house. When I fell asleep for the third time inside of five minutes Mike woke me up and coached me back onto my bicycle.

We rolled along slowly until encountering "The Burger Barn." Now this looked like salvation. We were pleasantly surprised to find Tar Heel Burgers on the menu and although hailing from the Tar Heel state opted for their Classic Burger with cheese and a coke.

I retired to the restroom and found a cozy spot on the toilet. The bathroom was arranged so that a plywood wall was six inches in front of the toilet. Still wear-

ing my helmet, I leaned my head forward while on the throne and fell into a deep and necessary slumber. I awoke with one of those "where the hell am I?" moments but quickly gathered myself together and rejoined Mike in the restaurant.

The cheeseburger was out of this world. While we were eating, one of the SIR members driving the course stopped in with another fellow. The other guy turned out to be a rider who had DNFed on day 1 due to an extended ride off course. He was still here cheering us on. I really can't stress how magnificent all of the volunteers were along the course.

■ Continued on page 52



# Cascade 1200: Special Report

## THE AUDAX ATLANTA ASSAULT

BY ANDY AKARD

Photo courtesy of Andy Akard



Two down. Standing (l-r): Ted Lundin, Owen Richards, Andy Akard. Resting: Larry Fyffe, Mark Wolff

Deciding to ride a 1200K was a long process. Starting in 1999, I began riding the intro distances of the brevets with the Georgia club and my Nanimal friends Tom Cross, Hans Mixdorf and Mike Delong. Through those rides and the Gainesville, Fla. brevets, I met the unforgettable beer (not) brothers, Mark Wolff and Lou Wolff, from Jacksonville. I have certainly enjoyed their company and pace on a number of brevets. When I heard about

the format of the Cascade 1200K including the overnight stops, this concept of a “kinder, gentler” approach to a 1200 seemed quite attractive.

One of my best friends from college, Ted Lundin, who lives in Portland, Ore., decided on the Cascade as his first 1200. Another cycling friend and ancien, Owen Richards, lives in Seattle. He also planned to ride and offered to serve as a base station for our Audax Atlanta assault on the

Cascade. Larry Fyfe is a part of the Jacksonville crew and rounded out our group of six who signed up for the ride.

In 2005, my qualification efforts started with the Gainesville, Florida, series where I completed the 200K, 300K, and 600K brevets with Mark, Lou and Larry. The Georgia brevet series treated me less favorably. Nutritional failures on the Georgia 400 led to my abandonment after the halfway point somewhere in South

Carolina. I had similar problems on the Georgia 600 with abandonment at mile 300. Accompanying me on the Georgia 400 were the Florida boys, who stopped with me rather than leaving me sick in some smalltown hotel. Those are good friends but also friends that I didn't want to subject to the same on a 1200. On the Ga. 600, Cary Way offered support and company during the night riding portion and our late return to the overnight control. I was encouraged that Cary was also planning to do the Cascade 1200.

My DNFs on the hard Georgia rides had given me some real doubts about my ability to complete the Cascade 1200. After some medical and nutritional consultations, a change in some prescription medication, some advice from Mike Delong and a renewed focus on electrolyte replacement, I decide to pursue my original decision and do the ride.

**Day One: This 1200K brevet will start in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains northeast of Seattle and head south,**

■Continued on next page

## American Randonneur

# Audax Atlanta Assault (continued)

along the front range of the Cascades, to the foot hills of Mount Rainier. Riders will then continue south and skirt Mt. St. Helens, then up and over Elk Pass before dropping into the Columbia Gorge to stop at Carson, Washington for the first night.

### ▣ Official Ride Description

While our group was standing at the start of the ride Saturday morning looking around at a crowd of fit to being almost grizzly riders, Ted and I were struck by a similar scary thought—that we don't belong with this company! (Looking deeper we did start to note the very occasional beer belly.) There were many elegant bikes and folks had come from all over the country. Many riders were proudly sporting various PBP jerseys from over the years.

It was a pleasant start as we rolled out as a group at 6 a.m. on Saturday. The riding began through the agricultural countryside with the smells of the farms in our faces as we pedaled the rollers and turns leading up to the first two controls. Ted, Larry and I stopped briefly at the Truly Scrumptious Bakery near mile 95 for a quick snack (two donuts and a Mountain Dew) and then rejoined Mark, Lou and Chris Kaiser to continue toward our planned lunch stop at mile 120—a great Mexican restaurant near the

Photo courtesy Andy Akard



Like other riders, Akard paused for a victory shot at the top of Washington Pass.

turn to Randle. Mark sampled a cold beer but the rest of us settled for iced tea or colas. The plan was to allow

lunch to settle prior to starting the climb up to Elk Pass at elevation 4080. And a good plan it was!

The lunch revived me a good bit and we all rode comfortably onto the gorgeous forest service roads at mile 140. Below, the road surface was great and above was overhung with lush trees and landscape. Ted and I inched towards the back on this hilly section and were soon riding along at a comfortable, if slow, pace. Somewhere on this section the sun set and we settled in to work our way towards the next control at Northwoods.

At the Northwoods control was a scene that would be repeated for Ted and I over the next two nights—a cheering and supportive group of volunteers with lanterns, soup, coffee and sandwich makings. Mark, Lou, Larry and Chris had waited for us here and all except for Chris, we headed out together for the last 35 miles to the overnight control in Carson. It might have been midnight at this control when next the road turned upwards towards Oldman pass at elevation 3100. Ted and I watched the Florida boys' tail lights wind up in the air above us, indicating the work we were going to have to do. Chris came and passed by us after changing a flat tire and rode on up the road.

The temperatures were in the 40s at this point. Ted and I decided that we needed a short nap to rest our eyes (and legs). Lying beside the road in the gravel and

■ Continued on next page



## American Randonneur

# Audax Atlanta Assault (continued)

the cold air served as our alarm clock and after 20 minutes we got back on the bikes and finally reached the overnight control at around 3:15 a.m. After a shower and some food at the middle school we retired to the gym with a wake up time of 5:30.

Around this time, it struck me that our 10.6 mph average speed for the day did not bode well for our sleep potential for the remainder of the ride. It probably helped that I did not know this would be the last time Ted and I would have time to sleep at one of the overnight controls. Our pace from this point onward forced us to ride straight through with only road naps to revive us. Lou must have had some similar thoughts because at breakfast we heard he had decided to abandon the ride and become a volunteer. Larry had a look of fear in his face as he told us about Lou. It was a shock to us, and my thoughts turned to the fact that one of our stronger, experienced companions had decided this ride may be too hard to complete.

**Day Two: From Carson, riders will travel east, up the gorge, climb out of the Columbia Breaks to Goldendale and over Status Pass before dropping into the Yakima River valley, in Eastern Washington. Riders will turn east in Toppenish to cross the Rattlesnake Hills and then drop into the**

### Columbia basin for the second night.

#### — Official Ride Description

Mark, Larry, Chris, Ted and I rolled out together from Carson. One of the volunteers who took our photo tried hard to animate the group, but everyone was thinking their own thoughts and mulling over their concerns about our short night of sleep. None of us had gotten much more than two hours.

We had a great ride along the Columbia River with a tailwind and paceline helping to make good time. We picked up our friend Owen Richards somewhere in this stretch and turned up a pretty river road to start our climb out of the valley to Klickitat. This was another gorgeous section with great views in the valley and even better ones heading up the plateau to the Goldendale control. On the way to the Status Pass summit, Ted and I assumed our usual position at the back as we were dropped from the group that then roared on a great long downhill. This turned into a hot section on a too-traveled road that had us looking for shade. The experience was made worse by one narrow-shouldered section with trucks and RVs roaring by much too close for comfort.

We regrouped with Mark, Larry, Chris and Owen at the Café control in Toppenish where they were

splayed out on the sidewalk in the shade of the building. Larry looked particularly red-faced and toasted so everyone was OK with waiting on Ted and me to eat and get back on the road. This leg was generally uphill and Ted could not keep the pace so I dropped back to ride with him. We met Peter Noris on this stretch and helped him change a flat. We rode with Peter for several miles until we were almost at the Mattawa control.


Ted and I biked on through the waning daylight to the control at Mattawa, to be greeted by our great con-

trol group. After hot soup, good coffee and sandwiches we took a 20-minute nap and then headed off for the last leg. We both hit a low point on that leg. The road was not steep but seemed to be generally uphill and we were generally uncomfortable. We did a lot of stopping and adjusting on this section and did not feel very good until the sun came up. At that point we enjoyed a couple of comfortable hours cycling to the Quincy-supposed-to-be-overnight control. We arrived in time to greet

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## American Randonneur

# Audax Atlanta Assault (continued)

departing riders (including Cary, Davy and Charlie and Jim Solanick) and for a great breakfast.

**Day Three: From here riders will travel through time as they encounter the prehistoric archaeology of Moses Coulee, and the mid-Columbia plateau. Riders will then head west to once again cross the Columbia and head north to Loup Loup pass before spending the last night in the scenic Methow river valley at the foot of the North Cascades.**

### □ Official Ride Description

Day Three should not have been so hard but it was my worst. The distance was only 170 miles but based on our late finish of the previous day we got a late start heading back out. Showering and clothing changes took us until 8 a.m. before Ted and I were on the road again. The route also started with a long section of chip and asphalt being laid on the way out as we were riding, combined with being the very last riders in the group at this point. It seemed that all the folks that had been struggling in and around us had dropped out and we missed the shared misery.

The route went through a really pretty farming valley

that was bordered by basalt cliffs. The cliffs had a lot of great detail as if they had been carved. Ted informed

up the valley to Malott. The control guys in Malott were my same favorite folks. It seemed like we only saw

were suspended in Lucite. At other times the road surface was decorated with patterns like a full body tattoo.

The lines on the road assumed different appearances as well. At times both the white lines and the yellow would disappear, or more accurately, appear clear, and the road would seem to be a guardrail-less bridge in the sky. I don't particularly care for heights and found this to be not very conducive to safe riding. At other times, the lines turned into two-foot-tall curbs or



Photo by Andy Akard

**Shady Business.** Ted Lundin finds an oasis of shade in the desert sun.

me that they were columnar basalt. We recharged at the Farmer control which was in a great looking wooden community building. Surprisingly, another rider came in while we were there. We went down the road a bit from there and laid down in the sun for a nap. My memory gets a little fuzzy on this section. I know there was a long section where the straight road just went up and down and eventually we got to McNeil Canyon Road, dropped down off the plateau back to the river and finally to the control in Malott.

The sun set on our way

them at night. They were encouraging, helpful and supplied the now familiar soup, sandwich and coffee. We were trying to move fast, motivated by thoughts of getting some sleep that night but that was before we left and encountered Loup Loup Pass.

While pretty, Loup Loup was a vicious climb. Ted was feeling pretty good at this point, but I was starting what was to become several hours of fairly entertaining but ride-crippling hallucinations. First, the entire road surface appeared to be underlaid with leaves and other patterns, as if they

low walls. The most disturbing vision involved the center line bending over to connect to the white side line, forcing me to ride into a slowly unfolding corner of highway.

Another fairly consistent and persistent vision involved wet or tar patches on the road turning into a half-animal that would rise from the road upon our approach and then shrink back down into the two-dimensional shape when we passed.

The edges of the road were full of fairly active

■ Continued on next page

## American Randonneur

# Audax Atlanta Assault (continued)

visions as well. Landscape moving in the breeze turned into cubist jack-in-the-boxes grimacing towards the roads. The horizon and sky were also a little bright which brought about an effect that Ted shared, which was feeling like we were riding under a bridge even in the open road!

The picture show continued with the addition of boxy furniture forms appearing on the road so that I was forced to ride through them. There were also various sheets and other vapors that would drift across the road and obscure Ted's taillights from view. One particularly fine example of this was a mattress form that was thick enough that my vision changed for the period that I was "inside" this shape. After this went on for several hours, I decided to try another roadside nap in an effort to shake these visions.

This was a fairly pitiful point for us. It was raining and the shoulder was just a mud field but finally we found a place to lean against the guardrail under our space blankets and snooze for 30 minutes or so.

We eventually made it to the top, met up with the volunteer that was providing the sweep and headed into the very cold downhill run to Mazama. We arrived there at around 4:30 a.m. but once again it was all we could do to eat breakfast, get cleaned up and get back on the road for the next day's start.

While Ted was on a mission to find some relief for his saddle sores, our general stuporous state made us slow to get a move-on. This would have been a good stop to have made early, given the nice hotel-type rooms distributed around a ranch-like property. I managed about 30 minutes of sleep on a couch but Ted was not so lucky.

**Day Four: The last day will take the riders over Washington and Rainy Passes in the North Cascades, along the Skagit and Sauk rivers and home to the finish.**

### □ Official Ride Description

We stopped for a shot of espresso at a little stand on the way out of the overnight which improved our spirits. This was going to be a hard day but I was actually feeling pretty good and was having thoughts that we might just finish the ride within the time limit if we picked up the pace. The road climbed for the first 30 miles up to Washington Pass at elevation 5477 feet. It was well graded but still took almost 3.5 hours of upward pedaling—the best part was knowing it was going to be generally downhill the rest of the day.

Ted was feeling the impact of his saddle and lack of sleep on this section, so I

ended up doing a lot of pulling. My legs were feeling strong and we started making good time but Ted kept drifting off the back. He stopped for a nap and I had a bad cup of coffee at a health food store. Ted had a low point here and considered stopping the ride. The volunteer providing sweep essentially wouldn't let him stop; he whipped us into shape and got us moving again. He waited for us at the turns, kept time and generally urged us on for the remainder of the ride. His strong manner but good sense of humor was instrumental to our finish. His

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Photo by Andy Akard



Still standing: (l-r) Ted Lundin, Mark Wolff, Larry Fyffe, Chris Kaiser, Andy Akard.



# Cascade 1200: Special Report

## 'No Night Riding, No Rain Riding'...

BY TIM DODGE

June 24, 2005 and finally it's time for the Cascade 1200k. My good friend John Flanigan and I fly out to Seattle on Friday morning ahead of Saturday's 6:00 a.m. start in Monroe.

The drive to Monroe takes about 45 minutes, although at least one person will ride to the start from the airport. Not that the ride needs to be any longer. John and I joke that the final cue sheet now reads 767 miles, about 10 more than an earlier version, and by the

time we finish it is certain to be at least 20 miles more than that. Incidentally, we are also told that the route has more than 37,000 feet of climbing.

The ride is hosted by the Seattle International Randonneurs club. With 160 active members in RUSA, they boast more members than any other club in the United States. That depth of experience proves to be invaluable, because the folks from Seattle anticipate every major need we have as riders. Hard to believe this is their inaugural 1200k.

We find our way to "downtown" Monroe without much difficulty. After lunch we head to the hotel to put our bikes together. We visit the local bike shop after I realize that I forgot to pack



**Chow time.** Charles Breer, John Flanigan, Tim Dodge and Chris Ragsdale at Mattawa enjoying "nice rest, great sandwiches," according to a caption posted on the Internet.

water bottles—something I am fairly certain I will need on the ride. We head back to the bike store a second time after I realize that I also forgot my toe warmers. I start to get concerned....

John and I decide that we have two goals for the ride: (i) no riding in the rain and (ii) no riding at night. Sure these are both unrealistic, but at some level so is the idea of riding 1200k in 90 hours. During the pre-ride bike inspection we are asked to show our lights and reflective gear. Since this is mandatory, we don't mention that we won't be riding at night. Plus we're pretty sure this would be considered bad form.

We start just after 6:00 a.m. Our goal for the day is some 224 miles away—a high school in Carson. The

pace is quick. After a couple of hours in the saddle the group thins to about 12 or 15 people. Everyone looks very strong on the bike—good spinning cadence and no wasted movement; clearly this is a group that has put in some serious mileage over the years. There is not much talking; instead we are all focused on the challenges still to come. And the first one comes sooner than we thought. John gets a flat, forcing us to stop while the paceline continues without us.

The rest of the day is glorious. Although we started with heavy overcast and a light mist, the weather clears by midday. John and I ride at our own pace under clear skies over the shoulders of Mt. Rainier, Mt. Adams and Mt. St. Helens. I can't believe how good I feel in spite of some steep climbing. I can tell John feels pretty good, too, because at the end of the day, after more than 200 miles, he manages to spin at 25+ mph to the day's final control. (Must have been the awesome SIR control at Northwoods!)

Our time for the day was a little more than 14 hours, including all stops. This put us somewhere in the top 15 or

■ Continued on next page

## American Randonneur

# No Night Riding... (continued)

20 finishers for the day, and we were feeling pretty good about that. But just as we wheel our bikes into the school, Ken Bonner heads back out into the night. The man is legendary, riding some 14,337 km in sanctioned events for 2004 and winning the BC Randonneurs Cycling Club's John Hathaway Trophy—aka "The Iron Butt Award." (The award is given each year to the British Columbia resident who covers the most distance in successfully completed official distance brevets and flèches ridden anywhere in the world in a particular calendar year. Ken Bonner "won" the award in 2002, 2003 and 2004.) He clearly has a different agenda for this ride, and it doesn't appear to involve sleep. Suffice it to say that this puts my effort for the day in a different light. I am forced to admit that my goals are a little less speedy, so after showering and inhaling a couple servings of lasagna I try to get some sleep in the school gymnasium.

Sleep proves to be impossible for me. I toss and turn for six hours before deciding it's time to start the day. In this case, the day is 213 miles to Quincy. John and I watch a few riders leave before us, but we quicken our pace up the Columbia River and soon latch on to a paceline of six riders. Nods all around as the group acknowledges our presence and then we all take turns at the front. In short order, however, four of the riders drop back. This leaves me, John, Chris Ragsdale from Seattle and Charles Breer from St. Paul. Our alliance proves to be remarkably resilient over the next several days.

\*\*\*

Day 2 was a shock to me. Once we climbed out of the Columbia River valley we face mile after mile of desert. It is so dry that there isn't even sage brush growing. Just a low scrub grass that was burned brown by the sun months or years or decades ago. The scrub is bro-

ken up by rock outcrops in a series of long grades. We manage 48 miles without passing through a single town; we didn't even unclip from our pedals between controls. By midday we reach Control #2 at Toppenish and I realize the sun is still climbing, the temperature is up and we still have 112 miles to go. We load up on supplies and climb back on our bikes.

The next leg is 62 miles, again without any services, crossing the Rattlesnake Hills. We grind up a long grade into a headwind—what Charles calls the "landscape treadmill" because we never seem to make any progress. The elevation gain isn't apparent given the general absence of landmarks and our only point of reference is a ridge-line some five or 10 miles off in the distance. It finally dawns on us that we are, in fact, climbing because our speed never gets above 14 mph. Great, 62 miles at 14 mph means we are looking at almost 4½ hours for the stage. Did everyone bring enough to drink? The short answer is: no. Luckily an SIR aid station midway up the Rattlesnake Hills brings relief. So does a highway rest stop near Hanford (incidentally, site of the country's largest Superfund clean-up) where we dunk our heads under a hose spigot. This lifts our spirits in a way that is probably best understood by a five year old playing in the backyard on a hot summer day.

After Control #3 at Mattawa it's only 40 miles to Quincy, our overnight control. On the way we see some farms and other signs of life. A quarter tailwind has our foursome in an echelon as we cruise the final 10 miles to Quincy. Another 14-hour day in the saddle for us, but the next riders don't show up for more than two hours. They report that the wind shifted, turning into a quarter headwind. We count our blessings.

\*\*\*

Day 3 calls for 168 miles, with a

3,000-foot climb over Loup Loup Pass. The climb is 115 miles into the day, and causes some strong separation in our little group. At this point we have roughly 500 miles under our wheels since Saturday, and my caloric reserves are depleted. Instead of keeping pace I stay seated and spin up the hill much more slowly. Charles and Chris beat me to the top of the pass by at least 20 minutes, John by 10. Although we regroup at the top and stay together on the descent to Twisp, I am so drained that I am forced to stop and eat. John sticks with me while the other two ride ahead. Painfully I crank out the last 25 miles to Mazama, our third overnight control, by following John's wheel.

Once off my bike I have trouble walking. This is much worse than just bonking. Through the fog that envelopes my brain I realize that my left Achilles tendon is shot—it has no support at all—and my right knee is throbbing. (Doing the math in my head, I estimate that I have done close to 150,000 pedal revolutions in the last 62 hours.) The pain makes me question whether I will finish the last 162 miles.

\*\*\*

Day 4 has us starting with a 4,000 foot climb over Washington Pass in the North Cascades, descending 1,000 feet and immediately climbing another 500 feet over Rainy Pass. My eyes blink open at 2:45 a.m., and without any forethought I climb on my bike at 3:30 a.m. John is still asleep, sticking to our original plan to leave around 5:15 a.m. I am hoping that the head start will be enough to get me to the top of Rainy Pass about the same time as John, but I have real doubts. One of the volunteers mercifully shares some anti-inflammatory liniment for my Achilles.

I soft pedal the 18.5 miles to the top of Washington Pass. On the entire

■ Continued on next page

## American Randonneur



# Cascade 1200: Special Report

## Cascade 1200 Finishers

Rider Name		Location	Age	Sex	Bike Type	Time
Andy	Akard	Atlanta, GA	48	M	Single	89:54
Shane	Balkovetz	Bothell, WA	38	M	Single	89:27
Robert	Barday	Golden, CO	61	M	Single	88:15
Bernie	Barge	San Miguel, CA	43	M	Single	87:55
Stephen	Barnes	Bellevue, WA	52	M	Single	88:50
Landon	Beachy	Kalona, IA	53	M	Single	88:50
Peter	Beeson	Tacoma, WA	37	M	Single	84:23
Michael	Bingle	Vancouver, WA	49	M	Single	83:50
Rick	Blacker	Olympia, WA	54	M	Single	86:11
Ken	Bonner	Victoria, BC	62	M	Single	74:21
Charles	Breer	St. Paul, MN	42	M	Single	82:35
Dale	Brigham	Columbia, MO	48	M	Single	84:33
Dan	Clinkinbeard	Columbia, MO	56	M	Single	84:33
Matt	Dalton	Ferndale, WA	53	M	Single	89:27
Mike	Dayton	Raleigh, NC	49	M	Single	87:50
Tim	Dodge	Denver, CO	44	M	Single	82:50
Bill	Dussler	Burien, WA	52	M	Single	86:50
John	Ende	Marion, NC	40	M	Single	87:50
Charles	Feaux	Huntsville, AL	69	M	Tandem	85:50
John	Flanigan	Denver, CO	47	M	Single	82:50
Chester	Fleck	Calgary, AB	41	M	Single	84:33
Arjuna	Flenner	Ridgecrest, CA	31	M	Single	84:39
Jennifer	Flenner	Ridgecrest, CA	30	F	Single	84:39
Roseanna	Freeman	Carrollton, TX	44	F	Single	85:12
Art	Fuoco	Palm Bay, FL	52	M	Single	86:17
Dan	Fuoco	Boca Raton, FL	52	M	Single	86:17
Larry	Fyffe	Atlantic Beach, FL	46	M	Single	87:55
Scott	Gater	Richmond, BC	35	M	Single	87:49
Rick	Haight	Maple Valley, WA	56	M	Single	86:50
Davy	Haynes	Huntsville, AL	42	M	Tandem	85:50
David	Huelsbeck	Seattle, WA	39	M	Single	84:23
David	Huggins-Daines	Pittsburgh, PA	27	M	Single	87:55
David	Johnson	Arlington, WA	57	M	Single	85:12
Paul	Johnson	Tumwater, WA	55	M	Single	89:12
Christopher	Kaiser	McDonough, GA	40	M	Single	87:55
Stephen	Kenny	Calgary, Alberta	47	M	Single	84:33
Tom	Kenny	Calgary, Alberta	42	M	Single	84:33
John	Kramer	White Salmon, WA	48	M	Single	85:12

## American Randonneur



# Cascade 1200: Special Report

## Cascade 1200 Finishers

Rider Name		Location	Age	Sex	Bike Type	Time
Tom	Lawrence	Mountain View, CA	38	M	Single	84:17
Robert	Lundin	Portland, OR	49	M	Single	89:55
Kevin	Main	San Luis Obispo, CA	52	M	Single	85:34
Don	Mankewich	Calgary, Alberta	47	M	Single	87:49
Lawrence	Midura	East Syracuse, NY	50	M	Single	83:10
Mulder	Fred	Seattle, WA	38	M	Single	83:50
Dan	Paarsmarkt	Cochrane, AB	40	M	Single	84:33
Wayne	Phelps	Miami, FL	53	M	Single	86:17
Chris	Ragsdale	Seattle, WA	27	M	Single	82:35
Owen	Richards	Seattle, WA	49	M	Single	87:55
Mark	Roehrig	Redmond, WA	54	M	Single	85:08
John	Russell	Sebastopol, CA	58	M	Single	89:18
Del	Scharffenberg	Milwaukie, OR	59	M	Single	83:50
Matt	Settle	Strasburg, VA	47	M	Single	87:38
Jim	Solanick	Lake Worth, FL	56	M	Single	89:00
James	Sprague	Seattle, WA	47	M	Single	86:11
John	Spurgeon	Hillsboro, OR	35	M	Single/Fixed	87:11
Tim	Sullivan	Coronado, CA	51	M	Single	85:34
Mark	Thomas	Redmond, WA	44	M	Single	86:50
Linda	Valadez	Imperial Beach, CA	52	F	Single	85:34
Cary	Way	Murfreesboro, TN	55	M	Single	86:50
Mark	Wolff	Jacksonville, FL	48	M	Single	87:55

## 1000 Km Finishers

Rider Name		Location	Age	Sex	Bike Type	Time
Merle	Baranczyk	Salida, CO	58	M	Single	68:32
Brad	Flickner	Fort Worth, TX	38	M	Single	63:08
Dan	Lundeen	Houston, TX	48	M	Single	63:08
Brian	Ohlemeier	Renton, WA	43	M	Single	63:22
Dave	Read	Tumwater, WA	42	M	Single	63:40
Bob	Sheldon	Takoma Park, MD	54	M	Single	63:22
Charles	White	Marysville, WA	42	M	Single	62:20

## American Randonneur

### No Night Riding... (continued)

ascent I only see two cars pass me. It turns out the drivers are both SIR volunteers and they are waiting for me at the summit. I try not to show too much pain as I reach the top, especially when I realize one has a camera. They tell me they plan on setting up an aid station about eight miles down Rainy Pass. That is music to my ears.

To my total amazement I also crest Rainy Pass before anyone catches up to me. At the top I stop just long enough to put on every piece of clothing that I am carrying: rain jacket, arm warmers, long fingered gloves, toe covers, winter tights and cap. The temperature is in the low 40s, a steady rain is falling, and I am about to begin a 20-mile descent. After two minutes I realize that this will be

unbearably cold. I am already shivering so strongly that my grip on the handlebars gives my bike high-speed wobbles.

After seven miles I begin to look for the aid station. With every passing corner I mutter a string of four-letter words when it fails to materialize. Finally I see the familiar SIR Control sign, day-glow orange lettering on a white background, right where they said they would be. I practically fall off my bike from a combination of pain and uncontrollable shivering. Standing under a tent, I gratefully accept a cup of instant espresso spiked with hot chocolate mix. After 20 minutes or so I can't think of any more reasons to stay so I stumble towards my bike. Finally I pedal into Marblemount, the first control of

the day after 74 miles, and still no other riders have appeared.

At this point I don't care about my finishing time, just about finishing, so I forage through the mini-mart grabbing everything that seems palatable. About half an hour later I am almost done eating when John shows up. We compare notes on the morning. Ten minutes later, just as we are clipping in to our pedals, Charles and Chris show up ready to roll (they used the other gas station in town for their control stop) and our foursome is back together.

With roughly 100 miles to go, I am ecstatic to be in the company of three strong riders. My Achilles is shot and

■ Continued on next page



Photo by John Ende

The twilight zone. A solo rider at dusk on Day 3.



## American Randonneur

# No Night Riding... (continued)

my knee is on fire, but I am as happy as could be. With a little luck I will be able to hang on to the paceline and avoid putting my nose in the wind. But the pain! I tossed back an Aleve at the SIR aid station on Rainy Pass, and now I start a steady diet of ibuprofen, roughly two every hour, to numb the pain.

Just before Granite Falls, the penultimate control, I can't handle the pace any longer. I fall back and John kindly slows with me. We face a final 20-mile stretch of rollers from here to the finish, and I wonder how I will get through it. Then, miraculously, the pain subsides. I can't turn the pedals as hard as usual, but I can turn them! John and I reach the finish a few minutes behind Charles and Chris, at 82:50.

The volunteers are terrific as we make our way into the hotel. The applause is the most welcoming sound I have heard in four days. I hand my brevet card over for the last time, then slump in a chair. Across the small meeting room I spot Ken Bonner, the first finisher. He is showered and rested, and later I learn that he came in at 74:21 by riding through the final night.

My conclusions? First, the overnight controls had me thinking this would be a "mellow" 1200k. I seriously doubt if there is any such thing as a "mellow" 1200k. There may be some that are more social than others, but they are not mellow. Second, this was a very tough ride, and I didn't give it the respect it deserves. Having never ridden longer than 400k in one go, I didn't fully appreciate the physical stress that accumulates over distance. There is no doubt that many of the finishers were much more capable than I was, given my lack of any serious long distance experience before the Cascade 1200k. The ride would have been much more challenging without the support I got from the SIR volunteers and my fellow randonneurs. Thanks to all of you.

## In Praise of Volunteers

BY MARK THOMAS

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Randonneuring in the U.S. owes much of its success to dedicated volunteers, and the Cascade 1200 was no exception. As the local RBA, a co-organizer of the event, and a rider of the event, I can't say enough to thank the more than 50 volunteers who helped with the Cascade 1200. Before the ride, many people helped to plan the ride, to scout the route, to arrange for food and lodging and other logistics on the route, and to house and transport out-of-town riders. During the four day event, over 40 volunteers helped out on the route in various capacities, led by super-volunteer Terry Zmrhal, who seemed to be everywhere and who probably slept less than the vast majority of participants.

But don't take my word for it alone—here's a sampling of what other riders had to say:

- The support was perfect.
- Many thanks to all the folks that organized &/or volunteered to make the Cascades 1200 a very positive experience!
- All the SIR volunteers should be proud of this very well supported ride
- The control guys in Malott were my same favorite folks. It seemed like we only saw them at night. They were encouraging, helpful and supplied the now familiar soup, sandwich and coffee.
- The Seattle International Randonneurs club volunteers who sponsored this ride were absolutely fantastic. Besides being incredibly organized, everyone involved was focused on providing the best experience possible and offered support and encouragement throughout the ride. We could not have done it with out their encouragement.
- The volunteers are terrific as we make our way into the hotel. The applause is the most welcoming sound I have heard in four days.
- The attitude and help of the volunteers was great and really helped to push me along. Smiles, even if bleary eyed, were welcomed.
- Again, can't say enough about the volunteers.
- I especially was impressed with the "non-control" controls, which seemed to magically appear whenever they were most needed.
- Plenty of very friendly and helpful volunteers.
- PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE thank all the wonderful volunteers that worked this ride. They were just great and made this the best supported, most fun (although hardest) ride I've done.
- Please pass on my warmest thanks to all of the organizers and support people on the ride. They did an amazing job and made all of us feel right at home. There were also a number of rider support personnel at the controls that provided help. Please extend my thanks to them as well should the opportunity arise.
- Great group of volunteers!
- Thanks for everything!



Terry Zmrhal

American Randonneur

# Super Randonneur Medal Application

In 1952, the Audax Club Parisien created an honorific recognizing randonneurs who had completed, in the same year, the series of brevets of 200k, 300k, 400k and 600k. This honorific is called the Super Randonneur Award. Randonneurs may request a medal commemorating their accomplishment by submitting the request form shown below. This request form, filled out correctly and including verification numbers for the brevets, should be submitted with payment to RUSA, which will collect the forms and forward them to the ACP person responsible for Brevets de Randonneurs Mondiaux. The medal design will be changed every Paris-Brest-Paris year.

## SUPER RANDONNEUR Medal Application Form

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ RUSA #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Club: \_\_\_\_\_ ACP Code: \_\_\_\_\_

no abbreviations

	Brevet	Date	Organizer or Name of Event	* ACP Brevet Number
Brevets de Randonneurs Mondiaux	200k			
	300k			
	400K			
	600k			

\*The ACP Brevet number can be found on the ACP sticker on your returned Brevet card or check the Brevet Results on the RUSA web site.

Signature : \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Include medal payment of \$7.50 to Randonneurs USA. Mail to:

Don Hamilton  
RUSA Super Randonneur Award  
3078 Wakeshire Drive  
Dublin, OH 43017

**Deadline for submission is September 15.**

American Randonneur

# Randonneur 5000 Medal Application

In 1961, the Audax Club Parisien created an award for those randonneurs who have completed 5000 km in BRM events. It is called the Randonneur 5000. To qualify for this award, the successful randonneur must complete the full BRM series (200, 300, 400, 600, and 1000k), a Paris-Brest-Paris, a Flèche Vélocio and additional brevets to bring the total distance up to 5000 km. The normal R-5000

application period is each September 1st to 15th—except in years when PBP is held. The ACP is busy with that event and does not accept any R-5000 submissions. Those riders should hold their application and send it to RUSA the following September. The qualifying events must be completed within a four year period, beginning on the date of the first qualifying event.

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Club: \_\_\_\_\_ ACP Code: \_\_\_\_\_

RUSA #: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of First Event: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Last Event: \_\_\_\_\_

	Brevet	Date	Organizer or Name of Event	Certification Number
Brevets de Randonneurs Mondiaux	200k			
	300k			
	400K			
	600k			
	1000k			
PBP	1200k		Audax Club Parisien	<b>PBP Rider #</b>
Flèche				

**Balance of Required Kilometers**

	Brevet	Date	Organizer or Name of Event	Certification Number
Brevets de Randonneurs Mondiaux				

Signature : \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Include medal payment of \$7.50 to Randonneurs USA. Mail to:  
 Don Hamilton  
 RUSA R-5000 Award  
 3078 Wakeshire Drive  
 Dublin, OH 43017

**Deadline for submission is September 15.**

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## American Randonneur

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### Sleepless in Seattle (continued)

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After the cheeseburger I started to regain some strength, but 20 miles down the road this wore off and I began force-feeding myself anything that I thought I could stomach. At another low point, Mike raised my wife on his cell phone and an emotional boost was realized that fueled me into the next-to-last control at McDonalds. Ronald hit me with two more cheeseburgers, fries and a coke. That meal in combination with Mike's surplus gels fueled a mad dash into the finish back at the Holiday Inn Express in Monroe. There was a large enthusiastic group at the finish. Each rider was given a loud round of applause as he or she cruised in. I was enveloped by my wife and kids and was never so happy to see them in my life. The check-in was too brief. I

really wanted to stay and mingle but sleep hit me like a brick and within 10 minutes I was in ZZZZZville up in my room. Our 6 a.m. wake-up call to make the ferry for the Gulf Islands would come too soon.

Overall the ride was extremely well done. The controls were fabulous. The common overnight stops were welcomed enthusiastically by everyone that I spoke with. The scenery left riders searching for words that somehow came up short. The course is challenging. Everyone that had done other 1200s rated this one the hardest that they had ever done. Personally I have only done PBP and can at least confirm that the Cascade 1200 is several notches harder than PBP. SIR is to be congratulated for all their hard work. Special recognition goes to Terry Zmrhal,

Mark Thomas and Paul Johnson for their particular dedication.

Why do I do these rides? I don't know. They certainly beat up mind and body. I actually recovered faster and was in overall better shape after this than after PBP but that is a whole other story, already published in the RUSA PBP 2003 yearbook. The challenge is a definite reason. The scenery and exploration of the Pacific Northwest was another reason for me and I was not disappointed with the spectacular and varied scenery. Most of all I think that it is the camaraderie that comes from that common place of a group of humans taking on an unimaginable task to the every day ordinary Joe. The people riding these events are different, and that is what I like, different.

### Audax Atlanta Assault (continued)

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name was Ted, too.

So after much pain and torture and riding around in what seemed like circles, there we were back at the hotel. There was a group waiting to cheer us in but we got turned around in the parking lot and managed to ride up behind them! We could not have planned that part better. Their cheers were still real, and we were glad to greet our Florida pals as we handed over our bikes and limped into the

control for pizza and beer. We were the last two riders to arrive and right at the time limit.

I had tears in my eyes and could not really believe that we had made it. We had been chasing controls since Sunday morning, had gotten less than four hours' total sleep/naps and now at mid-

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**'I had tears in my eyes and could not really believe that we had made it. We had been chasing controls since Sunday morning, had gotten less than four hours' total sleep/naps and now at midnight on Tuesday it was over.'**

---

night on Tuesday it was over. It had been questionable most of the ride but now Ted and Andy had successfully completed the Cascade 1200K! The remainder of our group had arrived around an hour earlier. (Larry had also finished his first 1200K.)

The Seattle International

Randonneurs club volunteers who sponsored this ride were absolutely fantastic. Besides being incredibly organized, everyone involved was focused on providing the best experience possible and offered support and encouragement throughout the ride. We could not have done it without their encouragement. Since Ted and I were bringing up the rear, we were also the ones keeping the late controls open and the sweep

out late. This group was not getting enough sleep either.

Ted and I could also have not done it alone since we found that our highs and lows generally did not coincide, allowing us to take turns pulling the other along and keeping track of the route and turns.

## American Randonneur

# RUSA SOUVENIRS CATALOGUE



**Item:** **Randonneurs USA Polo Shirt**  
**Description:** Short-sleeve polo shirt with RUSA logo  
**Fabric:** Soft knit, two-ply cotton with banded cuffs, no pocket  
**Color:** White with RUSA logo embroidered on left side  
**Size:** S(34-36), M(38-40), L(42-44), XL(46-48)  
**Cost:** \$27.00



**Item:** **Randonneurs USA Cycling Jersey**  
**Description:** Lightweight touring jersey with short sleeves  
**Zip:** 15 inch long zip  
**Pockets:** Three rear pockets with reflective strip across the top  
**Fabric:** Microdry  
**Colors:** RUSA logo in red, white, blue, and black; blue sleeves, white line, red trim  
**Sizes:** S, M, L, XL, XXL (unisex)  
**Side Panels:** Blue background with Randonneurs USA in white lettering  
**Sleeve:** RUSA in white lettering around outside edge of blue background  
**Cost:** \$55.00



**Item:** **Randonneurs USA Cycling Shorts**  
**Description:** Lycra cycling shorts  
**Chamois:** Synthetic antibacterial microfiber chamois  
**Fabric:** 8.5 oz. nylon, Lycra, spandex blend  
**Colors:** Black with Randonneurs USA in white lettering  
**Sizes:** S, M, L, XL, XXL (unisex)  
**Cost:** \$45.00



**Item:** **Randonneurs USA Duffel Bag**  
**Description:** Lightweight duffel for PBP bag drop  
**Fabric:** Nylon  
**Colors:** Royal Blue with Randonneurs USA in white lettering on both sides  
**Size:** 10 in. x 20 in. (one size fits all)  
**Cost:** \$10.00



**Item:** **Randonneurs USA Wind Vest**  
**Description:** Lightweight sleeveless wind vest  
**Zip:** 15 inch long zip  
**Pockets:** Three rear pockets with reflective strip across the top  
**Front Fabric:** Non-stretch, moisture/wind resistant material  
**Colors:** RUSA logo in red, white, blue, and black; sleeveless, with the stars and stripes  
**Sizes:** S, M, L, XL, XXL (unisex)  
**Rear Fabric:** Lycra  
**Cost:** \$55.00



**Item:** **Randonneurs USA Waterbottle**  
**Description:** Plastic waterbottle  
**Colors:** White with Randonneurs USA logo on both sides  
**Cap:** Black, wide mouth, screw-on  
**Size:** Large (one size fits all)  
**Cost:** \$4.00

## American Randonneur

### Souvenirs Order Form

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	COST	SIZE	QUANTITY	TOTAL
PBP 2003 VIDEO	45 MINUTES OF PBP 2003 (FRENCH)	\$45.00			
PBP 1999 VIDEO	42 MINUTES OF PBP 1999 (FRENCH)	\$25.00			
PBP 2003 YEARBOOK	PBP 2003 STORIES & RESULTS	\$10.00			
PBP 1999 YEARBOOK	PBP 1999 STORIES AND INFO	\$7.00			
RUSA DUFFEL BAG	LIGHTWEIGHT NYLON DUFFEL BAG	\$10.00			
RUSA JERSEY	SHORT-SLEEVE: S-M-L-XL-XXL	\$55.00			
RUSA LOGO DECAL	5.25"x3" - REMOVABLE VINYL	\$1.00			
RUSA PBP 2003 JERSEY	SHORT-SLEEVE: S-XL-XXL	\$55.00			
RUSA POLO SHIRT	WHITE WITH EMBROIDERED LOGO: S-M-L-XL	\$27.00			
RUSA SHORTS	LYCRA BLACK SHORTS: S-M-L-XL	\$45.00			
RUSA VEST	LINED WINDFRONT WITH REAR POCKETS RUNS SMALL: ORDER NEXT SIZE UP S-M-L-XL-XXL	\$55.00			
TOP TUBE DECAL	5"x1" REMOVABLE (BLUE & WHITE)	\$0.25			
T-SHIRT	WHITE SHORT-SLEEVE: S-M-L-XL-XXL	\$12.00			
<b>New!</b> FLECHE T-SHIRT	WHITE SHORT SLEEVE - BLACK TRIM: M-L-XL	\$12.00			
WATERBOTTLE	WHITE 28 OZ WATERBOTTLE	\$4.00			
RUSA LAPEL PIN	Single Pin	\$2.00			
RUSA LAPEL PINS	2-9 pins	\$1.75			
RUSA LAPEL PINS	10 or more pins	\$1.25			
RUSA REFLECTIVE SASH	Sayre Sam Browne-style Reflective Sash: one size fits all	\$5.00			
RUSA REFLECTIVE ANKLE BANDS	Sayre Reflective Ankle-Bands: one size fits all Sold in pairs	\$2.00			
<b>SHIPPING &amp; HANDLING (USA):</b> \$4.00 for one item \$5.50 for two items \$6.60 for three items or more 37-cents for each decal 60-cents for each lapel pin  <b>EMAIL <a href="mailto:otherwise@att.net">otherwise@att.net</a></b> <b>FOR FOREIGN SHIPPING RATES</b>					
					<b>SUBTOTAL</b>
					<b>SHIPPING &amp; HANDLING</b>
					<b>TOTAL</b>

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ RUSA MEMBER # \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Want to pay with a credit card?  
 Go to [www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com) to pay electronically; send payment to [otherwise@att.net](mailto:otherwise@att.net)  
 Or pay by check payable to Randonneurs USA.

Send order form and payment to:  
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 10 Bliss Mine Road  
 Middletown, RI 02842

6-15-2005



Randonneurs USA  
 10 Bliss Mine Road  
 Middletown, RI 02842



# American Randonneur



## Randonneurs USA Membership Form

*PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!*

*Renewal*       *New Member*



Name : \_\_\_\_\_ RUSA # \_\_\_\_\_

Address : \_\_\_\_\_

City : \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Country : \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Club : (full name) \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date : \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Randonneurs USA keeps personal member information private.**

### Membership Types and Terms - Please Check One

#### Individual Membership

One Year \$20.00       Two Years \$40.00       Three Years \$60.00

#### Foreign Membership (if residence and mailing address is outside the United States)

One Year \$30.00       Two Years \$60.00       Three Years \$90.00

#### Household Membership (limit two names; please add the second person's information below)

One Year \$30.00       Two Years \$60.00       Three Years \$90.00

*- Complete this section for Household Membership only -*

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ RUSA # \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date : \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (M/F): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Memberships are active for the calendar year of January to December.**

**Should RUSA publish a Membership Directory, may we list your name and mailing address?**

**Yes**       **No**

Make check payable to Randonneurs USA in US Dollars. Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Send this form and payment to:  
Don Hamilton  
RUSA Membership Office  
3078 Wakeshire Drive  
Dublin Ohio 43017

Please allow two weeks for processing.

## American Randonneur

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