

AMERICAN RANDONNEUR



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Pacific Atlantic Cycling Tour

www.pactour.com

Lon Haldeman and Susan Notorangelo

Contact us... 262-736-2453

notorangelo@pactour.com

Celebrating 40 years of cross country cycling events. 1981 to 2021

Planning Ahead for 2022

Due to the ever changing Covid-19 virus restrictions all tours and dates are subject to change.

We are considering upcoming tours in 2022. We will have a firm schedule by September 2021.

2022 Possible Desert Camp in Arizona

Week #1 Tour of the Historic Hotels Early March

Cycling 50 miles per day to classic hotels in southern Arizona. This is a good week for beginning riders or cyclists who want an easier early season tour.

Week # Century Week Mid March

A full week of tours from 60 to 100 miles based in Sierra Vista, Arizona. Riders can choose an assortment of daily distances

Week #3 New 10 Day Mountain Tour Late March

This was a popular new tour in 2021 combining the best days from past Chiricahua and Mountain Tour routes riding 75-100 miles per day. We would like to offer this tour again in 2022.

Check out the PAC Tour website for dates, prices, registration information and a full schedule of available tours.

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PAC Tours coming in 2021

Southern Transcontinental Celebrating Lon and Susan's

100th Cycling Event Across America

September 7 to October 5

2,923 miles 108 miles per day 27 days

This will be a 27 day tour from San Diego, California to Tybee Island (Savannah) Georgia. Most days average 100 to 120 miles. We will cross the country through a variety of terrain and visit many historical sites along the way. See the PAC Tour website for route details. We still have room for about 10 more riders.

Postpone for 2021

Due to the covid virus concerns in Peru we are not doing this tour in 2021. We hope to include it again in 2022. It's a really interesting and fun tour.

Andes to the Amazon in Peru

Late October 9 days 300 cycling miles in 6 days

This tour is organized by the Peruvian National Women's Cycling Team. The cycling is 80% paved roads and 20% gravel routes in the jungle. This tour travels on a boat on the Amazon for 300 miles and visits several villages. There is an optional additional tour to Machu Picchu and Cusco to visit these classic ruins in the Andes Mountains.

Cycling in Ghana Africa

December 1-14 14 days with travel days

The Covid Virus is not a problem in Ghana. We have 10 riders signed up for this tour. We have room for a few more.

This unique tour will ride a 320 mile loop of southeastern Ghana. Along the way we will meet and visit many local people of this beautiful country. Road conditions will range from good pavement to red dirt. Bikes with 35mm tires are recommended. The people of Ghana speak English. We will stay in nice hotels and eat in restaurants along the way.

Coming in 2022

Cycling Route 66 (Western Half)

Santa Monica, California to Amarillo, Texas

April 23 to May 13

18 riding days 1,276 miles 1 train ride day

We will cross the western states of California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. This tour will focus on the history of building the highway and the cultural changes that happened during the past 95 years. We will stay in many original motels and eat at the popular cafes and diners on the "Mother Road". We will be joined by several guest speakers along the way and have educational programs about Route 66 history everyday. One of the days is a train ride to visit the Grand Canyon and back. Due to smaller motels this tour is limited to about 20 riders

PAC Tour

***Making good riders
better since 1981***



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COVER—Hawks Nest never disappoints.

PHOTO GEORGE RETSECK

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President's Message

How time flies. None of us were around to ride on September 11, 1921, but ACP is celebrating with its centenary 200km this year. By the time you read this, many of our regions will have run events on September 11, 2021. ACP even created a special medal to celebrate 100 years. We hope that we've ordered enough of them for everyone who wants to add to their collection.

There's an excellent history of randonneuring in the U.S. in our handbook, starting on page 147. I encourage you to check it out. The paper version is available through the RUSA store but it's also online, under the Members tab. Written by Johnny Bertrand (RUSA # 2), it covers the first evidence of U.S. randonneuring, starting in 1966 through the formation of RUSA in 1998. In between, there was a predecessor organization, International Randonneurs (IR), formed by Jim Konski in the US, and some regions operated on and off as individual correspondents with ACP. There was some organizational turmoil through that time but through the efforts of many RUSA members, from RUSA # 1, Jennifer Wise, Johnny Bertrand, Bill Bryant, Lois Springsteen, John Wagner, Mark Thomas and many others, RUSA established a solid base and has continued as an organization representing our members and the sport worldwide.

One of the things that brought international recognition to U.S. randonneuring was the Boston Montreal Boston 1200km. For that we can thank Charlie Lamb and Hauke Kite-Powell for its initial development but most of us think of Jennifer Wise and Pierce Gafgen (RUSA # 9) who took over the event. Run nine times prior



to RUSA and six times since then from 1988 to 2006, if my math is correct there were 990 finishers including many international riders. BMB brought riders from all over. London Edinburgh London started the year after BMB and soon after there were 1200km's in Australia and elsewhere, but BMB was run every year other than PBP years. Since then, of course, 1200km's have boomed world-wide but especially in the US. Check out the

Domestic 1200km history on our website under the Long Brevets tab. It's fascinating.

Many of our regions pre-date RUSA. According to Johnny there were around 25 brevet organizers in the U.S. at RUSA's formation. Two of our RBAs were also organizers under IR: Alan Johnson (RUSA # 306), Raleigh NC, and Don Podolski (RUSA # 30), Westfield MA. As of this writing, they have certified results for 6,064 rides



over the 23 years. That doesn't count DNF's or all their work pre-RUSA. That level of contribution and that continuity is what keeps our sport alive.

We have 97 current members whose join date = 1998/08/22. Although not all of them are prodigious riders, they have almost 3 million kilometers with RUSA in that time frame. Believe it or not, a few have logged zero RUSA kilometers but have continued to contribute to our organization. All of them have RUSA numbers below 500. If you have a chance to ride with any of them or hoist a cool one, extend your thanks. We owe them, big time.

Fast Forward.

There have been many changes to the sport but the basics are the same. We have better equipment. I think of electronics with a cue sheet as my backup. Bill Bryant reminds me that advances in lighting have helped many. Lucky me, I've never had to worry about carrying a spare halogen bulb for my light! With all of these advances, we are still rider powered. It's a sport that fosters self-reliance but at the same time, camaraderie. Stopped by the side of the road, a fellow rider always asks if I'm ok, unless it's very obvious why I'm stopped. We often have to dig deep to get 'er done. Our fellow riders can help us keep going but oftentimes on a long ride we are alone. It's a sport requiring physical and mental endurance.

In addition to better mechanics, electronics and lighting, and 1200km rides to interest those who want to partake, a recent addition to the menu is the SR600. Nothing pushes us harder - 10,000+ meters over the course of 600km. The SR600 is a no-support ride,



other than from your fellow riders, and that includes controls. Is it a niche event? Read on ...

The first SR600 results were recorded in 2015. Looking at the ACP website today, I see 2837 finishers – world wide. The time limit for a “normal” 600km is 40 hours. The SR600 time limit was originally set at 50 hours but then extended to 60. That change was made to allow a ride to be broken into “reasonable” 3x200k riding days. There's also a “tourist mode” of 75km per day. If you don't think that you can complete one of these rides in 60 hours, consider the tourist mode. Given the climbing, you can be certain that you'll experience some of the best scenery that we, and other countries, have to offer. Find a riding friend and do it in tourist mode.

To increase the interest in these events, in 2019 ACP created a special award for multiple SR600 finishers, which includes tourist mode. After completing 10 of these rides, a

customized ceramic frame plate is produced in your name. Our very own Charlie Martin was the 12th awardee. To put that in perspective, there are only 17 worldwide. Charlie has the additional distinction of completing 12 SR600's in 12 months. Yes, although we don't have an award for it, he earned the SR600-12 and I'm betting that he is the only one having such an achievement world-wide. I should also mention that Charlie's results reflect randonneur mode, vs tourist mode.

Look under the Members / Awards tab for details on the SR600.

So yes, we have a lot of history. It's a challenging sport, a niche sport, but with rides from 100km to 1200km and beyond, from flat rides to hilly rides, from rides in the heat to rides in the snow, there's a lot to enjoy.

—Dave Thompson
RUSA President
president@rusa.org

From the Editor

Is randonneuring a sport, an avocation, or something else entirely? It is similar to other activities about which people are passionate. Watching the Olympics, I see other athletes who devote even more of their time and energy than most randonneurs to their sport. In this context, randonneuring does not seem so extreme. Think of the work and the guts it takes to show up on the start line of any Olympic event. Being an Olympian is much more than being an athletic sort of person. And similarly, being a randonneur is more than just being a cyclist. Randonneuring is also a philosophy and an approach to life. To be a randonneur is to see value in experiencing life through this lens.

I just finished a three-day self-supported bike tour across part of Pennsylvania. My rando training and experience helped me prepare for the adventure, mentally and practically. I knew what to carry and I knew how to get through each day's challenges. I love having the ability to plan and do this kind of ride.

The skills and attitudes developed in and fostered by randonneuring influence the rest of life. Thoughts from a couple pieces in this issue come to mind as I think through this idea. Mary Gersema quotes an un-named source as saying, "The group is the group," meaning, the people who are with you doing the same thing as you are within your sphere of concern and even sort of your responsibility. We know this about family, but certainly it applies in other aspects of life. The importance of the

group is also emphasized in the proverb quoted by Chris Newman: "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." Surely it would be productive to think about how working together on almost anything will help us keep moving forward.

As I've suggested, we randonneurs believe in the value of a good challenge. We like to go far, and take pride in our ability to do so. But we need to care for ourselves as well. Matt Strassberg addresses his efforts to balance randonneuring goals with health

concerns. Alternative cycling goals and different kinds of 'bikes' are addressed as well in this issue.

Randonneuring is an amazing sport and discipline—in the sense of practice. I would love to hear from more of you regarding your thoughts on and experiences in this sport. Please consider submitting a short article.

Please stay safe out there.

—Janice Chernelkoff
Editor, *American Randonneur*
editor@rusa.org



Ready to board the train for Pittsburgh.

—PHOTO JAYNE BROWN

The American Randonneur Award

Once a year, the RUSA Board of Directors and the RUSA Awards Committee present an award to a member of the organization who has made a significant and outstanding contribution to randonneuring in the United States.

This person is to be recognized for having gone above and beyond the call of duty to help our niche of cycling grow. It can be an RBA who has dramatically increased brevet participation, a hard-working RUSA volunteer, or someone who has helped randonneuring flourish by a selfless act, good sportsmanship, camaraderie, or by being a good Samaritan.

RUSA wishes to recognize that special volunteer and inspire others to do the same. This is a most prestigious award, a high honor of American Randonneuring. It is the only award we have that names a single winner; all other awards can be earned each season by any number of our members who qualify successfully.

This person must be a RUSA member. (Check the RUSA website Members Search to see if the person that you have in mind is a current member and note their membership number).

The American Randonneur Award is given by the RUSA Board. The nominees' names come from the general membership. The Board then votes on the award winner. Please note that the Board has decided to exempt itself from any active nominations for this award in order to avoid possible conflicts of interest that could then affect other Board matters. If an American Randonneur Award nomination comes in for a sitting Board member, it is held over until that person's term of office is ended and then placed among the next batch of nominees.

You may nominate a member by email. To make a nomination by email, send your name and your RUSA membership number with your nominee's name and RUSA membership number to Johnny Bertrand at JohnnyBertrand@mykolab.com. Alternatively you may fill out a candidate submission form and mail it to the address below. All nominations must be **received** by December 15.

PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS

2001	Johnny Bertrand
2002	David Buzzee
2003	Jennifer Wise
2004	James Kuehn
2005	Daryn Dodge
2006	Bill Bryant
2007	Robert Fry
2008	Dan Driscoll
2009	Mark Thomas
2010	Don Hamilton
2011	Mike Dayton
2012	Crista Borrás
2013	John Lee Ellis
2014	Lois Springsteen
2015	Vincent Muoneke
2016	Bruce Berg
2017	Shab Memarbashi
2018	Dan Shadoan
2019	Spencer Klaassen
2020	Janice Chernekoff

NOMINATION FORM

YOUR NAME _____ YOUR RUSA # _____

YOUR AMERICAN RANDONNEUR AWARD NOMINEE _____

NOMINEE'S RUSA # _____

BRIEF REASON FOR NOMINATION _____

SEND THIS FORM TO: Johnny Bertrand, 858 Carrick Pike, Georgetown, KY 40324

E-MAIL: JohnnyBertrand@mykolab.com

Eugene 300/600

BY MICHAL YOUNG WITH RIDER COMMENTS

Two mountain ranges, the Cascades and the much lower Coast Range, divide Oregon into distinct climate regions with the major towns and cities of Oregon located on rivers just inland of the coast range. Cross either range for a change in the weather and the sense of having really gone somewhere.

300 kilometers is enough to cross the coast range twice, following one river from the Willamette Valley to the far cooler Oregon coast and following another river back. The Smith River 300km follows this basic recipe, from Eugene in the Willamette Valley to Florence along some smaller rivers and then a fork of the Siuslaw, south along the coast to Reedsport, and then inland along the Smith River. The 600km adds a flatter excursion north and back south within the valley.

Scheduling close to the solstice makes it feasible for many randonneurs to ride 300 kilometers fully in daylight. By early summer, coastal winds are predominantly from the north, so the Smith River loop goes a little north and west outbound, south with the prevailing winds on the coast highway, then east again along the river.

This past June, at the cool, clear, 5:30am departure for this year's 300/600, the Ruth Bascom River Bank Path offered lovely views of the

Willamette River. Five 300km riders and three 600km riders shared the first 150 miles and largely stayed together. The riders passed through tiny communities of Low Pass, Triangle Lake, Deadwood, and Swiss Home on the outbound before joining a newer and larger highway at Mapleton. The best one can say about the 15-mile stretch from Mapleton to Florence is that the pavement is good and the shoulders ample. Soon enough, the riders were at the coast in Florence,

refueling and ready for the jaunt south. While the coast highway, dotted with small lakes, runs a mile or two from the ocean, Gary Prince persuaded some of the riders to add a few bonus miles for a beach excursion.

In Reedsport the riders turned inland again, on roads even more lightly traveled than the outbound leg. One tiny market about fifteen miles from Reedsport offers the only resupply opportunity on the 50-mile stretch from Reedsport to the staffed control at Oxbow Summit. After Smith River Market, an hour or more can pass without seeing a car. On the pre-ride I saw a small black bear starting to cross the road. The bear saw or heard me from about 100 meters off and retreated to the patch of woods along the river.

The eight riders arrived at the next control—hungry, thirsty, and tired,



Departure group L to R: Keith Billingsley, Steve Erickson, Graham Ross, Jason Hansen, Gary Prince, Julien Erard, Norm Field, James Taylor, Michal Young.

—PHOTO CYNTHIA WENKS



Just about to put feet in the surf—well worth the small detour and extra miles.

—PHOTO NORMAN FIELD

Smith River.

—PHOTO NORMAN FIELD





but in good spirits. The control was well-stocked with water, soft drinks, instant savory foods including a vegan dahl, and salted nuts. Best of all was the remainder of a watermelon that 600km rider Graham Ross had brought to the pre-ride dinner the night before.

The five 300km riders rode another 33 miles, including one more hard climb, to finish in Eugene. All finished in daylight.

The three 600km riders had lots of riding still ahead of them. Their next services were in Cottage Grove, about 37 miles and one hump ahead, then

L to R: Ken Billingsley, Julien Erard, Steve Erickson, James Taylor, Gary Prince, Graham Ross, Jason Hansen.

—PHOTO CYNTHIA WENKS

another 25 to Eugene for a brief nap before the second day of riding. The second loop, north and slightly east into the valley, then south again mostly along the Willamette, is designed to be much flatter and easier than the first. An unseasonably hot day, alas, made it much harder, and only two of the three 600km riders were able to finish within the time allowance. 🚲

Some of the Riders'

Best Part of the Ride

Both groups were able to ride together for the first 150 miles. This allowed both brevets to start concurrently and allowed me (and I believe others) to meet some new randonneurs that I/we might not otherwise have done.

Ken Billingsley

Best Part of the Ride

The beach excursion—it added 3.3 miles and 150 feet of climbing, but more importantly gave us a chance to take off our cycling shoes and run barefoot up and over the loose sand of the dune and soak our feet in the Pacific surf for a few minutes.

Graham Ross



Smith River.

—PHOTO NORMAN FIELD

Comments and Compliments About the Eugene 300/600

An Interesting and Unexpected Thing

The Olympic Trials in track and field, which nearly doubled the prices of hotel rooms in Eugene, presented us with a second gift (in the dark, after 360km of riding). Many streets in Eugene were completely blocked to create spaces for the festivities, making it a challenge just to get to our hotel.

Graham Ross

An Exciting Moment

Sections of the Oxbow Summit descent had been recently paved (although the lines were not fully repainted) providing a fun and exciting stretch near the end of the ride.

Ken Billingsley

Best Part of the Ride

Riding under tree canopies on outbound and inbound legs of ride. Temperatures were moderated by the shade and by the rivers along which the roads traveled. Also, "The lack of traffic (winding roads were perfect to discourage traffic yet were ideal for us) was such that it allowed the 3 of us (including Norm, Gary) to ride 3 abreast for a considerable portion of the PM."

Ken Billingsley

A Much Appreciated Control

The Smith River Market was a quaint/neat kind of place (small store sharing space with an attached bar/pool table area) out in the middle of nowhere. It was perfect, too, for a short respite and ice cream treats before continuing the climb to Oxbow.

Ken Billingsley

An Exciting Moment

Julien and I saw an adult black bear on Cottage Grove Road. We were inspired to pedal past that point a bit faster, joking that we probably couldn't outrun the bear but each thinking he might outrun the other.

Ken Billingsley

Building a bicycle frame starts long before the torch is lit.

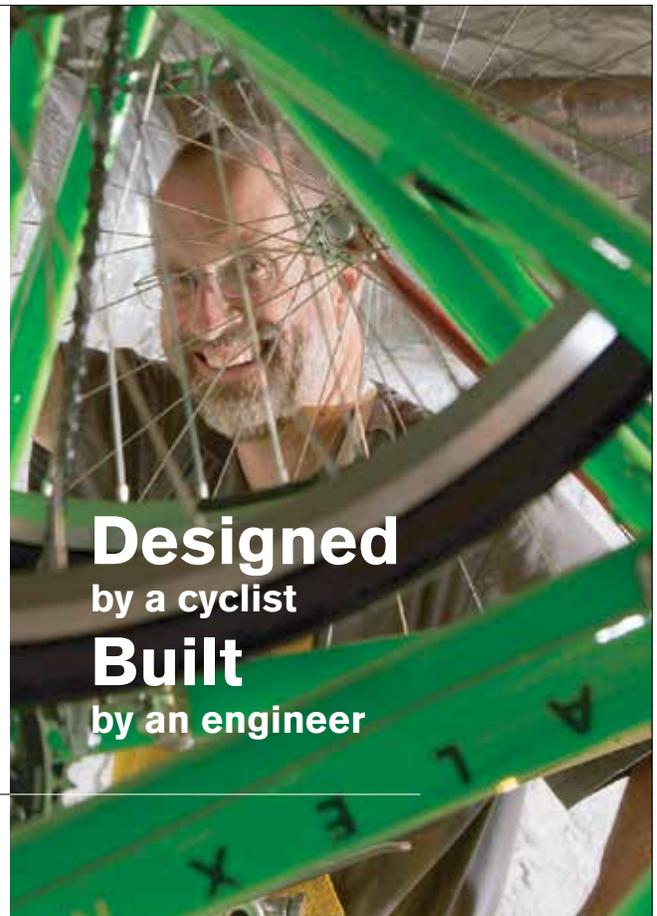
It begins with the right questions; by learning the needs and desires of the customer. I listen to the experiences that led you to me: your riding history, your cycling dreams, and what you want your next bike to be.

My goal as a designer and builder is to use my experience as a cyclist and training as a mechanical engineer to translate your vision into a beautiful steel bicycle

that will give you a lifetime of service and enjoyment, for less than you might expect.

Every frame I produce is completely engineered and manufactured by me. I do everything from working with you on initial measurements and selecting materials, to the intricate filing and metalwork needed to make a beautiful and unique frame.

To begin the process, visit my web site, then email or call me. I look forward to hearing your thoughts.



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“What do you actually *think* about on those long rides?” It’s a question each of us has been asked at one point or another by someone mystified by the extreme distances randonneurs cover on brevets and training rides. It’s also a question that James Hibbard takes up in his 2021 book *The Art of Cycling*.

Hibbard, a former youth track cycling champion and professional road racer, presents us with this meditation which is part memoir, part introductory philosophy lecture and part road trip saga with three old friends along the California coast. I was a bit disappointed that the three spheres of this book (memoir, lecture, and road trip) were not more smoothly integrated with one another, but each has its value and the author’s insights

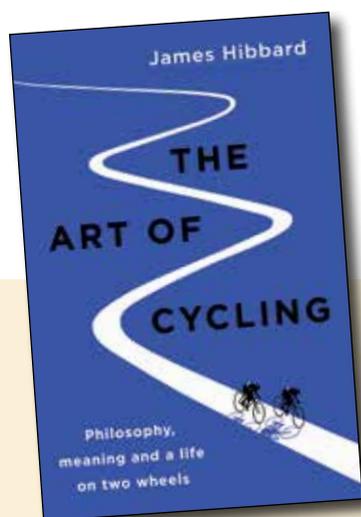
overall will undoubtedly resonate with many long-distance cyclists.

We learn (or relearn depending on which courses you may have taken as an undergraduate) how the insights of the pre-Socratics influenced Plato and the premodern and modern philosophers beyond him. Even in modern times, we can see the enduring impact of Plato’s concept of the *Forms* on cycling. The Forms present ideal versions of all that is true and our march towards these north stars of perfection explains much of what motivates human behavior. The balance between perfectionism and pragmatism is very much alive and well in modern cycling and in a brilliant insight, the author argues that the common obsession over equipment

and gear can be seen not so much as a process to “fetishize” these objects as an effort to get everything dialed-in to the degree to which the bicycle itself disappears so that we, as riders, may become one with it.

Hibbard claims that it is the Existentialists in particular who resonate with the elemental demands of endurance cycling. On long rides, the superfluous concerns of modern life are stripped away as the core of our being is laid bare. Anyone who enjoys the challenges of a 1200km is likely motivated in part by this existential potential to discover “that you’re no longer merely pedaling a bicycle, but doing something far more interesting, significant, and meaningful: remembering, with every pedal stroke and heartbeat, that you truly exist.” Hibbard confides that it is the work of Friedrich Nietzsche that has perhaps the most saliency, especially to those who seek through cycling to “become what they already are . . . using the sport as a means of self-expression . . . elevating [their] very existence into a work of art.”

For Hibbard, cycling is both an “escape hatch” from the confines of his analytical mind as well as a setting upon which he maps the philosophies he explores intellectually. Cycling, like other endurance sports, seems almost designed to determine who can endure pain the most effectively and the chapter on the psychic dynamics of pain may be particularly relevant to those of us who often find ourselves at the “ultra” end of the endurance spectrum. The ability to withstand suffering, if not an end in itself, is certainly a



The Art of Cycling

BY JAMES HIBBARD

Quercus Books
305 pages, 2021

component of success. Sadly, Hibbard's world-view skews towards the depressive, as his memoir recounts, which is at times destabilizing to him. Is cycling better seen as a healthy pursuit or as an addiction? There is evidence of both here and it is up to the reader to decide.

A through line in the book is a trip that the author and two of his former racing buddies plan along the California coast. Inching toward midlife, Hibbard no longer rides very much, his candle having burned bright and early. This journey from San Francisco to San Luis Obispo that totals roughly 300 miles, though, forms an opportunity for the author to reconnect with both the highs and lows of his earlier self. Somewhat ambivalent towards and surprisingly unprepared for a ride of this distance, it's not clear whether he extracts much joy from cycling or how much riding he will do in the future. One hopes that he might reconnect with this activity through which he has gained so much success and insight, but this remains an open question.

Ultimately, considering this long journey through the history of Western philosophy, Hibbard confides that "the most compelling – even beautiful – aspect of cycling is that when I'm riding, I'm able to think about very

little." As Hamlet famously utters, "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." Sometimes riding a bicycle is just riding a bicycle, but the depths that Hibbard plumbs in this book provide form and structure to feelings and fleeting images that are likely on the minds of many riders. Unique and well-written, *The Art of Cycling*, is a book worthy of your attention.

Post-script

After logging 4,865 miles and climbing 570,370 feet over countless hours, I finally reached Rouvy Legend status on June 15, 2021. In the process, I visited dozens of countries on 336 routes, participated in 76 races, and completed 36 multi-route challenges. I also bought a pair of wireless headphones and learned how to use Discord to communicate with other riders from all over the globe while pedaling away in my pain cave. I installed a power meter on my randonneuring bike and began to learn how to use power numbers to focus my training. All told, it was a great season of riding, even though so much of it was technically indoors. It's now time to reactivate my Zwift subscription to see if I can earn that elusive Tron bike before the Rouvy season starts up again on October 1. 🚲



James Hibbard

share YOUR FAVORITES

What is your favorite local brevet route?



What is your favorite snack on a 100km, 600km, third day on a 1200km?



What is your favorite pre-brevet song or music?

If inspired, write answers to one or more of the above questions, including brief explanations about your choices, and send responses to editor@rusa.org by **October 10, 2021**.

Rando? How about RanGO?

BY DIDI HENDRICKS SCHENCK, A BUDDING RANGONNEUR

If you rode Paris-Brest-Paris in 2015, you might not remember their names, but you likely remember those eight dudes on the ElliptiGOs: Idai Makaya, Billy Grace, Stuart Blofeld, Alan McDonogh, Bill Pinnell, Carl Nanton, Andrew Nuttall, and Jim Cremer. The first six actually finished in under 90 hours on those stand-up bikes, leaving no doubt that the ElliptiGO was a legitimate presence in the field of one of the most grueling endurance cycling rides in the world.

If you are in the majority here and *didn't* ride PBP in 2015, then it's possible that you have never even *seen* one of these machines. Created by Bryan Pate and Brent Teal as a running alternative, the first long stride (LS) ElliptiGO hit the market in 2011. Since then, several more models have been introduced, and more than 35,000 have been distributed all over the world. Fifty of the USA athletes who competed in June's Olympic Track and Field Trials use the "GO" to cross-train without risking injury from impact.

With 20" wheels, 8 or 11 gears in its internal Alfine hub, and weighing in at about forty pounds, the stand-up GO requires about 30% more power than a conventional bicycle at the same speed. In short, traveling at 12 mph correlates to about 16 mph on the seated steed.

So, let's briefly analyze what these PBP Boys (as they are affectionately known in the GO community) accomplished. They had far less time to rest during this event than regular cyclists, not to mention they were standing up the whole time. They had

about two hours of sleep on the way to Brest, just one hour on the way back, and occasional 6- to 7-minute micro naps—just enough to keep them from falling asleep on their GOs. Stories of hallucinations, riding in circles, running into hedges, biting a hand to stay awake, falling asleep (anyway) on their GOs.... CRAZY! And still, six were able to triumph over all that and become the first ElliptiGO riders to complete PBP.

It certainly was an incredible feat, but that doesn't mean the ElliptiGO shouldn't be a consideration for cyclists who have difficulties with conventional bikes as well as anyone who just wants a new challenge.

We ElliptiGOers love our bikes. Why? Some, like me, are former runners who can't run anymore, looking for that brief state of euphoria known as



The PBP Boys, 2015.
—PHOTO ETHAN PINNELL



runner's high. Some are people who enjoy the elliptical at the gym and want to take it outside. Still others are cyclists who for whatever reason can't cycle anymore – due to neck, back, knee, or, ahem, gluteus maximus issues. We do like to brag that our butts never get sore, so add the ElliptiGO to the list of alternatives to consider if you're in this group.

The ride is quite splendid. It's no impact yet weight bearing. You don't need a zero-gravity treadmill if you have a GO. You're standing tall; I feel like a prairie dog on top of my GO, able to look over small rollers and see beautiful sights without that awkward turn of the neck from the seat of a bicycle. The stride is effortless and uses more muscles. I'm not going to lie; on long rides my feet can get sore and tired, but I'm not chafing down in the nether region either.

And the ElliptiGO climbs – yes, it does! In fact, the ElliptiGO World Championships are held every October outside San Diego on an 11.67-mile course with 4200' of climbing up Mount Palomar. We've represented at Mount Washington, Pike's Peak, and the Death Ride. Someone once quipped that you can climb a telephone pole with an 11R.

The Path to the ElliptiGO

I've lived most of my life on a farm in Southern Maryland, that part that is

southeast of Washington, D.C., tucked between the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay. I ventured out only to go to Penn State (Class of 1986), where I ran cross-country and track and graduated with a degree in mathematics and computer science. I've enjoyed three careers: programmer analyst, stay-at-home mom, and now 8th grade algebra teacher. Though I always had a goal of running a marathon, I never figured out how to incorporate into my busy life the serious training plan to run a good one! I delayed too long. The years of hitting the pavement pounded thin the cartilage in one knee, and I tore what was left of the meniscus stacking hay. My running career came to a screeching halt in 2016 and crushed the marathon dream.

By 2018 I was desperate to fill the void of not running. I had a decent entry-level Trek, but cycling just didn't thrill me – I mean no offense here. I knew of the ElliptiGO from running

NVR-Warrenton 100/200K, 6/26/21.

—PHOTO ANDREW ADERE

magazine advertisements and the great champion marathoner Meb Keflezighi's endorsement. Wanting more information, I casually Googled "ElliptiGO guru" and up popped the name: **"Idai Makaya, Milton Keynes, England."** Reading his biography, I had no idea what his references to PBP or LEL meant. I just thought he was that expert for whom I was searching. I'm not terribly ashamed to say I found him on Facebook and eventually friend-requested him. To my surprise, he accepted and we chatted for quite some time. Not only did Idai fire me up to order a top-of-the-line 11R the next day, he also encouraged me to join his "Longest Ride Challenge" and do a century on the GO to replace the lost marathon dream. *A hundred miles?* What the heck was I thinking?

Long distance cycling on the GO gripped me early on. I was thrilled by the gorgeous countryside and mountain views – sure, you see a bit of this running and hiking, but you only cover a fraction of the miles.



MD Endurance Challenge, 5/22/21.

— PHOTO JESSICA SHORT

Nine weeks later, under Idai's mentorship, I completed that century on my 11R nicknamed "Hot Lips," at the Cap2Cap in Richmond, Virginia.

(Fun fact: Hot Lips gets her name because she was shipped without the E in ElliptiGO, so I filled the blank with a hot lips decal.)

Six months later, I qualified for and competed in the 2018 ElliptiGO World Championships race up Mount Palomar.

It took me 2 hours and 29 minutes and I felt every single one of those 4,200 feet. Every. Single. One.

Three years later, I've now completed 24 centuries (including one solo 200km) and probably 30-40 100kms – about 17,000 miles in all. Most of these have been organized rides because I truly enjoy riding everywhere, and I like being around people, even if I'm not actually riding with them. My biggest climb was the Savage Century 77 in 2020; Strava gave me 6,623' for that ride!



A Developing RanGOneur

Long distance cycling on the GO gripped me early on. I was thrilled by the gorgeous countryside and mountain views – sure, you see a bit of this running and hiking, but you only cover a fraction of the miles. My friend Jim Cremer, a PBP Boy and then president of the *Global ElliptiGO Riders Club (GERC)*, turned me on to "audax" and "RUSA." I learned about the brevet series and the time limits. I've come to the conclusion that I am definitely NOT Paris-Brest-Paris material, but more challenging 200kms and maybe a 300km seem like reasonable targets for this gal. A 400km is a big maybe; remember, on the GO, I'm not going to get that rest and yes, my feet get very sore. I'll need every bit of the time limit for a hilly 200 and flat 300. I doubt I can make the 400 limit, but I might be able to finish one.

It took a couple years to get up the nerve to join the Northern Virginia Randonneurs (NVR). While I *can* climb, the thought of moving up to the 200km *and* adding 6000 to 7000

300 feet from the summit of Palomar, ElliptiGO World Championships, 2018.

— PHOTO MAC MCKEHNIE

feet of climbing was daunting. And the thought of no SAG or rest stops was just plain scary. 2020 happened and further delayed my debut.

In late March of this year, I discovered my Rando Guru, when I finally reached out to Hamid Akbarian, the regional brevet administrator (RBA) of the Northern Virginia Randonneurs. To my surprise, Hamid was excited about an ElliptiGO riding with NVR! He remembered Idai from LEL a few years earlier. He and the lovely, incredible Misha Heller convinced me to join them at an upcoming 100/200 event down in my neck of the woods on April 3.

That debut 100km was so cold and windy, and I moved like a frozen turtle. It was the slowest metric century I have ever completed, and these were *my* roads! It should have been easy! Forget the lovely new French words I'd acquired: "populaire," "brevet," and "bonne route"; I was using those other words, the ones you have to beg pardon for using! One negative of standing on the GO is being a big wind block. This particular day's wind was one I refer to as the "infinity headwind." Like the scarf of similar name, it never ended. I turned around in Leonardtown, and that sucker turned right around with me.

I left with the 200km riders, but still, the dashing and talented Georgi Stoychev caught me on the way back, and he was kind enough to say that I "looked strong coming up the hill" out of Chaptico. Oh, Georgi, nice try! A flurry of congrats on the e-mail thread made me blush since I didn't feel I'd ridden well, but the outpouring of kindness made me realize these people were really good folk, much like my beloved GO community.

I couldn't wait to join them again, but it was going to have to wait. A week later I had to pause my riding due to a long overdue partial knee replacement. I incorporated the GO into my rehab and had such a fantastic recovery that I was able to complete my first 100km+ just six weeks later at the Maryland 12-Hour Endurance Challenge on May 22 with several NVR members.

In early June I joined NVR on a brutally hot weekend for two back-to-back 100kms in Sterling, VA, while Misha and crew were simultaneously hammering away at the 600. Hamid sent us off Saturday morning promptly at 7:00 am and then resumed his responsibilities monitoring riders and cooking. I did a tour of Loudon County and was just about to reenter the Washington and Old Dominion Trail for the last leg home when I heard, "DIDI! I FINALLY CAUGHT UP TO YOU!" Bless his heart, it was Hamid! He had left over an hour after I did

so he could catch up to me and ride the rest of the way. It was such a great experience, and even though I was exhausted, I came back the next day. Three weeks later, I discovered the beauty of Warrenton with NVR on another populaire.

****THIS, folks, is how to grow your rando membership! Hamid will schedule as many as five different routes on a single weekend to accommodate everyone's schedules and abilities! He is the master Jedi of RBAs! ****

What's next for me? I've completed a couple of centuries, and I'm hoping by the time you read this, I'll have some 200kms brevets under my belt. Perhaps next year I'll tackle a 300 if I can find a very gentle one. I think I'm crazy enough; the day after the Warrenton 100km, I did a century. I've got a little pluck!

I'm hoping this article encourages rando groups to welcome the GO and

inspires other GOers to join RUSA. We have a few already, but we have not tapped into the hundreds more who already partake in non-RUSA organized rides. ElliptiGO is always represented at organized metric centuries and centuries, Mount Washington, RAGBRAI, CCC, and various time-trials around the country.

In closing, I'd like to personally thank *American Randonneur* for inviting me to write this article; Bryan and Brent for creating this bike that I love; Hamid Akbarian, Misha Heller, and NVR for welcoming me with open arms; Idai Makaya and the other ElliptiGO PBP Boys for paving the way; and my beloved GO community for boldly riding our contraptions. I had no idea that randonneuring even existed, and here I am, making wonderful new friends, enthralled by the sights, achieving new goals, and having a blast! I ranGO! 🚲

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The Group is the Group

When I began riding bikes with the D.C. Randonneurs, I didn't imagine the significant role this activity, as well as the people involved in it, would have on my life. But the randonneuring community is small and the rides are long.

Brevets require riders to maintain an overall pace, but randonneuring rewards successful completion rather than speed, and I think these elements contribute to the evolution of a rather unique sporting club.

There aren't many people who "get it" when it comes to randonneuring. Most people think we're crazy and tell us so in various ways. But we know the appeal of long days on the open road, and even if we don't share much in common beyond that, we have a way of sticking together.

In a sense, it's like living in a small town. Our little community grows stronger through mutual acceptance as we tolerate – even appreciate – each other's quirks and our individual approaches to long-distance riding.

The group is the group, somebody said to me once. When you show up for a brevet, the people who line up with you at the start are your event posse for the duration. Even if people tear off the front or someone drops back, an awareness permeates that you are all out there together in some fashion. We appreciate each other's efforts, varied in execution though they may be. The group lasts only as long as the event

itself, but the small-town feel lingers after the ride ends.

Nobody else understands why we choose to ride long year-round, through rain and chill, on sunny as well as less inviting days, but *we* do. We get it, and among each other we relax, knowing we need never explain that part of ourselves.

Outside the context of bike rides, lives of fellow riders may be a mystery, but through brevets people become familiar in a limited yet unexpectedly intimate way. Unfamiliar faces gradually intertwine with your cycling network. This is a gift of the long ride.

You see the fender crowd, the no-fender crowd (gasp!), 650B aficionados, and the boutique bags contingent. You meet people who show up at almost every brevet, those who generally pop their heads in during a PBP year, and newcomers only just dipping their Sidis into brevet distances. There are those who ride for speed and others who savor each kilometer to the fullest.

Over time, you develop an ability to recognize fellow randonneurs from afar. Some combination of their bike setup – the way they sit or pedal, their clothing choices, or the bags they use to carry gear – reveals their identities before you even glimpse their faces.

Every rider's unique profile becomes known to you, even as most of our lives happen outside the bounds of bike rides. Over the years, the group I have known through brevets has changed. Some have moved on to other



Mary on Hains Point.

—PHOTO ED FELKER

pursuits. Others relocated. Sadly, some have died. At unexpected moments on rides, I swear I see their profiles and the memories of times shared in the randonneuring small town awaken.

Still others of us continue to intersect at rides. We exchange hellos, talk about brevets gone by, and watch the sun rise and set over us.

The group is the group. Let's keep growing and diversifying randonneuring so our group and community may thrive. 🚲



Randonneurs on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC.

—PHOTO MARY GERSEMA

Comparing RUSA to the World UltraCycling Association

BY DAN DRISCOLL WITH GEORGI STOYCHEV AND ANDREA MATNEY

The leaders of Randonneurs USA (RUSA) and the World UltraCycling Association (WUCA) recently came together over the realization that there is significant overlap in the interests of their respective members. Believing that both forms of long-distance cycling are appealing, and that many members of each organization might be tempted to try activities in the other area, we thought you might be interested to hear from a few cyclists with extensive experience in both.

of riders stay in groups, helping one another and enjoying the shared adventure. When it comes to WUCA, you can expect to find welcoming racers and events from six hours to over 3,000 miles. Many of the races offer a self-supported division, bringing the nature of the event closer to randonneuring. And for an extra thrill, don't be surprised to line up next to some of the best athletes in the world, from RAAM veterans to World Record Holders.

Georgi Stoychev, Andrea Matney, and Dan Driscoll describe their experiences in the piece that follow. All have built impressive resumes from years of participation in both forms of cycling. The purpose here is to encourage members with experience in only one of these areas to expand their horizons.

In which sport did you begin and what prompted your initial decision to venture into the other

area? Why would you recommend a WUCA rider try a RUSA event and vice versa?

Georgi: After mountain bike racing as a teen, I was introduced to randonneuring at 16. The camaraderie is the number one reason to try randonneuring. It is less stressful and does not require you to be super fast. The distances vary from 200km to 1200km, and one simply needs to be fit to finish within the time limit. A lot

Dan: I grew up with a competitive swimming background, training six days a week from age 12. The transition out of the pool to biking, then road racing and criteriums, was a good one. Training with real race goals kept up my motivation and gave training a purpose. Bike racing taught me that the longer and harder the race, the better I fared. And as I aged and gravitated to longer miles, ultra cycling was an obvious next chapter. Ultra cycling training usually meant long solo rides; the goals were the races, usually just one or two a year. Then came my introduction to randonneuring, which was a perfect complement to my ultra-distance racing addiction. I could now do long miles with companions and camaraderie.

How does your training differ between the two sports? How is overlap optimized for enjoyment of both?

Then came my introduction to randonneuring, which was a perfect complement to my ultra-distance racing addiction. I could now do long miles with companions and camaraderie.

DAN DRISCOLL



Georgi at the Maryland Endurance Challenge, WUCA's 12-hour North American Championship.

— EVENT PHOTO

Below, the start of 2014 RAW (Race Across the West) "Team Crewless and Clueless."

— PHOTO DAN DRISCOLL

Andrea: I believe that the two organizations' events complement each other. As a RUSA rider, after investing SO much time in non-competitive events, you may find yourself wondering how fast you can go or how you stack up against others. WUCA can help you resolve that curiosity. Races will provide a higher level of adrenaline and will push you to new heights. It's incredibly fun!

To the WUCA rider – know that brevets are an adventure and journey

with new roads. It's never a circuit done over and over – which can be boring. I use the non-competitive RUSA brevets as training for races. Brevets give you tremendous base miles, but they also teach you about self-reliance. There's no crew, so it's all you, Babe! You'll learn how to handle sleep deprivation, energy conservation, and nutrition. All of that helps build mental fortitude to push through the difficult times – regardless the type of event – and finish no matter what.

Georgi: For racing, you would typically do more high intensity workouts; to increase your FTP (functional threshold power) and to sustain a higher percentage of FTP for an extended period. In randonneuring,



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.

Update your address online at:

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you will mostly work in lower zones that can also be beneficial for racing as endurance is the base of both. My high intensity workouts are on weekdays and long miles on weekends, which works well with scheduled randonneuring events. It erases the monotony, and mixing things up helps to keep cycling interesting. As I am preparing for racing across the USA, my plan usually requires back-to-back 8-hour training days on the weekends with moderate intensity. Randonneuring can be a perfect substitute. The 400km and 600km events work well, and the 400km, with its 27-hour time limit, is done without sleep. This can be the perfect training ride as preparation for multi-day ultra races.

Dan: When this started for me, there was very little science available.

It is much different now, with TrainingPeaks and power meters. Back in the day, it was all just long miles. Today, the long miles train the brain, allow for enjoyment of the outdoors with friends, while shorter and faster miles (or trainer hours) train the body. Many have found a happy balance between enjoyment and training, and this mixture works well for both ultra-distance racing and randonneuring.

Motivation — what motivates you as a randonneur or ultraracer?

Dan: As an ultra-distance racer, I am motivated by developing and executing a good game plan, which involves efficient training, peaking, tapering, and then performing on race day—this is results-oriented. My

Andrea, thoroughly enjoying the DC Randonneurs' 600km Brevet.

—PHOTO MARY GERSEMA

motivation for randonneuring changes with the event. On one ride, I may be concerned with keeping the herd together, and in particular helping the ones in need—keeping everyone happy and having fun. On the next ride, I might be saving a friend's ride by giving them the spare tire I have been carrying, or helping them with a mechanical, or just having fun with them.

Georgi: The motivation is similar: challenging myself, accomplishing my goals, getting stronger, finding my limits. I am also raising funds for breast cancer through racing as this has affected my life tremendously and the

Ultra Racing family has done amazing things on the fundraising front.

Obviously in racing we aspire to win. That is a motivator itself. But each racer sets their own goals, with plenty of riders hoping to set a personal best or to finish at their own performance target.

In randonneuring the goal is to finish under the time limit, and it feels great to do it. Many riders enjoy the social aspect of events. You can ride and chat all day, stop at historical places and take pictures, take frequent breaks and enjoy great company. What is not to like?

Andrea: Do you love eating lots of chocolate chip cookies and other goodies? Do you like doing that with new-found and life-long friends? Both sports create the opportunity to eat a lot and meet a lot of people! And honestly, I just love the physicality of riding. It feels good . . . well, mostly.

How do participants typically define “success” and what does that take?

Georgi: Success can be just showing up to the start line, believing in your fitness and equipment and accepting the challenge. Success can be finishing, winning or simply enjoying yourself with friends. Success in ultra-distance racing can be earning a World Record, being one of the few in the entire world who dares to attempt and then finish Race Across America, winning a local 24-hr race while going over 400 miles, or becoming a champion in a specific division.

Andrea: Success for me in both sports is the same but comes from a different angle. Did I have fun, learn something, give my best, make new friends, or strengthen bonds with old ones? Yes? Then, it was a success.

Dan: The ultimate goal in racing is to WIN, or to come as close to that as possible. The ultimate goal in randonneuring is to finish in the time limit. We’ve seen the fastest riders on a 1,200km randonneuring event finish close to the cut off time, but they enjoyed eight hours sleep each night. Some take pleasure in the flexibility of personal goals, saying, “The ones who got the most sleep win.” Having a foot in both camps brings a better perspective of the bigger picture. Being able to differentiate between racing and riding as a randonneur, while also seeing the similarities, is a good thing. At the end of the day, everyone needs to feel good about what they have done, or they will likely not continue. For me, if I’m still racing and still randonneuring for as many years as possible, I’ve succeeded. Having a foot in each camp helps me keep a good perspective. 🚴



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Going Far Together

I was talking recently with a colleague who mentioned the African proverb, “If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.” We were not discussing cycling, and certainly not randonneuring, but it clearly applies to our sport. A focused rider can zip into and out of a control in minutes, but add a buddy or two and the time required multiplies exponentially. For me, the enjoyment of riding with friends more than compensates for any time lost en route.

At PBP 2011, my only goal was to finish after dropping out in 2007. I always think of that ride as a very workman-like endeavor. I rode all 1200+ km solo and aside from crying at the sight of the “Brest Bridge,” there was not much enjoyment along the way. In 2015 I teamed up with Paul and Joe, and I remember, for the most part, having a blast and treating it as

a sleep-deprived, inexpensive tour of France. In 2019, teaming up with Nigel and George and having my brother and nephew providing support was, in true randonesian hindsight, a purely joyous adventure.

During the pandemic there were many solo rides or rides with only a trusted friend or two. We wanted to maintain our “pandemic pods” as much

as possible, which sadly limited our group size. Then, a few weeks ago, Nigel sent out a group invitation, declaring that he was emerging from his Covid cocoon and was there any interest in a 100km or 200km permanent? He clearly tapped into pent-up demand as everyone invited said yes, so more names were added, and additional invites were sent.

We decided on a flat, scenic 100km through the cranberry bogs and blueberry fields which mark the northern tip of south-eastern New Jersey. Janice and Nigel would come over from PA, Katie and Jon would dust off the “Tandemator” and head down from the north, Paul and I had a short trip to the start. Nigel had dangled the last-minute possibility of surprise guests. When we arrived the morning of the ride, sure enough there were Ron and Barb, the promised surprise, with their very shiny Bilenky tandem. (Bilenky Cycle Works had just built the custom bike Biden gifted to Boris Johnson so it was akin to riding with celebrities...). We planned to meet up with Mary, the route designer, and Mac, at the halfway point as they would be starting from the next control.

Janice and I had ridden this route a few times over the winter and very much enjoyed it, but this ride was different; the hours just flew by. It was a delight to ride along and chat with



June 26 group ride.

—PHOTO CHRIS NEWMAN

everyone about everything and nothing in particular. The weather co-operated, our pace was leisurely, and we had a picnic lunch at the intermediate control where we did catch Mac and Mary.

In the home stretch, we were talking about revisiting the winery tour of the previous year when Ron divulged the presence of a small microbrewery a short hop from the start. That's all Janice and I had to hear as we had spent a good part of last year ending rides near brew pubs or creameries. As we finished the ride and exchanged long overdue hugs, we invited all to join us for an impromptu post-ride beverage. The invitation seemed irresistible, but family obligations prevented all but Nigel from trekking to the Screamin' Hill Brewery, where we sipped our reward at a picnic table overlooking fields thick with wheat. We had gone far with great friends -- a good day on the bike, indeed! 🚲



The tandemator rides again!

—PHOTO CHRIS NEWMAN



American Randonneur — CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

We welcome submissions of interest to readers of *American Randonneur*. Articles with photos or other visual elements are particularly welcome. While the focus of *AR* is

on randonneuring events held in the U.S., articles on international events are also published.

Types of articles include but aren't limited to the following:

- Ride reports
- Ride promotional articles
- Technical and gear articles
- Training, health, nutrition articles
- Collage articles incorporating tweets, facebook quotes and/or short quotes from blog posts
- Reprints of blog posts (However, original material preferred)
- Reports on non-rando long-distance/endurance events of interest to randos
- Letters to the editor
- Book reviews
- Cartoons, sketches or other humorous articles

Length of articles: articles of up to 2000 words. No minimum length requirement, but please contact editor about longer articles.

Photos: must be high resolution and unaltered. They can be submitted as attachments to email messages. Other options are available and can be discussed with the editor.

How to submit articles: articles should be sent as Word files (no PDFs, no links to blog posts) to editor@rusa.org or jchernekoff@yahoo.com. Send photos separately; do not include them in articles.

The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, accuracy and brevity.

Paid advertising: is available. Please contact Jay Fichiolas (quadmod@gmail.com) for details.

Submission deadlines:

Spring issue — December 15 Fall issue — June 15
 Summer issue — March 15 Winter issue — September 15

Questions? Please contact the editor at editor@rusa.org.

New RUSA Members

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE	RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE	RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
14420	Howard, Thomas M	Anchorage	AK	14528	Kretzschmar, Kenneth M	San Diego	CA	14569	Marzot, Hilary	Concord	MA
14416	Lambert, Steve A	Anchorage	AK	14509	Noble, Cris	San Diego	CA	14493	Phillips, D	Medford	MA
14418	Purrenhage, Tim J	Anchorage	AK	14592	Polakoski, David R	San Diego	CA	14519	Duffin, Chase M	Melrose	MA
14431	Velez, Shannon Lynne	Anchorage	AK	14557	Sallis, Stephen M	San Diego	CA	14512	Fox, Henry S	Newburyport	MA
14422	Smithson, Lisa C	Girdwood	AK	14478	Abramson, Robert Willis	San Francisco	CA	14595	Novark, Gene	Northampton	MA
14423	Smithson, Peter J	Girdwood	AK	14510	Conner, Alana L	San Francisco	CA	14440	Clark, Colin H	Quincy	MA
14404	Evans, Mikey	Palmer	AK	14489	Cully, David	San Francisco	CA	14549	Courchaine, Abbey A	South Dartmouth	MA
14407	Ferguson, Adam Brett	Palmer	AK	14558	Erickson, Nick Edward	San Francisco	CA	14576	Johnson, Ritchie	Deale	MD
14408	Ferguson, Brett A	Palmer	AK	14504	Hagstrom, J	San Francisco	CA	14537	Vlaikov, Michael A	Edgewater	MD
14381	Van Tol, Carlene	Palmer	AK	14588	Lawrence, Genevieve	San Francisco	CA	14449	Kearney, M C	Cumberland	ME
14470	Hardwick, Shannon Lee	Wasilla	AK	14511	Rose, Howard A	San Francisco	CA	14505	Darling, Chris	Lovell	ME
14550	Bryant, Michael R	Athens	AL	14486	Sweeney, Patricia	San Francisco	CA	14506	Bourgoin, Ryan	Portland	ME
14533	Bagdigian, Robert	Huntsville	AL	14430	Brogan, Mark	San Jose	CA	14507	Wilding, Jillian	Portland	ME
14541	Gayk, John	Prattville	AL	14518	Chen, Jiaao	San Jose	CA	14382	Mudar, Alex	Oak Park	MI
14544	Dix, Brian	Sylacauga	AL	14523	Swarup, Daivik	San Jose	CA	14380	Harding, Mark A	Oxford	MI
14589	Belt, Scott A	Bentonville	AR	14429	Tran, Sang T	San Jose	CA	14398	Shears, David	South Lyon	MI
14566	Dang, Diletta Z	Tucson	AZ	14522	Kubasti, Nick	Santa Clara	CA	14421	Franklund, D E	Bloomington	MN
14562	Sidhu, Laljit	Bakersfield	CA	14585	Legakis III, Vernon A	Santa Cruz	CA	14488	Lyons, Kevin Patrick	Duluth	MN
14514	Applegate, Alex C	Berkeley	CA	14499	OCillin, Everett	Santa Cruz	CA	14397	Morton, Patrick E.	Edina	MN
14535	Glover, Rolfe	Berkeley	CA	14577	Parrish, Cheryl M.	Santa Monica	CA	14385	Rueda, Edward S	Excelsior	MN
14515	Atencio, J	Capitola	CA	14579	Fitzgerald, John	Santa Rosa	CA	14586	Uhl, Scott C	Minneapolis	MN
14492	Maynard, Carol J	Colfax	CA	14526	Szura Shen, Christine Louise	Sunnyvale	CA	14409	Wilson, Charles D	Minneapolis	MN
14474	Noda, Rodney J	Corte Madera	CA	14393	Thakkar, Kushan	Walnut Creek	CA	14545	Moser, Chris	Minnetrista	MN
14547	Andrews, Justin Hale	Culver City	CA	14427	Lagerlof, Erik J	Castle Rock	CO	14564	Sunohara, Masahiro	Plymouth	MN
14548	Angius, Carolyn Marie	Culver City	CA	14481	Brown, Eileen Ann	Copper Mountain	CO	14580	Enzler, Mark	Rochester	MN
14425	Reitz, Nicholas F	Davis	CA	14496	Cooper, Trent	Denver	CO	14490	Ficatier, Johanna	Rochester	MN
14582	Birch, Geoff	Escondido	CA	14401	Terrana, Gaspar	Denver	CO	14583	Muro, Mario A	Rochester	MN
14435	Khan, Ahsan	Fremont	CA	14437	Andre, Mark S	Fort Collins	CO	14563	Rowley, Greg S	Rochester	MN
14534	Korevaar, Eric	La Jolla	CA	14399	MacInnes, Brennan	Middletown	CT	14553	Tieskotter, Charles	Rochester	MN
14573	Taw, Quinn	Laguna Niguel	CA	14497	Jaroszewski, Rebecca	Vernon	CT	14432	Dobrovolny, Walter	St Paul	MN
14539	Budge, Travis Ryan	Lake Forest	CA	14498	Villafano, Geno	Vernon	CT	14390	Pellettieri, Noah L	St Paul	MN
14520	Begland Jr, Rob Roy	Los Angeles	CA	14464	Alleyne II, Carl A	Washington	DC	14424	Bax, Carrie	Hartsburg	MO
14448	Shear, Michael	Los Angeles	CA	14463	Lee, A	Washington	DC	14438	Barcroft, Michael E	Kirkwood	MO
14471	Holden, Richard J	Martinez	CA	14559	Haynes, Jeremy O F	Apopka	FL	14476	Butterfield, Samuel L	Lincoln	NE
14434	Herget, Thomas	Menlo Park	CA	14594	Twiford Sr, Dallas	Chuluota	FL	14482	Bradshaw, Peter	Atkinson	NH
14521	Richards, M Rachel	Menlo Park	CA	14552	Bell, Troy J	Carrollton	GA	14395	Dellea, Erik	Concord	NH
14441	Schneider, Florian	Mountain View	CA	14529	Grant, Graham	Carrollton	GA	14387	Raju, Jay	Basking Ridge	NJ
14433	Almquist, Nicholas	Oakland	CA	14503	French, Carson Bennett	Columbus	GA	14405	Goldsmith, Steven	Cherry Hill	NJ
14479	Grant, Megan T	Oakland	CA	14468	Lockhart, Christian D	Geneva	GA	14392	Hammill, Michael G	Flemington	NJ
14517	Horowitz, Josh	Oakland	CA	14436	Sirajud-deen, Talib	Stone Mountain	GA	14426	Parker Sr, Kyle S.	Hamilton	NJ
14473	Levitt, Drew S	Oakland	CA	14396	Perry, Bruce	Port Byron	IL	14551	Johnson, Olin	Jb Mdl	NJ
14483	Siler, Charles C	Oakland	CA	14502	White, Steven J	Fort Wayne	IN	14454	Reh, Paul W.	Mahwah	NJ
14480	Williams, Douglas	Oakland	CA	14458	Gavin, Tim	West Lafayette	IN	14543	Minner, Derek	Medford	NJ
14495	Austin, Tye	Sacramento	CA	14461	Koser, Vince	West Lafayette	IN	14415	Sadasivuni, Satya	Monmouth Junction	NJ
14494	Daggett, Lya	Sacramento	CA	14472	Jongenelen, Ben	Shawnee	KS	14394	Reo, Joseph	Parsippany	NJ
14414	Harmeier, Michelle A	San Carlos	CA	14410	Fleming, David	Paducah	KY	14402	Saini, Prabhjot	Princeton Junction	NJ
14593	Hom, Michael Deron	San Diego	CA	14536	de la Cretaz, Ben R	Boston	MA	14571	Wangikar, Prasad S	Princeton Junction	NJ

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE	RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE	RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
14560	Cappel, Kenneth	Ringoes	NJ	14450	Caplan, Mark	Bala Cynwyd	PA	14413	Hendry, David G	Bothell	WA
14411	Alexis, Madhu	Somerset	NJ	14403	Simpkins, Christopher J	Harleysville	PA	14572	Gwildis, Ulf Georg	Kirkland	WA
14417	Hamlett, S Nicole	Trenton	NJ	14389	Crouch, Jason	Narberth	PA	14565	Dunphy, Allan	Medina	WA
14465	Serter, Digidem	Bronx	NY	14584	Mookerjee, Samit	Philadelphia	PA	14587	Brine, W David	Olympia	WA
14451	Eklund, Martin	Brooklyn	NY	14568	Reddy, Silpa	Philadelphia	PA	14591	Griswold, P D	Olympia	WA
14453	Gordon, Adam	Brooklyn	NY	14538	Koontz, Jeff	Pittsburgh	PA	14542	Rabena, Yuri	Renton	WA
14466	Pezzilli, Vincenzo	Brooklyn	NY	14508	Loewen, Ralph	Saint-Lazare	QC	14487	Zheng, Ben	Renton	WA
14456	Weisburg, Eric	Brooklyn	NY	14524	Bingham, Robert Scott	Beaufort	SC	14525	Lynch, Abbe Bartlett	Sammamish	WA
14444	Wong, Kevin	Flushing	NY	14513	White, Jane J.	Rock Hill	SC	14532	Armijo, Michael P	Seattle	WA
14455	Dyrkolbotn, Ann Kristin	Long Island City	NY	14567	Rice, Adam	Austin	TX	14452	Coyle, Aidan F	Seattle	WA
14457	Albuquerque, Claudia T	New York	NY	14383	Skordas, Greg	Eden	UT	14575	Diegert, Kurt W	Seattle	WA
14460	Ashley, Victoria A.	New York	NY	14379	Beresford, Bryan	Midvale	UT	14527	Hauser, Sheri Anne	Seattle	WA
14467	Bertaccini, Blair F	New York	NY	14556	Robey, Hoyt S.	Morgan	UT	14531	Janel, Kathleen J	Seattle	WA
14459	DiBartolomeo, Joel T	New York	NY	14581	Feld, Christopher	Ogden	UT	14530	Kelley, Colleen	Seattle	WA
14462	Hardwicke, Adrian C	New York	NY	14443	Kelly, Jennifer	Park City	UT	14516	Kitchen, Chase	Seattle	WA
14447	Mascarenhas, Karl Rajiv	New York	NY	14386	Mceneaney, Patrick	Park City	UT	14406	Lee, Rob	Seattle	WA
14388	Pierre, Marilynn	New York	NY	14554	Kennedy, Bobby	Salt Lake City	UT	14546	West, Jo-Anne	Seattle	WA
14469	Vaccaro, S	New York	NY	14561	Lustig, Brian R	Ashburn	VA	14555	Kelly, K L	Snohomish	WA
14540	Havill, Jessen	Granville	OH	14590	Stahlman, James E	Burke	VA	14578	Butler, Mark Edward	University Place	WA
14484	Clark, Travis A	London	OH	14400	Tatusko, Joe	Leesburg	VA	14419	Nall, Branden A	Eau Claire	WI
14442	Huntsman, Brent E.	Xenia	OH	14439	Mothes, Mike	Vienna	VA	14477	Williams, Andy	Eau Claire	WI
14501	Henderson, Dustin W	Gresham	OR	14485	Seifert, Nick	Marshfield	VT	14391	Ham, Carl Kenneth	Madison	WI
14428	Spangle, Trevor L	Lebanon	OR	14445	Stewart, James I	Montpelier	VT	14570	Oh, Jinwoo	Madison	WI
14491	Banks-Watson, Alexander R	Portland	OR	14446	Wexler, Chloe	Montpelier	VT	14384	Duewel, Christoph Alexander Muenchen	DE	
14574	Gagosian, Ben	Portland	OR	14475	Oberther, Chris	Putney	VT				
14500	Steiner, Michael	Portland	OR	14412	Shepley, Henry R	Winooski	VT				



RUSA Elections

By the time you receive this edition of *AR*, information on the annual RUSA elections will have been shared in our new *Between Controls* email newsletter. If you missed the email notice, check the RUSA website:

rusa.org

Making the Mason Dixon 1200K

BY GARDNER DUVALL

I was hooked at “1200 km.” I had never considered being the RBA, had never been an officer, and had never so much as been a board member of DC Randonneurs. I was just a guy who liked to ride, create routes, and was willing to lend a hand. As I mulled over Nick Bull’s suggestion that I succeed him as the Capital Region RBA, it was promoting the next 1200km in 2022 that really made me want to take on the position.

The intrigue of organizing a 1200km was mesmerizing. I wanted to take the route to Pennsylvania Dutch Country, where centuries of gentle cultivation by the Amish and Mennonites have left this gently rolling terrain a feast for the senses and a treat to ride. Our prior events longer than 600km never got near the Mason-Dixon Line, much less east of

the Susquehanna River, where many live a different way. Concepts were bandied about, a team formed, and the Mason-Dixon 1200 (with a 1000-km option) was born.

In this region Leesburg, Virginia, is the best place to start a grand randonnee because of its proximity to the suburban/rural edge of the DC area, the convenience of two airports, and

the availability of useful services. Big water to the east and the Appalachian range to the west and north constrain long routes yet make for delightful riding. That means either going around or over the Blue Ridge Mountains, Massanutten and Catoctin Mountains, and the South Mountain range. These mountains line up to form the gorgeous agricultural wonderlands of the Shenandoah and Cumberland Valleys. The Mason-Dixon 1200 minimizes mountain climbing by starting through the Virginia piedmont, which is replete with Civil War history, has Virginia’s premier horse country at Middleburg, and contains James Madison’s Montpelier home.

At mile 150 the course rolls over the Blue Ridge at Rockfish Gap and



Chuck Wood and Crista Borrás approaching a buggy in Pennsylvania Dutch country.

—PHOTO BILL BECK



drops into the Shenandoah Valley. The southern point is Lexington, where the trip up the valley begins with Massanutten Mountain to the east. The first overnight is Staunton, where the downtown Hotel 24 probably is four times better than the randonneurs' more customary Motel 6.

On Day 2 the northerly trip up the Shenandoah Valley continues to the delightful randonneuring crossroad of Shepherdstown, West Virginia, which is charming and historic but small enough to present no urban riding. Shepherdstown quickly yields to the Potomac River and Maryland. A few miles later the route touches the Antietam National Battlefield, where beautiful fields belie a bloody history. From there we ride the Cumberland Valley to Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, for the second overnight, on the northeastern flank of the South Mountain range.

Day 3 starts with the second and final mountain pass, over Big Flat in the Michaux State Forest. The descent launches riders toward historic Gettysburg, where an extended ride through the National Military Park



Rolling terrain and scenic views on the Mason-Dixon 1200.

—PHOTO BILL BECK

Eastern Pennsylvania RBA, graciously designed the 100-mile loop in Lancaster County, a gorgeous area where bikes often pass buggies (you need to know the etiquette!) before crossing the river again at the 1000-km mark. A few miles later the third overnight pops up in York, PA. From there we ride a short Day 4 over some favorite DCRand terrain of lovely farms and quiet roads that are fairly flat before passing through Frederick, Maryland, and crossing the Potomac again to get to the finish.

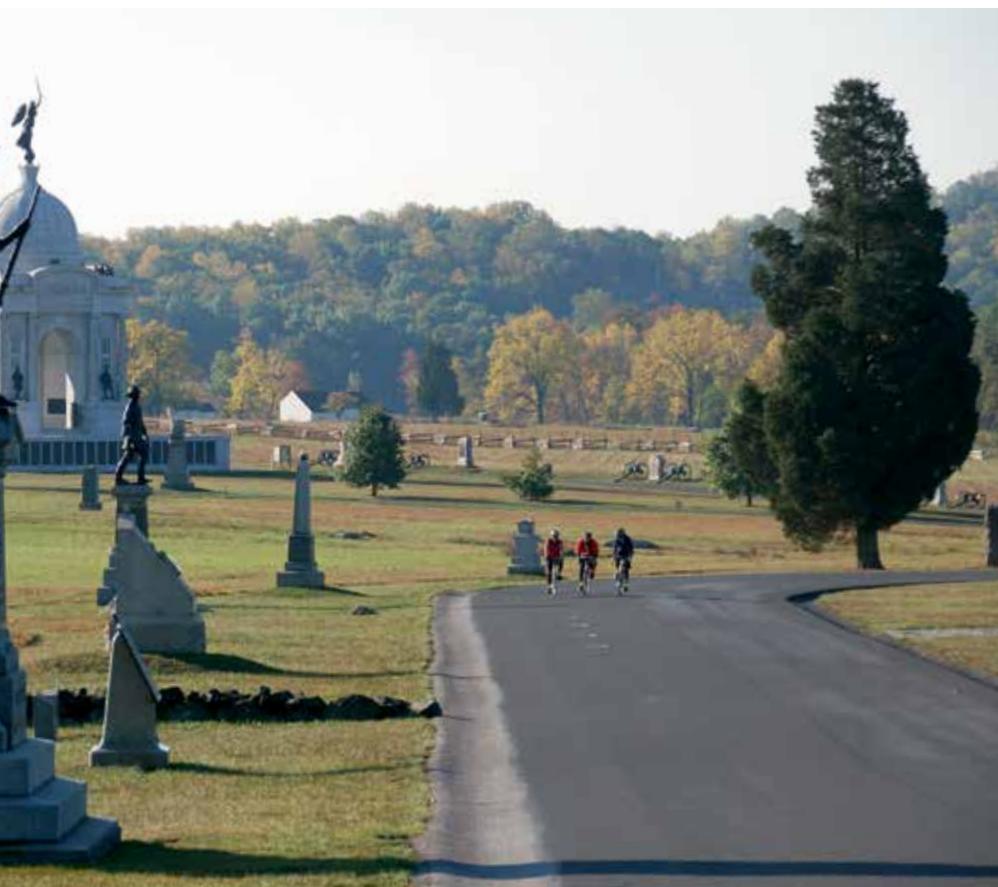
In different ways over the four days, the route traverses Civil War history through key battlegrounds in the Shenandoah Valley, Antietam, and Gettysburg as well as areas of critical logistics regarding manufacturing, agriculture, and transportation. The geographically vulnerable Union capital of Washington, D.C., is never more than 200 miles away throughout the ride. Lancaster County was a bit off the beaten track for battle and protected by the Susquehanna, but it was a critical location for the Underground Railroad just north of the Mason-Dixon Line. Many pathways of the Underground Railroad headed west from Lancaster County across our roads in south central Pennsylvania. In consideration of the social history of this region as the borderland between north and south, this ride is dubbed the Mason-Dixon 1200.

Wheels roll June 9, 2022, in Leesburg. More information and registration at masondixon1200.org 

Randonneurs riding along Cemetery Ridge in the Gettysburg National Military Park.

—PHOTO BILL BECK

travels the main battlelines of both the Confederate and Union armies. The route then heads east to cross the mighty Susquehanna River into Columbia, PA, a rideable gateway into Lancaster County and Pennsylvania Dutch Country. Andrew Meade, the



Randos by the Roadside—Part II

In the last column, I described a few things that can go wrong with wheels, and what you can do about them when you're out on the road.

If it's not your wheels that go wrong, another likely culprit might be your drivetrain. But like wheels, there are lots of drivetrain problems that can be patched up by the roadside to get you home. It definitely pays to learn a bit about all the parts of your bike's drivetrain and how they all work together so that you can more easily diagnose problems and make adjustments.

Minor shifting issues can be caused by all sorts of things, from general wear and tear, to grime from a particularly rainy ride, to your derailleur getting knocked around while you were loading the bike into the car. Basic derailleur adjustments involve just the cable tension or occasionally the limit screws. If you haven't acquainted yourself with these sorts of adjustments, check YouTube for videos.

Of course, sometimes something happens that requires more than a minor cable adjustment.

When chains break, what generally happens is that one of the outer plates pulls away from its pin. The inner plates are probably fine; however, it's the outer plates that hold the chain together. But a complete link consists of a pair of inner plates and a pair of outer plates, and the outer half of the

link that broke is now useless. The basic, old-skool way to fix a broken chain is to carefully drive the pin most of the way out of the next link, so that it's still stuck into the outer plate but the inner plates and roller can be pulled apart; then you assemble the next inner plate into it and carefully drive the pin back through. It may take a bit of flexing the chain side to side to get it to move freely.

However, while the old-skool method worked fine for old chains with plates made out of thicker metal, modern narrow chains have thinner plates and will be weaker after they are reassembled in this way and so more likely to break again. If you're riding on a chain that has been reassembled this way, ride as gingerly as you can. Don't sprint, and also stay out of your small chainring. (It's counterintuitive, but

for a given gear ratio, chain tension is higher when you're in a smaller chainring than when you get the same ratio using the big ring.) The limit to this advice is that now your chain is one link shorter, so the big-ring + big-cog combination could be more of a problem than it would normally be.

The better solution is to carry a master link with you, and/or a spare of the special pin that comes with new chains for assembling them when they're installed. Many of the master links can even be assembled without tools although they can be tricky; it's good to figure out the process ahead of time! You can buy master links separately, but alternatively you can always save the one from your old chain when you get a new chain. The master link replaces the outer plates in a chain link, so if you just had one link break open, the master link can completely solve your problem in a snap without shortening your chain. They aren't intended to be interchangeable between brands, but in practice you can sometimes get away with using a different brand master link as long as

Most of us don't ride around with an entire bike shop in our saddlebags. But a few strategic additions to your tool kit can save your ride or at least let you limp to the finish with minimal additional weight.



Wrecked chain.

—PHOTO EMILY O'BRIEN

it's the same size; it may just make a little extra noise.

But chains don't usually just break on their own. If you have a broken chain, you may have broken something else as well, such as your rear derailleur or derailleur hanger. Any number of things can send your rear derailleur into your spokes: sticks, debris, the bike falling over onto the derailleur or getting banged around in transit, and so on. Note that limit screws stop the derailleur from shifting into the spokes, which is a good reason to know how the limit screws work!

Sometimes you can bend a damaged derailleur hanger back into an approximately useful position, although you'll probably have to put up with less-than-optimal shifting until you can get back to civilization. If your derailleur hanger is aluminum, be extra careful in trying to bend it back and don't push your luck—you probably

can't bend it back much without breaking it completely!

If either derailleur is damaged but still more or less in position, or if you've snapped a cable, you can adjust the limit screws to fix the derailleur into one spot. You won't be able to shift with that derailleur anymore, but you'll still be able to use the other

one. In other words, if you have to fix your rear derailleur in place but it's still more or less there, it will still function as a chain tensioner and allow you to shift between chainrings. If your front derailleur cable has snapped, you can use your limit screws to fix the front derailleur into position over one chainring and still continue to shift the rear one. You'll be limited in how many gears you have, but you'll still be able to keep rolling.

If your rear derailleur has died more spectacularly, you'll have to take more drastic measures. A common way for this to happen is for something to cause the derailleur to hit the spokes, which then grab it and yank as the wheel goes around.

As long as your dropouts are still intact enough to hold your wheel



Master link.

—PHOTO EMILY O'BRIEN

securely, you can remove the derailleur, shorten the chain, and make your bike into a singlespeed. You'll have to choose your chainring/cog/chain length combination carefully; different combinations will leave you with different amounts of slack in your chain, and most modern bikes don't have horizontal dropouts to let you take up that slack. So, you'll have to find the best balance between a combination that will keep the chain in place and get you up most of the hills; you can always coast on the way down and walk up the steepest ones. It might not be the gear you'd prefer. You'll probably be slower, but you'll be able to keep riding. If your chain rubs your front derailleur, use the limit screws to reposition the cage. You won't be able to use your front derailleur either, because there's nothing to tension the chain except the exact combination of gears it's sitting on. Funny story: The first time I rode a brevet on a bike with

gears (as opposed to my customary fixie), halfway through the ride, this exact thing happened to my rear derailleur and I finished the ride by taking these steps.

There are, of course, other mechanical failures that are harder to work around. There's no way to field repair a broken bottom bracket spindle that I know of, short of carrying around a spare bottom bracket. In many cases, the bottom bracket is easy enough to get replaced if you can find a bike shop; the only caveat there is that if you use cranks that require non-standard tools to remove them (like my TA cranks), it's not a bad idea to carry the crank extractor with you when you travel, since bike shops may not have one. I once needed a bottom bracket replaced on a 400km; I was fortunate that the route went by a place where that was possible!

Most of us don't ride around with an entire bike shop in our saddlebags.

But a few strategic additions to your tool kit can save your ride or at least let you limp to the finish with minimal additional weight: a usable chain tool, a spare master link or two, a spoke wrench that fits your spokes, and a fiber fix spoke—or spares for the length and type that are used in your wheels. Many multi-tools include a spoke wrench and a chain tool although they aren't all equally functional. It only takes a few minutes to verify that your multi-tool has bits that fit all the nuts and bolts on your bike, that the spoke wrench isn't too awkward, and that the chain tool will actually fit your chain. If your bike has components that require proprietary tools to remove or adjust them, it doesn't hurt to carry those with you when you can.

You can't fix everything by the side of the road, but many of the more common mechanicals can be overcome without ending your ride, with just a bit of creativity and persistence. 🚲

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Randonneur Reflections on Stoicism

BY MARK LIEBIG

Having ample time to read is perhaps one benefit of the long North Dakota winters, and while I rarely read cycling-themed books, last winter's collection brought unexpected reflections on randonneuring in the form of William B. Irvine's, *A Guide to the Good Life: The Ancient Art of Stoic Joy*.

Briefly, Stoicism refers to a 'philosophy of personal ethics informed by a system of logic and objective perceptions of the natural world.' According to its teachings, the path to Stoic tranquility is found in accepting what we're given in life, not allowing ourselves to be controlled by our desire

for pleasure or fear of pain, using our minds to understand the world around us, working together and treating others fairly (description adapted from *Wikipedia*).

According to Irvine, successful adoption of Stoicism is strongly linked to techniques for either preventing

negative emotions or mitigating such emotions when prevention falls short. But what might this mean for randonneuring? Well, as I progressed through the book, I identified seven Stoic psychological techniques that I've either applied myself or have observed others apply during brevets. They are:

Applying the Trichotomy of Control

"There are things over which we have complete control, things over which we have no control whatsoever, and things over which we have some but not complete control." Here, the randonneur focuses on the first and third scenarios, while dismissing the second. Placed in practice, never have I heard a fellow rider complain about the weather.

Being Fatalistic about the Past and Present, but not the Future

Related to the issue of control, there is no value in concerning oneself with the past or immediate present. Only outcomes in the future are potentially within the randonneur's domain of influence. As applied, randonneurs seem uniquely capable of not dwelling on difficulties/mishaps encountered earlier in a ride, focusing instead on the next control or completion of the brevet.

Internalizing Goals

Selecting goals whereby one has control over the outcome is a hallmark attribute of randonneurs, as the non-competitive nature of the sport facilitates internal goal-setting.

Why, then, do you wonder that good people are shaken in order that they may grow strong? No tree becomes rooted and sturdy unless many a wind assails it. For by its very tossing it tightens its grip and plants its roots more securely; the fragile trees are those that have grown in a sunny valley. It is, therefore, to our advantage to the end that we may be unafraid, to live constantly amidst alarms and to bear with patience the happenings which are ills to those only who ill supports them.

SENECA (ROME 4BC-65AD)



Moving forward.

—PHOTO BY LUCA ON UNSPLASH

Using Humor, Abundantly

The use of humor serves to soften the gravity of difficult situations, thereby reducing – or even eliminating – anger and anxiety. Making light of difficult situations through humor has been an attribute of those I’ve ridden with during many brevets.

Committing to Voluntary Discomfort

The phrase ‘voluntary discomfort’ could just as well serve as a synonym for randonneuring, as unsupported, long-distance cycling will eventually become uncomfortable, particularly when mileage exceeds 400km. Accepting this sort of discomfort is an attribute of randonneurs.

Dealing with the Fear of Failure, Head-on

Every brevet has challenges that could potentially keep the randonneur from a successful ride. Recognizing that things could potentially go wrong but pressing forward anyway takes courage.

Not Avoiding Challenging Circumstances:

Though less of a technique and more of an attribute, choosing to ride your bike over long distances openly welcomes challenging experiences.

After finishing Irvine’s book, I wondered if many randonneurs were stealth Stoics, not knowingly engaged in Stoic practices, but possessing a set of inherent attributes that lend

themselves to leading a Stoic-type life, at least occasionally. Is this a valid inference? It’s hard to tell, and without results from a well-designed study there is no way to be sure.

For myself, the association correlates reasonably well in my role as a cyclist. Embarking on long rides has always necessitated a different sort of mindset not always present in my non-cyclist self, one requiring a hyper-awareness of my surroundings, along with an openness to adapt to and overcome challenging circumstances as they arise. Not getting worked up over setbacks has also helped (e.g., mechanicals, getting lost, or arriving at a control that falls short of expectations for nourishment or rest), along with an expectation that I’ll eventually need to work through some degree of physical discomfort or fatigue (e.g., the latter stages of a 600km brevet). These attributes, at least according to Irvine, are Stoic-like.

How about you? Are you a part-time Stoic? I would be interested in knowing if these associations resonate with your experiences as a randonneur. Feel free to email me at Bismarck.Randonneur@gmail.com with your thoughts. 🚲

Back in the (Grand Randonnée) Saddle Again

John Cap'n Ende talks with Mark Thomas who celebrates the return of 1200km events in this article. (See "Celebrating 60 by 60" in *American Randonneur* Spring 2020, where Mark talks about his goal of completing sixty 1200km adventures before his 60th birthday. He actually reached this goal almost a year ahead of schedule.).

John: You recently completed the Colorado High Country (CHC) 1200km pre-ride. How did it feel to be on a grand randonnée again?

Mark: To be honest, it felt wonderful. The ride gave me four days of many of the things that I love most about randonneuring – I enjoyed the excellent company and mutual support of old friends (Paul Foley and Vernon Smith) and new friends (Nate Hartokolis and Jim Howell). We solved problems together: weathering storms, fixing mechanicals, and finding supplies. We experienced a challenging route with seven significant climbs and numerous small ones. And we finished in great spirits and chatted extensively about "how great we are" over a beer and snacks.

J: What is the format for the CHC?

M: John Lee Ellis may be RUSA's most experienced 1200km organizer. For this year's edition he chose a route that covered a lot of ground but stopped in the same place each night. The first day brought us out of the

Boulder area and up and over Cameron Pass (10,250' above sea level) to an overnight stop in Walden, CO, at 8000' above sea level. The second day made a loop north into Wyoming and across

the Snowy Range (10,700' above sea level) before returning again to Walden. The third day looped to the west and south over three big passes (Rabbit Ears Pass 9400', Gore Pass 9250', and Willow Creek Pass 9700') before returning to Walden again. The last day took us back over Cameron Pass to a 60-mile canyon descent and on back to the start.

This format provided a lot of advantages for us – allowing us to set up camp in our Walden rooms for several days, letting electronics charge and clothes dry. Kudos to John Lee for this setup.

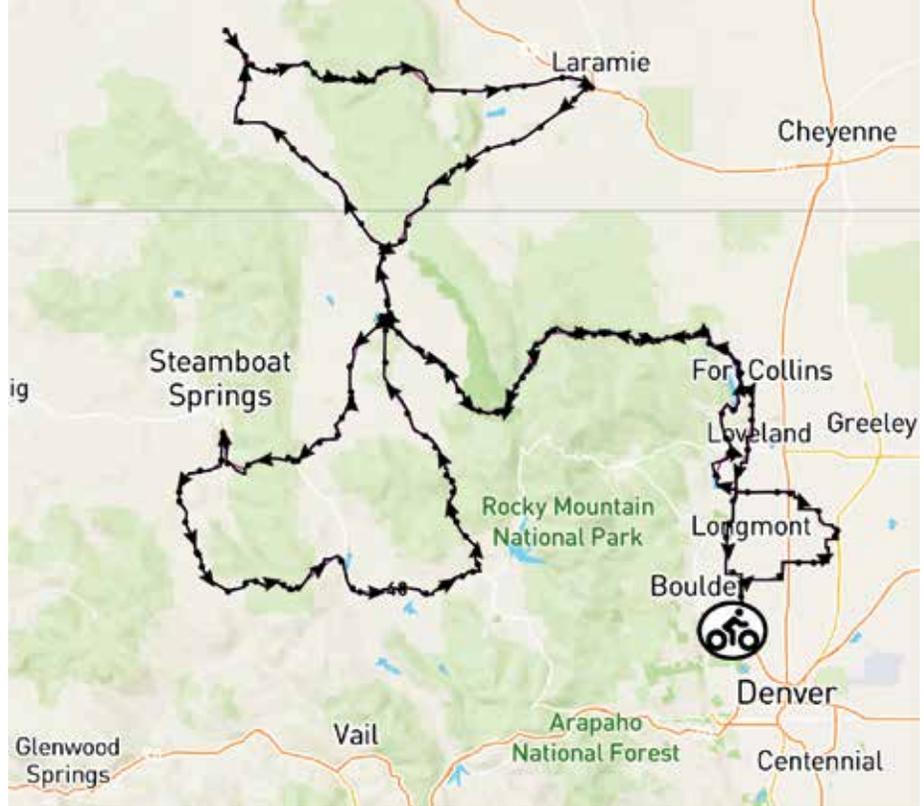


J: How long had it been since your previous 1200km?

M: Nearly twenty months. My last one was in November of 2019 in Australia. I had been averaging around five 1200s a year for nearly a decade, so this felt like a very long gap.

J: Did the event seem any different than pre-pandemic rides?

M: Other than a bit of a joyful lift to being back doing what we love, not really. With fully vaccinated riders and loosened local restrictions, the pandemic was more a topic of conversation than it was a factor in our ride.



J: You are used to doing your fair share of long rides all around the globe. How did the pandemic affect your riding?

M: The pandemic affected my riding in quite a few substantial ways. For a few months after the pandemic began, nearly all of my riding was solo. Although I have covered my fair share of randonneuring kilometers alone, I missed the company and support of friends and fellow crazies.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, I have done a lot more “no credit” riding, with permanents and brevets taking a back seat for quite a few months to back road exploration on the largely gravel forest roads of Washington.

And, as you note, my riding became a lot more local. Between the time I completed a flèche in Australia in March of 2019, following a holiday there with my wife, and the time I



Snowy Range, Wyoming.
— PHOTO MARK THOMAS

Problem solving.
— PHOTO NATE HARTOKOLIS

rode a 300km brevet in North Carolina in May of 2021, after a visit with my parents in Virginia, all of my rides started and finished within 150 miles of my home. I had to satisfy my cycling wanderlust with visits to new places near home.

J: As the current president of Les Randonneurs Mondiaux, what can you tell us about the state of randonneuring outside of the US? Are global events cautiously back or is that yet to be determined?

M: It's quite a mix, really. I'm most familiar with the state of 1200km or longer events that fall within the purview of Les Randonneurs Mondiaux. Many of those events were cancelled in 2020 and cancellations have continued to affect the 2021 calendar. Some marquee events have been postponed – like London Edinburgh London, which will now be held in 2022. Even events that have taken place as scheduled have been affected: some rerouted to avoid border crossings, some limited to same-country riders, and some conducted in staggered start formats over several days.

But as with the event in Colorado, normalcy is beginning to return to the extent that local pandemic conditions allow. I'm cautiously optimistic that by 2022, international randonneuring will look familiar again.

J: A 1200km offers time for contemplation. Have you thought about what it was that you missed

most during the randonneuring pandemic pause?

M: Oddly enough, I'd say that I'm not very contemplative at all while out on my randonneur bike. The ride itself occupies most of my attention – the company of friends, the beauty of the surroundings, the challenges of the course, the sounds of my bike and the environment, even the problems to be solved.

Wait, I think I just answered your question!

J: Randonneuring seems to be a sport whereby the participants learn the same lessons over and over again. What did you relearn on this 1200km?

M: Ok, I'm going to twist this question a little. I've been riding long randonneur events for more than

twenty years and have completed dozens of 1200kms. I never cease to be amazed by my ability to learn new lessons each time I set out.

Case in point: Over the last few years, my local club, the Seattle International Randonneurs, has rendered its classic blue and white jerseys in an array of hi-viz colors in the interest of rider safety. The jerseys have been accompanied by matching hi-viz accessories – gloves, arm warmers, neck gaiters, caps, and so on. As a result, I could pack for a 1200 in Colorado with a yellow kit, a white kit, an orange kit, and a pink kit. I carefully packed these matching bits for my trip. Except the jerseys. I packed no jerseys at all and set out in a wool t-shirt from my non-cycling clothes. Note to self: packing checklist can't be too detailed. 🚲

Poudre Canyon, Colorado.
—PHOTO MARK THOMAS





Top photo, Jim with Mark sporting wool t-shirt with pink SIR accessories.

—PHOTO PAUL FOLEY

Happy finishers with organizer John Lee Ellis. From left - Jim, Paul, John Lee, Mark, Vernon, and Nate.

—PHOTO MICHELLE GRAINGER

Follow Your Heart and Your Heart Rate

BY MATT STRASSBERG

My wife played a joke on me on our first Valentine's Day by having the waiter at a trendy restaurant in San Francisco set a third place setting at our table. The miniature bike by the plate was a recognition of how important biking is to me. Twenty-five plus years later of randonneuring, and that hasn't changed. She still quips that there are three of us in this marriage. I think she's joking (she's says she's not); however, I acknowledge that I have a mistress, and she has two wheels.

Like many randonneurs, biking is never far from my mind. Think of the cartoon of a dog's brain that shows oversized sections of the brain devoted to sniffing things, chasing things, eating things; a cartoon of my brain

would feature riding my bike, planning where to ride my bike, and thinking of upgrading bike components.

I have always lived by the mantra "follow your heart." Until recently that meant following my bliss by taking long rides through Vermont's seamless mosaic of dairy farms, forests, small quaint villages, and mountains. Those long rides were a tonic that kept me physically fit and were key to my emotional and spiritual well-being. Apart from some chronic over-use injuries, I thought my training kept me feeling young and vibrant. My primary care physician would comment that I had the low resting heart rate of an athlete. It never occurred to me that I was developing athlete's heart, most often a benign condition where the heart adapts to the physical demands of training by growing larger in order to pump more blood faster to your working muscles. That is part of becoming fit, and that's a good thing; but can too much of a good thing be bad?

After observing some unusual

spikes while riding that were over fifty beats per minute higher than what I understood to be my maximum heart rate, I underwent a series of tests to discover the cause of the unusual heart activity. On the positive side, I made randonneurs proud by rocking the stress test even though it was on a treadmill. More concerning, however, was my discovery of the numerous studies demonstrating a correlation between endurance athletes and heart arrhythmias. Of course, correlation is not causation, but the notion that the activity I loved and thought key to my health might actually be harming me was shocking and sobering.

Many of the adaptations of an athlete's heart, such as a low resting heart rate, are benign even though they mimic disease. However, some of these changes are associated with an increased risk of arrhythmias and may require treatment. When I heard about one treatment called "detraining," my mind envisioned a freezer full of Ben and Jerry's ice cream. Unfortunately, rather than increasing caloric intake, detraining involves decreasing training volume and intensity, which seemed unthinkable until I compared it to the other treatment options.

For anyone who has experienced unusual heart rates, I recommend *The Haywire Heart: How Too Much Exercise Can Kill You, And What You Can Do to Protect Your Heart* by Leonard Zinn, Chris Case, and John Mandrola, MD. Excuse the sensationalist sounding title; those who read VeloNews know that Zinn is a long-time columnist and an accomplished bike racer, and the



book includes his insights based on his first-hand experience with heart issues. I am not a doctor, and this article is not intended to provide medical advice. However, one of Zinn's co-authors is a well-respected cardiac electrophysiologist and a cyclist who has personal experience with heart arrhythmias. While the authors describe credible causation theories, there is no consensus amongst cardiologists about why endurance athletes have statistically higher incidences of arrhythmias compared to control groups.

Although there may not be consensus on causation, there appears to be consensus among cardiologists acknowledging the correlation. Most of the studies focused on endurance racers, and so I asked sports cardiologist Dr. Gregory Dadekian whether endurance racers' high-intensity and

high-volume training is potentially more harmful than the high-volume but lower-intensity riding of randonneurs.

"There is a clear connection between atrial arrhythmias like atrial fibrillation and exercise. While moderate intensity exercise seems to lower the risk for atrial fibrillation, high-volume, high-intensity endurance training increases the risk. This has been demonstrated in multiple, high-quality studies looking at serious, highly trained endurance athletes. There are structural and electrical changes that occur in the heart's upper chambers (i.e., the atria) as a consequence of prolonged exposure to high cardiac output during exercise."

Gregory Dadekian, MD, FACP, FACC
*Cardiologist, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center
 Team Physician, Dartmouth College*

There are still many unknowns, and more research is needed. For now, an awareness about the correlation will hopefully remind randonneurs to listen to their bodies and watch out for warning signs.

Randonneurs come in all shapes and sizes. What we have in common is a brain that doesn't know the word quit and a good pumping heart. Ultimately, we rely on our brain to make prudent decisions about our lifestyle and hopefully don't pursue activities that are harmful to us. Following my heart no longer means following my bliss. It now means following my heart rate closely and consulting a sports cardiologist. My mistress may have two wheels, but I have one heart and I need to take care of it and my family. 🚲

RUSA Awards

RUSA American Explorer Award

By definition, a randonnée is a long ramble in the countryside. The American Explorer Award recognizes the achievements of RUSA members rambling across the United States. The award is earned by riding events that cover at least ten (10) different U.S. states and territories.

This is an ongoing achievement program that recognizes continued exploration of additional states and territories. The maximum achievable number of states and territories will depend on the availability of routes and the member's desire to explore. Once a rider has credit for all 50 states (territories and DC are 'extra credit'), they can start again.

NAME	CITY, STATE	TOTAL STATES	APPROVED
Castillo, Justin	Falls Church, DC	17	7/4/21
Conderacci, Greg	Baltimore, MD	12	6/8/21
Fambles, Millison D	Olympia, WA	20	7/7/21
Feinberg, Brian K	Cupertino, CA	11	7/9/21
Huber, Kerin (F)	Pasadena, CA	37	7/8/21
Mathews, David	Prairie Village, KS	10	6/23/21
Sexton, Robert B	San Jose, CA	28	6/9/21
Trott, Lydia Ellen (F)	West Point, IN	12	6/10/21

RUSA Awards

R-12 Award Recipients

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

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Bigler, Wallace J [9]	Houston, TX	5/9/21
DelNero, Gary M [2]	Leawood, KS	6/26/21
Driscoll, Dan [17]	Arlington, TX	6/17/21
Dusel, Peter W [10]	Ontario, NY	6/8/21
Edwards, Joe [6]	Glenwood, IA	6/13/21
Ehrentreich, Norman [5]	Minneapolis, MN	6/13/21
Erickson, Steve	White Salmon, WA	6/26/21
Gottlieb, Gary P [16]	Aledo, TX	6/1/21
Haley, Joshua J [4]	Canton, OH	5/20/21
Kline, Stacy (F) [8]	Newport Beach, CA	4/16/21
Laine, Erin (F) [6]	Bridge City, LA	6/30/21
Maglieri, Christopher [8]	Weatogue, CT	6/15/21
McAlister, Grant [5]	Morro Bay, CA	5/20/21
McCaw, Richard Grant [12]	San Jose, CA	7/17/21
Midura, Lawrence A [8]	East Syracuse, NY	7/4/21
Nicholson, Jack [9]	Arnold, MD	5/17/21
Szmerlo, Len [2]	Dillon, CO	5/14/21
Turek, Michael Gerald [5]	Longmont, CO	4/26/21
Wright, Pamela (F) [15]	Fort Worth, TX	6/18/21

Galaxy Award

The Galaxy Award is for RUSA members who have successfully completed at least 100,000 km in RUSA events.

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Acuff, Jan (F)	Seattle, WA	5/19/21

P-12 Recipients

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

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Alexander, Ron [10]	Overland Park, KS	6/9/21
Anderson, Randy T [2]	Peoria, IL	5/14/21
Argo, Charles Christopher [2]	Lake View, AL	7/7/21
Beck, William A [7]	Woodbine, MD	7/7/21
Bingham, Bob [8]	Greensboro, NC	7/1/21
Blassl, Duane A [2]	Sioux Falls, SD	7/12/21
Chernekkoff, Janice (F) [5]	Lyon Station, PA	7/5/21
Cousseau, Peter L	Seattle, WA	7/18/21
Crixell, Joshua [8]	Temple, TX	4/13/21
Durkin, Tom [2]	Portland, OR	7/6/21
Dusel, Peter W	Ontario, NY	6/8/21
Eves, Garrett C	Burbank, CA	7/16/21
Fraser, Malcolm R [4]	Boulder, CO	7/5/21
Gottlieb, Gary P [9]	Aledo, TX	6/27/21
Gridley, Ross [8]	Pickerington, OH	5/16/21
Huber, Kerin (F) [7]	Pasadena, CA	7/18/21
Ishihara, Mitch [6]	Issaquah, WA	7/8/21
Ivory, Shaun	Woodinville, WA	7/1/21
Kanaby, Gary [5]	Salado, TX	7/5/21
Knutson, Ken [8]	Tracy, CA	6/23/21
Laine, Erin (F) [5]	Bridge City, LA	6/1/21
McMakin, M Deanie (F)	Crestview, FL	4/23/21
Midura, Lawrence A [3]	East Syracuse, NY	7/3/21
Nagel, Peter [6]	Georgetown, TX	6/28/21
Newman, Christine (F) [10]	Skillman, NJ	7/6/21
Ogilvie, Raymond [8]	North Plains, OR	7/8/21
Pacino, Dana A (F) [4]	Aledo, TX	6/27/21
Slocum, Christopher C. [4]	Toms River, NJ	5/12/21
Vincent, John [6]	Rochester, WA	7/8/21

RUSA Awards

ACP Randonneur 10000

Complete at least 10000km of brevets including a Paris-Brest-Paris, another 1200k, two full ACP series of 200, 300, 400, 600, and 1000 km brevets, a Flèche team event, and a Super Randonnee 600 within a six-year period.

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Dorobek, Russell	Austin, TX	6/10/21
Green, Bill	Nevada City, CA	12/31/19

RUSA Cup Recipients

The RUSA Cup is earned by completing at least one of each type of RUSA calendared event, comprising 5000km in total, within a two-year period.

Riders must complete, within two years of the first counting event:

- a 200k, 300k, 400k, 600k, and 1000k brevet
- a 1200k or longer Grand Randonnée
- a RUSA team event (Dart, Dart Populaire, Arrow, or Flèches-USA)
- a Populaire
- any other calendared events—including Populaires—to achieve the required 5000 km.

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Conderacci, Greg [2]	Baltimore, MD	7/8/21

Ultra P-12 Award

The Ultra P-12 award recognizes the accomplishment of ten P-12 Awards over any number of years.

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Alexander, Ron	Overland Park, KS	6/9/21
Newman, Christine (F)	Skillman, NJ	7/6/21

Mondial Award

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

Mondial: French adjective meaning worldwide or global. The name relates to the fact that the circumference of the Earth is approximately 40,000 km.

This award is achieved by a member for the completion of every 40,000 km in RUSA rides. (That is, after achieving 40,000 km, 80,000 km, and so forth.) It is automatically recognized upon completion of the required distance.

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Andersen, Gabrielle Friedly (F)	Woodside, CA	5/3/21
Beck, William A [3]	Woodbine, MD	5/12/21
Clayton, J Andrew	Powell, OH	5/16/21
Hansen, Jason L	Seattle, WA	4/19/21
Mangin, L John	Loveland, CO	6/22/21
McDonald, David R	Apex, NC	5/3/21
Nakai, David [3]	Fallbrook, CA	6/22/21
Ranson, Emily (F)	Ellicott City, MD	6/27/21
Thompson, Corey	Olympia, WA	4/22/21
Welsh, Rob [2]	Apple Valley, MN	7/1/21

Ultra R-12 Award

Whereas the R-12 award recognizes the completion of a 200km (or longer) randonneuring event in each of 12 consecutive months, the Ultra R-12 Award recognizes the completion of ten (10) R-12s. There is no time limit; there may be gaps between any of the 12-month sequences that define each R-12.

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Dusel, Peter W	Ontario, NY	6/8/21

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