

AMERICAN RANDONNEUR



VOLUME 26 • ISSUE #1 SPRING 2023

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An Unimaginable Journey — VINJAYSHREE SUNDARAM

Paris Focused — BILLY EDWARDS

Permanently Looking at Routes and Statistics — JAKE KASSEN



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COVER— The New England Randonneurs dart populaire in September. Team "Antsy Ens": from L to R, Patrick Chin-Hong (MA, PBP '11), John D'Elia (CT, PBP '03), Vaune Davis (FL, PBP '15), Chris Slocum (NJ, PBP '19), Dan Aaron (NY, PBP '07).

PHOTO PATRICK CHIN-HONG

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President's Message



I've been cycling a long time. Back in the Middle Pleistocene period, when I was 17, I began riding with the local bicycle club. I rode my first century and double century in 1971 and my first Paris-Brest-Paris in 1983. One of the earliest skills I learned was to ride well in a paceline. Sharing the work, especially against headwinds, was an essential part of our club spirit. With everyone contributing, it made our group rides more fun and certainly much better than slogging along alone. This mindset has never left me and with teamwork, whether it is in racing, touring, or randonneuring, the rides go better when we work together.

And thus, I find myself back at RUSA HQ in the president's chair. I've enjoyed my first weeks back on the board; we've got a good group of people working together to help guide Randonneurs USA through 2023 and beyond. Sincere thanks go out to Vinny Muoneke, Dawn Piech, Rob

Hawks, Dan Driscoll, Gardner Duvall, and Charlie Martin for making me feel welcome and bringing me up to speed. I also want to offer my gratitude to my predecessor Dave Thompson, who is riding off to a well-deserved break from our hectic board duties. (Dave isn't going too far; he was elected by the board to be RUSA's new treasurer.)

A randonneuring friend asked me if things felt the same from when I was RUSA's president back around the turn of the century. In some ways, yes, it is all familiar, but in other ways it feels different too — and not a big surprise, since our sport has changed a lot during the past 20 years. The essential, timeless characteristics of BRM *allure libre* randonneuring remain: riding long distances over hill and dale with time limits, being self-reliant, night-riding, earning brevet medals, and, hopefully, earning entry into a *grand randonné*e like Paris-Brest-Paris. And perhaps best of all, the rando-camaraderie that was so common in our sport seems as strong as ever.

The differences stand out too, because much has been added to our sport during that time. When we started Randonneurs USA back in the summer of 1998, our goal was to organize and promote yearly randonneuring in the United States, not just holding brevets during PBP years (which was the norm.) There was a definite season to riding brevets in spring and summer, but now we have it year-round. Where our shortest events back then were 200 kilometers, now we have 100-199 km populaires. We also have team events of eight, 13.5, and 24 hours. And we now have permanent rides so we can go randonneuring in-between brevets. When RUSA got started, I recall we

had about 28 regions offering events; now we have about 50. Active membership has climbed from many hundreds into several thousands. And the awards! In the year 2000, one could earn ACP medals for earning their 200, 300, 400, 600, and 1000k brevets, and their Randonneur 5000 medal. Now we have numerous awards to inspire RUSA members to ride far and wide across our nation. Beyond the sport itself, the equipment, clothing, and nutrition are better too. Now we have very good lighting systems to illuminate the road at night and GPS to show us the way forward — wow! All these things have arrived incrementally, but the overall change during the past 20 years has been amazing.

And yet, despite all the changes, we still have the outstanding camaraderie that characterizes our sport. A long time ago I wrote that “dog-eat-dog is not a term often used about randonneurs” and I feel that this is as true now as it was then. If you are riding a brevet, be sure to thank any volunteers and the RBA who helped make your ride possible. If you see a rider struggling to keep the pace, ease up a bit for a while so they can stay with the group. After you're done with the ride, buy your companions a beverage. And most of all, take turns when you're in a group or paceline; share the work. Things go better when everyone is pulling on the oars together.

—Bill Bryant
RUSA President
president@rusa.org

For RUSA's 2022 financials summary, please see page 15.

From the Editor

Gratitude. It's a word that has been popularized recently because of studies showing that people who express gratitude in their daily lives are happier. And it's the word that conveys how I feel about RUSA. On my first 200k, I remember Paul Foley telling me I now had my Rocky Mountain Cycling Club family to ride with when I said most of my miles are ridden alone. I tried not to smirk at what sounded like hokey encouragement, but I was grateful that he tried to make me feel welcome.

The funny thing is that Paul was serious, and as the season progressed and I did my first SR series, first Colorado Triple Crown, first 1200k, and first 24 hour race, I came to feel that RMCC and my fellow randonneurs really were one of those communities that are a family of choice. Never before had I felt I belonged like I did with this group of crazy cyclists. I also volunteered for the first time that summer and discovered that the act of helping someone else was even more rewarding than hitting a goal of my own. And so I was hooked on the whole package, and RMCC and randonneuring became a major part of my life.

Nine years later, I am no longer driving 20,000 miles a year to get to ride starts. I burned out on that, but

not on cycling. So I am grateful to have this opportunity to play a role in supporting others without having to pay for all that gas. And I harbor the hope that someone else may find in the pages of this magazine a community that they feel they belong to, even if they aren't close to the starting point of their home club's brevets.

With that in mind, many in RUSA are focused on a little ride in Paris this August. The mystique of PBP is probably what draws a good number of folks to RUSA events in the first place, and this issue is somewhat of a celebration of that *joie de vivre*. From the nascent enthusiasm of Vinjayshree Sundaram's "An Unimaginable Journey," to the sage advice in "Bonne Route et Courage" from Cap'n Ende, there are several PBP-oriented articles for you to enjoy this issue. It isn't lost on us that most people reading this will not be going to France this summer.

Perhaps you may find inspiration in the Ed Felker interview with Charlie Martin, or Jake Kassen's data-driven "Permanently Looking at Routes and Statistics." And while the Nuts, Bolts, and Gear crew are on hiatus, we are debuting the gravel-oriented column "Beyond Pavement," featuring the spare prose of Jonathan Fey. He just might convince you to move beyond your comfort zone and onto the dirt. Finally, for the back story on our fabulous cover photo, read the contribution from first-time K-Hound John D'Elia.

Whatever your goals for 2023, you have an extensive family to ride with if you choose, and that is something we all can be grateful for.

—Corinne Warren
Editor, *American Randonneur*
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On last year's *fleche* with PBP anciens Ryan Franz (2011) and Mateo Ramos (2019).

—PHOTO MARISA FARRO-MIRO



An Unimaginable Journey

BY VIJAYSHREE SUNDARAM

A year ago I had not even heard of Paris-Brest-Paris, and here I am getting ready for my first PBP in 2023. It's a randonneur's dream, a dream I truly believe in and am working hard towards achieving. Big dreams come with big challenges, though, and for me that challenge is the intramedullary nail running down the center of the bone in my right tibia. My surgeon doesn't see it as an obstacle towards achieving my goals but it puts a mental limit on me. I wish it weren't there, but it's part and parcel of my journey now. I hope it becomes an unbreakable support to my accomplishments and not a hindrance to them.

In July of 2017 my family and I were in a head-on car collision in India. Both my right and left tibias were fractured. I couldn't move at all. I remember thinking "What now? How do I deal with this? This can't be happening!" To this day, I tear up visualizing that night. In an operation two days later, a plate with eight screws was inserted in my left tibia, and a rod with locking screws in my right tibia. My husband and parents flew in to care for me and my son, and family members were there, willing to do everything for us. I was immobilized for almost eight weeks and longed for my daily routine — taking a shower, brushing my teeth near the sink, and

just standing on the floor. I could barely sleep for those two months, and would sit in the dark looking out the window. Still, it felt like a rebirth. I had survived. I held out hope to be able to walk again, and I learned to value the small things in life that we take for granted.

After two long months, a wheelchair gave way to a walker and I was learning to walk again like a baby. But the right tibia fracture was not healing, and a procedure called "dynamization" was done ten weeks later to allow for better contact at the fracture site. By now I was using a cane for walking, as I had frequent pains and swelling in my knees and feet. I walked with a limp on my right side, and developed bunions on both feet. What was supposed to be a one-month holiday extended to an almost six-month stay in India. When I finally returned home to the US, I started physical therapy. As my muscles gained strength, I started walking without a limp after 9-10 months, but the pain lingered for years. I would have pain in one leg or the other, but not bad enough to depend on painkillers. Now I could go for walks but not runs. It felt as if my legs had forgotten the running motion. I liked running before

Ready for our first 300k, starting in the fog at the Golden Gate Bridge.



Ready to roll my first 600k, starting with my teammates in Santa Cruz.

the crash, did half-marathons and marathons, and would go for trail runs on the weekend. But those were distant memories now. The plate in my left knee was partially palpable from the surface, and it would hurt upon touching anything. I couldn't even bend the knee. My surgeon removed the plate in 2019 but left the rod in for life.

I had joined a gym but then Covid happened in 2020 and we were in lockdown. My family and I started going for bike rides on nearby trails, and I would cycle with my son on weekdays to stay active. Funnily, I would avoid any road with even a 100-foot climb; flat roads were my favorite. I would walk the climbs with my son. He is my biggest supporter, and enjoys setting up my bike while munching on the energy chews and bars I get for my rides.

In July 2021, one of my friends joined the Team Asha Biking Program



to train for a 100-mile ride. Team Asha is a premier endurance sports training program for cycling, running, and triathlons. The next weekend I joined their first training ride on my hybrid bike and decided to train for a 100k ride. We trained locally on weekdays and went for long weekend rides around the Bay Area. I restrained myself from push-ing on the rides because of the rod in my leg, but developed a slow and steady approach to finish the ride. Interestingly, I have done all my rides in running shoes. Fear of falling stops me from even trying clipless pedals. Some incidents damage you for the long term. I still don't know what I am capable of because I am holding back from going all out.

Two weeks before the 100k ride, I climbed Mount Hamilton in the South Bay and decided to go for the 100-mile Giro Bello ride in Sonoma County.

Coach Venki from Team Asha patiently listened to me and approved my idea of doing the century ride. A half-mile into the ride my rear derailleur malfunctioned and wouldn't shift gears. I went back to the start, got the bike fixed, and restarted the ride a good 30 minutes late. It took a lot of self-motivation and determination to finish that day, considering I had trained for only a 100k, and was riding alone for half the ride, but I did it. I was jubilant to have finished my first century. The limp, however, returned off and on for the next few months. I did my second century ride, Foxy's Fall in Davis in October, while still battling it.

The official Team Asha season had ended but I continued climbing new routes on the weekends with the advanced riders. They had moved on to the brevets and my friend Harsha convinced me I should try them, too.

Some incidents damage you for the long term. I still don't know what I am capable of because I am holding back from going all out.





With the Golden Gate Bridge in the background.

—PHOTO VIJAYSHREE SUNDARAM

It was January 2022, and I trained alone to get ready for my first brevet, a 200k offered by the Santa Cruz Randonneurs. Three weeks before the ride, an empty propane tank fell on my left foot. I narrowly escaped a fracture, but the pain and swelling would not let me train for the next two weeks. Most of my teammates had already completed a 200k ride, but Harsha graciously agreed to keep me company on this one. It was a beautiful ride along Highway 1 with breathtaking views of the ocean, calm beaches, and rolling hills. I had a new Trek bike with a tubeless setup and as luck would have it, half way into the ride I had a tubeless failure. We both were clueless, but made a few calls, and were told to add some air to the tire and keep riding. Finally, the sealant did its job and I finished my first brevet and became a randonneur.

Two weeks later, I was again at the start with Team Asha to ride the San Francisco Randonneurs' 300k. The course had rolling pastures, redwood forests, coastal cliffs and the world famous Golden Gate Bridge. It was a huge ride with about 130 riders. I had

company most of the time, and rode comfortably at my own pace, chatting with the person next to me. But as dusk fell I found myself riding alone. My friends had offered to ride with me, but thinking I would slow them down I turned down their offer. I was nervous, as it was getting dark and I could see no one. I wished I were stronger and faster to be able to keep up. After some 20 miles, I caught a couple riding a tandem and breathed a great sigh of relief. We stayed together until teammates Nikhil and then Ashok caught up to me. We listened to music, talked about random stuff, and happily rode in the drizzling rain to successfully finish our ride around 11:30 p.m.

Soon after I found out I was pregnant with our second child, and there was excitement in my family. Bike rides turned to long walks, and we started talking about our new addition. But the happiness didn't last long and I had a miscarriage. I was drowning in emotions, failing to come to grips with it, crying at every small thing. A couple of weeks later I was back on trails, and found solace in long rides. The rides offered peace, they were

like meditation. But that didn't last long either. Two weeks later I became sick with Covid and I was again going through fatigue, headaches, and malaise. I remember testing negative for Covid on a Friday evening and being out on course on Saturday doing the Santa Cruz Randonneurs' 300k. It was a training ride for me for the upcoming 600k brevet. I didn't know what to expect and others, too, were skeptical of my decision. Oh boy, the virus had affected my lungs and heart! I was fighting for breath on and off. Climbing was literally an uphill battle. I made sure I was not pushing hard on the climbs, taking it easy so as to be able to finish the ride, which I did.

The very next weekend was the Santa Cruz Randonneurs 600k and the two-day adventure began for eight of us from Team Asha. It was a fairly smooth start but as the day progressed, it got warm and once again I found myself



X-rays of both legs with the hardware.
The plate in the left leg was removed.

— PHOTO VIJAYSHREE SUNDARAM

struggling on the climbs, gasping for breath, feeling demotivated and thinking of aborting the ride. Right there on the climb Coach Venki joined me. It was a relief! I finished the climb, we chatted for few minutes, I found my groove and was back on track. I was done with the first 200k of the ride and was getting ready for the night riding. I had no intention of braving it alone and Venki and Mihir rode with me for most of the night. As I was approaching the King City overnight control, I saw riders already returning. Wow, it was amazing to see how strong they were! I checked-in around 3:30 a.m., took a hot shower and a 45 minute nap, and was ready to head out at 5:00 a.m. As the sun came up, I was maneuvering my bike around potholes for a round trip of about 40 miles. We stopped at a Starbucks for a hot breakfast before starting the return journey back to Santa Cruz. The day started heating up



fairly quickly. The winds picked up and I found myself riding out into the headwinds at three or four miles an hour. It was demoralizing. I was running out of time to reach the evening control at the

marina. It was a race against time, but I made it. I rode the last stretch with Rohit and we finished our 600k with 38 minutes to spare. To our surprise, Sowjanya and Mohit from Team Asha were waiting to greet us at the finish. It was a moment of celebration. Now I was eligible to register for PBP in the second tier of priority!

A month later was the Death Ride in Markleeville, California. This is considered one of the toughest rides in California, with six alpine climbs, 14,000 feet of elevation gain in 103 miles, and a time limit of 13.5 hours. Each climb has a cut-off time you must make to be able to keep progressing. I climbed mountains in the Bay Area, doing repeats with elevation, as



A ride with Team Asha in Monterey County.

Dreams do come true.

—PHOTO AMAY TANEJA

training. The day of the ride was super hot with an exposed route, some steep climbs, and winding descents. To finish it was a dream come true. I successfully completed the ride on July 16, 2022, exactly five years after the accident, becoming the first woman from Team Asha to finish the ride. Then in October 2022, Team Asha organized the Crab Ride, which had six climbs in Portola Valley with 15,000 feet elevation and 115 miles, again with cutoffs for each climb. Coach Venki and the team put a lot of effort into arranging the ride and four of us successfully finished to much jubilation and celebration.

At this point, I was craving a 400k ride to earn the Super Randonneur award. I messaged San Francisco Randonneurs' RBA, Rob Hawks, requesting he organize a 400K ride for a group of us. He graciously agreed to organize the ride, but needed to get ACP approval. One night he emailed me saying "We are a go!!" and the Hopland 400K was on the calendar for October. The weather the day of the ride was good, and I was smoothly riding along with Nitin. We had a similar pace and stayed together the entire ride — I was trying hard to not slow him down. The course took us through Marin, the vineyards and redwoods of Sonoma County, and all the way to Mendocino County before turning back. I have to mention the "Joy Road" climb. It was not too long but relentlessly steep and I kept thinking "There is no joy in climbing this road." There were eight of us on the course, and as night fell four of our teammates patiently waited for the rest of us in Cloverdale for over an hour. The idea was to ride together at night and to look out for each other. Thank you, guys!!! Being a female cyclist, I feel more exposed and vulnerable to the outside dangers. My team provides



me with an inclusive, welcoming environment and I feel protected from the unknown out there. Just past midnight I was not feeling okay, as I had some stomach upset, and was hoping to find a restroom at our 2:00 a.m. stop. I was miserable in the saddle. Unfortunately there was none, and it took another four hours to find one around Sausalito. As a female cyclist I feel I have a complicated set of barriers to overcome. Stopping on the side of the road didn't feel like an option then, but as I ride more in the future, this might become inevitable. Once we stopped and I felt better, I was a few miles away from the finish, envisioning the end, when my right knee started hurting. It was a sharp pain on the inside with every pedal stroke, and I was almost in tears. I had enough time to walk those miles if needed but Nitin stayed with me and

slowly, steadily I finished the ride to become Super Randonneur.

An unimaginable journey of 15 months saw me successfully completing the Death Ride, the Crab Ride, and a Super Randonneur series. Now my dream is to finish PBP. I am focusing on muscle strengthening, stretching, map reading, and learning to fix mechanical issues. I plan to get stronger and faster before PBP so that I can afford some sleep during the 90-hour ride. It is a dream that I wholeheartedly believe in!! This has all been possible because of the support of my family and Team Asha (<https://ta.ashanet.org/siliconvalley/marathon/index.php>). Joining Team Asha was one of the best decisions of Covid. The team is made up of the most humble achievers I know of and I look forward to more adventures with them. 🚴

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French 101 for PBP Riders

BY PASCAL LEDRU

One of the subjects of conversation during our RMCC rides lately has been “It is time to learn French again.” From my usual group someone proclaimed, “I expect them to speak English anyway,” and someone else claimed, “I am going to learn Breton,” and someone else already knew the essential *J’ai besoin d’une bière*. Because of course you will need a beer.

But maybe there is some middle ground that won’t require you to learn how to conjugate *le verbe faire* (the verb to do) perfectly — something you are tested on up to middle school. Here are a few sentences that will make you feel welcome. *Je parle français comme une vache espagnole* will indicate that your French is not quite there yet but that you are definitely willing to give it a try.

The literal translation is that you speak French like a Spanish cow.

Arriving at CDG (Charles de Gaulle Airport, named after the most revered French president and for whom the biggest ship of the French navy is also named), you could try *Je voudrais un taxi pour aller à Rambouillet; combien coûte ce trajet?* (How much is a taxi for the trip to Rambouillet?) Or, if you

Rocky Mountain Cycling Club’s own Pascal Ledru is a native of Paris, yet he hadn’t ridden PBP until living in Colorado, where he started randonneuring. For him the quadrennial event is not just a time to enjoy the iconic rando experience, but a chance to return home. He had a little advice on how to manage in France when you don’t really speak the language. True to French form, his words are infused with wry humor and a dose of wit.

want to take public transportation: *Comment aller à la gare Montparnasse avec les transports en commun?* From Gare (station) Montparnasse, you then can go to either Versailles or Rambouillet.

At check-in you could brag with *J’ai déjà fait Paris-Brest-Paris deux fois mais chaque fois c’est de mieux en mieux* (I have already done Paris-Brest-Paris twice, but each time it gets better and better) and *Les Français sont vraiment super* (The French are really great!). You usually cannot go wrong with *c’est super* if you want to say that something is great. And don’t forget to say *Merci d’être bénévole!* (Thanks for

Sleepy, but always have time for cider!

—PHOTO PASCAL LEDRU





Carb loading in Villaines.

—PHOTO MIKE TUREK

On the iconic bridge with Mike and John.



As for speaking Breton, if you order a *Kouign-amann* (butter cake), which I highly recommend, you already speak Breton! Very few people still speak Breton fluently, but most people will know *kenavo* (see you later) and probably *Yec'hed mat* (Cheers)!

Once you make it back to Rambouillet and it is time for celebration: *Champagne à flot pour tout le monde* (unlimited champagne for everybody)!

Allez! On y va, mais rappelez-vous, ce n'est pas une course! 🚲

volunteering!) This small acknowledgment will be much appreciated.

If you want to eat, a very common snack or small lunch is a slice of baguette with either cheese or ham inside: *un sandwich au fromage* or *un sandwich au jambon* (which usually comes with butter; the French love butter!) If you feel more reckless, you can inquire about the special: *Quelle est la spécialité du jour?* If you order a “Coke”, you will be THE American, so order a *coca* instead. Normandy and Brittany are known for cider, so instead of ordering beer, you could try *Je voudrais un verre de cidre, s'il vous plait*. Most people will order a coffee at the end of a meal: *un café s'il vous plait* (which will get you an espresso). And finally, *l'addition s'il vous plait* (the check — note that the tip is usually included). I forgot we are talking about PBP, so inquire if they have a Paris-Brest *pour le dessert*. They had some of this wonderful pastry in Dreux in 2019, and having a Paris-Brest with coffee, knowing at this point we would finish, was divine!

Sleeping along the way: *Je voudrais un lit et pouvez vous me réveiller dans trois heures* (I would like a bed, and can you wake me up in three hours)? And if you are lucky, you can inquire about a blanket: *avez-vous une couverture?* If you are not tired enough yet and want to shower: *Où sont les douches?*

In case of medical emergency, there is no 911 in France. Instead, *appelez* (call) *le 15* (*le SAMU: le Service d'Aide*

Médicale Urgente) or *le 17* (*la police*). You can stop at any pharmacy (that you recognized with the green cross) and explain what you want, and the pharmacist will find something for which you do not need a prescription. You can start with: *J'ai mal* (I hurt) as in:

- *J'ai mal au ventre* (stomach ache),
- *J'ai mal à la tête* (headache),
- or *bien sur* (of course) *J'ai mal aux jambes* (the legs)!

If you have cramps: *J'ai des crampes; avez vous des tablettes de sel* (salt tablets)? If you need sunscreen: *de la crème solaire*. In case of plain emergency along the way: *Où sont les toilettes?* Don't hesitate to stop at a house and ask if you need to; it's much quicker than being in the line at a control!

Should you require some help with the bike:

- *J'ai crevé* (I have a flat), not to be confused with *J'ai la crève* (I am sick)
- *Je voudrais acheter une chambre à air* (the very fancy name for a tube — for those of us still not running tubeless)
- *Avez-vous de l'huile?* (oil)
- Or something slightly more serious: *Ma chaîne saute et j'ai besoin de régler mon dérailleur* (derailleur tuning — for those of us not riding single speed)

Rando(m) Thoughts BY CHRIS NEWMAN

“Where's Pete?” Does LEL

Thinking back on my London-Edinburgh-London attempt last year I feel I was destined to fail from the start. Truthfully, even before the start. This epic ride had loomed so large for so long that I believe I psyched myself out by over-thinking it. I was simultaneously convinced that LEL was A) no big deal — I had completed several 1200ks and one 1500k and B) this was the most terrifying brevet of all time and what was I thinking? These competing theories waged a battle right up to start time!

I had researched and read LEL reports and had spoken with other randonneurs who had “only” attempted or who had, impressively, finished the ride. I expected to be cold, wet, hungry, tired and unable to find a place to sleep.

I knew I would be riding through a barren country with a head wind in both directions and would be at the back of the pack. Our PBP crew of Nigel Green, George Swain and I were getting the band back together for this LEL

attempt. My brother would not be supporting us with an RV this time around, so we named our team “Where’s Pete?” in honor of an oft-repeated phrase. We had several meetings to hash out the details. We itemized our gear and ride plans in spreadsheets, reserved seats on the same flights, obtained ground transportation, reserved hotel rooms along the route and plotted our bag drops based on overly optimistic daily mileage estimates. We were ready — at least from a logistics viewpoint. We felt so confident in our plan that we didn’t really have a back-up ready. Let’s call this Mistake No. 1. (Some might consider registering Mistake No. 1 but they are clearly not randonneurs).

Our journey to London from the East Coast was largely uneventful and we enjoyed a jet lag nap on our way from Heathrow to our hotel. We checked in and enjoyed breakfast No. 2 or lunch No. 1 while we waited for our rooms to be readied. We had arrived two days early and busied ourselves with sleeping, eating, sampling local brews, meeting up with old friends, assembling our bikes and seeking out the best fish and chips. We pedaled the slightly hazardous route to check-in where we received our jerseys, brevet cards, drop bags and assorted LEL swag. We were all wearing our team jerseys, a collaborative creative effort,

The countryside was very picturesque.

—PHOTO CHRIS NEWMAN



In good spirits despite our mistakes.

—PHOTO CHRIS NEWMAN

which proudly proclaimed our team's name "Where's Pete" on the front and featured a self-portrait of Pete on the back. (The jerseys are fabulous but this might have been Mistake No. 2 as most folks we encountered over the next week felt obliged to ask "So where is Pete?")

We planned on covering 300K each day (Mistake No. 3) and had hotel reservations for each overnight. Our start time of late morning was not ideal for reaching the initial sleep stop before midnight, but we calculated the mostly flat first day would permit a faster average speed which would reset our clock and allow us to be in bed by a decent hour each night.

We started our adventure promptly at 10:45 am and were moving at a decent pace until we hit the flat Fens with the very powerful headwinds. Although we had been relatively efficient at controls and minimized time off the bike, the hilly first section and the headwinds slowed our pace considerably and we arrived at the overnight control at 4 am, three hours past our planned arrival time. Our plan was starting to disintegrate.

Day 2 was going to be the most challenging since it contained the most feared climb, which had been made exponentially harder by a reroute due to a road closure to repair a damaged cattle guard. Only in England! The new route substituted multiple steep climbs for the one long, less steep but legendary climb of Yad Moss. One local rider had helpfully posted that all but the strongest riders should plan on doubling the time it usually took to ride 52 miles. Our plan was to ride another 300k, finishing the day at a hotel on the far side of the climbfest. (If you are keeping track, this is Mistake No. 4.)

We pedaled away from our first stop in the bright sunshine attending



a 10 am start, realizing we would not reach our hotel until the middle of the next night. This day proved to be a beautiful trip through the North Moors, past fields of purple heather and stunning vistas. The relentless steep climbs made this day long and challenging and we reached Barnard Castle at 10 pm. It had taken us 12 hours to traverse 100 miles and we hadn't yet encountered the most difficult section. There was nowhere to sleep at Barnard Castle. Fortunately for us, we knew a volunteer, Michele, the wife of a New Jersey Randonneur, who very generously led us to the hostel where she and some other volunteers had been bunking.

As exhausted as I was, I could not sleep thinking of the impossibility of completing the ride. Our plan was in tatters, there was no back-up. If we continued, we would need to sleep at the controls. I was barely managing to sleep in hotel rooms, and I knew exhaustion would be my downfall. I had largely conquered my sleep issues



CAUTION!

—PHOTO CHRIS NEWMAN

Our bikes outside the brilliant Barnard Castle.

—PHOTO CHRIS NEWMAN

on the 1200ks I had finished and had managed to finish the Cascade 1200 on only a few hours of sleep. But this was different. There was no way I could complete this ride without sleep and so far, I had managed only a few hours, if I even slept that much. For me, mentally, the ride was ending as I lay awake on that cot, listening to my friends softly breathing as they slept soundly.

We started out early that morning, still hoping to make up some lost time. The scenery was gorgeous, and we were pleased with our decision to have stopped and rested the night before. My GPS file shows that the 5k detour took me over an hour to ride and the 52 mile stretch between controls took us over seven hours to complete. We did stop for a leisurely lunch, but our average speed was just around 10 mph and lurking in the recess of my mind was the knowledge that we would need to climb this again on the return trip.

We reached the Brampton control just before 1 pm. We had ridden past our hotel and were facing 200k until



the turn around point. Mentally, I was finished. I dreaded arriving in Scotland, in the middle of the night, too exhausted to think, unable to sleep, wanting to quit and sure that no trains would be running at 3 am.

George and I decided to turn around and pedal the 20 miles back to the hotel where a room, dinner and a cold beverage awaited us. Nigel wanted to see Edinburgh and hopefully finish the ride, so we parted ways.

After a lovely dinner, a Guinness or two and 10 hours of sleep, I was in a much better mental place. George and I planned to have our cards stamped at every control, having dubbed our endeavor the ALT LEL. We had a lovely and relaxing return trip. The volunteers

were impressed by our perkiness which always made me fess up that we were cheating.

Nigel reached Edinburgh, had a long sleep, and started his return journey. He was making steady progress and as I followed his tracker, I had a few pang of regret at having turned around. Unfortunately, he arrived at the hilly detour at night and there were no services or support of any kind. He was low on water, with several hours of riding until the overnight control. He arrived at Barnard Castle close to 6 am and decided his ride was over.

Nigel took a train back to London and George and I had a leisurely tour of the English countryside. We regrouped at our hotel Friday morning each of us having ridden approximately 1200k.

Despite not completing the entire route, we agreed we had a lovely cycling vacation. The weather was warm and sunny, the route was challenging and at times truly breathtaking. We had plentiful food, chatted with innumerable local volunteers, and had spent the week in the company of good friends. We didn't earn the finishers medal, but we had said all through planning if we just ended up on a bike ride together, that would be reward enough. 🚲



A lovely break with George.

—PHOTO NIGEL GREENE

We are TOGETHER WE RIDE 2023



The 4th annual International Women's Day Together We Ride: A Bike Ride for Equality, Inclusion and Empowerment March 8th through March 12th, 2023.

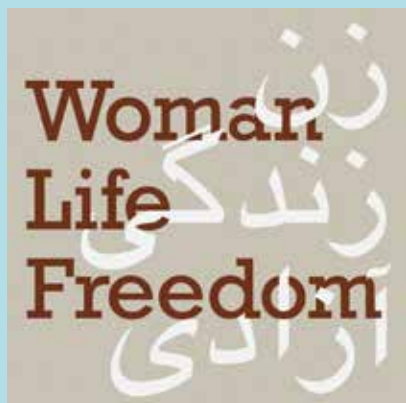
- Ride Wherever You Are!
- Ride Indoors or Outdoors!
- Ride Any Bike!
- Ride Your Pace!
- Ride at Your Place!
- Ride alone or with friends and family!

**Everyone is welcome.
Everyone has a seat at our table.**



Come and join our
**Community of
Positivity and Sunshine**

March 8th through March 12th, 2023, as we all ride virtually in unison in our yearly global movement to celebrate International Women's Day.



Together We Ride asks you to keep the courageous women of Iran in your heart as you ride this year.

We are pleased to report that we have a healthy financial position going into 2023.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2022

FEES AND DONATIONS

Advertising	5,355
Donations	200
Commissions & Interest	17
Membership Dues	112,130
Ride and Perm Fees	61,736 ¹
PayPal Fees	-5,752

Net Fees and Donations 173,685

RUSA STORE

Revenue	22,191
Inventory	-16,340
Shipping and PayPal	-3,722

Net Store Profit 2,129

EXPENDITURES

ACP/UAF/SR600 fees	217 ²
Insurance	40,428 ³
American Randonneur	39,547 ²
Website, Admin & Tax	3,719
Promotion / Video	1,250 ⁴

Total Expenditures 85,160

Net Operating Revenue 90,654

ASSETS

2023 Membership Dues	66,240 ⁵
2024+ Membership Dues	22,740
Cash Reserve	137,815
Store Inventory	14,811

Net Assets 241,606

NOTES:

- (1) Ride Fees billed to RBAs have been eliminated for 2023 and Perm Fees reduced; these fees will be about \$6,000 in 2023.
- (2) The ACP invoice of \$5,298 and printing invoice of \$9,124 both came in too late to make it into the 2022 financial statement
- (3) Liability insurance fees are per rider day and the rate has not changed in 3 years. We expect an increase with our Oct 2023 renewal.
- (4) We started work on a promotional video series, paying 50% upfront
- (5) We started 2023 with approximately 2200 members having already renewed

Beyond Pavement

BY JONATHAN FEY

A Post-Brevet Gravel Transfer Stage on an Early Colorado Spring Day

As I write this, I'm laid up with a small yet annoying injury which is keeping me mostly couch-bound. So I'm thinking about routes and route planning. If you're anything like me, you probably have an open tab in your browser dedicated to RideWithGPS. Mixed surface brevet riding is something I've been thinking about a lot lately. Many of the most remote roads here in Colorado are the most beautiful, and circumstances dictate that they are largely unpaved.

To plan and look forward, it is often useful to look back. So this is going to be somewhat of an exercise in flexing the memory-access musculature.

In order to test the viability of a gravel brevet, we're using an existing event with two transfer stages: one paved transfer to the start stage, and one gravel-heavy transfer home stage. The plan is to cover about 210 miles, with a proportionally small amount of gravel, maybe 30 miles.

It's April in Colorado, which is particularly volatile, weather-wise, but the forecast looks pretty good. Four or maybe five of us meet in the post-industrial redeveloping north edge of downtown Denver around say, 4:45am. I'm the latest of the group so we roll out as I arrive. It's unexpectedly warm, say 45 degrees.

But what happens next is that it gets colder and colder. The ride to the start of the course is pretty much a straight shot on a few major throughways; we pass a lot of things that we can't discern, but I suspect it goes like this: office park, office park, gas station, office park, neighborhood, strip mall,

repeat. The city gives way to the plains with the same slow gradual process by which the night gives way to day, which is incidentally also what happens.

There are these low pockets of land filled with cold air being illuminated with the half-light of dawn and now we're starting to ride harder to keep warm. I'm a notorious under-dresser, but this time is worse than usual. My hands gradually ghost me, then my toes. I'm preoccupied by it. We pass a high school, make a few turns, and finally arrive at the start in the township of Mead. It's about 18 degrees Fahrenheit.

As I've come to know it, Mead is a small truck stop town which sprung up to service the start/finish of our local randonneuring club. We mill around in the convenience store for maybe 40 minutes. Sitting on the floor,

Jonathan trying to thaw his feet in the c-store.

—PHOTOS ANDY STOCKMAN





Through the tunnel in Poudre Canyon.

I repurpose a couple sheets from the local newspaper into the toeboxes of my shoes. We take turns with the hand-dryer in the bathroom, trying to invest life in our frozen fingers.

The smarter randonneurs arrive gradually in heated vehicles, and the group sets off around 8am. It's still cold but the promise of more sunshine is tempting.

The group rolls out about two dozen deep, as far as I can tell. We'll make a westward traverse of the plains north of Boulder, head north to Vern's in Laporte, just above Fort Collins, then head west up the gradual ramps of the Poudre Canyon to Stove Prairie Landing, then up to Stove Prairie; then down a fast, winding descent to Masonville, and finally a jog back to Mead through Berthoud.

At Vern's I eat a big, warm cinnamon roll and drink a coffee. We're not especially hurried, so by the time we start to head up the Poudre we link up with the group that rolled past Vern's. There's one fast rando up the road we likely won't catch, but two of

us push ahead and make our turn for Stove Prairie.

We bungee back and forth a little as the weather finally becomes truly amenable to cycling. We're together at the top, so start to head down toward Masonville together. Eventually I'm on my own and start pushing on back toward Mead with a slight tailwind. My computer tips over 150 miles on the approach and I finish by myself in the mid-afternoon. I stop at a pizza shop and put in an order in for a half-cheese,

half-Hawaiian pie, and go back to the convenience store for a tall Michelada, which I drink at the patio table in front of the pizza place while I wait for the pie. Riders cruise in in ones and twos and by the time the pie is ready, our crew of Denver-bound randos have rolled back in.

We split the pie and reassess the day out in front of the convenience store as the light starts to gray out. We climb back on our bikes and make our way south and east for a while



In the pre-dawn chill, waiting for Jonathan.



Hairpin turn before climbing a small dam

on a mix of mostly low-traffic gravel roads, hard dirt roads, and some minor paved county roads, some of which are familiar but most of which are new to all of us.

We stop to fix a slow-leaking tubeless tire. A sparrow-hawk hovers above us in what I assume is a small uplift of hot air. We make a turn I've used before. It takes us past a links-style golf course but the road is closed for construction. We use the stop to do a little more mid-ride wrenching to

free up a rider's shift cable in the lever. We consider hiking over a big mound of dirt, but eventually back-track a little on a paved road and turn again back onto a rougher gravel road.

Two of us push ahead hard for a little while. It feels good to ride hard and it's not lost on me that I'm hitting a second stride late into this ride after taking on the pizza calories.

There's almost no traffic the whole way. Occasionally, we're passed by a friendly work-truck on one of the paved

connectors between our north-south gravel through ways.

We eventually make a few winding turns through a subdivision on pavement and will ride pavement the rest of the way into town. We're still pushing pretty hard but the group is back together. It's starting to get cold again as the sun gradually slips from behind a small, pink gauze of cloud and then below the peaks to the west. There's plenty of light for now, and we'll be home soon anyway. We dispatch two from the group as they head west and the last two of us cut through downtown, and then finally I split off toward my house.

This isn't my first brevet of the season but the taste of nicer weather is tantalizing. Later, I'll try to cement in memory the dirt roads we used to connect back toward town for future reference and route building.

So consider this dispatch an introduction, or a handshake between two worlds that have been dancing around each other for a long time. Riding gravel on brevets isn't new, but it's not yet that common (at least here in Colorado). I suspect we'll be seeing a lot more of each other. 🚲



Riders waiting for the brevet to start on a chilly April morning.

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New RUSA Members

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE	RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE	RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
15890	Cummings, Reid	Calgary	AB	15853	Ferguson, Andrew	Kapaa	HI	15753	Miller, Andrew S	Bala Cynwyd	PA
15841	Taylor, Jack H	Montgomery	AL	15825	Meyer, J Eric	Wailuku	HI	15906	Rinestine, Steven R	Duquesne	PA
15894	Maisonville, Lloyd L	Pelham	AL	15856	Atherton, Jake	Iowa City	IA	15790	Han, Joshua S	Lansdale	PA
15819	Colley, David	Wetumpka	AL	15740	Escobar Nunes, Rodrigo	Vinicius Chicago	IL	15814	Atkins, Max	Philadelphia	PA
15913	Winger, Kirk P	Buckeye	AZ	15915	Kuhn, Ian	Elgin	IL	15899	Aune, Jordan M	Philadelphia	PA
15896	Curtis, Alan A	Gilbert	AZ	15817	Readey, Jay Scott	Flossmoor	IL	15821	Dahn, Tristan	Philadelphia	PA
15916	Powers, Kyle T	Goodyear	AZ	15836	Carani, Kevin	Gilberts	IL	15756	Falcone, John	Philadelphia	PA
15917	Wollgast, Teresa	Goodyear	AZ	15741	Hrycak, T J	Indianapolis	IN	15859	Harries, David	Philadelphia	PA
15829	Schiffhauer, Charles Lloyd	Scottsdale	AZ	15914	Savage, David T	Indianapolis	IN	15754	Horvath, Stephen G	Philadelphia	PA
15884	Aptekar, Rory	Berkeley	CA	15776	Perry, Richard Todd	Wichita	KS	15803	Jones-Layman, Amanda	Lynn Philadelphia	PA
15876	Sullivan, Barbara B	Carlsbad	CA	15772	Payne, Campbell	Acton	MA	15864	Kline, Chris D	Philadelphia	PA
15798	Anderson, Robert Scott	Coto de Caza	CA	15837	Sousa, Matt	Arlington	MA	15763	Knight, Simon	Philadelphia	PA
15795	Runquist, Benton James	Davis	CA	15778	Wang, J	Concord	MA	15806	Lackey, Bryce	Philadelphia	PA
15783	Wada, Sakae	El Cerrito	CA	15789	Atwell, Zachary J. D.	Medford	MA	15782	Miklasevich, Daniel A	Philadelphia	PA
15872	Marcel, Vincent	El Segundo	CA	15865	DeSelms, Micah James	Newton	MA	15786	Scholl, B	Philadelphia	PA
15788	Rogers, Cooper	Emeryville	CA	15885	Potts, Carl	Quincy	MA	15832	Dello Russo, Christopher	Stroudsburg	PA
15850	Wheeler, Patrick	Fremont	CA	15891	Ellis, Amy E	Salem	MA	15844	Hutchison, Phillips	Westerly	RI
15867	Palmer, J M	La habra	CA	15784	Altepeter, Jeffrey J	Watertown	MA	15882	Misegades, Keith	Franklin	TN
15759	Gangadharan, Karthik	La Mesa	CA	15799	Doig, Alex	Watertown	MA	15881	Posey Jr, Allen Wayne	Woodland Mills	TN
15907	Mann, Michael J	Los Angeles	CA	15779	Owen, Shawn	Winthrop	MA	15828	Salazar, Nicole	El Paso	TX
15767	Wilson, Houston H	Marina del Rey	CA	15760	Elliott III, Shedrick	Baltimore	MD	15862	Connor, Timothy W	Frisco	TX
15840	Friedman, Greg L	Merced	CA	15747	Lucas, William M	Eden	MD	15787	Carreno, Carlos A	Houston	TX
15902	Pourmehr, Kaveh	Mill Valley	CA	15807	Hoover, S	Elkridge	MD	15771	Cummings, Eric M	Houston	TX
15804	Ventura, David	Moraga	CA	15822	Du, Sam	North Bethesda	MD	15758	Davis II, Raymond J	Marble Falls	TX
15908	Hoefer, Liam	Oakland	CA	15826	Streetman, Joshua P	Freedom	ME	15805	Goins, Bill	Layton	UT
15911	Ilen, Rocky	Oakland	CA	15834	Akmon, Devon	Ann Arbor	MI	15873	Bonebrake, Kathleen Marie	Salt Lake City	UT
15845	Jensen, Jessica	Oakland	CA	15835	Akmon, Dharmia	Ann Arbor	MI	15868	Boren, Jacob L	Santaquin	UT
15809	Anthony, James P	Orinda	CA	15777	Anderson, Dennis P	Rochester Hills	MI	15880	Framm, Alec	Arlington	VA
15849	de Martel, Vincent	Palo Alto	CA	15769	Stenson, Erin L	Dayton	MN	15764	Lahr, Thomas	Arlington	VA
15742	Kapoor, Rupesh	Palo Alto	CA	15895	Ibrahimpasic, E	Minneapolis	MN	15860	Wiseman, Brian	Burke	VA
15887	Leclaire, Annie Breinholt	Pleasant Hill	CA	15830	Mullery, Michael	Rosemount	MN	15808	Ogar, Jeffrey A	McLean	VA
15757	HLushchenko, Andriy	Rancho Cordova	CA	15751	Schwarz, Matthew	Shakopee	MN	15901	Green, Jeffrey W	Virginia Beach	VA
15823	Giske, Mt	San Diego	CA	15851	Serroque Jr, Stephen Manuel	Kansas City	MO	15883	Patterson, Calvin C	Bellingham	WA
15898	Litvin, Chris	San Diego	CA	15904	Brodsky, Forrest	Asheville	NC	15793	Distelhorst, Luke	Edmonds	WA
15750	Beyerlein, Dagmar Bettina	San Francisco	CA	15852	Waffa, Rowan	Cary	NC	15897	Harrington, Kristi M	Kirkland	WA
15842	Boeckel, Peter	San Francisco	CA	15888	Tschurtsenthaler, Florian M	Manchester	NH	15746	Drake, Jon	Lake Forest Park	WA
15794	Mielke, A	San Francisco	CA	15877	Day, Jeff	Newton	NH	15848	Larson, Kate L.	Olympia	WA
15863	Soderstrom, Myles Arend	San Francisco	CA	15892	Cassidy, Sean	Flemington	NJ	15816	Sparks, Martin A	Richland	WA
15900	Tran, Dat G	San Jose	CA	15910	Mellies, Sarah Diana	North Plainfield	NJ	15801	Bailey IV, Robert W	Seattle	WA
15878	Schierbeek, Miles C	San Luis Obispo	CA	15813	German, Stan	Princeton Junction	NJ	15869	Finne, Neal K	Seattle	WA
15770	Heller, Peter M	San Mateo	CA	15833	Cooper, Philip	Rio Rancho	NM	15874	Gilbert, Donald	Seattle	WA
15815	Bourdow, Stephen	Santa Cruz	CA	15774	Aptekar, Nicole	Brooklyn	NY	15838	Hakala, Jason M	Seattle	WA
15831	Hess, Jake J	Santa Cruz	CA	15886	Barber-Smith, Luke	Brooklyn	NY	15755	Ho, Joanne	Seattle	WA
15765	Messina, Dana D	Santa Monica	CA	15855	Litton, Samuel B	Brooklyn	NY	15905	Kehoe, Pat J	Seattle	WA
15762	Hoffman, Robin D	Santa Rosa	CA	15775	Lofaso, Sophia	Brooklyn	NY	15773	Magness, Bill	Seattle	WA
15871	Cho, David	South San Francisco	CA	15909	Schaller, Jonas	Brooklyn	NY	15893	Martin, Joseph Daniel	Seattle	WA
15743	Sunkavalli, Laini	Temecula	CA	15781	Usherenko, Aleksandr	Brooklyn	NY	15749	Metteer, Dale Edward	Seattle	WA
15889	Moede, Doug	Arvada	CO	15752	Adelman, Ian	New York	NY	15739	Rudy, Chris S	Seattle	WA
15866	Allen, Colin	Boulder	CO	15812	Conheady, Brian F	Rochester	NY	15861	Savage, Ryker Stiles	Seattle	WA
15792	Center, Jack D	Boulder	CO	15820	Buettner, Robert D	Sloatsburg	NY	15800	Scott, Judson J	Seattle	WA
15791	Kohen, Max	Denver	CO	15858	Bennett, Tim R	Bedford	OH	15796	Shuman, Andrew	Seattle	WA
15768	Vacek, Veronika	Golden	CO	15761	Wichner, Benjamin P	Cincinnati	OH	15870	Volta, Matthew H	Seattle	WA
15824	Dubois Sr, Mark A	Berlin	CT	15857	Katz, Jonathan D	Cincinnati	OH	15810	Welsh, H P	Seattle	WA
15748	Hemphill, R	Willimantic	CT	15780	Allen, B	Dayton	OH	15811	Wyllie-Cain, Sam Gamgee	Seattle	WA
15818	Magruder, Daniel L	Davie	FL	15744	Easley, Rex E	Xenia	OH	15903	Wise, Jay	Spokane Valley	WA
15802	Quinn, Michael F	Jacksonville	FL	15843	Muret, Kyle	Stillwater	OK	15766	Lippert, Dylan R	Tacoma	WA
15797	Santos, Maybelle F	Ormond Beach	FL	15827	Haber, Jonah	Toronto	ON	15879	Vanier, Kim	West Allis	WI
15875	Dejarme, Amy	Atlanta	GA	15846	Broberg, Peter	Portland	OR	15839	Mende, Patrick	Leipzig	Germany
15847	Michaud Jr, Andrew	Statesboro	GA	15745	Russell, Christopher Ryan	Portland	OR	15912	Takita, Kei	Tsuchiura	Japan
15854	Alexander, Katelyn M	Kapaa	HI	15785	Oh, Daniel	Abington	PA				

The 2022 American Randonneur Award

DEBRA BANKS

BY DAN DRISCOLL AND BILL BRYANT

The RUSA Board of Directors is pleased to give the 2022 American Randonneur Award to Debra Banks. Deb has been an extremely hard-working Regional Brevet Administrator, volunteer, and board member. She is also a strong rider and has earned many finisher's medals across the US and around the world.

Riders have often remarked that Deb helped them during long rides; it's this type of selfless compassion that marks her commitment to our sport and its riders that sets Deb apart. For example, during the Gold Rush Randonnée 1200K in 2017, many riders were in big trouble because of a serious heat wave. It was magical to watch Deb work hard for every rider at her control, helping them to get down the road safely, including an ice sock around departing riders' necks. Looking forward to this coming August, Deb is stepping up again for RUSA members by organizing bag drop support at Paris-Brest-Paris.

Being on the RUSA Board can be a very time-consuming labor of love. A term is three years, and that's a long time. Deb has served two terms. Participating in the normal day-to-day board duties and meetings is one thing, but when a board member takes on extra duties, as Deb has done, it can easily double their time commitment, and she has done it all to help our sport. Deb is currently serving on the RUSA Awards Review Committee and

is also the chair of the RUSA Gravel Committee, plus she helped jump start the new Permanents Committee during the pandemic. Deb has also served on other committees and ran the RUSA store in the past.

Deb is the Regional Brevet Administrator for Davis, California. Few riders know the time commitment

that is needed to be a successful RBA in our sport. Doing so has to be a passion, otherwise it's just a pain. Deb stepped up when the previous RBA retired several years ago, and she kept the popular Davis brevet series from going dark. In addition to the regular Super Randonneur brevet series, she has organized many brevets, populaires, and team events each year. She was the organizer for the quadrennial Gold Rush 1200K too, another labor of love.

All in all, it is hard to imagine a more deserving recipient of the 2022 American Randonneur Award than Deb Banks. Randonneurs USA sends her our admiration and heartiest congratulations. 🚲



Deb is hands-on, hardworking and dedicated.

—PHOTO DREW CARLSON

Paris Focused

BY BILLY EDWARDS

As an athlete and coach, I am fully devoted to being physically prepared and making sure my athletes are ready for the goal. However, sport is more often about the obstacles along the way as well as during the event. I am privileged to have a life that is well-managed and often it is sport that provides the extreme challenges. As we all get on our journey to Paris-Brest-Paris 2023, I will share the fun and challenges in my journey to PBP 2019.

Twenty kilometers into PBP 2019, I was on my back, looking up at the afternoon sky, and for a short moment I thought my eight-year journey was over.

Let me rewind to explain those eight years. I rode PBP in 2011 and it was the hardest thing I had ever done, physically. I executed a Charly Miller performance, riding straight through two nights, meeting some amazing Frenchmen, and finishing fully broken but on the greatest endorphin high of my life. On night two without sleep east of Fougères, I had “danced with the devil in the pale moonlight” and I wanted more of that.

Ultra triathlon ambitions caught my fancy in my post-elite triathlon

life. In 2015, I skipped PBP to properly prepare to compete at the Ultraman World Championships in Hawaii. Ultraman is a three-day adventure with 10k of swimming, 261 miles of biking and a double marathon. It is a three-day stage event. My race execution

was decent but hindered by a bike crash and an asthma attack. I have few regrets in life, but if I could do it over again, I would have been in France that summer, not Hawaii. As I hobbled along the Queen Ka’ahumanu Road during the double marathon, I began to dream again of PBP. I had completed Ultraman despite some serious setbacks, but missed the simple torture of pure cycling. It only reinforced my quest for the next four years: PBP and another Charly Miller.

The summer of 2018 provided a first step towards PBP. The grandest of randonnees had grown in popularity and I knew I needed a long ride that year, to register for an early wave in 2019. I had major foot surgery in 2016 and spent a good portion of 2017 lacking the proper motivation to train. In 2018 I did not have the proper training, but had the focus and motivation.

Billy taking the 80 hour start at PBP in 2019.

— PHOTO CORINNE WARREN





Paris, Utah on the Utah randonneurs 600k in June 2019.

—PHOTO BILLY EDWARDS

There was a 600km in June that lined up with my commitments well-enough. It would require my family to have a babysitter since my wife was headed out of town on her own bike trip. Every extra hour spent on the road after 8pm on Saturday was \$15 and I was financially motivated to get the ride done in close to a day. I rode the mountains well- paced, and then the flats of the Front Range into the night for the final 200km. My old lighting system failed at 10pm in the rain, so I rode completely dependent on my back-up lights. I finished in just under 26 hours, but straining in poor light had left me with blood shot eyes that scared my kids. Good back-up lights

were key, I noted, but the focus on PBP was what lit my motivation.

The spring of 2019 was full of obligations, but I found a brevet in Arizona that dovetailed well with a coaching trip. Despite being completely

under-trained, I went out fast and was light-headed and broken at 80 miles. Taking an Uber back to Tucson entered my mind. My gracious ride partner, Corinne Warren, looked at me in slight pity and then watched me devour about 2,000 calories in one stop. My plan for the spring and summer had exactly one option for a 400km so I had to finish this ride. Corinne dragged me through about 300km and into the dark until I finally rebounded. The final 100km, I shared pulls then shared water bottles when Corinne left her bottles at the last aid station. We discovered that mistake five miles and 1000 feet of elevation

On an unusually rainy day in the foothills of the Colorado Front Range.

—PHOTO BILLY EDWARDS





Motoring up a hill on my PBP rig.

—PHOTO BILLY EDWARDS

loss too late. Mistakes were made, but we kept focused on the path to PBP.

The longest day of the year in June 2019 provided an excellent opportunity in Colorado to do the required 600km. I was physically ready to ride under 24 hours, but Mother Nature had different plans. We had a blizzard in the mountains and freezing rain on the flats. At roughly 100km in, the route goes right by my house. I stopped for a bottle refill and my wife pulled me off the road. I was shivering, soaked to the skin, and still had to ride up to 9000 feet, through a snow storm.

She would not allow such jack-assery. I love her; she completed PBP in rainy 2007, and she was allowed to force that DNE. She also had a plan. We were going to get it done and go to PBP.

There was a 600km in Logan, Utah, an eight-hour drive away six days later. Back against the wall, I would attempt to homologate on the final weekend. It was a completely unfamiliar area but the ride leader Richard Stum was welcoming and gave me all the intel I needed. I had a group to blaze the first 200km with, and then ventured forward on my own. Around Bear Lake

east of Logan, the pavement in Utah nearly rode itself. I felt like I was on an e-bike. Then into Wyoming on the north side of the lake the road was being prepped for chip seal. There were miles of road with 3-4 inches of ungraded chip. I laughed and cried for 15 miles and lost all feeling in my hands. On a relatively beautiful section of road from 300-400km, headed due south, a summer wind cranked comically in my face. The final 200km was eerie since there was no lunar illumination and very little road lighting. At least my new light system held up. Honestly, it was a relatively easy 600km and I was privileged to ride with some great folks early on. It also went through Paris, Utah — twice — which kept my sights firmly on PBP.

The years immediately prior to PBP 2019 left me fit, but the many years since 2011 had me motivated. I had pondered all the things that would help get me through the roughly 50 hours. I was scared but excited about how the second night out would go. I had many friends from eight years prior and a good group of randos from Colorado to roll out with. I had a plan and was ready to execute.

Then, only 20km into PBP, I was on my back, my bottles strewn on the road, my handle bars trashed, and my elbow steadily bleeding. Freaking French road furniture and dangerously ambitious front groups. I knew to be wary of both and for a moment I thought my ride was over. Nope! I had come too far, had dreamed too long. My mind shifted. The group was moving up the road and I was losing valuable time towards my Charly Miller. Instantly, I was back to the focus that got me here.

... to be continued in the summer issue 🚲

I have few regrets in life, but if I could do it over again, I would have been in France that summer, not Hawaii.



Cartoon collaboration between Sean O'Connor and Staygold.

To have your original comic published, please submit to editor@rusa.org.

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End to End

What is it about seeing how fast you can ride your bike between two fixed points that seems so appealing? In randonneuring, many of the most storied events such as Paris-Brest-Paris (PBP), London-Edinburgh-London (LEL), and Boston-Montreal-Boston (BMB) involve out-and-back, point-to-point routes that conjure timeless images of historic proportions. In Britain, riding the “End to End” from Land’s End (in southern England) to John o’Groats (in northern Scotland) has occupied cyclists’ minds since the dawn of the bicycle. In this new book, Paul Jones explores the history of this epic challenge through the stories of riders who have attempted to ride the 842 miles in the shortest time possible over the years.

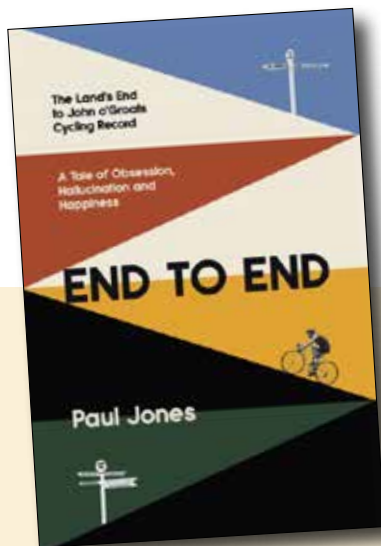
Bicycle racing in Britain evolved much differently than in Continental Europe. Group races were banned in the UK on public roads starting in 1890 and continuing up through 1959. Mass start races only becoming more

common in the last quarter of the 20th century and as a result, racing against the clock over set distances and/or times is deep within the DNA of British cycling. As a result, time trials, hill climbs, and 6/12/24 hour races are far more common and have a longer and deeper history there than in other parts of the cycling world. The Road Records Association (RRA), the official certifying body of cycling records in Britain, formed in 1888 and continues to monitor the rules and maintain the speed records for LEJOG and other

cycling challenges. Groups such as the LEJOG Association, on the other hand, celebrate and acknowledge all End to End accomplishments utilizing any mode of transportation and all who do so are welcome as members.

Thousands complete this journey each year. Many go on foot while others cycle or simply drive. One fellow even swam the distance over an incredible 135 days so that he could attain the triathlon record by riding, running, and swimming the distance between these two hallowed points in succession. Many who complete LEJOG are undertaking such an accomplishment for the first time to honor a loved one, to raise money for charity, or for any number of other reasons. Anyone in search of one of the most idiosyncratic accounts should consider George Mahood’s *Free County* in which he and his friend start the journey in Land’s End with only their boxer shorts and a commitment to reach John o’Groats by relying on the generosity of strangers they meet along the way. The focus of this current book, however, is on the time trialists, those shooting for a fastest known time (FKT) across this distance.

The first recorded attempt to complete the End to End by bicycle was undertaken in 1880 when C. A. Harman and H. Blackwell made the journey on penny farthings or “ordinary” bicycles, as they were known. They were successful, yet speeds increased dramatically over the years once the diamond frame “safety” bicycles and then gears were introduced, and when roads were paved, and technology



End to End

BY PAUL JONES

Little, Brown, 2021, 303 pages



Author Paul Jones
— © DANIEL BURBRIDGE

increased. Women have played an important role in the history of the End to End, and Jones is sure to include their stories along with an exploration of some of their specific struggles for recognition by the male cycling establishment. In 1939, for instance, at the height of the Second World War, Marguerite Wilson achieved the remarkable accomplishment of cycling the End to End in 2 days and 22 hours before adding another 160 miles to complete the 1000-mile record of 3 days and 11 hours. *End to End* is well documented with contemporaneous accounts of historic crossings such as these, but it is the conversations Jones includes, from interviews with his more recent subjects, such as the remarkable Eileen Sheridan, over tea and biscuits, that are priceless.

Jones' account is largely chronological with chapters documenting his own journey thrown in from time to time along the way. Jones is a cyclist himself, with some experience racing hill climbs and time trials over shorter distances. He makes it clear that he's not some "ultranutter" (as he calls them), so he

is a bit out of his depth on this journey. Since the other racers he covers in his account are generally fed and sheltered by follow vehicles filled with crews and race marshals, the fend-for-yourself ethos of self-supported racing and randonneuring is not present. The writing of this book also coincides with a particularly difficult personal time in Jones' life and readers will likely respond well to his self-deprecating and often humorous writing style.

Sadly, by maintaining a tight focus on those making record attempts, Jones overlooks what many might find to be salient details of the route and the country in between these two terminal points. As a result, one may not emerge knowing a whole lot more about the actual route or the sights and topography along the way. While Jones does relay some stories about his own attempt to complete the route in multiple stages, these mostly focus on the mental and emotional toll of the ride and not on the course itself. While he writes that "I want to see

the topography of the island from the width of a bicycle tyre," readers in search of this level of detail may be somewhat disappointed. But as he also claims, regardless of all the incredible tales and accomplishments of those who have attempted to break the record, ultimately, "time is irrelevant, the journey is the thing."

Why is the LEJOG challenge so magnetic? Perhaps it's simply because "it's there" as Sir Edmund Hillary once said of his reason to climb Mount Everest. There's something extremely elegant in riding between the two extreme ends of a small country and I've wanted to complete this challenge ever since hearing British cyclists discussing it while riding LEL many years ago. Although the option to complete LEJOG is literally available at any time, it may be a bit easier for those not actually seeking the fastest possible time in July 2024 when Audax UK will be hosting a 1400-kilometer brevet starting in Land's End and finishing in John o'Groats, following back roads, adhering to standard audax rules and providing typical audax amenities along the way. Let me know if you're interested. I may see you there. 🚲



Land's End GB
— © MARKUS JASCHKE

The Irrepressible Charlie Martin

BY ED FELKER

In many respects randonneuring is all about achieving goals, whether it be a 200K within the time limit or that first 1200K. When Charlie Martin of Sunnyvale, California (RUSA #12815) took up randonneuring, he set goals that most of us might never consider — and smashed them. Take a look at his RUSA results page! In 2021 he completed 50,000 RUSA kilometers, and in 2022 he had more than 25,000.

Here's Charlie in his own words, telling us what led him to these big numbers and what it takes to get there.

Tell us about yourself: where do you live, what do you do professionally and what drew you into randonneuring?

I live in Sunnyvale, California and work at Google as a software engineer. I got into endurance cycling in 2018, rapidly escalating from an innocent decision to make an infamous hill part of my daily repertoire. Throughout the year I relentlessly explored my limits and had my mind continually blown as I learned about all manner of endurance cycling challenges. One day I chanced upon PBP, and an acquaintance (Joth Dixon, #8094) pointed me to RUSA and advised me to bag a pre-qualifier ASAP. I immediately hit it off with randonneuring. I had found my people and my sport.

According to the RUSA site, you had a big jump in RUSA kilometers in 2019, from 1,830 the previous year to 26,223, with three 1200s and 14 total 1,000s and 600s. You logged many shorter brevets and permanents.

What led you into that level of ambition and commitment?

I developed commitment and consistency in spades from the climbing nonsense I started in 2018. As for my ambition, I'd say it stemmed from an itching curiosity to explore my limits. At the tail end of the year, I decided I'd wrap up my other cycling commitments and then carry my momentum over to randonneuring.

Half a year into rando, I discovered the SR600 ride format, thought it was awesome, and started doing one every month. Eventually I realized I had a streak going, so I decided to complete an "SR-12" (one per calendar month for a year). I finished the last one in the series right when the pandemic started, and shelter-in-place orders were put in effect soon after I arrived home. To date I've done 35 of these and have my own awards page on the Super Randonnées website. It'd be neat to get to 100 someday and even neater to complete an "Ultra SR-12" challenge. I'd also eventually like to experience all the domestic SR600 routes.

I love an exciting goal, and it didn't take long to discover that randonneuring

was a gold mine for goals I could pursue. Consistency, distances, climbing, variety, you name it. Aw yeah, they all sound fun!

You've backed up that year with 15,037 kilometers in 2020 and then a massive increase to 50,000 (exactly) in 2021, and more than 25,000 for 2022. How did you arrive at 50K, and what challenges did you overcome to reach it? That's five K-Hounds in one year!

I draw immense inspiration from other people, and one feat that made my jaw drop was Gary Gottlieb's 40,001 km in 2012. How on earth?! That's a single-year mondial! I'd had a few years in RUSA to ruminate on this, and I always had a nagging question of what sort of cycling volume I could achieve



in a year. What's it like to do that? How would I approach it?

2020 was a strained year for biking. RUSA was navigating the Covid pandemic and searching high and low for insurance, and for a good while randonneuring was completely on hold. Rampant wildfires devastated California and made outdoor endurance rides impractical for a significant chunk of the year. You'd better believe I got stir-crazy! When perms were reinstated in August and the pandemic didn't show any promise of slowing down, I saw the faint outlines of an opportunity. Since I was working from home indefinitely, that cut out 10 commutes and five showers per week. Maybe it was enough to sustain a permanent every morning before work? I took a deep breath and set my sights on a new, exciting goal: 40,000 km.

RUSA distance wasn't my only goal for the year. I had an extremely aggressive elevation goal of 3,000,000 feet, and I would end the year with upwards of a million meters. I also had a goal of climbing Page Mill Road 400 times, which I eventually achieved thanks to creative free-routing on one of my permanents.



What challenges did I have to overcome? Hell and high water. I actually abandoned my goal just two weeks into the year when I tragically broke my wrist during a nasty downhill crash. I optimistically and painfully finished that ride, but after the doctor forbade me from riding for upwards of five weeks, that put my aggressive goal well out of reach.

Or not? Soon enough I was stir-crazy and found solace in day-dreaming and drawing up projections. If I made some heavy schedule optimizations and things went exceedingly

Hitting 40,000 kilometers with Dan Driscoll.

—PHOTO CHARLIE MARTIN

well, I could hit somewhere in the upper-40,000's. If I threw a healthy dose of creativity on top, could I hit 50,000? I got excited, and that's all it takes.

Things didn't go exceedingly well, but they went exceedingly well enough. In May I snapped a crank arm at 2a.m. on my way to an SR600. I scrambled to assemble another bike to complete the ride, and the delay resulted in getting kicked off Mt. Diablo just before reaching the summit, forcing me to book a hotel and climb it a second time the following morning. Meanwhile, I had a flight booked for Seattle's brevet week less than a week away, and my travel bike was missing an important crank arm.

I arranged to fly to Seattle with a broken bike and got an emergency fix on the eve of the first ride. During the 600 km event one of my shoes snapped in half, and I rode another 160 km with increasing Achilles pain before I had an opportunity to buy replacement shoes near a control in Bellingham.

In July my bike didn't make it with me to New York for a solo pre-ride of the Waterfalls 1200k, so I started with a sleep deficit and rode the first half with Pete Dusel's bike and shoes. I battled unseasonable winds and navigated route-upending road closures, finishing with five hours in the bank that were critical for making it to the airport in time to catch my flight to the Colorado High Country 1200k.

My bikes were constantly falling apart from wear, and I never had the time to properly maintain them. In September I flew to Seattle without a bike and rode the Craters 1200k with a new bike I'd bought from a Seattle International Randonneurs (SIR)

Riding through farmland on the Coulee Challenge with Brian Lewis-Jones.

—PHOTO DEB FORD



Riding a perm in Washington with Pam Wright, John Nguyen, and Dan Driscoll.

—PHOTO CHARLIE MARTIN

member. Fire season threatened to rear its ugly head again, and I made a handful of questionable riding choices with awful air quality and debilitating allergies.

In October I completed an epically stupid SR600 permanent during the brunt of a bomb cyclone. Multiple atmospheric rivers rounded out the year, doing their best to shatter my resolve. With nine days and 1,723 km remaining for the year, I suffered another nasty downhill crash during a dark and stormy descent, cracking a few ribs. I still managed to limp across the finish line!

I could fill a book with such stories, but ultimately, they're distractions from what made this a truly difficult challenge. Time knows no mercy, and a year can simultaneously feel torturously eternal and comically inadequate. No matter how bad the circumstances or how destroyed my bike or body, there was simply no room for abandoning a ride or sitting out a day. I had a deep abyss to escape, and every opportunity counted. Each day required a firm decision to climb back on the bike. It was tempting to take vacation days to make some breathing room, but I knew I'd need them all for the deluge of rides on the 2022 RUSA calendar.

The daily time commitment put an enormous strain on my social and professional lives. There was never a



free weekend to visit family, hang out with friends, or join any social non-randonneuring ride. Jumping straight into a full day of work after riding a permanent similarly doesn't leave much time for life. On a typical weekday I'd wake up at 2:45am, hop on the bike at 3:30am, and work from 9am-5pm. That left under two hours to squeeze in life before getting to bed at 6:45pm to target eight hours of sleep. Imagine fitting all of life into two hours per day: groceries, dinner, laundry, talking with family and friends, meeting with the RUSA web team (and contributing to the website!), maintaining bikes, etc. Life was its own logistical challenge!

You bank a lot of kilometers on the same permanent routes. What's been your approach to keeping yourself ready to do the rides and engaged in the process?

I create routes that I love and can enjoy riding again and again.

They're packed with hills, and when I'm climbing, I'm having fun. Most of my ride choices feed into one or more goals. Seeing how each ride feeds into the bigger picture is plenty to keep me engaged.

What's your advice to someone who wants to put in high numbers of kilometers?

Consistency is everything. Be realistic about what it's going to take to achieve your goal. Then make a commitment and stick to it.

What's ahead for you in 2023?

Heck, I didn't even figure out what last year would look like until several weeks in! I don't know what the next exciting goal is, but there's always plenty of fun to be had with 1200's and SR600's. Similar to 2022, I'll also devote a healthy amount of time to my activities on the RUSA web team and board of directors. 🚲

Attention Members

American Randonneur 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 magazine will reach you in a timely fashion.

Update your address online at:

rusa.org/cgi-bin/memberaddresschange_GF.pl

And, don't forget to renew your membership!

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 September 16th - 23rd, 2023
 This week-long tour begins by crossing Lake Champlain heading into the beautiful Adirondack Mountains. Then we head north all the way to the shores of Lake Ontario and along the St Lawrence Seaway. During our final few days we ride passed the 1000 Islands region, across the farmlands and conclude with a final ferry ride back into downtown Burlington. 6 riding days - 75-100 miles per day.

Check out our Friends!
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 Oct. 26th - Nov. 8th, 2023
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Register at paceperu.weebly.com

Bonne Route et Courage!

Randonneuring is a sport of phases. Individual rides, seasons and careers follow imperfect sinusoidal waves. There are highs and lows, periods of activity and periods of equally important rest. The year 2023 will carry us up to another peak, and the pinnacle of our sport, Paris Brest Paris.

PBP is the World Cup and Olympics of randonneuring and the buzz has already begun. Some of the riders toeing the line in Rambouillet this August will be in search of their 13th PBP homologation while others will be seeking their first. There are so many valuable resources offering advice for a successful PBP. I highly recommend the RUSA website and PBP pages, BC Randonneurs PBP pages and of course the ACP's own PBP site, web addresses listed below. This article will not delve into the specifics of equipment or detailed planning but is intended to serve more as a brief guide to PBP fulfillment.

rusa.org/pages/pbp

(which includes a link to the RUSA PBP wiki)

www.randonneurs.bc.ca/pbp/main.html

www.paris-brest-paris.org/

Inbound Dreux. Zombies fuel for the home stretch.

—PHOTO GREGG BLEAKNEY

The delta between our expectations and perceived reality translates to satisfaction or disappointment. The higher the expectation, the more difficult it is to satisfy that expectation. With an event like PBP, the expectations will always be sky high. Follow the Buddha's advice and temper your expectations. Some riders come back PBP after PBP, while for others Paris Brest Paris is one and done. I can promise you right now that the entire event will not be ecstasy. You will have highs and lows. When you're feeling low, don't despair

— the trough will pass. Of course, the corollary is also true. Don't get too sure of yourself when you are riding high because it won't last. Gravity will still be in effect. Don't make homologation your only option for success. If you qualify for PBP you are already successful beyond what most people even consider possible. If you get yourself and your machine to Paris and line up at the start, you will have a unique experience. No one else will ever have your PBP experience, even if it doesn't result in a medal.

Here is some advice based on my experiences and advice offered to me:

Don't start too fast. You can't win a 1200k on day one, but you sure can lose it. As long as you're feeling good, make steady progress but resist the temptation to hang onto the group that is going just a bit fast for your sus-





tainable pace. As Lon Haldeman said, “There is a group riding your pace, and they are likely behind you.”

Stop between the controls to ward off Shermer’s neck and other ailments. Roughly you will be stopping at a control every 80-100 kilometers. Those stops are mandatory and you will need to be efficient and not dilly dally. Stops allow rest for your neck, shoulders, and all pressure points. When performed efficiently, stops help maintain your ability to ride comfortably. Some brief stretching always feels good and can be done on and off the bike. You might choose to eat between controls, at controls or, as is often the case for me, at both. Time off the bike is good for your body and could save your ride. Some of my favorite unofficial stops include the Moules Frites tent in Saint Martin des Prés, Paul Rogue’s garage crêperie in Tanniere, and anywhere in Sizun. If you don’t stop in Sizun, have you really completed PBP?

Bringing small souvenirs to share can really win points with the locals, especially the many kids that line the course. I’ve handed out stickers, pins and even cycling caps. If you don’t bring anything to give out, you’ll still have opportunity for hundreds of high fives and miles of smiles.

Learn a bit of the French language. I promise it will enhance your experience. The volunteers have invested a tremendous amount of time and resources into your success. You can take a few minutes each day to at least learn proper greetings, please and thank you. Bonjour madame, bonjour monsieur, s’il vous plaît and merci will take you a long way even if you know no other French. See Greg Merritt’s section of the RUSA PBP prep seminar discussing language.

As the training progresses and the qualifiers are completed, the excitement will build. It continues to build right up until you are at the starting line. It can feel quite stressful. You’ll have invested a lot of time and effort to reach that point. Don’t fight it. Just let it come and then enjoy as it evaporates into the first pedal stroke. Once the ride starts, you will be in the moment. Being in the moment for three plus days or so is likely one of the main reasons that many of us return to these events. Being in the moment with up to 8,000 others is what makes PBP so special. Be flexible with any plans because as the event progresses, you will encounter battlefield conditions. If you think this is an exaggeration, have a good look

Don’t miss a chance to Stop at Paul Rogue’s garage crêperie in Tanniere. The only cost is a post card from home.

—PHOTO CAP’N ENDE

around at Loudéac on your return. Battlefield conditions call for flexibility. Be flexible and PBP will provide.

No one can guarantee that your PBP will be a success. I wish you the best of luck in your preparations and on PBP if you are fortunate enough to find yourself riding across the hills of Brittany this August. I believe as the French do that we make our own luck. Preparation will help you to be lucky. Prepare your body, your mind and your machine. You will ride with people that you have never met. You will be taken care of by volunteers that you may never see again. You will eat something so French and so wonderful that you will dream of that food item for years to come. You may hear accordion music along a dark roadside and wonder if that is real or imagined. It is real. Whatever happens along your route will be unique and will contribute to your personal PBP experience. I wish that your PBP is wonderful but even if it isn’t, it will be your PBP experience and for that, you should consider yourself lucky. 🚲

Permanently Looking at Routes and Statistics

BY JAKE KASSEN

In August of 2020 the RUSA permanent program went through a complete metamorphosis. Gone were the days of directly contacting a perm route owner for a copy of the cue sheet and requesting their permission to ride the route. Today, riders can review the route publicly on RideWithGPS and the registration and result submission process can be done in minutes on the RUSA website. No advanced approval required. (See the end of this article for a tool to find nearby perms.)

For even greater flexibility, the exact route attempted, including the start and end locations, can be determined by the rider. So long as you pass each control in sequential order, you do not need to follow the approved route. Riders don't even need to start the route at the first control — or any control at all. They only need to return to the same point in which they began the ride. Riders must still complete the minimum distance within the corresponding time limits.

I was initially apprehensive about the change but I've since come to see the new program as a real improvement. As a rider, the freedom to change the route and explore makes perms more fun. Being able to start anywhere means we no longer need to find a way of getting to a control before starting

the ride in earnest. This is particularly helpful when on a trip and/or without a car.

I like to think of perm routes like recipes. You can ride the route exactly as designed and you'll probably get a tasty day on the bike. Or you can

make the route your own, adding and subtracting roads according to your personal tastes. No two attempts need to be the same.

To further the cooking analogy, gravel roads are the cilantro of the cycling world: Some people can't get enough while others find them repulsive. As a dirt road (and cilantro) lover myself, I spend hours scouring routes to add as many as I can. In New England we're lucky to have a plethora of options between most controls, including enjoyable gravel roads in rural areas. I strive to never ride the exact same route twice.

There's another benefit to the new perm program — with all the routes in RideWithGPS in a uniform format it's possible to search and analyze the entirety of perm route

Emily O'Brien (#3597) having a heart to heart with a goat in Carlisle, MA, a common area on many MA perms.

—PHOTOS JAKE KASSEN





On an early morning ride next to the Quabbin Reservoir — a detour made possible with the free route perm option.

data. (Unfortunately, there is no single repository of RWGPS links for brevet routes, and not all have been mapped in that system.)

What the data show

I've downloaded the RWGPS data (Cues, Routes, etc.) into a database containing other result data. Here are some brief findings:

There are **4,583** perms in RUSA's database although only **1,772** (39%) are active as of the end of 2022. With the revamp of the perm program, only new entries and resubmitted routes are active. The percentage of rideable perms will grow over time as routes no longer become inactive if the submitter lets their RUSA membership lapse.

There are **288,710** kilometers of active routes which are documented by **114,511** cuesheet entries — roughly one turn every 1.6 miles on average. As an aside, it's likely that Crista Borrás has personally reviewed and verified more than 300,000 cue sheet entries (!) since she began reviewing applications. That's true dedication.

There's a wide range of navigational complexity. If following cues isn't your thing, try riding Perm #4523 — *Tunnel Hill Trail* out of Harrisburg, Illinois. It only has five cue sheet entries, three of which are controls. The remaining two are reminders to turn on headlights when entering a tunnel.

Perhaps the most navigationally

complex active Perm is #2632 — *Montivilla — The Ring of Fire* out of Portland, Oregon. This 100k has 11 controls and a cue about every *3000 feet* on average. Five riders have successfully finished, some more than once.

Perm submitters are focusing on the shorter distances. There are **1,009** 100-199ks (57%), **660** 200-299ks (37%), and 75 300-399ks (4%). Only **28** active perms are 400k or longer.

At the moment, permanents can mostly be found in a few large states: **351** in Texas (17%), **274** in California (14%), and **146** in Washington (7%). Unfortunately, 25 states have fewer than 25 perms in total. I'm considering a perm as belonging to all the states it passes through, not just the starting state.

There are **188** permanent routes in which at least 5% of the route is unpaved and **66** with at least 20% gravel. (This is based on RWGPS surface data which is occasionally suspect.) Recently, the RUSA board approved a measure to allow credit for gravel kilometers ridden on perms; there is also one additional minute added to the time limit for each gravel kilometer ridden. Hopefully this will encourage more members to create more routes with unpaved miles.

Control Info

There are **12,928** controls, about one every 14 miles on average. For most perms you'll need to bring a camera

(or GPS) as **3,019** controls (23%) call for a picture. Technically, perms can be verified using the traditional methods of penned initials or a store receipt, but in many of these places you'll be hard pressed to find another person if riding solo.

Common control locations:

- Gas Station: 668 (Using common gas station names)
- Starbucks, "Donuts", and "Coffee": 428
- 7-Eleven: 254
- "Church": 176 (Mostly photo controls)
- Subway: 77
- McDonalds: 58

Participation Rates

In terms of perm participation, the program has room to grow. At the start of 2023, there were **4,081** current RUSA members of which only **659** (16%) completed a permanent in 2022. That said, this group rode often and collectively finished **6,655** perms in 2022.

Of active perms, **184** (10%) have no finishers and **270** (15%) have only been completed by a single rider. In many cases the same person has ridden the same perm multiple times.

Most perm riders appear to enjoy the program as **78%** have ridden more than one in 2022. Eighteen RUSA members each completed more than 50 perms last year, five riders completed more than 90, and one rider finished a whopping 156 perms in 2022!

The most popular active perm is currently #350 — *Lighthouse Point to Hobe Sound Run* in Pompano Beach, Florida. This Perm has been completed a total of 899 times by 129 different riders.

Perm #1664 — *SART Permanent Populaire* in Newport Beach, California,

Scouting this dirt “road” in Vermont required more hiking than riding.

has 421 finishes by 16 riders. Several riders have completed more than 30 times with one person having 247 finishes of that 107k route!

Perm #2895 — *Morro Bay to Ragged Point Return* in Morro Bay, California, has been completed 109 times — all by the same rider.

Finding Routes

One limitation of the permanent program has been simply finding one. Even if you are looking for options locally, it can be a challenge to know which are geographically close. This is doubly true if you travel with a bike but don’t know your destination area well. I’ve been working to solve this problem.

Several years ago I created the “Geosearch” website, which lets riders enter an address and find all the RUSA events, brevet routes, and permanents nearby. With the RWGPS data, the website now has the ability to show the



nearest cue as well as the permanent’s official starting point city. When testing the site I was surprised to find a few perm routes went closer to my house than I would have assumed.

The Geosearch site can be found at <https://rusa.jkassen.org> If you find it useful or have suggestions to make it better, please let me know. See you on the (dirt) road. 🚲



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. Send photos separately; please 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 Dan Driscoll at dandriscoll1@me.com for details.

Submission deadlines:

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

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

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

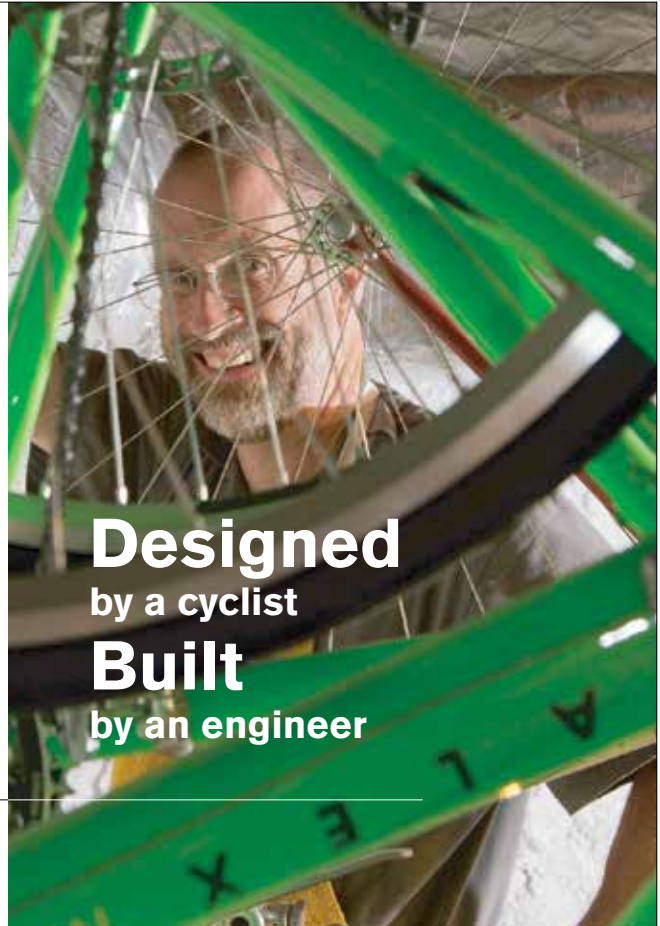
It begins with the right questions; by learning the needs and desires of the customer. I listen to the experiences that led you to me: your riding history, your cycling dreams, and what you want your next bike to be.

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RUSA's Crazy K-Hound'ers

BY DAN DRISCOLL

What's a K-Hound? Just ride about 200km a week for a calendar year, and you'll see, 10,000 kilometers is not nearly as impossible as you'd think, and this year 54 RUSA members got'er done, with a total of 644,348 kms.

For 2023, if you're thinking about PBP (or any 1,200km randonee), the qualifiers to get you there, plus keeping your R-12 and P-12 alive, a few new states, a few Rando Scout rides, a UAF brevet, oh, and there's that RUSA Rouleur Award, you're already over 75% of the way there. So, you might as well add K-Hounding to your bucket list, now, before the year starts to get away from ya.

Many thanks to all of our 2022 K-Hounds. The more that jump on board, the easier it is for everyone having committed riding partners, which makes it more of a team event, as well as keeps

our K-Hound Klub growing. It's always nice to meet up with fellow K-Hounds at an event far from home and have this K-Hound Klub as a Kommon ground.

Don't forget to take your K-Hound Jersey(s) to PBP for the "K-Hound Klub" photo shoot, prior to the start. Details will be announced on the K-Hound Facebook page; if you've not been there yet, take a look — it's a fun place to visit.

RUSA applauds it's 54 2022 K-Hound Klub members. Of those, 12 or 22% are females, well above the national gender mix, which we are extremely proud of. We have new K-Hounds from all over the country

which is Crazy Kool: Seattle, San Francisco and Colorado all have three new K-Hounds each. Texas and the Northeast add a couple more, while Florida, Arizona, Georgia and Oregon help to round out the geographical diversification of new Hounds.

Casting a broader net and including all of the 2022 K-Hound Kounts can promote some club and state pride, but it's never a Kompetition. Seattle wins the most K-Hounds per Klub with 12, San Francisco Randonneurs with nine, and Colorado with six. California leads the states with 14 K-Hounds, Washington has 12, Texas 11, and the East Coast is very well-represented with well over a dozen.

The K-Hound Klub is filled with over achievers, but as Mick Jagger says "Anything worth doing is worth overdoing", and so it is with K-Hounding. Kongrats to our "Hound and a Halves" who accumulated 15,000kms or more in 2022: Bill Beck, Dan Driscoll, Gary Gottlieb, Kitty Goursolle, Shaun Ivory and Mark Thomas (doing so with 9,339kms of foreign 1200's).

We had six riders use foreign 1200K's to K-Hound, and one, Vernon Smith, just to add extra kilometers to his tally. We had one Double Dog K-Hound, Charlie Martin, with 26,910kms.

The Ultra K-Hound is one of RUSA's most difficult awards to earn. It requires a full 10 years of 10,000kms. For 2022, we had two new Ultra K-Hounds: Hugh Kimball and Dave Thompson (RUSA past president) checked that box with ease. RUSA now totals 14 Ultra K-Hounds. For 2023, we have four hopeful Ultra K-Hounds to howl for: Jan Acuff, Spencer Klassen,

2022 Ultra K-Hound Award

The Ultra K-Hound Award recognizes the completion of ten (10) K-Hound Awards. There is no time limit; there may be gaps between any of the calendar years that define each K-Hound.

It is likely that members will have applied previously for each of the ten component K-Hound awards; however, it is not a requirement to have done so.

A given year can only be used towards one Ultra K-Hound award.

RUSA congratulates the riders who have earned and applied for the Ultra K-Hound award.

NAME	CLUB	DISTANCE
KIMBALL, Hugh	Seattle International Randonneurs / 947018	10234
THOMPSON, W David	Central Florida Randonneurs / 909062	12599



Patrick, John, Charlie, and Dan — K-Hounds all — on the Cibola Quest in Arizona.

—PHOTO PATRICK CHIN-HONG

Jeff Newberry and Paul Shapiro. Let's wish them the best of luck.

Helping to lead the packs were committed RUSA volunteers, who put in enough hours to warrant a special designation as a "Time K-Hound" with service to our organization that goes above and beyond. Nine RBA's managed to set stellar examples by K-Hounding. Three of your hard-working RUSA board members found the time to K-Hound. Your RUSA store volunteer Susan Gryder and our new American Randonneur magazine editor Corinne Warren K-Hounded as well.

In total, over the last 17 years of RUSA K-Hounding, there's been 634 K-Hound awards, earned by 213 unique hounds, which is an average of about three K-Hound Awards per hound, although the females are averaging closer to four awards per rider.

Most encouraging is our 18 new K-Hounds, 33% of this year's total. This new blood helps ensure there will be hounds a plenty for years to come. Three of these 18 new K-Hounds, or 17%, are females: Colorado with two, and Texas with one.

It's Interesting to note that exactly half of these first time hounds have four digit RUSA numbers, meaning they've been around a while, and half have five digit RUSA numbers. Below are accounts from some of our new

K-Hounds, and as you'll read, there are a lot of different ways to accomplish a K-Hound award. Some ride solo 100ks, and others mix in SR 600's, brevets and or foreign and domestic 1,200ks, all good options and nice to be able to use to personalize your approach.

K-Houndin' by Corinne Warren #7898 (Colorado)

For me, the K-Hound was not quite an accident but a serendipitous fluke. I had thought about trying it several years before, but quickly decided that I didn't have the attention span to see it through. In 2022, though, having gone to California in February to visit my in-laws meant that the nastiest month of the year in Colorado was supplanted by two weeks of riding new routes in nice weather, and I racked up 1,000k at a time I'd normally be lucky to get in two or three hundred.

Add to that the enthusiastic support of Jim Howell, who got two perms close to my house up and rolling and by the time I hit the Treasure Cove 1200k in May, and I was starting the calculations. I could do it, I figured, if I took it in small bites so as not to get overwhelmed.

I looked at it month by month, rather than week by week, which made the task easier to grasp, especially with erratic Colorado weather. Three of my

rides were mountainous 300k's, the kind of routes I really love, aligned in spirit to the Triple Crown rides I have done in Colorado and California. Thirteen hundred kilometers were ridden on the two routes Jim got approved for me. I added the Super 600 I vowed I would never ride again, but with closed roads, Mike Turek's reroute made it feel different enough that I didn't feel like I was going for a redo.

I calculated that I rode 6,573 km solo — almost two-thirds. It isn't that I wanted to ride alone, but more that I am relatively removed from the rando epicenter to the north of me and it usually wasn't practical to drive an hour and a half up to ride with others. I would not recommend tackling the K-Hound this way; long rides are more pleasant when ridden in company. But it can be done if you set your mind to it, and all of us tend to have a stubborn streak, don't we? I wanted to finish this goal without riding a single kilometer more than I had to, so I rode just what I needed, leaving only my P-12 and R-12 rides for the last two months of the year.

Everything worked out, though I knew I was taking a small chance not finishing as quickly as I could, and I hit 10,023 kilometers on the December 200k, finishing in the company of other Rocky Mountain Cycling Club riders. I am not going to say never again, but it will likely be awhile before the stars align and I have the time and the inclination to finish another K-Hound.

K-Hound(ing) by Chris Michels #4386 (Texas)

The best advice I have ever received regarding cycling is to remember to hydrate. There are many things you need to do in order to K-Hound, but the most important one is to remember to hydrate.



Kevin Williams on Day Two of the Coulee Challenge 1200K. Truly the adventure of a lifetime!

—PHOTO DEB FORD

You will have short rides, and long rides. You will have cold rides and hot rides. You will have rides that will test your spirit, and you will question your sanity, but if you remember to hydrate you will be okay. Hydrate.

You will meet riders with way more experience who will pass by you, faster than the Flash, and then there will be days that you are the Flash; in either case remember to hydrate. You will have rides that start when it is raining, and some when it is dry, some with still, crisp air, and some with continuous soul-crushing winds, but if you remember to hydrate you will make it through it. Hydrate.

Sometimes you will finish last, sometimes you will finish first, and along the way you will make friends, and have rivals, but if you remember to hydrate you will be okay. You will forget equipment at home, you will break things on your rando bike, you will have more flats than you can count. Hydrate.

You will crash! But you will get up. And remember to hydrate.

Your family and friends will not understand and question your sanity. Your spouse will call or text you when you do not have cell service. In this case you both need to hydrate.

So for those of you wanting to K-Hound, I wish you the best of luck with all your planning, and I hope you have the wind to your back, and remember to hydrate!

Who Da K-Hound by Shaun Ivory #11519 (SIR)

I joined RUSA and Seattle International Randonneurs in 2016, but I was always busy on Saturdays, leading rides for our local mega-club (Cascade Bicycle Club), so I never got around to riding with the randonneurs.

When I retired in 2018, I was finally looking forward to doing some randonneuring. After I did the

TransAm in 2019, my preference for riding alone was cemented, and I was ready to jump in and do some permanents — just as the program was suspended. And shortly after that, the pandemic hit.

But as soon as the permanents program was reactivated, I jumped on it. I did my first permanent populaire on August 2, 2020, and started doing one or two a month, with the modest goal of earning a P-12 award.

It wasn't until November 2021, that I realized you could EARN TANGIBLE AWARDS for permanents! So I rode 1,618 rainy kilometers in November, and 1,214 rainy kilometers in December, to earn the 5000 km medal. Then, I decided to earn the K-Hound award in 2022, which I accomplished in early August. I would have done it earlier, but I only rode one permanent in April, and eight in May, because I was touring Route 66.

As of December 22, 2022, I have completed 165 rides, consisting of

100k and 200k permanents, and a handful of populaires, darts, and 200k brevets (I only rode 10 in-person events in 2022), for a running total of 17,624 km, and I plan to do a couple more this year, weather permitting!

Advice for a K-Hound by Jenn Moore #11755 (Colorado)

Ten thousand kilometers is a lot of time in the saddle. I knew that in an abstract way last year before embarking on a K-Hound, but I don't think the reality sank in until somewhere around September ("How am I STILL doing this??!!") Unless you plan to travel the world with a bike in tow, you will likely end up riding many of the same routes multiple times (maybe even from your house, thanks to the awesome new permanent rules!) If you are considering joining the pack, and like me, find yourself riding many of the same routes over and over, I offer a few tips on keeping it interesting:

- Be sure to plan some "adventure" rides. Without a 1,200k and an SR600 to look forward to, I might have collapsed due to boredom in the middle of one of the same five 100k's I can ride from my house.

- Devise new challenges for old routes. I'm pretty sure I could now ride oft-used sections of Boulder County permanents with my eyes closed. (For purposes of RUSA insurance, I have yet to put this one to the test.)

- If you ride in rural areas, consider playing "Hey cow". This is a rousing game in which you yell "Hey cow!" and see how many of them look at you. Bonus points if they audibly respond.

- Points deducted for every time you get coal-rolled.

- Find a riding buddy! I logged most of my K-Hound kilometers with my husband and many more with

clubmates. Company always makes the miles go by faster.

• SNACKS. You will burn approximately 1 billion excess calories in the course of completing a K-Hound, and fantasizing about your next gas station repast kills a surprising amount of time.

In all seriousness, it feels pretty great to have joined such an accomplished group of randonneurs, and committing to a K-Hound was a good way to keep up motivation for riding through the winter months. To all those working towards 10,000k in 2023, happy riding!

K-Hounding through Super Sixes by John D'Elia #1146 (Connecticut)

By 2022, I am sure we were all tired of Zoom. We wanted to be “in person”. Sick and tired of virtual, we all wanted “real”.

Finally experiencing the freedom of being an empty-nester, and with a Covid hangover pushing me to get out and ride, I did a lot of rides in 2022. My only goal was to ride as much as I could and along the way I realized I might be able to reach K-Hound status, so I pushed on. It was less a goal unto itself than a byproduct of my exuberance at finally being able to get out and ride with my friends. I did a great variety of rides, with regular brevets, Super Sixes, and the Treasure Cove and London-Edinburgh-London grand randonnes. Between all these, the kilometers piled up and I hit the K-Hound mark in the fall.

Several of us got together and rode whatever Super Six brevets we could organize. Unfortunately, one ride in Washington was canceled due to impassable roads, with snow six feet deep in the mountains, in August! But we were able to organize and complete seven other Super Sixes, all in different parts of the country. This gave us the

chance to see over 100 types of trees on the Blue Ridge Parkway and the famous Skyline Drive in Virginia on the Lynn Kristianson Super 600.

The Sierra Nevada Super 600 began ominously at the Donner Monument, the place where some travelers met their grisly fate in 1846, but the scenery — azure blue Lake Tahoe and the beautiful mountains of the Sierra Nevada — was spectacular.

On the Arizona Cibola Quest Super 600, as we rode down to Alpine in a rainstorm, we encountered the fantastic quaking aspen, with their golden leaves; they do seem to shimmy and shake in even the slightest breeze. Riding all those miles provided lots of unexpected moments of beauty I would have missed, had I not traveled the country to rack up the kilometers.

But not all was verdant vistas and fun. We were out on the Sierra Super 600 when we came to Sonora Pass. About halfway up, there is a sign warning of a 26% grade. Being certain I wouldn't see anyone I knew, I jumped off and began to walk. The grade was so steep it was hurting my Achilles to walk in cleats, so not wanting to add injury to insult, I took off my shoes and began padding up this huge hill in my stocking feet, looking unlike the sort of athlete

that might attempt such a feat.

As I plodded up, a driver was coming down in an SUV. I am sure I looked like a person in need of help and this Good Samaritan rolled down her window: “Do you need help?” To which I replied, “No, this is what I do for fun and relaxation.” A few minutes later she came back, unconvinced: “Are you sure?”

This wasn't the only time I pushed my bike this year. I did it on the Southern California Super 600 near Pine Creek, in February, and again on a short, steep spot on the Lynn Kristianson Super 600 near Wintergreen, Virginia in the spring. Do all of those K-Hound kilometers have to be actually ridden?

I often felt like a beginner this year with some of my clothing choices. My winter gloves proved totally inadequate when they got wet on the Cibola Quest SR 600 when we encountered heavy rain and temperatures in the low 40s on the second day. For that matter, my tights weren't doing much to help me stay warm either, and I thought I'd freeze if I had to fix a flat with my useless frozen hands.

Looking at the hill profile for that ride, I had left my rain pants in the car, not wanting to carry the extra weight. I really should have paid more attention

A Kwintet of Kolorado K-Hounds:
Vernon S., Rashid K., Jenn M.,
Corinne W., and RBA John Lee E.

— PHOTO DEBBIE BUSH



to the weather and worried less about how heavy my gear was, but I wasn't expecting to be so cold in Arizona.

Then I had the opposite issue at LEL in August. I had heard about predicted bad rain and wind, especially when crossing the Fens at the beginning and end of the ride. I took two jackets and had three layers to put on over my shorts, including the rain pants that I later shunned at the Cibola Quest. But this time at LEL there was zero precipitation, I never even rode through a puddle.

We had a lot of weird mechanicals this year. Dan Colvin's chain breaking on the Lynne Kristianson Super 600, and Charlie Martin snapping his crank in two on the Sierra Super 600. I had my own odd bike repair issue early on, on the Southern California Super 600. I got a flat late at night and tried to fix it in the dark. The fancy carbon mini-pump I had bought required threading the hose on to the valve stem for a secure fit. Unfortunately, after pumping about 200 times to get pressure, all that work went to waste. When I loosened the

hose, it unscrewed the valve core, too, and emptied the tube.

On one occasion the valve core blew out and went God knows where. Dan was ahead of us but left tubes for me at the photo controls. We fell woefully behind schedule and it was late and we were tired. At one point, we became so sleepy we pulled some large cardboard boxes out of a dumpster and made them into impromptu beds. Dumpster diving was never an intentional tactic but crucial to making it through this ride and to the two-room hotel that night.

2022 K-Hound Awards

The K-Hound Award honors members who accumulate at least 10,000km in qualifying rides during a calendar year. Qualifying rides include:

- All events on RUSA's calendar.
- All RUSA permanents, including RUSA sanctioned Super Randonnée permanents.
- Paris-Brest-Paris and foreign RM-sanctioned events of 1200km or more. Documentation must be submitted for any foreign event not included in RUSA's database.

NAME	CLUB	DISTANCE
ACUFF, Jan (F) [9]	Seattle International Randonneurs / 947018	10101
AKBARIAN, Hamid [7]	Northern Virginia Randonneurs / 946020	11521
ANDERSON, Randy T [2]	Quad Cities Randonneurs / 913042	10238
BECK, William A [8]	DC Randonneurs / 946012	15570
CARDELL, Greg [2]	Pacific Coast Highway Randonneurs / 905051	13333
CAREY, Alison (F)	Randonneurs USA / 943095	10109
CARLSON, Drew [6]	San Francisco Randonneurs / 905030	10016
D'ELIA, John	Randonneurs USA / 907095	10067
DRISCOLL, Dan [16]	Lone Star Randonneurs / 943026	17350
ELLIS, John Lee [11]	Rocky Mountain Cycling Club / 906002	12086
ERARD, Julien	Oregon Randonneurs / 937020	10028
FOLEY, Paul A [4]	Rocky Mountain Cycling Club / 906002	11345
GOTTLIEB, Gary P [15]	Lone Star Randonneurs / 943026	17912
GOURSOLLE, Kitty (F) [5]	San Francisco Randonneurs / 905030	15000
GRYDER, Susan L (F) [3]	Central Florida Randonneurs / 909062	10007
HELLER, Misha Marin (F) [2]	Asheville International Randonneurs / 933011	10731
HRAST, Michael	San Francisco Randonneurs / 905030	10074
ISHIHARA, Mitch [3]	Seattle International Randonneurs / 947018	10101
IVORY, Shaun	Seattle International Randonneurs / 947018	17830
KANABY, Gary [6]	Heart of Texas Randonneurs / 943049	10549
KHAN, Rashid	Rocky Mountain Cycling Club / 906002	10837
KIMBALL, Hugh [10]	Seattle International Randonneurs / 947018	10234
KREGGER, Matt	Seattle International Randonneurs / 947018	11267

The most special ride of my K-Hound journey this year was also the easiest. I wanted to get together with a team and ride at least once in a flèche or dart. Patrick Chin-Hong quickly organized a flat, easy route in the Connecticut River Valley, where we had great views of the river and great New England fall foliage. Patrick, a Massachusetts native, invited Dan Aaron from New York, Chris Slocum from New Jersey, Vaune Davis of Canada and myself (from Connecticut) for the event. Each rider had completed

a different edition of the last five PBP's all the way back to 2003.

We wore our PBP jerseys and used our official water bottles, and took a bunch of pictures. We were chatting and lurching and having so much fun recounting our experiences in France that we almost missed the cut-off time. We ended up finishing alright and enjoying the views of the rushing Connecticut river from our seats in a brewery in Brattleboro.

I didn't DNF any ride this year, although I thought about it plenty of

times. And on Cibola Quest, when we were confronted with the rain, wind, cold, and possible ice on the road, I seriously considered quitting. But the ice never showed up and when the sun rose we had a nice day and with only 80 miles to go, so we went for it.

In so many ways this sums up my season and my K-Hound: plenty of obstacles, many justifiable reasons for stopping, but my friends and the drive to just ride to keep me going to the K-Hound finish line. 🚲

LEBRON, Gil [4]	New Jersey Randonneurs / 930029	10480
LENTZ, Richard	South Jersey Wheelmen / 930003	13006
LEWIS, Thomas	Seattle International Randonneurs / 947018	10895
LIPPINCOTT, Jeff [2]	Pennsylvania Randonneurs / 938017	10000
MAGLIERI, Christopher [5]	Eastern Bloc Cycling Club / 907007	12013
MARINO, John J. [2]	Orange County Wheelmen / 905025	10246
MARTIN, Charlie A [4]	San Francisco Randonneurs / 905030	26910
MASON, Tim	San Francisco Randonneurs / 905030	10820
MCALISTER, Grant [5]	San Luis Obispo Randonneurs / 905166	10144
MICHELS SR, Christopher D	Houston Randonneurs / 943030	11319
MOORE, Jennifer (F)	Rocky Mountain Cycling Club / 906002	10727
NEWBERRY, Jeff [9]	Hill Country Randonneurs / 943025	13395
NEWCOMER, Robert C.	Audax Atlanta / 910004	10217
NGUYEN, Hoang Q [3]	Xe Dap Viet / 905174	14000
NGUYEN, John D [3]	Seattle International Randonneurs / 947018	10463
PACINO, Dana A (F) [13]	Lone Star Randonneurs / 943026	12679
PRANDELLI, Andreas	New Jersey Randonneurs / 930029	10220
RANSON, Emily (F) [4]	DC Randonneurs / 946012	10191
RUSSELL, Amy L (F) [4]	Heart of Texas Randonneurs / 943049	14246
SHAPIRO, Paul G [9]	New Jersey Randonneurs / 930029	10012
SINGER, Ian Ryan	South Florida Randonneurs / 909014	10965
SMITH, Vernon M [3]	Rocky Mountain Cycling Club / 906002	12814
STOLZ, Sarah (F) [2]	Seattle International Randonneurs / 947018	10394
STURGILL, Michael R	Bullshifters Bicycling Club / 903011	10250
THOMAS, Mark [14]	Seattle International Randonneurs / 947018	16683
THOMPSON, W David [10]	Central Florida Randonneurs / 909062	12599
TODD, Joseph H [2]	Audax Atlanta / 910004	10923
VINING, Matt [2]	Pacific Coast Highway Randonneurs / 905051	10555
WARREN, Corinne Downs (F)	Rocky Mountain Cycling Club / 906002	10023
WILLIAMS, Kevin J	San Francisco Randonneurs / 905030	10212
WRIGHT, Pamela (F) [15]	Lone Star Randonneurs / 943026	10641

RUSA Awards

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
Paul A Foley [4]	Golden, CO	10/19/22
Christopher D Michels, Sr	Houston, TX	1/2/2023
Robert C. Newcomer	Atlanta, GA	12/27/22
Matt Vining	San Gabriel, CA	11/15/22

RUSA Coast-to-Coast Award

The Coast-to-Coast 1200km award is earned by RUSA members who have successfully completed four different Randonneurs Mondiaux 1200km-or-longer randonnées held in the United States.

A member may earn multiple Coast-to-Coast awards. No event or different editions of the same event may be used more than once among multiple awards. For example, if Boston-Montreal-Boston 2002 is used in a member's Coast-to-Coast award, BMB'06 (or other edition) may not be used to claim another award.

The four events needed to qualify can be completed at any time and over any number of years.

RUSA congratulates the riders who earned and applied for the Coast to Coast 1200km Award.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE
12/19/22	Graham A Ross	Portland, OR
EVENTS	2014 Cascade	
	2017 Gold Rush Randonnee	
	2021 Colorado High Country 1200	
	2022 New York - Montréal - New York	

Ultra Randonneur Award

The Ultra Randonneur Award is for RUSA members who have ridden ten (10) Super Randonneur series. The Super Randonneur (SR) series of brevets (200 K, 300 K, 400 K and 600 K in a calendar year) that are used to qualify for the Ultra Randonneur Award need not be in consecutive years, nor is there a time limit on how long it takes to accumulate the ten SR series. Note that it is possible to earn more than one SR series per year, making it possible to earn this award in fewer than ten seasons.

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Michael R Sturgill [3]	Phoenix, AZ	11/17/22
W David Thompson [3]	New Smyrna Beach, FL	11/19/22

RUSA American Randonneur Challenge

The American Randonneur Challenge (ARC) is a special award given by Randonneurs USA to any RUSA member who successfully completes in the same season two or more Randonneur Mondiaux 1200-kilometer or longer grand randonnées held in the United States. The ARC award can be earned only by riding the event as a 1200k; riders entered to do it as a 1000k + 200k may not claim the award.

RUSA congratulates the riders who earned and applied for the ARC award.

APPROVED	NAME	CITY, STATE
12/12/22	Bradford D Tanner	Concord, NH
EVENTS	Coulee Challenge	
	Blue Ridge to Bay	

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
Chin-Hong, Patrick	Amherst, MA	32	10/19/22
Foley, Paul A	Golden, CO	45	11/13/22
Gritsus, Vadim	Paramus, NJ	19	12/29/22
Hazel, Geoffrey	Bellevue, WA	16	1/9/23
Lakwete, Angela (F)	Auburn, AL	13	10/18/22
Martin, Charlie A	Sunnyvale, CA	25	10/20/22
Mathews, Craig	The Woodlands, TX	37	11/14/22
Newberry, Jeff	Austin, TX	21	10/26/22
Newcomer, Robert C.	Atlanta, GA	28	12/27/22
Nichols, Eric M	Newfields, NH	13	10/28/22
Schurman, Regina (F)	Lisle, IL	26	12/12/22
Stolz, Sarah (F)	Seattle, WA	10	11/6/22
Taylor, Scott A	Austin, TX	31	12/19/22
Walsh, Hugh Michael	Cincinnati, OH	17	10/31/22

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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	NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Tom Atkins	Ravensdale, WA	1/3/23	Jeff Newberry [13]	Austin, TX	1/2/23
Jeff Brain	Bonney Lake, WA	12/14/22	John D Nguyen [4]	Seattle, WA	12/31/22
Alison Carey (F)	Houston, TX	1/9/23	Patrick F O'Connor [2]	Washington, DC	1/18/23
Drew Carlson [9]	Sacramento, CA	12/3/22	Gary Allen Parsons	Nevada City, CA	11/21/22
Trent Cooper	Denver, CO	10/20/22	Joseph Ray [6]	Bernardsville, NJ	12/24/22
Sharan L Daniel (F)	Seattle, WA	11/18/22	Graham A Ross [7]	Portland, OR	1/4/23
Norman Ehrentreich [6]	Shoreview, MN	10/24/22	Amy L Russell (F) [3]	Waco, TX	1/2/23
Julien Erard [2]	Portland, OR	1/2/23	Kevin Schmidt	Portland, OR	1/12/23
Michael Fretz	Berkeley, CA	11/17/22	Paul G Shapiro [13]	Princeton Junction, NJ	11/9/22
Sebastian Nugent Frye [2]	Minneapolis, MN	11/2/22	Bret A Slater	Springfield, VA	12/10/22
Theresa A Furnari (F) [12]	Jefferson, MD	1/18/23	Christopher C. Slocum [8]	Toms River, NJ	1/4/23
Luke J Halliwell	Byron, CA	10/18/22	Sarah Stolz (F) [4]	Seattle, WA	11/5/22
Jason L Hansen [2]	Seattle, WA	12/29/22	Mark Thomas [15]	Kirkland, WA	1/12/23
Steven D Haskins [2]	Hartselle, AL	10/10/22	Bill Vanderslice [7]	Sacramento, CA	12/3/22
Michael Hrast	Danville, CA	12/8/22	Mac Vergara [3]	Piscataway, NJ	11/5/22
Kerin Huber (F) [11]	Pasadena, CA	12/17/22	David Weigel	Wheat Ridge, CO	11/8/22
Mitch Ishihara [7]	Issaquah, WA	11/27/22	Rob Welsh [2]	Apple Valley, MN	11/3/22
Eric J Linser [2]	San Francisco, CA	10/25/22	Peter C Wick	Granby, CT	1/5/23
Charlie A Martin [4]	Sunnyvale, CA	12/13/22	George Winkert [16]	Highland, MD	12/28/22
Brian R McGuire [2]	Phoenix, AZ	12/27/22	Howard Zabell	Granite Bay, CA	12/10/22
Christopher D Michels, Sr	Houston, TX	10/14/22			

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
Bill A Brier, Jr	Fremont, CA	12/21/22
Alison Carey (F)	Houston, TX	11/19/22
Dan Driscoll [7]	Arlington, TX	11/14/22
Vadim Gritsus	Paramus, NJ	12/5/22
Charlie A Martin [3]	Sunnyvale, CA	12/30/22
Corinne Downs Warren (F)	Monument, CO	11/9/22

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
Jan Acuff (F) [7]	Seattle, WA	12/31/22
T Marie Autrey (F)	Tucker, GA	12/23/22
Alison Carey (F)	Houston, TX	1/9/23
David G Conger	Port Orchard, WA	12/26/22
Joshua Crixell [10]	Temple, TX	12/30/22
Sharan L Daniel (F) [2]	Seattle, WA	12/21/22
Paul A Foley [4]	Golden, CO	11/26/22
Susan Gishi (F)	Davis, CA	1/8/23
Jason L Hansen [3]	Seattle, WA	12/29/22
Robert A Hendry [7]	Bainbridge Island, WA	12/7/22
Gary Kanaby [6]	Salado, TX	10/22/22
Ken Knutson [9]	Tracy, CA	10/31/22
Cheng-Hong Li	Princeton, NJ	12/12/22
Charlie A Martin [4]	Sunnyvale, CA	1/9/23
Anthony M Medina	Bainbridge Island, WA	12/7/22
Randy Oakley	Bellevue, WA	12/26/22
Eric J Pedersen [2]	Audubon, NJ	12/5/22
Paul G Shapiro [10]	Princeton Junction, NJ	11/9/22
Martin Shipp [7]	Raleigh, NC	10/16/22
Kenneth D Smith, Jr	Plainfield, IN	1/14/23
Sarah Stolz (F) [4]	Seattle, WA	11/5/22
Bill Threlkeld [5]	Herndon, VA	12/11/22
Matt Vining [2]	San Gabriel, CA	11/15/22
Brian Volkoff	Rocklin, CA	12/8/22
David Weigel	Wheat Ridge, CO	1/14/23
David M Wiley [6]	Lawrence, KS	1/18/23
George Winkert [3]	Highland, MD	12/29/22
Duane Wright [3]	Seattle, WA	11/5/22

Rando Scout Awards

Created to encourage exploring new routes, the Rando Scout recognizes RUSA members who have ridden at least 25 distinct routes in brevet, populaire, or grand randonné (1200km and longer) RUSA events. (Permanents do not count.) The route must be in the RUSA Brevet Routes database and be linked to the event ridden by the member. There is no time limit to accumulate routes.

NAME (25-49 unique routes) CITY, STATE APPROVED

Williams, Eric Allen	Silver Spring, MD	11/9/22
French, John D	San Francisco, CA	12/8/22

NAME (50-74 unique routes) CITY, STATE APPROVED

McDaniel Jr, Kenneth E	Millbrook, AL	11/7/22
Gritsus, Vadim	Paramus, NJ	11/10/22
Rozelle, Paul G	Saint Petersburg, FL	12/20/22

NAME (75-99 unique routes) CITY, STATE APPROVED

Feinberg, Brian K	Cupertino, CA	1/9/23
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NAME (125-149 unique routes) CITY, STATE APPROVED

Stevens, Sharon (F)	Richardson, TX	11/5/22
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NAME (150-174 unique routes) CITY, STATE APPROVED

Thomas, Mark	Kirkland, WA	12/21/22
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NAME (200-224 unique routes) CITY, STATE APPROVED

Driscoll, Dan	Arlington, TX	11/5/22
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RUSA Awards

RUSA Rouler

The RUSA Rouleur award is earned by completing at least one event within each type and distance range of event listed below.

RUSA Rouleur recipients must complete, in the same calendar year:

- 100-124 km populaire
- 125-149 km populaire
- 150-199 km populaire
- 200-220 km brevet
- and an 8-hour Dart populaire team randonnée of 120 km or longer. At least three team members must finish the ride together for this event to count for the award.

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Bill Akiyama	Torrance, CA	11/14/22
Terri Boykins (F)	Los Angeles, CA	11/1/22
Greg Cardell	Valencia, CA	11/14/22
Randy Carey	Shoreview, MN	10/25/22
Matthew L Cazalas	El Cajon, CA	11/1/22
Joshua Crixell [2]	Temple, TX	11/13/22
Linh P Do (F)	Orange, CA	11/1/22
Gregory K Goebel	Cypress, CA	11/1/22
Kitty Goursolle (F)	San Ramon, CA	12/20/22
Stephen Hazelton [2]	Garland, TX	12/10/22
Christopher Heg	Seattle, WA	11/20/22
Daniel Hernandez Rivera	Long Beach, CA	11/14/22
Kerin Huber (F)	Pasadena, CA	11/1/22
Greg Jones	Moorpark, CA	11/14/22
Lisa Jones (F)	Moorpark, CA	11/14/22

The recipient must be a current member of Randonneurs USA during each of the qualifying rides.

Each counting ride must be an event on the Randonneurs USA calendar. Permanents and foreign events cannot be used to earn this award.

The award can only be earned once per calendar year per member.

Longer events cannot be substituted for shorter events (e. g., a 130 km populaire cannot be used for the 100-124 km counting event requirement; a 13.5-hour Dart team randonnée cannot be used for the 8-hour Dart team populaire.).

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Gregory A Jones	La Canada Flintridge, CA	12/5/22
Jairo Lopez	Long Beach, CA	11/14/22
Dave Milsom	San Diego, CA	11/1/22
Foster T Nagaoka	Ventura, CA	11/14/22
Hoang Q Nguyen	Orange, CA	11/1/22
Mike Pace	Los Angeles, CA	11/14/22
Amy L Russell (F) [2]	Waco, TX	1/1/23
Kade Schemahorn	Durham, NC	10/16/22
Martin Shipp	Raleigh, NC	10/16/22
Shai Shprung	Encino, CA	11/14/22
Timothy J Sullivan	Coronado, CA	11/1/22
Wei P Sun	San Diego, CA	12/3/22
Matt Vining	San Gabriel, CA	11/14/22
Brian Volkoff	Rocklin, CA	11/1/22
Douglas A Whitfield	St. Paul, MN	10/11/22

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