

Woodstock Cycling Club

The Voice of the Woodstock Cyclist



*It has
been a
wet
season,
but still
lots of
great
riding*

Upcoming Events

- *Balzac's Ride - Sept 14*
- *Fall Colours Ride - Oct 11*
- *Tour de Pizza - Nov 9*
- *Last Ride - Dec 7*

Summer 2008 News Letter

News from the Prez:

Hi everybody and again welcome to all our new members.

This is the first newsletter in way to long! It has been a long spring, and into summer with getting insurance issues figured out for the Pines, as some of you may have seen by a couple of emails that were floating around. Our goal as the executive was to find the proper insurance that the UTRCA wanted, and we needed. The OCA package we have always used no longer covered this. So after several months of delays, we finally got insurance through the IMBA recommended plan. If any of our members are in the insurance industry or are a lawyer I would love to speak to you on this issue!

This brings us to the big news! The WCC Dairy capital Classic has been CANCELLED for 2008, due mainly to insurance issues! Obviously there is a lot more to this story so if you're interested in the issue please feel free to contact me.

Brian and the crew at Pedal Power have had a few people asking about weekly rides, so we started Sunday mornings at 10am, either at the Pines or Pedal Power for road riders. I have been away a lot this summer and I have not been able to make any of these rides this year, but rumor has it attendance has been very poor. I have said this before, but I believe with peoples busy lives these days, cycling is a direct reflection of an individuals time schedule, and therefore group rides with set times get harder to make. I personally do 80% or more of my rides by myself, and wherever I ride. I usually run into single riders or a couple of riders, and not too many groups. Group rides in the past, that we used to host got very well attended! But these days it seems the only ride that gets good attendance is our annual New Years Day ride. Included with the newsletter is a survey, which will also be emailed out to everybody. Please take a couple of minutes to fill this out as we are trying to get some statistics to make our club better.

We have set the date early for the Annual General Meeting.

It will be a buffet dinner and the club is going to split the bill for dinner. We will pay for 50% of the cost of all member's meals. The date will be Saturday November 08 at Ody's located at the Quality Inn. Happy Hour will be from 6pm to 7pm and then supper at 7pm. Please plan on coming out this evening and joining us for some fun. Bring your pictures and stories of rides this season. Please RSVP to me at rludington1128@rogers.com on or before October 15 so we can get things set up with Ody's. If you do not get a confirmation back from me please resend it as it may have ended up in my roger's spam file.

We have purchased a new gas weed wacker as some of you may have noticed with the recent trimming done at the Pines. There is always trimming to be done and the wacker is easily accessible – if you can help out with some trimming, just drop me a line and we can set it up on your schedule.

How about those trail conditions at the Pines this summer! I can not remember ever seeing it that overgrown. The thinning of the trees the UTRCA did in late 2005 is certainly making for extra work for our volunteers to keep up with the trail work. The extra sun from fewer trees combined with a summer of rain and heat made it very jungle-like.

That's about all I have for now, please mark your calendars and plan on joining us for the A.G.M.

Ryan Ludington

ONE LESS CAR



INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN BICYCLING ASSOCIATION

BIKE TRIPS

For anyone reading this, there is a good chance you like riding your bike, and perhaps most of the time, your riding involves riding the Pines or perhaps other local trails. Maybe you just like to ride the local roads around Woodstock and Oxford County. After awhile it can get boring. Huh!

Don't you sometimes wish you could be riding some exotic trail in a far away place, or perhaps on some scenic road you have seen in some magazine or television program. Well what's the hold up? Time? Money? Riding partner?

Time? You really can squeeze a lot of quality riding in a one week time period. Money? A self guided tour can save you some money, especially if you do the tent or hostel route. Just remember, even staying at home, you still have the cost of food and other expense to manage. Riding partner? You could be waiting a long time if you need to find someone to take the time to ride on "YOUR" little trip, so go by yourself. Besides, you're an adult, does someone really have to take you by the hand?

Getting back to Time, everyone needs a vacation, and everyone is entitled to a vacation. It's too easy to take in account day trips or things that need to be done around the house, so take a vacation.

Now with money, we never seem to have enough of it. I remember taking my first bike trip. I had planned several months in advance on a three week bike trip around Europe. Thinking of how I was going to pay for the flight and cost, I just had to set aside some money every week into a separate holiday account. This was not as hard as it seems, and by the time my holiday was to start, I had even managed to sock away more savings than I expected. Oh how I wished I had planned my trip longer than three weeks.

At first, all of my bike holidays were by my self, where I could set my own trip and pace. At days end, it was never hard to find a group of people to go out and socialize. Once I got into mountain biking, I'd organize a group for week long vacations travelling around Ontario hitting different trails every day and camping at night. That was cheap. Another possibility is a road tour with your mountain or road bike, starting and ending at your home. Or you can take the Via Rail to some destination and then ride back home, or just head off on your bike and take the train back.

Once you want to spend more money on a bike vacation, a internet search's help out a lot. Another good source of bike vacations can be found at the Toronto Bike Show. It does not matter if you want a mountain bike or road bike holiday there are many cool vacations with anything from a few days to several weeks. For the mountain bikers perhaps a week in Whistler, Fernie, Moab or Fruita. For the roadie, the Cabot Trail, biking the Rockies or perhaps part of the route of the Tour de France or a Mosel Valley wine tour.

If you happen to take a guided tour with mountain or road, just remember to shop around. There are dozens of bike tour companies out there. Some of them are no frills and others are so exotic which is reflected in their prices. Some of the tours may seem nice and simple but still are very expensive. And just because the bike tour may be close to home as in Canada or the US, doesn't automatically make it less expensive. There are some really good packages for road and mountain biking in Europe, after all they have been arranging these for a long time.

Just remember, if you decide to take on a group tour and you are going by your self, don't be scared, especially if it's in a land where English is not the number one language. There will always be people with a little grasp of the English language. Besides, you will be meeting so many interesting people who share your love of cycling.

Gerald Mueller

WCC Tours 2008

So far this year we have had 3 tours:

- Dundas Valley in May which was an enjoyable, scenic ride at the Conservation Park in Dundas Valley;
- Mystery Tour in June which was created and put on by John Lynes and his cronies. (Thanks John)!!! The riders were orchestrated around Oxford County seeking information from clues that only John could put together;
- the Ice Cream Ride put together by Christine and Bill Losee and hosted at their cottage in Turkey Point. It was a fun event with a scrumptious fish fry finish!
- the August 10th Balzac's Coffee Ride was cancelled due to wet weather and R/S to September 14 (see below).

Upcoming Tours:

- September 14th - Balzac's ride is from Pedal Power parking lot and leaves at 1:00pm. The ride consists of 45 km of mixed dirt and paved roads heading into Stratford where Balzac's serves up the best coffee in Ontario. Those who wish to ride all paved roads will have an alternate route. For those who don't want to ride back from Stratford, a car pool can be arranged and we will dine at one of the local pubs before driving home. Those who want a really long ride are welcome to turn around after Balzac's and head back to Woodstock-90-100km.
- October 11th, Gerald Mueller will be hosting his annual "Fall Colours Ride". It consists of dirt road, railbed and any single track that Gerald can find. Beautiful scenery will be experienced as you ride over and around the Nith River area in the Canning and Drumbo area. This ride will leave Pedal Power parking lot at 11:00am and you need to bring snacks and drinks to support yourself over the 50km travelled.
- November 9th, the Club will hold its annual "Tour de Pizza". This ride starts at Roth Park at 11:00am and there will be both a 20km ride and a 40km ride offered. This is a single track tour with railroad and dirt roads thrown in. After the ride, we will all gather at the "Pizza Hut" at 3:00pm for pizza and beer. Bring loads of cash to go with your appetite.
- December 7th, our last ride of the year will take place. It will start at Roth Park at 11:00am and will be of approx. 30km duration on mainly single track, railroad beds and dirt roads.

At this time, I would like to thank John Lynes (et al) and the Chris & Bill Lossee for their efforts to provide two exciting tours. **Kerry Redden**

A GRAND ADVENTURE

Well this year I did not get a lot of cycling in but hey, it's early and Donny and I plan a trip from Windsor along the shore of Lake Erie with a side trip to Pelee island for mid September. This will be in sharp contrast to last years trip when we made the trek to Ottawa via Orangeville and Orillia then east to Ottawa.

Lots of hills, most of them up, but we did have some good weather.

This year it will be mainly flat and of course we are counting on a good tailwind to help us along.

However, as that is still in the future I thought I would tell you of another venture.

It has long been a plan of mine to take three of the grandchildren on a canoeing trip down The Grand River from Paris to Brantford.

Brendon 13, Michael 13 and Tyler 8.

I had asked the boys if they had ever been in a canoe before, Michael said yes but as we set off it transpired that he had once sat in one, but never paddled one or been out on the water,-- I've got to learn to ask the follow up question.

I made the booking with 'Grand Experience' who operate a shuttle from Brant Park up to Paris and then you canoe down the Grand back to Brantford. The booking was for late in the afternoon 3.00 pm start but it was the only time available.

I was a little concerned because every afternoon we had lots of thunderstorms and the open water is not the best place to be in a thunderstorm.

As we arrived in Brantford it grew more and more ominous with thunder rumbling in the background and lightning flashes all around.

To add to the concern you could hear the adjacent Golf course warning horns to clear the course.

I was fully expecting the trip to be cancelled but no, after loading the canoes from the previous trip on to a trailer we were on our way to Paris.

It was a motley crew that set off, one couple with a 6-month-old baby, another with loads of equipment, big boom box, picnic hampers, the works. In total, probably around 20 canoes. Waivers signed we were all set to go and we donned our soggy life jackets and boarded the canoes.

By now it was raining and the storm showed signs of worsening.

Despite warnings to stick together the two 13 year olds were first in the water and quickly wobbling their way down-stream.

Tyler and I climbed in the second canoe and away we went.

After the first few yards and negotiating our way past the bridge abutments we started to get the hang of steering and controlling our direction.

About 10 minutes into the trip it started to rain and I do mean rain, the heavens opened and it poured down. Thunder and lightning intensified and I became increasingly concerned.

Then the wind came up. It was blowing directly up-stream and we could make no

progress. The wind persistently blew the canoes either crossways or completely reversed them and I had to change positions and paddle from the front to try and make progress.

The older boy's canoes capsized and they were dumped in the water.

At this point the Grand was only about 2-3 feet deep and warm, so it was no great hardship. We also capsized and had to drag our canoes to the nearest bank and empty them of water.

At this stage I decided we could not fight the wind, despite our best efforts we were being blown back up-stream.

Reluctantly we started to paddle our way back to Paris.

Just as suddenly as it started the wind stopped.

The rain continued unabated, as did the lightning but what the heck so we turned around and started down stream again.

Having capsized and survived the boys lost their fear and managed to tip over the canoe at every opportunity.

Tyler wanted to transfer to the big boys canoes, as they seemed to capsize with much greater frequency. We trapped fish and frogs in the canoes when they tipped.

However a canoe full of water is a heavy load about 1500 lbs and dragging them ashore to get rid of the water was proving more tiring than the paddling so that novelty began to wane, I slipped on some slimy rocks as we were pulling one boatload ashore and the keel ran across my foot resulting in a blackened toe nail so I called a halt to the capsizing for fun game.

We did encounter one other couple on the trip but I was not sure if they were part of the original group or not.

We settled down to some more regular paddling now and the rain eased to just a regular downpour rather than the extreme conditions earlier.

The rest of the trip was uneventful just slow and steady progress.

I was impressed by all the boys perseverance, no complaints and they all paddled steadily for the whole trip.

We were the first of the group to arrive and no one else showed up while we were there but I did not hear of any mass disasters so I guess they either made it or returned to Paris.

I think the temperature dropped as we returned to Brantford, or perhaps it was just the effect of being wet and rained on for 2-3 hours but, as soon as we got ashore we all started shivering. The heater was turned up to max and we made our way to the nearest MacDonald's. The storm returned in earnest with heavy rain, thunder and lightning.

We consumed massive amounts of food in a very short time.

Dropped off the grandchildren to respective homes and home to a hot bath and dry clothes.

I guess the trip was a success, about ½ way down Tyler asked, 'Can we do this again Grandpa?' Grandpa was noncommittal, but in retrospect it was an enjoyable experience

Ike Donnan

SINGLE SPEEDS, FIXED GEARS AND PAIN

You've read about them in the bike Mags, you have probably seen one go zinging by you on the trail, but there is starting to be a little following even here in Woodstock. Most of us learned to ride on a one gear bike, and I think all BMX's are single geared, but then we wouldn't want to be associated with a kid's bike. Why would you want to ride a single speed when you can have 27 gears. Oh the pain.

For those of us who have ridden road for a long time, we will recall when the winter came around you'd slap some fenders and a fixed gear on an old road bike and that was winter training. You think that's painful, then you have never meant the King of Pain.

The King of pain happens to be the old "Oxford Merx's", Ken Ross. Most of you probably don't know him, some probably heard of him, and a few of you may have even had the chance to ride with him. Ken was Pain. It did not matter if it was him talking religion, the way he fixed your bike or the way he rode you into the ground, it was Pain. It was him that introduced me to fixed gear biking, without brakes, but that wasn't pain that was Nutz. Ken always liked to talk about gearing in inch's, so in other words you picked out your gearing in how many inch's you biked travelled in a certain gear with one completed pedal stroke. He even had a homemade chart stuck to the stem so he knew exactly how many inch's he was travelling in each pedal revolution in every one of his gears, That's a little bit of pain, but mostly anal retentive.

I don't know if the roadies still use a fixed gear bike over the winter, but it seems doubtful because most serious riders have either a set of rollers or bike trainer, and then now we have an abundance of Gyms. Today it's mostly the mountain bikers who now are carrying the torch. Buy why? I blame Dirt Rag. If there is one bike mag that is consistently promoting SS's it's them. They sucked me in. You know the simplicity, the pure form, the anti-anti, it almost seems glamorous or self righteous to own one. Myth after Myth. It's all becoming painful.

The first pain after you build up a single speed is deciding what frigg'n gear you are going to put on it. Do you do the norm? The 2 to 1, say 32X16. It might be fine on technical trails, but if you are mostly riding urban or road it's a no go, so perhaps a 34-36X15-16. Then to be Uber Cool, it must have a rigid fork. That's just pain and stupid.

So now you've got this cool single speed, and you go for your first ride and things are looking great. Then comes your first downhill and it's in town. You are spinning like crazy and you reach to click down a few gears and then WTF. It's a single speed. I want to go faster. It's not going to happen. Things will work out better once I hit the trail. Huh. You hit a couple of steep technical climb's, you grunt for more power, you swear your going to pull the cleats right off of your shoes. Then You think this whole love affair with the SS is over. Where's my full susser? On your mind is David Bowies Station to Station."The return of the thin white Duke, throwing darts in lovers eyes". I've been blinded by this lust for this bike. But I got over it.

I really do think the biggest pain I've experienced with this Single Speed-Fixed Gear fixation is even though there are a lot of us in Woodstock, the biggest ride I have been able to organize has been four riders. You'd almost think we would have some sort of community or

bond, or we would be organizing rides together. Some of us are doing that, but perhaps with all of the pain, there staying at home with their injuries.

But there is one thing I figured out with my Single Speed, is that it's a Fun Pain.

Gerald Mueller



