

THE SPOKE 'N WORD

Vol 31, Issue 4 - Fall 2012

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UPCOMING EVENTS IN THE CNY AREA

[OCC Cyclocross Race](#)

Sunday October 21, 2012.
Held in LongBranch Park at Onondaga Lake Park, Liverpool, NY.

[GobbleCross 2012](#)

November 23, 2012, held in Lafayette, NY [Visit the Facebook page for more info!](#)

[SAVE THE DATE!](#)

[OCC Annual Banquet](#)

Friday, January 18, 2013 at the DoubleTree Hotel on Carrier Circle. Social Hour will begin at 6:30 pm with Dinner Buffet to follow at 7:30 pm.

AND NOW A FEW WORDS FROM YOUR PRESENTLY PRESIDENT

BY MIKE LYON

Wow, where did the summer go? It sure got cold fast...well at least during the night. But we still have some riding left. So look on the web for the latest and greatest of the upcoming rides and don't forget team RAW (Ride All Winter) for some impromptu postings.

At the top of my thank you list are the 100+ volunteers that make this club function. From the ride leaders to those of you who help out with the various events, i.e., Cyclocross, Tour de Syracuse etc. The Tour de Syracuse alone takes between 60 and 100 volunteers. Without you guys none of this would be possible. Also, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the board members for the work they have done this past year. I don't think that the average member realizes all that goes on behind the scenes. One of the really fun things we did this year was to apply to become a charitable organization or a 501-C3. Let's see, there were multiple federal forms as well as various state forms and oh yeah, the club bylaws had to be rewritten. While we are presently a non-profit, there is a big difference between these two designations. Perhaps the biggest is that sponsors of our various events will be able to claim a deduction for their generous contributions.

Speaking of contributions, I am sure that most of you don't know but over the last five years our club has donated over \$20,000 to other charitable organizations. Nearly all of this money was raised by our Tour de Syracuse race weekend. I know that before I was on the executive board (EB), I never realized how important these races are to the financial wellbeing of the club.

There have been other things going on. We have new club clothing or as some call it a new kit. This was no small undertaking. First there was soliciting designs, voting on those designs,

then setting up the ordering and finally getting everything straightened out when the problems occurred. This latter part took many, many exchanges with the manufacturer. Thanks Brenda!!

We also have a new web page and a committee to run it. While it is still a work in progress, it was no simple task to complete and hopefully, the majority of the clichés are behind us.

This year the board decided to change the election cycle to earlier in the year. In the past, election of the officers and members of board of directors (BOD) has always been held at the end of December into January with the results announced at our annual banquet. Usually, the first board meeting after the banquet is when tasks are assigned to the various BOD members. For new BOD members, it is difficult to know how things operate without having attended a couple of meetings. Now we will have this time is so we can build sufficient guilt in the new BOD members so they have no reluctance in volunteering for these tasks (just kidding). You will find a slate of candidates in this edition of the Spoke-N-Word and you should have or will receive a ballot in the mail. Choose wisely, since you will have to live with their decisions for the next year.

That's all for now, Keep safe out there.



An accident occurred at one of the Slow-N-Easy rides. Some skin was lost, it wasn't pretty

Mike

FROM THE EDITOR

By DAVE VANWIE

THIS ISSUE: CYCLOCROSS!!!

Cross season has arrived! Cyclocross is arguably the hardest (and many will argue, the funnest!) form of bicycle racing. If you are just getting into racing, give 'cross a try! If you prepare yourself properly, cyclocross can be hard and enjoyable. A lot of novice racers and people who are excited to be trying their first race in the fall typically ask "how do I get started?" Well, following are some tips for getting your feet wet (literally) in 'Cross Racing!

Attend A Clinic

Often, these clinics are offered before the 'Cross season, and can run the full gamut of price ranges: some clinics are offered as training camps that are a few days long and offer things like lactate threshold testing, and others are just a few hours to go over the basics on a Saturday. Well worth the time and effort, these clinics not only show you the basics and offer training suggestions, they give you a chance to connect with other noobs and maybe make plans to train with them!

CLINICS

Right now, Syracuse Bike is sponsoring a Cyclocross clinic series to help newbies and veterans alike.

For more information visit their website at this link: <http://syracusebike.com/2012/08/3196/>

Get a bike fit

or at least read up about how a bike should fit: it's hard to race when your knees come up to your shoulders when you pedal, and it's amazing the amount of power you can put out when your bike is properly fit to you compared to when it isn't. Consider at least getting an expert opinion on how your bike is fitted currently, but make sure that you go to someone you trust and someone who knows what he or she is doing. Bike fitting is a science and does require some knowledge of anatomy and bike mechanics.

Use what you have

Have a mountain bike? Road bike? Heck, even a hybrid will do! The beauty of cyclocross is that it's made for a combination of bikes, so whatever you've got, the odds are good you can use it to get your feet wet before committing to a new bike.

Practice

Find a local CX practice by joining local clubs or checking online. If there isn't one around, set up some makeshift barriers in your backyard or local park, find a hill to practice run ups, and get practicing techniques and skills!

Learn the Basics

Speaking of techniques and skills, learn the basics: barriers, dismounts and remounts, shouldering the bike, riding through mud or sand, and soon. (See the first tip one about attending a clinic if you want to speed this process along.)

Race

The best way to get good at cyclocross and have fun at the same time is simply by racing. You'll learn technique, skills and race strategy as you go, all you need to do is get started. And don't just race and head home- stick around for the camaraderie and the crowds, the beer and the Belgian waffles. Staying for the Pro race is also always a good idea for picking up tricks and techniques: see how *they* take barriers and then go home and practice.



AS DEFINED BY WIKIPEDIA:

Cyclo-cross (sometimes cyclocross, CX, CCX, cyclo-X or 'cross') is a form of bicycle racing. Races typically take place in the autumn and winter (the international or "World Cup" season is October–February), and consists of many laps of a short (2.5–3.5 km or 1.5–2 mile) course featuring pavement, wooded trails, grass, steep hills and obstacles requiring the rider to quickly dismount, carry the bike while navigating the obstruction and remount.

Remember: You are Going to Have Bad Races

This is a scientific fact. Some days it just isn't going to come together. However, there is always something to be gained by finishing the race. So, put forth your best effort and make it happen. Don't quit unless you or your bike are physically unable to complete the race.

Have fun!

Cyclocross is a sport meant to be fun, otherwise, there wouldn't be beer hand-offs, money pits, crowds heckling the pros, or pros heckling the crowd. Unless you're aiming for World Cup titles, there's no reason to take this sport too seriously. Train, race hard, but above all, remember that it's supposed to be fun. (Yes, even when you're shouldering your bike crawling up a steep incline praying for the race to be over. Just repeat to yourself over and over: "this is fun!")

Dave

OCC ELECTIONS

Onondaga Cycling Club Inc. Annual Election

This year the board decided to change the election cycle to earlier in the year. In the past, election of the officers and board members has always been held at the end of December into January with the results announced at our annual banquet. Usually, the first board meeting after the banquet is when tasks are assigned to the various board members. For new members, it is difficult to know how things operate without having attended a couple of meetings. With this change, we will have time to build sufficient guilt in the new members so they have no reluctance in volunteering for these tasks (just kidding). Ballots are in the mail, so choose wisely, since you will have to live with the Executive Board decisions for the next year.

OFFICERS:

Nominated by current BOD
* Incumbent

President: Mike Lyon*
Vice President: Dave VanWie
Secretary: Tony Baleno*
Treasurer: Don Butler

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Nominated by current BOD
* Incumbent

Nancy Bailey Chuck Dominick
Gus Engbretson* David Grieves
Steve Ransford* Zeke Ronnow*
Marlene Cleary Brenda Engbretson*
Tom Fucillo* Wayne Miner*
Todd Relyea* Dan Voutsinas

SAVE THE DATE!!!

The OCC Annual Awards Banquet and Annual Meeting has been set and will be held on **Friday, January 18, 2013 at the DoubleTree Hotel.** Social Hour will begin at 6:30 pm with Dinner Buffet to follow at 7:30 pm. Details of the menu and cost per person will follow in December.

Questions? Contact Nancy Lyon at nance@twcny.rr.com.



TIME TRIAL WRAP-UP

BY RED & BEN DONZELLA

Hi folks. As you all probably know Red and I took over the duties of TT directors from the famous and illustrious Sam Sampere who every one agrees did a fantastic job for many years. We knew it would be tough to fill those shoes but we went for it anyway. Although the course was well established, traffic has increased substantially over the years and we felt it needed a tweak for safety reasons. Moving the turn around point a little farther down the road increased the distance to 11.4 miles which elicited a few groans but after

the season started and the PR's started rolling in we settled in to a fine season with a total of 80 different racers participating. I would like to point out that the first ride of the season was cold and rainy and we had only one participant (Ben Salibra). Undaunted we pushed on.

Club events go nowhere without volunteers to do the yeoman work involved and we were very fortunate to have many. Perhaps most notable were Jeff Stringham and Linda Bonczek who volunteered at the turn multiple times while recovering from injuries and could not ride. Several others did more than their share including standing in the rain. That's dedication to the sport and we all should thank them.

And speaking of support, we were able to give out small prizes to the fastest people after each ride thanks to the local bike shops. Syracuse Bicycle was the first to

step up with Bicycle Alley, The Bike Loft North, and The Bikery all getting involved with nice stuff. At the end

of the season we were able to give out Season's Best awards and The Bike Loft on South Bay Rd donated two floor pumps and Syracuse Bicycle donated two bike tool bags to present to the leaders. Nice swag indeed. A big Thank You to all the shops that participated. They support us, lets support them.

Red and I have agreed to give it another go next season so we hope more club members "come on down" to give the Race of Truth a try.



Red & Ben D

The year end Seasons Best were:

Erik Bollt Course Record 27.04 mph
Emily Elbers Fastest Female 25.39 mph
The Low's Fastest Tandem 26.5 mph
Chris Larsen Fastest Youth 18.73 mph

OPINION: RECENT EVENTS

By TOM FUCILLO - Attorney and Member of OCC Board of Directors

RECENT INCIDENTS INVOLVING CYCLISTS SHOULD MAKE ALL CYCLISTS PAUSE FOR REFLECTION

Recently, several stories have bounced around the OCC List Serve about vehicle/cyclist collisions (both literal and figurative). One literal collision involved an OCC club member who was struck by a golf cart, while cycling on a public road near a golf course in Cicero. Another incident involved a complaint submitted by a shaken motorist who claimed that she had only narrowly avoided a serious accident after a time-trialist veered in front of her during a Tuesday night event. Most recently, a video was circulated showing a Ford Explorer stalking two cyclists, following closely behind them without passing and continuously working its horn. Because those cyclists were driving on or near the shoulder of the road, the driver apparently disputed their right to ride on a public road at all.

Although the cyclist who was struck by the golf cart was injured, none of these incidents ended tragically. Still, this is a good time for all cyclists to reflect on both our rights and responsibilities while cycling on public roads.

As pointed out in a prior article, cyclists are subject to the full protections and requirements in the State's Vehicle and Traffic Law ("VTL"), the so-called "Rules of the Road". According to VTL § 1231, "[e]very person riding a bicycle upon a roadway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle..." Except for certain limited access highways, bicycles are allowed on public roads in this State. Unfortunately, many motorists such as the angry Explorer driver do not recognize a cyclist's right to share the road, or, that a cyclist might actually have the right of way, just the same as any vehicle. At the same time, there have been many recent complaints by club members about cyclists who ride two, three or even four abreast during club rides, well into the main lane of travel. Yells of "car back" bring neither movement nor any indication of concern.

Such riders interfere with traffic and give all cyclists a bad name. According to the law, if no usable bicycle lane is provided, cyclists are required to ride "near the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway or upon a usable right-hand shoulder in such a manner as to prevent undue interference with the flow of traffic except when preparing for a left turn..." Cyclists are only authorized to leave such areas "when reasonably necessary to avoid conditions that would make it unsafe to continue along near the right hand curb or edge" (VTL 1234 (a)).



Absent glass, potholes or other hazards, there is no reason to be in the main lane of travel when there is a usable shoulder, unless when on rural roads. When there is no usable shoulder, it is still incumbent on cyclists to stay as far to the edge as possible, especially when cars are present. Just like any motorist, a cyclist can be held legally responsible if he or she violates the Rules of the Road and his or her actions cause injury or property damage.



VACATION RIDE 2012

By PEG HOTALING Photos Courtesy of BOB SPEAR

On Sunday, August 5, thirty-five OCC members packed up their cars with their bikes and headed to Storrs, CT to stay at the University of Connecticut campus for five days of biking. We arrived at the Nathan Hale Inn with packets provided by Joan and Jimmy filled with bike routes of varying distances including cues & maps, places to eat and things to see and do.

From Day 1 we knew it was going to be a great place to cycle. We immediately went from a very busy campus area to beautiful, rural roads with little traffic, rolling hills and many shaded areas. Every day started with an ample breakfast at the campus cafeteria complete with anything you'd want to get you going for the long ride ahead.

Our first ride was around the town of Coventry. One of the historic finds on this route was the Nathan Hale Homestead. It was the home of the family of Nathan Hale, a soldier in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. Hale was captured & hung by the British as a spy and today is the State Hero of Connecticut. The land associated with the property is now the Nathan Hale State Forest.

Tuesday was an optional remote start ride. Several of us drove about 22 miles to The Inn at Woodstock Hill in Woodstock, CT. A beautiful Inn located on Plaine Hill Road; it was originally built in 1816. Today it operates as an inn and restaurant with 18 rooms in the main house & 3 additional bedrooms in the cottage. Plaine Hill is



^ The OCC favorite site revolved around a bicyclist's favorite, high butterfat, Jersey cream at the UConn Dairy Bar (special this week is Jonathan's Supreme. Jonathan is the UConn husky and also is featured in 'Husky Tracks.' It may be reported as fact that many OCCers visited here up on Horsebarn Hill Rd more than once a day.

UConn was founded as an ag school and a 1917 UConn Course Catalog refers to the Creamery and describes courses taught in Dairy Husbandry such as Milk Testing and Separation, Milk Production, Ice Cream Making, and Butter and Cheese Making.



Nathan Hale homestead



Road Group I



Yes, there is poison ivy in CT...

VACATION RIDE 2012

By PEG HOTALING Photos Courtesy of BOB SPEAR

on the National Register of Historic Places. Our ride took us to a gated castle that we have little information on, but was definitely amazing to look at. We also visited Roseland Cottage in Woodstock and took a stroll through the garden. During our visit, we stopped at Sweet Evalina's Stand for lunch and later a refreshing cold one (not necessarily ice cream...).

No Vacation Ride would be complete without an 'adventure ride' à la Bob Spear. The route was designed by Bob (Spear and Ruth) and Tom (Hotaling) who worked into the late hours of Tuesday night so everyone would have a cue to follow. Starting again from our home base and traveling 64 miles, we went through several townships - including Coventry, Lebanon, Sprague, Canterbury - in an effort to visit Scotland where a stop in the town square was made by a few folks to take some pictures (and check out the cannon) before returning to campus.

One of the great things about the Vacation Ride is not only the cycling, but the food and social activities. I would say one of our biggest 'find' was the UConn Dairy Bar. The ice cream is homemade, made from UConn's own dairy cows. Once discovered, this became a daily stop for many of the group & some even admitted they visited twice in one day! And there were the Happy Hours - a chance to get together with everyone, have some munchies and a 'recovery' drink and share stories. After we met, we went off to various restaurants for dinner.

Our last night together was the traditional 'group dinner'. This year it was held at the Willimantic Brewing Company. Once a 1909 US Post Office that closed in 1967 and was left vacant for almost 30 years, it is now a very popular restaurant still filled with memorabilia. We enjoyed a wide selection of handcrafted beers as well as a wide choice of menu items.

It was a very pleasant evening and, for some of us, one last trip to the Dairy Bar was in order before calling it an evening.



This is the aforementioned Horsebarn Hill Rd



Group I (diff. location)



This Bud's for OCC. Baltic is a quaint little town on the way to Scotland.



Scotland visit on a day of remarkably little traffic on shaded, windy country lanes.

I have a feeling that many of you who are reading this are saying - 'I'll have to sign up next year!' If you go, you won't be disappointed.

Joan and Jimmy do a great job organizing this event. All of us that participated are very grateful to them for all their hard work, again this year, and finding this 'gem' for us to visit.

SYRACUSE GRAND PRIX CYCLOCROSS

Join the fun at Longbranch Park, Liverpool for the 2012 edition of OCC's annual cyclocross race. The event will be held on Sunday, October 21st. Each year we typically draw around 125 participants who race in nine separate categories. Races last between 45 minutes to an hour over a very spectator-friendly course. The racing will begin at 11:00am with the Category 4 men and Juniors. At noon, the masters men and both women categories will take to the course. There will be a non-competitive youth race at 1:00pm which will be run on a modified lap of the course. Finally, at 1:45, the Category 1-3 men will race. We have a need for racers, volunteers and spectators, so whatever you fancy, please come on out and enjoy a great day.

If you are interested in volunteering, we have many spots available; some need experience or training, others do not. We have a wide range of times available, from early morning course set-up to afternoon course tear-down. In between, we need people to help with timing (you'll be stationed at the finish line and able to watch the races as they finish), registration (experience helpful, but not mandatory, as we can train you), and course marshals (especially for the youth race, as they will be racing on a modified lap). New this year, we are using "volunteerspot.com" to coordinate our volunteer's efforts. For a full listing of volunteer opportunities, including descriptions and times, visit the Grand Prix page at <http://tinyurl.com/9rvzrw1>. For additional information, contact Sue Faso at syracusecx@gmail.com.



2012 Syracuse Grand Prix Cyclocross

In memory of Jim Konski, founding president of the Onondaga Cycling Club
Sunday October 21, 2012



Long Branch Park at Onondaga Lake Park, Liverpool, NY
 Held under USA Cycling Event Permit # 2012-3431

Category	Time	Duration	Entry fee	Prizes
Men, Cat 4 and 1-Day	11:00	45 min	\$25	merchandise
Juniors, under 19	11:00	45 min	\$15	merchandise
Master men 35+, Cat 1-3	12:00	45 min	\$25	\$60/3 + merchandise
Master men 45+, Cat 1-3	12:00	45 min	\$25	\$60/3 + merchandise
Master men 55+, Cat 1-3	12:00	45 min	\$25	\$40/2 + merchandise
Women, all categories	12:02	45 min	\$25	\$40/2 + merchandise
Master women 35+, all categories	12:02	45 min	\$25	\$20/1 + merchandise
Youth (ages 10-14)	1:00	1 lap ^a	Free ^b	Ribbons
Men, Cat 1-3	1:45	60 min	\$25	\$130/5 + merchandise

Organizer reserves the right to combine fields, depending on participation

^a Youth will be riding one *modified* lap

^b Entry for youth will be free of charge; however, participants must still provide a waiver signed by parent or guardian

Registration and other details:

- Pre-register at BikeReg.com
- Day-of registration opens at 9:30 AM. Add \$10 to register day of race
- Sign-in and bib pick-up for pre-registered racers opens at 9:30 AM
- USA Cycling license required. One-day licenses available at registration for additional \$10. **Please note that one-day license holders are only eligible to compete in the Men, Cat 4 and 1-Day race at 11:00**
 - Neutral pit support provided by the staff of Bike Loft East
 - All USA Cycling rules apply; mountain bikes with handle bar ends removed are allowed
 - Enter second race for just \$10

Additional info: send e-mail to syracusecx@gmail.com

Special thanks to our sponsors:



SLOW 'N EASY RIDES...A GREAT YEAR

By **TONY BALENO**

The Slow 'n Easy rides season drew to a close Tuesday September 11th much to the dismay of a number of our regular riders. The season began on April 17th and ran for 23 weeks. In all that time we were only forced to cancel two nights due to poor weather that made for unsafe riding conditions for our inexperienced riders.

Mike Lyon and I were very pleased to see the phenomenal turnout of riders this year.

Our first night had 19 riders. We hit a record turnout of 29 riders later in the season and maintained a fairly steady average of about 15 riders per week overall. This is a far cry from our first season when Mike and I frequently rode by ourselves when no one showed up. A large number of our "new" riders continued to ride with us and graduated from "guest" to "member" as an indication of their enjoyment of the ride.

We had a large number of riders who were new to the sport as well as riding in a group. As they rode, they gained confidence as well as skill and after a few rides they were very comfortable. We also had our youngest rider since we started the ride this year. Young Isaac Paz and dad Steve Paz made a number of the rides on their tag-along-tandem. At only 11, Isaac was our youngest rider since the start of the ride. I don't know who our oldest rider was, but it is probably best left that way. The ride drew a very broad range of ages...and everyone had fun.

Did we get rained on? Sure we did! This only happened twice during the year but the last time around was a cloud burst. Just ask those who rode around in their cars for a few days with wet seats. Other than those nights, the weather gods were good to us and we enjoyed reasonably nice weather. Riding in the evening as we did, we usually escaped the high afternoon temperatures and enjoyed the cooler evening air.

I have had a number of people comment that they really enjoyed the rides...especially the fact that everyone seemed to look out and care about the other riders. There was excellent rider camaraderie in the groups and everyone seemed to enjoy meeting in



Tony Baleno, ride leader, explains the planned route to riders.

the parking lot after the ride to share their ride experiences with the other riders. Lee's cookie baking probably helped. On those really warm nights Mike always had something cold to enjoy.

Watch future newsletters for an announcement on the start of the 2013 "Slow 'n Easy" season. We'll be back! In the mean time, keep riding!

Tony



Ride leader Mike Lyon prepares to take out the highway group.

MEMORIAL CENTURY 2012

Photos Courtesy of Dick Matthews

This year's Fall Memorial Century was held on September 15th and started at Carpenters Brook Fish hatchery. The full century looped up to Rudy's on Lake Ontario, while the shorter rides meandered north then east and back to the park. What great turnout we had. There were 78 preregistered and another 20 or so registered that day. While the weather started out cool and cloudy with threatening rain, it turned out to be sunny and warm. The full century started at 8:00 AM and unfortunately, our estimate as to when the faster riders would hit the first rest stop at Rudy's was wrong and some riders got there before we were setup. This won't happen next year. The metric century went off at 9:00 and the 37 mile ride at 9:30. The first riders started trickling in around 12:00 PM or so.....time to fire up the grills. It had been a quite a while since I had used charcoal and I significantly underestimated the amount that we would need. That meant that by 2:00 PM, we were running out and the fires were dying. To the rescue comes one of our trusty gofers, who in a flash, had 3 bags and we were back in business. Catastrophe averted!

One of the difficult things in running one of these events is estimating how much food, etc. that we will need. Wow, did it come close. Only 6 uncooked burgers out of 60, 10 uncooked veggie burgers out of 26, 1lb of hot dogs out of 7, a small amount of the pulled pork, and none of the salads or salt potatoes were left. Another problem is trying to be sure

that everyone has the same selection when they get back. This is a real juggling act since we ride so that we can eat and, therefore, eat well and often. Well, that is one of the reasons I ride. However, when the last rider came in around 4:30 PM, he was able to have a hardy meal and take home a few extra cookies.

All and all things went great. Only one phone call came in and that was from a lost rider who eventually made it home



MEMORIAL CENTURY 2012

Photos Courtesy of Dick Matthews

all on his own. Thanks to all the riders, because if you don't come, no matter what we do it doesn't matter. Because of you we raised approximately \$2500 for the ALS, which is \$500 more than last year. Hopefully, the word will get out about how great an event this is and the attendance will grow. As one rider put it "this ride may be the best kept secret in all of cycling".

While I did post a thank you to all of the volunteers on the list server, I think they deserve another round of thanks. So in alphabetical order, thanks to Bob Spear, Peggy Hotaling, Tony Baleno, Jim Rautio, Mark Roemer, Jack Sivalia, Mary Beth Barnell, John Gleeson, Dave Grieves, Gail Swinburne, Cindy Tolbert, and the other Cindy (sorry didn't get your last name). Hold the phone!!! That's not alphabetical at all. Oh well.

One person that gets a separate thanks is my wife, Nancy Anne. She puts up with a lot when it comes to my biking. She is frequently behind the scenes and I get the credit. This event was no exception.

She made lists, shopped, ordered, cooked, goffered, served, cleaned up, and washed dishes back at home. In addition, I know that I can depend out her to lovingly point out my mistakes, should I ever make one. She seems to think I could do this stuff without her and to that I say "NO WAY". Well that's it for now.

Keep Safe out there and see you next year.

Mike



OPINION: LANCE ARMSTRONG

By BRIAN RAUTIO

LANCE ARMSTRONG: A CHAMPION, NOT A CHEATER

I believe that Lance Armstrong doped. I also believe that he is, rightfully, a seven-consecutive-time Tour de France champion. To most people, these may seem like contradictory beliefs. The kind of contradiction that a young-guy like me might just ignore to save the image of his childhood hero. However, as an engineer, I hold myself to the highest standard of objectivity I can, and I don't see even the slightest contradiction.

You see, "doping" is a practice to artificially increase the aerobic capacity of an athlete. Since it's against the cycling rules as set forth by the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI), doping is a practice commonly associated with "cheating." Here's the problem: "cheating" is when people break rules to gain a competitive advantage. Yes, I believe Lance Armstrong broke the rules. I do not, however, believe that he gained a competitive advantage. Almost all of his major competitors have admitted to, or been implicated and/or caught doping. Therefore, to have a competitive advantage, he would have had to dope significantly more than them.

The way I see it, doping is so prevalent in the pelotons of the Grand Tours that it's those who aren't doping that are in the minority, and at a competitive disadvantage. Yes, there are numerous drug tests the athletes undergo. I believe these are effective, too, but only to a point. For example, many drugs have a half-life—a period of time after which 50% has left the body. If the UCI sets a test-limit for a drug of say, 1 microgram per kilo of body weight, and the drug has a half

life of an hour, then a 68 kilo cyclist (or more accurately, a physician helping the cyclist) knows that a dose of 13.6 milligrams can be taken 1 hour before testing without risk of failure. These numbers are fictional, and the case simplified, but it is processes like this that allow for doping to happen in competition.

So then what these tests do accomplish is to set a "top end" for doping. While the letter of the rules says that "no" doping is tolerated, I believe the de-facto arrangement is merely a "regulation", not all that different from a minimum bicycle weight. Should a cyclist dope excessively to the point of a competitive advantage, they will likely fail the drug test—just as Floyd Landis did after his (quite literally) super-human effort in stage 17 of the 2006 Tour.

And what of the USADA and their legal actions against Lance? I think they're probably actually right, but their acting on it is ridiculous. On the highway, drivers in the fast lane are generally going above 65 mph. This is in fact illegal, but it's most uncommon for a police officer to write a citation for someone going 68 mph. And if they actually clocked you at 64 mph, they aren't going to write you a ticket just because your buddy Floyd said you did 68 mph, 10 years later, as part of a plea to get out of his own 88 mph ticket. Ridiculous.

Now, I don't mean to say that I believe doping (or speeding) is OK, or even that I forgive Lance for lying about it.

If you're going to artificially enhance your cycling performance, you may as well just ride a motorcycle. It'll go much faster and be a lot less effort. Moreover, if doping became so rampant that amateur cyclists started doing it, I honestly believe we would start to see people having terrible side effects like heart problems. I just don't think we can pin it on any one man. What the USADA and UCI needs, are better and stricter rules for everyone. A level playing field of "zero" doping is better than a level playing field of "some" doping. Lance is still my hero, and to me, is, was, and always will be Seven-Time Tour de France Champion. USADA, UCI, please bin the practice, not the individuals. We owe it to the athletes, to the fans, and to the sport.

Brian



Photo: TOTALLYCOOLPIX.com

BIKE CALENDAR

OCTOBER

- 6 **ClamMan Triathlon**
Bayville, NJ
- 6-7 **BattenFall Road Race**
Cambridge, NY
- 6 **Town Hall Cross**
Bethlehem, PA
- 7 **Cobbs Hill Cyclocross**
Rochester, NY
- 7 **Iron Cross**
Michaux State Forest, PA
- 13 **Breast Cancer Awareness Ride**
Sponsored by Syracuse Bike
Fayetteville, NY
- 13-14 **Uncla Sam Cyclocross GP**
Troy, NY
- 13 **Kickoff Cross**
Mount Morris, PA
- 14 **Colden Cross**
Colden, NY
- 20 **Krepfels King of the Road Challenge**
Stratham, NH
- 20 **Phantom Phest MTB Race**
Wawarsing, NY
- 20 **Military Cross**
Oakdale, PA
- 21 **Syracuse Grand Prix Cyclocross**
Liverpool, NY
- 27 **Haunted Hundred**
Schuylerville, NY
- 28 **Hunter Mountain Cross**
Hunter, NY
- 28 **Star Rock Cross**
Washington Boro, PA
- 28 **Marilla Cyclocross**
Morgantown, WV
- 30 **HRRT All Hollows MTB Race**
Schenectady, NY

NOVEMBER

- 3 **Annual Woods Hollow Mountain Bike Race**
Middletown, NJ
- 4 **Cross in the Park**
Buffalo, NY
- 4 **Greene Cross**
Greene, NY
- 4 **Racoon Cyclocross**
Aliquippa, PA
- 4 **Murrysville Cyclocross**
Murrysville, PA
- 10 **River & Lakes Century**
Schuylerville, NY
- 10 **StatenCX 5.0**
Staten Island, NY
- 10-11 **Morgantown Monster Cross**
Morgantown, WV
- 11 **Dave Panella Memorial Cyclocross Race**
Greene, NY
- 11 **Crossasaurus Awesome**
Spring Mount, PA
- 17 **Bruceton Mills Cyclocross**
Bruceton Mills, WV
- 22 **HRRT Giving Thanks MTB race**
Schenectady, NY
- 23 **Gobblecross**
LaFayette, NY
- 24 **Gravel Grovel**
Norman, IN

DECEMBER

- 1 **Last Century Ultra**
Schuylerville, NY
- 1-2 **Wes Pennsylvania Cross**
South Park, PA
- 8 **Anthem Holiday Classic Triathlon**
Anthem, AZ
- 9 **Lippman Park Cyclocross Race**
Wawarsing, NY
- 23 **Christmas Cross**
Carlisle, PA



CIVIL WAR CENTURY REPORT

By SHAWN HEMINGWAY with addendum by MARK WHEELER

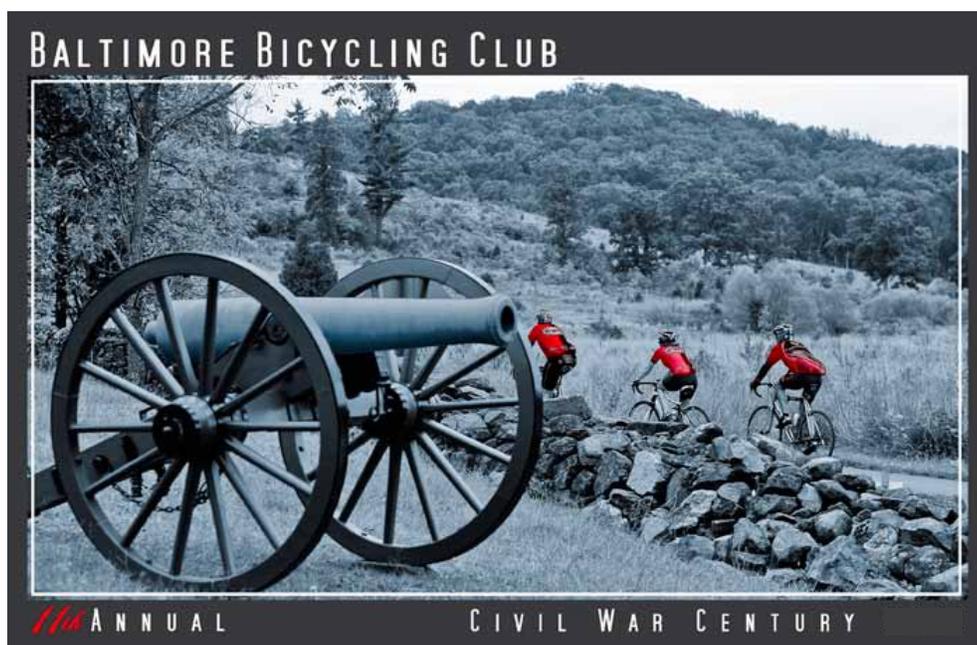
Seven OCC riders participated in this year's Civil War Century ride in Thurmont, MD last Saturday. For the record, me, my brother (Baltimore), my sister (Lancaster, PA), Joan/Jimmy, Kelly/Mark and Peg/Tom were there. The ride is quite unique in that you get to tour several important Civil War battlefields (Antietam, Gettysburg) and other historic sites. The best part of the ride is cycling through Gettysburg battlefield - the experience is very different on a bike (vs. a car).

The ride started out in cool but very humid weather. From the start we faced a 1000+ foot climb that passed fairly close to Camp David (although you would never know you were this close). This was followed by many miles of descent through beautiful countryside and canopied country roads. A group of crazy high speed riders passed us on one of the narrow windy roads; we came upon them a few minutes later as one of the group had entered a turn too fast and ended up in the woods. Ambulance arrived shortly thereafter.

First rest stop was at South Mountain State Park - a nice place for a rest atop of a mountain 28 miles into the ride. After refueling, we headed down the mountain and enjoyed some gently rolling terrain for the next 25 miles. Several miles before the second rest stop we encountered a short but steep climb that took its toll on many riders. One guy in front of me slowed to a crawl and then tipped over in the grass...leg cramps! People were dropping like flies.

Upon arrival at the second rest stop (53 miles) reports of severe weather were coming in. Tornado watches, lightning storms, heavy rain, etc. I was dragging a bit so urged my brother and sister to head out. Another five minutes passed and I left as well. Big mistake. After 10 minutes I noticed an ugly sky in the western valley - reminded me of those "storm chaser" videos you see in Kansas. Minutes later the wind whipped up and the skies started dumping rain. Then the thunder and lightning arrived. I left the road and crawled under the nearest group of trees I could find. It poured, then poured, then poured some more - 25 minutes of the worst drenching rain I have ever experienced. It was a cold rain - when it stopped I was soaked and shivering. Back on the bike... made it to a shopping plaza (mile 58) where 10 other riders had taken refuge and called it a day. I've finished this ride before and had no interest in plodding on in these miserable conditions.

Those who continued (including my brother and sister) reported one road where there were downed trees crossing the road. More like a cyclocross than a road tour. This was my brother's second attempt at finishing this ride so he talked my sister into finishing with him.



Finish they did - it was his first century ride and a memorable one at that! They finished at 4:30pm (9 hrs after the start).

All in all a great (epic?) ride. The terrain and scenery of this ride may be among the best to be found in the Northeast. If any of you find this interesting then perhaps you'll join us for the 2013 CWC ride. Keep a lookout for the open of registration next April. The ride is limited to 1600 riders and fills up fast. They offer shorter routes (50, 62, 75 miles) that are also worth the trip.

Shawn

As an addendum:

Jimmy Ryan broke his recumbent rear derailleur somewhere before the 1st rest stop. He had it looked @ by the REI mechanic, with the determination that the main spring had broken. Jimmy finished an abbreviated ride with only a hill climbing gear to use. Tom, Peg and I forged on. I had full intentions of doing the full century, when a mile from the "bail out" turn, I heard the 1st clap of thunder. Turning down this bail out hill, I saw a wall of rain cascading over the ridge to the right. Cross winds picked up to 40mph as I took shelter on the leeward side of a roadside house. Back @ the start, I talked w/a rider who saw a funnel cloud start to drop out of the sky, only to return back up into the clouds. The organizers blocked the final turn for the century after Shawn's brother went thru.

Guess I need to go back next year, as I still haven't finished the whole ride after the 2nd try.

Mark