



Official Newsletter
September 2002
Come Ride with Us

Free Wheelin'



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Riding The Wind

By Len Smith

Everyone certainly knows that the way to design a bike ride is to throw a hand full of dirt in the air and see which way the wind blows and ride in that direction. The down side of that method is, if you are going to eat dinner at home, at some point you have to turn around and fight that wind to get back. We have all had this experience. Worse, is picking up a tail wind without noticing it and, in the exuberance of feeling young and strong, riding too far with the wind to make it back against the wind. I, now, try to watch the trees along the way. If they are bent over so that some branches are touching the ground, I figure that the great strength that I feel is not the result of my training program but that I have a tail wind. Then I make plans to get home, before it is too late.

Still, with a little planning, it is possible to use the wind without letting it use you. In the Bay Area the prevailing winds are from West to East and from North to South. They are often light, or non-existent or

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New Meeting Location



Next Membership Meeting

**7 pm, September 18, 2002 (Wednesday)
Rockridge Branch Library
5366 College Ave (at Manila)**

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even reversed in the morning but kick up about noon or so and intensify until sundown. So the idea is to ride West and North in the morning and come back in the afternoon. Or, one can ride east and south in the afternoon, stay overnight and come home in the morning calm. Or, you can simply ride with the wind and get a ride home. After all, the flat ride home is on BART. This is my preference.

I belong to a Wednesday riding group. We do a couple of wind enhanced rides.

One ride that has some of these benefits is a 400-mile weekend trip to San Luis Obispo and back. We ride Amtrak to Salinas on Saturday morning, have lunch and begin south on Airport road about noon or one o'clock. The wind is building and in the right direction at this time. It will increase until sundown. There are sufficient secondary roads parallel to highway 1 to get you to San Luis Obispo. We used to stop for the evening in San Ardo and then continue to San Luis Obispo in Sunday morning's calm to catch the two o'clock train back to Oakland. The motel in San Ardo is no more, so the evening stop now has to be in King City or Paso Robles. This route uses some of the roads we used last September on the Yellowjacket century, however, we were there too early in the day to enjoy the tailwinds. The winds are so strong on this route that you feel as if you are on an amusement park ride.

The ride from Pleasanton to Stockton is a nice, one-day, spring, wind ride. We do it as a gourmet experience, which involves taking BART to Pleasanton and riding to Stony Ridge winery on Tesla Road south of Livermore for take out sandwiches and a bottle of wine. Proceeding past Mines Road and turning left at Greenfield, we pass the back of the Livermore Laboratory and continue under 580 until we reach the Altamont Pass Road. We plan to get here no earlier than noon. Although the ride from Pleasanton to this point

has mostly tailwinds, at the Altamont Pass the wind becomes really intense. I have experienced winds of 50 mph going through the pass. Of course, this being a mountain pass there is some elevation gain. You see the road rising, but you do not feel it. Booming through these five miles or so of uphill, topped out in your biggest gear, is the point of the ride. This is definitely an amusement park experience. On the east side of the pass

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How to Contact Us



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there is a nice down hill and the wind continues, so you really blast down into Tracy. It is a straight shot so there is no braking to rob you of speed. The ride at this point doglegs north against the wind, not pleasant, and east with the wind, very pleasant, to Stockton.

This is agricultural slough country. The farmland is flat, windy, brown and gray; the sloughs are wooded, green, fresh and calm. On our last trip we found a marina, with a lawn and picnic tables. It was a perfect place to eat the sandwiches and drink the wine. Alex Zuckerman was along and was scandalized by drinking wine on a bike ride.

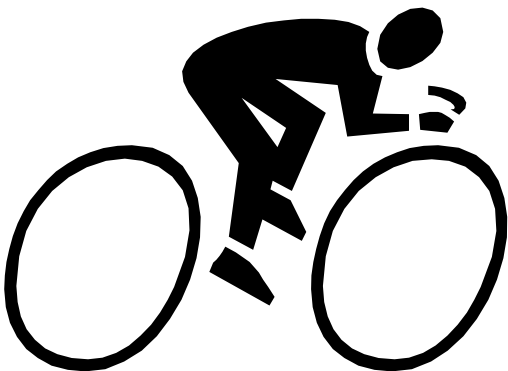
Amtrak leaves Stockton at 5:00 pm. The station, a few blocks from the center of town, is a standard Southern Pacific mission style building. We needed a picture ID to buy a ticket. Alex didn't have one; we offered to help him find a hotel room and a job until he could establish his identity. The agent sold him a ticket anyway. We had an hour to wait for the train, so we went downtown to a coffee bar and continued our gourmet theme with an espresso ice cream drink.

The train trip home took about two hours. The train stopped at Antioch, Pittsburgh, Martinez, Richmond and Emeryville on its way to Oakland. We got off at the Oakland Station and went immediately to Barkley's Pub where we had more wine, calamari fritti and other delicacies. The whole experience took about 12 hours, door to door. Riding dis-



tance was 65 miles. You could add 25 miles by riding to Pleasanton. Variations of this ride include riding through Tracy and on. The big wind will boot you all the way to Oakdale. Another day of riding will take you to Yosemite; four or five days will get you to Reno.

Another wind ride that seems to be reliable, and more exotic, is from the mouth of the Loire River in France to Orleans. In the old days, when the river was navigable, ships would raise their sails to get up the river; and then, lower them and let current take the ship back. Jan and I enjoyed this tailwind on a tandem ride from Angers to Orleans in late spring of 1980. In the fall of 1999, I had forgotten, or rather misjudged, the strength of this prevailing wind and we wound up riding from Paris to Angers against the wind. It was not pleasant. However, at Angers we turned east and spent two weeks riding with the wind. If it hadn't rained everyday this would have been more fun. This wind seemed to blow west to east morning and afternoon. It was not as fierce as the wind in the Salinas valley, but, definitely noticeable.



2002 Meeting Schedule

Membership meetings are on the second Thursday (unless otherwise noted in the newsletter) of every riding season month. Meetings are held at the Rockridge Branch of the Oakland Public Library, located at 5366 College Ave. (at Manila). Meetings start at 7:00 p.m.

September 18th (Wednesday)



2002 Ride Schedule

August 24 8:00 AM - Calaveras Loop: Departs Fairyland parking lot at Lake Merritt. Get ready to ride! This ride starts at Lake Merritt, climbs up to Skyline via Joaquin Miller, down Redwood Rd to Castro Valley, up Dublin grade, South on Foothill Rd to Niles Canyon in Sunol, (Intermediate riders break off on Niles Canyon go to Fremont, and return to Oakland by a route designated by the ride coordinator), advanced continue South on Paloma, climb Calaveras Rd, down into Milpitas, return to Fremont and take Bart back to the lake. Approx 67 mile for the main

route. Light Rider and Humane Intermediate group leaders will lead modified routes appropriate to their groups skill level.

August 31 8:00 AM Newark/Union City

Ride: Departs Fairyland parking lot at Lake Merritt. Flat and fast route The route goes South on E. 12th St., crosses into Alameda on Fruitvale, continues South on Doolittle to San Leandro and then on Hesperian to Union City. Return on same route, approx 40 miles.

September 7 Pacifica to Monterey - Pending Map Review

September 14 - AWAY - 7:30 AM Tiburon

(Paradise) Loop: BART to start or caravan from the Fairyland parking lot at 7:30 a.m. or meet at Bryant and Main Street in San Francisco at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot across from Red's Java Hut. Ride departs from the start at 8:30 a.m. Route takes you from S.F. to Tiburon via the Golden Gate Bridge. Advanced and Adv. Intermediate riders will do the Marin Headland loop, Corte Madera, the Tiburon Paradise Loop and return to S.F. over the GG bridge. Intermediates skip the Marin Headland loop, ride on to Corte Madera, the Tiburon Paradise Loop and return to S.F. Light riders will ride directly to Tiburon and return by ferry. Route subject to modification by group ride leaders. Light riders 17 miles, Humane Intermediates 46.3 miles, Advanced Riders with Marin Headland loop, 53 miles.

September 15 - AWAY - 7:30 AM Fog

City-San Francisco: BART-to-start. Depart the Fairyland parking lot at 7:30 a.m. to Lake Merritt BART station. Disembark at the Embarcadero Station in San Francisco and ride to the start opposite Red's Java Hut on the Embarcadero at Bryant and Main Streets. This is a scenic tour of San Francisco starting South of Market and riding along the Embarcadero past the Financial District, Fisherman's Wharf, Crissy Field and the Golden Gate Bridge. Continuing through the Presidio

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and Richmond district to Golden Gate Park with a hearty climb to the top of Twin Peaks for a grand view of the city. Then it's down to the beach and south to Daly City, a climb over Mt. San Bruno to 3rd Street and back to the start. Approx. 37 miles. Light Rider and Humane Intermediate group leaders will lead modified routes appropriate to their groups skill level. Bart to Start.

**September 28 - AWAY - 6:45 AM Gilroy/
Fremont Peak:** Pending Map Review

The Yellowjackets have a no drop policy and will leave no light or humane intermediate rider behind!

REQUIRED: Helmet, waiver, ID with emergency Info.

RECOMMENDED: Two bottles of water minimum, high energy food, pump, spare tubes, tools, patch kit, padded gloves, padded cycling shorts, protective eye wear, sun block.



From the Office of the President

THANKS

As the regular riding season draws to a close, I want to take the opportunity to thank all of you for making it a success. From the kick off ride until this point, everything we have accomplished has added to our club being recognized by all as the place to ride. How do I

know this? Because our membership, particularly new members, continues to grow. Now that I have thanked everyone, I want to step back and thank those members who have really stepped up to the plate and made sure that your season has gone by without a hitch. Someone once told me that you shouldn't name names because you will miss someone and, that person will be hurt. But being the risk taker that I am, here goes the attempt. If you enjoy the kickoff gathering, the picnic rides and the gigantic Monterey effort, you have to thank Kathy Starkey and Sherry Bell-Perocier for their tireless work. And, by the way Sherry, in her spare time Ha! is also the keeper of the finances. If you were able to find your way around on the many routes, you have to thank the map committee, in total, Jim Collier, the map maker, Farian Christian, the map printer, and Fred Morgan, the many meeting host, for the many extra hours they put in to get them developed and published. How good were the maps. Your ride coordinators, Al Bourges, Claudette Center, Fred Morgan, Reginald Burrell, Mark Rutta and Curt Council, actually interpreted them and made them work. If you used the website, you have to thank, Ron Starkey, who did a great job getting us started, Alfie Estrada, who has taken us to a new level and Maria Monet, who assures that everyone gets hooked up. If you are reading this newsletter, you must thank Jan Smith who tirelessly keeps you informed with a real quality product.

CLOTHING

Please bare with me as, I am working overtime with the manufacturer to get the clothing shipment expedited. They are being made in Europe and, as I am sure you are aware they have had terrible flood problems. It is my great hope that we will get delivery before we embark on the Monterey junket. Keep your fingers crossed.

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