



Official Newsletter
August 2003
Come Ride with Us

Free Wheelin'



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My Deathride Experience

By Orangeman

Although I'd begun riding early in the year, I hadn't really set down any concrete riding goals. The general mood seemed to be "Nyeah, been there, done that." Many in the club had already done this ride several times. So with what began as a lackluster attempt to do something noteworthy this year, I was feeling pretty apathetic as to whether I should do the ride or not. But I went ahead and signed up just to be doing it, and lo and behold, somehow I got accepted.

I had heard lots of grumbling from all quarters as to the new lottery process that was implemented last year; admission was formerly conducted on a first-come, first-serve basis. People I'd talked to whom had done it several times, had become disenchanted since they were unable to get selected.

When I first started out with the club, I didn't know anything about doing centuries, or that people even did rides like this for "fun". I'd hear folks talking about doing the Death Ride or some other challenging ride, and after I'd learned what was involved, I'd think to myself, "They must be NUTS"! At the time, it sure didn't seem like anything I'd ever want to do, yet now, here I

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**Next Membership Meeting
7 pm, August 14, 2003
Rockridge Branch Library
5366 College Ave (at Manila)**

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am, trying to go for it... go figure.

I guess one of the advantages to being laid off from work is that you've got no excuses when it comes to training--you've got this huge surplus of free time on your hands. Indeed, the opportunity to go riding during the week had provided a welcome diversion from the frustrations of a not-so-hot job market. So, I concluded, what better time of year to enjoy some time off and do something "fun."

Early on, I had no idea how many were planning on doing the ride, who had gotten selected, or who would even be available to train with, so I realized that I would have to do the bulk of the training on my own.

Well, the training was anything but fun, and I goofed off a lot in order to avoid it--several weekends came and went without being on the bike. During a spring ride with Kevin and Matt, I received the whole lowdown as to what I should expect. "Do lots and lots of climbing," they said. I came to the abrupt realization that I'd better start getting serious--here it was, well into May already, and I hadn't even done a single century.

So basically, with about eight weeks remaining before the ride, it became Mt. Diablo every weekend and a steady diet of local, hilly rides and intensity spin-bike training during the week.

The anticipation and excitement didn't really begin to build for me until just shortly before the ride, but I had somehow managed to get it in gear over the last few weeks, averaging about 160 miles per week, with a couple of centuries sandwiched in between. With a week remaining before the ride, I tapered down to rest and relax, and pronounced myself fit and ready to go.

My wife and I arrived in Markleeville about 3:30 on Friday afternoon and got signed in for the ride, and then from there, onto the hotel. I ate a light meal, stretched out, tried to relax and wound down early. For some reason, you never seem to get much sleep the night before such events... butterflies I guess. About all I could do was close my eyes and pretend to be asleep.

It seemed uncharacteristically warm out for 5:00

a.m. in the morning--no jacket seemed to be required. This was nothing at all like what I expected. I'd been forewarned about the widely variable weather conditions, which often ranged from freezing morning temperatures, to the possibility of rain, hail, thunderstorms, or wind, but it had been fairly warm on the days leading up to the ride--up in the high 80's. Perhaps this was indication of what could be expected for today.

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How to Contact Us



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Groups of riders began massing at the starting line prior to the 5:30 start time, but I didn't see any Yellowjacket jerseys around, so I decided to get started by jumping the gun a little early at 5:17 a. m. Rolling along at a brisk opening pace, it seemed like it was shaping up to be a beautiful day for riding, and in a beautiful mountainous setting. The vistas were pretty spectacular--there was still snow on some of the highest peaks, and riders were treated to an opulent sunrise as they ascended up Monitor.

As the climbing began to intensify somewhat, I thought, "WHOA, this IS going to be some work." They'd told me I was going to be working hard and this was only the beginning. I could've definitely used some taller rings in the back for sure. But I didn't panic though... I stayed with it and worked my way up, and before long had reached the summit. It's a good thing that I managed to do some training for this ride.

At the top of Monitor, one can see all the way down to the very bottom of the mountain. To be honest with you, I felt my best today while negotiating the downhills at speeds, which on a couple of occasions, exceeded 50 mph. While it may seem a little reckless to be descending at those speeds, it was none-the-less exhilarating--sometimes you just have to cut loose and let fly. Seriously though, I'm glad I didn't hit any potholes... you always have to be careful out there and not get too carried away.

As riders turned around at the bottom, it was impressive to look up and see a virtually unbroken line of riders for several miles as they wound their way back up the mountain. I tried to feed off the energy, enthusiasm, and generally high level of conditioning exuded by the three-thousand and some-odd riders out here today.

By the time I arrived at the second water stop, I



had already been riding about 3 hours and it was beginning to warm up considerably, so I got out of my warmers, grabbed some energy and got going again. I noticed that I began taking progressively longer and longer breaks at each rest stop--not necessarily a good sign.

In between grades, I bumped into Richie Jones as he was making some roadside adjustments; it was good to finally see a familiar face. While we chatted briefly, I sensed there'd be no way for me to keep up with the pace he was setting, and I wished him good luck as he rapidly pedaled out of sight. He seemed to be riding like a man possessed.

The climb up Ebbetts Pass quickly proved to be another matter--the climbing seemed endless, and there were many false summits. After a while, I noticed that conversation had mostly subsided and people stopped making the customary callouts--an obvious attempt to conserve energy. Signs were posted along the edge of the now, single-lane road as riders approached the 8,900 foot summit which read, "Yeah, Good Job, You're Almost There!," "Just Another Quarter Mile," "Keep Going!" Either they were very poor at measuring distance or that was the longest quarter mile I've ever ridden. It just would not end.

I ran into the team of Collier & Cruz up at the summit where they were madly trying to replenish themselves after the punishing climb. They had started their day at 5 a.m. It had gotten even hotter now and that had been a very tough climb. We were all encrusted with a layer of salt. I took a little extra time here to try to recover myself.

After a 30 minute break, I began my descent down the back side of Ebbetts. I welcomed the opportunity to coast downhill for a few miles, but I knew my enjoyment would be short-lived for the climb back up would signal another hour plus of slow and heavy grinding. It was on this stretch where I started feeling really fatigued. Indeed, the heat had begun to take its toll on a number of other riders as well; many were pulling over on the side to catch their breath or to find a few minutes respite in the shade.

Upon finally reaching the summit again, I immediately sped back down hill toward the lunch stop. After the long, long descent, I suddenly realized just how much of a climb it had really been. "Jeez,

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I actually scaled that"? I wondered aloud.

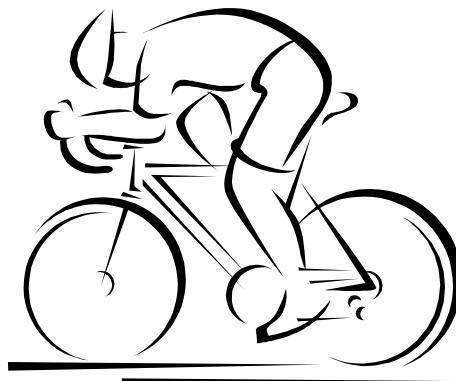
Though I heartily deserved a big lunch, I had been experiencing some gastric discomfort along the way, and I couldn't seem to fathom much of an appetite. I ended up tossing a half eaten sandwich along with some other "rest-stop" fare. I'm going to have to continue experimenting until I find the right mix of nutrients to use for these long rides. I used electrolytes for the first time, which worked well to control cramping and tried to drink lots of fluids along the way--I now have a better grasp of the role that adequate hydration plays during a long and difficult ride such as this.

I rode back the 12 or so miles back through Markleeville to the starting point at Turtle Rock Park. At this point, I had completed 4 rigorous mountain passes and 90 miles, and had ridden nearly the entire ride by myself. I wasn't really having any major problems to speak of, but I don't think I expected to be as tired as I was. They tell you that this is a hard ride and it seems to more than live up to its namesake. I would skip Carson Pass and call it a day.

Although I had set out to complete the entire ride, I just didn't have another 40 miles remaining in my legs. Reflecting back after the ride had ended, I began thinking more and more, "Man, I should've regrouped, made a go of Carson and finished the ride!" So now I'm kicking myself a little for bailing out too soon. On the other hand, it's good to know when to say enough is enough. Chances are that I might not have enjoyed it very much had I continued on. Is it really worth it to go out and kill yourself, I pondered? Well no, probably not. I guess I'll have to go out and get em' next time.

I had difficulty reaching my wife afterward since the cell phones don't work very well out here, so I waited around for a few hours. There were refreshments and a band to entertain all the participants, so I was able to unravel a bit. I enjoyed trading ride stories with my fellow riders, mostly total strangers. We talked about the Tour de France coverage and all seemed to agree that the Death Ride would certainly make a suitable stage for the Tour.

I want to go ahead and congratulate my fellow Yellowjackets who participated in this year's



event for their superlative efforts--although I didn't get to see very much of you, you all did an Excellent Job!

With its first-rate organization, and the outpouring of local support for this event, along with its outstanding venue, I feel The Death Ride qualifies as one of, if not THE premier cycling event in all of California. With this being my first attempt at doing the Death Ride, I would say that I really enjoyed it--even though the preparation for it was arduous and demanding, the ride itself proved to be extremely challenging, both physically, and mentally.

If you're ever able to arrive at the necessary pinnacle of conditioning that is required, and you're able to wind your way through the lottery process, then this is something every cyclist should try at least once. Even if you're only able to complete one pass, it is a totally worthwhile experience. All throughout my training, people were telling me, "Oh, you'll love it... you'll have a great time." Well you know what? They were right.

Breast Cancer Ride

Sometimes good things arise from adverse situations! The idea of the breast cancer ride was born from one of our very own, Jim Collier. His sister, Karen Collier, was diagnosed with breast cancer December 2002 and Jim wanted to do something to help, but what? After some discussions with friends like Mark Fong and others, the idea of a bicycle ride to support the fight against breast cancer was born and is growing and gaining support and momentum.

It's all about connections right? Jim and Mark began talking to members of the club and soon the idea was brought to our very own Al Joseph. The ride was put before the club for a vote on whether or not the OYJs would provide sponsorship and support. Not a surprise as it resoundingly passed and it will be marked as the first ever non-profit event the club has supported! The connections continued.....Eventually, **The Breast Cancer Fund** of San Francisco was brought in to manage the project and provide us guidance and very important connections and support.

Why the Breast Cancer Fund you say? Founded in 1992, The Breast Cancer Fund (TBCF) identifies -- and advocates for elimination of -- the environmental and other preventable causes of the disease. They bring passion and experience around the gathering support to fight this dreaded disease. Very importantly, they are a bay area organization who puts back a large portion of the money raised into our local community. TCBF hopes to raise approximately \$150,000 for TCBF and 3 bay area breast cancer organizations.

So your probably wondering what's happening with the big event? Well, let's get down to specifics.....

- What:** Bike Against the Odds
- When:** Sunday, October 19th
- Where:** Lake Merritt in Oakland (where else?)
- Who:** We're looking for a few (800 to 1,000) good riders of varying skill levels
- The Ride:** There are 5 routes with varying degrees of difficulty winding through familiar territory in the

east bay. You can select from a variety of climbs that best suit your specific cycling goals.

Ride Briefs:

- The **Light Loop** is 12.2 miles of beginner climbing and 400' elevation gain.
- The **Intermediate-Light Loop** is 19.5 miles of scenic climbing with 1700' of elevation gain.
- The **Advanced-Intermediate Loop** is 30.2 miles with 2 climbs and 2700' of elevation gain.
- The **Advanced Loop** is 47 miles of "gut-busting" climbing and 4000' of elevation gain.
- The **Pro/Am Loop** is designed for X-Men/X-Ladies only and is 65.6 miles with 6000' of elevation gain.

Additionally for the riders, there will be lots of activities such as drawings for free prizes, a great lunch, SAG support, rest stops stocked with food and water, first aide and much more.

So, I'll bet your wondering how you can help now. Well first, spread the news and tell all your friends to come out and support the ride whether it is as spectators, cyclists, or even volunteering to support the ride. Help us make this ride a HUGE success in it inaugural year. For additional information and registration, go to TBCF's web site and click on the Bike Against the Odds logo.

<http://thebreastcancerfund.org>

Last, but not least, we're happy to report that Jim's sister, Karen is progressing well throughout her treatment and is planning to be at the event. So come out, meet Karen, have a great time and support a great cause!

Provided by Audrey Rupe

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.

August 14, 2003
September 11, 2003



2003 Ride Schedule

Off-Season Rides (October to April) - Sat. 9 am
Every Saturday during the off-season rider's meet at the Children's Fairyland Parking Lot at Lake Merritt in Oakland, decide on a route, then depart at 9 am sharp, weather permitting. Routes during the off-season are typically shorter, 25 - 45 miles on moderate terrain.

August 2 - LAKE - 8:00 AM
Palomares Option

31/37/80 miles

START: Children's Fairyland, Oakland

August 9 - AWAY - 7:00 AM

Petaluma

39/59/98 miles

RIDE-AND-DECIDE OPTION: Those who prefer to ride locally may meet at Children's Fairyland and depart on a decided route at 9:00 AM.

August 16 - BART - 7:00 AM

Milbrae/Peninsula

30/40/50 miles

START: Milbrae BART

August 23 - LAKE - 8:00 AM

Crockett Loop

46/64/83 miles

START: Children's Fairyland, Oakland

August 30 - LAKE - 8:00 AM

Arlington

41 miles (shorter option for Light riders)

START: Children's Fairyland, Oakland

September 1 - LAKE - 9:00 AM

Labor Day Decide-and-Ride

START: Children's Fairyland, Oakland

Meet at the Children's Fairyland parking lot and depart on a decided route at 9:00 AM.

September 6 - AWAY - 7:00 AM

Santa Cruz Mountains

27/19/46/89 miles

START: Woodside Town Center (map)

or caravan from Children's Fairyland, Oakland

RIDE-AND-DECIDE OPTION: Those who prefer to ride locally may meet at Children's Fairyland and depart on a decided route at 9:00 AM.

September 13 - BART - 7:15 AM

Fog City / SF Grand Prix Option

37 miles

START: Embarcadero at Bryant St, San Francisco

(map)

Nearest BART station: Embarcadero

September 20 - LAKE - 8:00 AM

Calaveras

77 miles (shorter options for Light and Humane

Intermediate groups) START: Children's Fairyland, Oakland

September 27 - LAKE - 8:00 AM

Newark

52 miles (shorter options for Light riders)

START: Children's Fairyland, Oakland

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October 4-5 - AWAY - 5:00 AM

17th Annual Monterey Ride

120/85 miles

PACIFICA START (120 MILE): Pacific Manor Shopping Plaza (map)

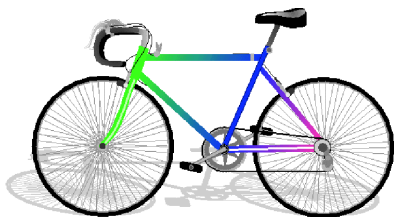
PESCADERO START (85 MILE, no overnight parking): Pescadero State Beach (map)

Our famous season-closer: a one-way ride to Pacific Grove in the Monterey Peninsula with dinner banquet and overnight accommodations at the Asilomar Conference Center, then a bus trip back to the start the next day. Registration and advanced room reservations required.

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

WELCOME

First I would like to welcome the significant number of new members who have decided to make The Oakland Yellowjackets their bike club of choice. Why have so many joined?.. Of course it's because they have met so many great people, you, who they want to be associated with. So you older members pat yourself on the back for a job well done. By the way we have reached a record membership, over 200...and counting.

REAL IMPORTANT

As many of you are aware we are embarking upon a great adventure, sponsoring a ride in conjunction with the Breast Cancer Fund, to raise funds in the fight against this devastating disease. We need the support of all members to make this a success. The article in this newsletter offers insight into how we got involved. What do we need from you? Volunteers to work some of the rest stops etc. Riders who are not only willing to pay the registration fee but get donation support from friends and relatives. The requests are modest but the need is enormous.

SAFETY

We are experiencing a really safe riding season. With the large number of riders who are participating each week it is great to be able to make that statement. I encourage everyone to keep up the great work.

NEWSLETTERS

At our last meeting it was determined that we would, in the future issue the newsletter via the web site. There are specific reasons for this ex-

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periment:

1. With the rise in membership the cost of producing and mailing the newsletter is approaching \$1500 per year. That's a lot of money.
2. 95% of our membership are hooked up to the Internet.

For those who are not hooked up and those who are hooked up but insist on receiving the letter by mail we will send copies as usual.

Basic Skills Clinic in September

This is to announce the scheduling of the basic skills clinic, it will be held on Sunday, September 7th. The clinic offers the same bike handling skills that have been covered in the past with a few new items. We cover emergency braking, how to ride in a straight while doing other things on the bike like drinking or looking behind you, and sweeping your tires for glass. Also, we teach two different styles of turning, one for dry pavement and one for icky conditions. Other skills will be how to protect yourself in case of incidental contact with another rider, and a couple of avoidance maneuvers that may help you avoid a crash.

We will meet at 9 AM at Miller-Knox Regional Park in Point Richmond. Take Hwy. 580 towards the Richmond/San Rafael Bridge and take the Canal Rd. Exit. Turn Left at the stop sign. Turn Right onto W. Cutting Blvd., Turn Left onto Garrard Rd. Go through the Ferry Tunnel and the clinic will be on your right about 1/2 mile down.

Prior sign up is essential because the last few clinics have filled up. Therefore there will be no same day sign ups. I am an USAC Expert Licensed Cycling Coach. There is a \$20 fee and the clinic will last for 4-5 hours. To sign up contact Mike Cox at mjcox@aol.com or 510-237-5265.

Thanks to Fred

A few weeks back during a ride out Lucas Valley Road in Marin to Nicasco, my back tire was rubbing against the brake, preventing me from going up the painful Big Rock hill. A Good Samaritan from the Yellowjackets, Fred (McWilliams), graciously stopped to help me and gave most generously of his time and expertise. I continue to be grateful for Fred's kindness to a stranger when he had his own ride to complete. Please pass along my gratitude to Fred; he's a gem and is truly a credit to the Yellowjackets.

I mentioned to Fred that my church, Tiburon Baptist, sponsors a century ride called The Fall Classic. We've raised funds for a hospital in Aklampa, Benin, an orphanage in Thailand and this year are raising funds for a project in Yemen. The event is September 13-14 and is a Tour of the Napa Valley. Any and all Yellowjackets are welcome to ride. I'll forward more information when I receive it.

Happy riding!
Susan Prnjak

Club Officers, Chairpersons, and Ride Coordinators

Officers

| | |
|-----------------|---|
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| Vice President: | Jim Collier 510-526-0716 Barbara Massey 510-531-5899 |
| Secretary: | Ann Ma 510-482-1167 |
| Treasurer: | Barbara Moodie (415) 586-3783 |

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Map Committee: Brit Harvey
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Christmas Party Committee: Kathy Starkey
510-521-6235

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Advanced Intermediates: Fred McWilliams
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