



Jerseys:

If you've seen the new club jersey and wish you would have ordered one, you are not out of luck! Rick Melick has placed an order for long-sleeved jerseys (\$68) and arm warmers (\$26). They will be available starting December 12th. Orders for these are coming in fast, so contact Rick to get yours today: 303-730-7322.

Water Bottles:

Rick Melick has official RMCC water bottles for sale. They are \$3 for one and \$5 for two.

Club Meetings:

Club meetings are held on the second Monday of the month at 6:30 at the flagship REI downtown. We are in the small meeting room on the third floor. All club members are welcome to come. Thanks to REI for providing us this space!

RMCC Online:

www.rmccrides.com

Wow, Big Pack! Or, My First Brevet

by Steven Williams

(Ed. Note: These are Steven's reflections upon completing this year's Denver-Aspen 300K brevet)

A writer is supposed to know his audience. But, they all pedaled furiously away at 4 AM and I haven't seen them since.

Now, that's not exactly true, I did see three other riders that day. One, on the climb to Bailey and two others at the first check point. They all said the same thing..."Wow, big pack!" But, you know, living at the other end of this ride, I regularly see and get caught in storms that slash these 14'ers around Independence Pass. Circumstances dictated being self-supported on this, my first brevet. So, like they intimated, "Wow, big pack!"

The silent spinning thread of blinking red long since sliced the pre-dawn, all-night, street light by the time I wheeled out of that 'Park and Ride' at 4:07 a.m. I didn't get lost until 4:12 a.m. Even during the day, I'm a foreigner in a cityscape, let alone a dark city, at night in tights on a bike. I stopped and tried my cell. It didn't work, just as well. So, I kept riding and got 'un-lost' (because that was my only choice) just in time for the first uphill and a detour.

I rode a quintessential Rocky Mountain August day. Our deep sky that only happens here made a lonesome cloud shine like an infrared photo. Never having been over Kenosha Pass, I saw part of Colorado for the first time in almost thirty years of living here.

I arrived in Twin Lakes at 4 p.m. and was elated. I had no idea when I could have anticipated getting there. I entertained visions of climbing over Independence Pass in a black rain and getting hypothermic while descending twenty miles into Aspen, only to ride practically right past my driveway and on to the Tavern, another nine miles distant.

But, as it turned out, I was on top of the pass at 6:15 p.m. and it was sunny. I was at the Woody Creek Tavern at 7:45 p.m. and it was still light out. I arrived two hours and one minute behind the second to last finisher. Yes, that's right, I came in a glorious and lonely last on my first brevet! I couldn't be happier.

I'm hooked, I'm addicted. I'm ready to run out and buy a Rivendell or at least put bigger cogs on my Cannondale and carry a smaller pack.

From the Editor: Rider Caps, Safety, Facts, and the Law

As everyone knows by now, the Colorado State Patrol recently had a short-lived attempt to impose a 2500 rider cap on cycling events and tours in the state. This cap basically would have shut down the Elephant Rock ride, forced the Lance Armstrong Foundation to take its event elsewhere, and had an unknown effect on the Triple Bypass. The cap is off for now, but may be back in a year.

The political back and forth on this one was actually quite entertaining to follow. State Sen. Greg Brophy had my favorite quip: "Nobody likes bureaucrats who make rules from behind their desks without consulting the people who are impacted."

Regardless, the Patrol stated that its decision was done to protect "safety." The safety issue seemed to vary based on the media outlet. In one case, it was because motorists were throwing things at riders. In other cases, it was riders riding two or more abreast or running stop signs. However, the only hard facts I saw in this discussion were from the Elephant Rock organizers—they have had exactly one bike/car accident in the entire eighteen year existence of the ride.

In my opinion, "safety" has nothing to do with this. I think the real concern is motorists getting annoyed (Let's face it, getting caught up with the Elephant Rock will slow you down quite a bit!). I say this because the State Patrol, or any other law enforcement jurisdiction in Colorado for that matter, makes no proactive effort to enforce laws protecting cyclists (at least that I've seen). When the 6000 Elephant Rock riders are out riding on their own the week after the ride, law enforcement will leave it up to them to protect our own safety. The law only comes into play after you've been hit.

So, as I see it, motorists basically do whatever they want towards cyclists for 364 days out of the year. Seems that one day of Elephant Rock, where we pretty much do what we want, still leaves a lot of balancing out left to do.

So, is the Elephant Rock unsafe? Although I did it once, I personally avoid it now because I don't feel comfortable around thousands of less-experienced riders. As to whether that is really a safety hazard or just my imagination, I can offer as many facts as the State Patrol did—none.

The one thing I do know it that it's up to us to watch out for our own well-being out there. Ride safe!



Resistance Training for Endurance Cyclists

by Dan Kehlenbach and John Hughes

Resistance training is a valuable tool that can contribute to the development of endurance athletes. Traditionally, endurance athletes were reluctant to include strength training as part of their training program in fear of developing "extra bulk" that would reduce cardiovascular performance.

In recent years, however, research has shown that strength training has no adverse effect on aerobic capacity and can enhance muscular strength and power. In addition, other benefits include maintaining proper muscular strength ratios, increasing bone mineral density, enhancing connective tissue, preventing overuse injuries, improving lactate threshold and improving exercise economy.

Cycling subjects athletes to continuous, repetitive movements that can last for many hours. This can result in a strength deficit in selected muscle groups that may compromise optimal performance and efficiency, and may also lead to injuries. The pedaling motion can overdevelop the powerful hip and knee extensors resulting in an imbalance between the muscles of the hip and thigh. Resistance training can address this by including specific exercises for the hamstring muscles to maintain proper strength ratios and promote joint stability.

In addition to muscular adaptations, strength training also promotes development of bone and connective tissue. Bone is a dynamic tissue that provides a rigid lever to support movement. Bone is sensitive to changes in forces it experiences and has the capacity for growth and regeneration if damaged. Activities must be weight bearing to provide the most effective stimulus for bone formation. Cyclists are particularly vulnerable since their activities are non-weight bearing in nature. They should incorporate strength training to promote bone health.

Strength training can also enhance connective tissue resulting in an increased ability to withstand greater forces and improved overall joint integrity.

Overuse injuries can be frustrating to the athlete and may result in lost training time and severe setbacks. Many of these injuries are predictable and can be prevented with proper training progressions and a "prehabilitation" strength-training program. Prehabilitation refers to the realization that a potential for injury exists, and implementing specific strategies to prevent such occurrences. Each sport has common overuse injuries. In cyclists, inflammation of the patellar tendon (patellar tendonitis) can result from repeated knee flexion and extension during pedaling. During a four-hour training ride, the knee joint can undergo over 25,000 flexion/extension cycles subjecting the tendon to high stress. Supplementing one's training program with strength exercises can help maintain proper muscular balance and enhance the connective tissue network to reduce the possibility of patellar tendonitis.

Lactate threshold, an important element of endurance performance, can be enhanced with strength training. One study in 1991 found that strength training improves cycling endurance performance independently of changes in VO₂ max.

After twelve weeks of strength training performed three times per week, cycling endurance time performed at 75% VO₂ max improved by an average of nearly nine minutes. The improved endurance comes from changes in muscle fiber-type recruitment. A greater percentage of slow-twitch and reduced rates of fast-twitch recruitment during exercise result in increased power.

Critical to the endurance athlete is developing high levels of exercise economy, or the energy cost to maintain a given level of output. Economical athletes can perform at a higher level while experiencing less fatigue. A 1997 study by the University of New Hampshire of 12 distance runners revealed that strength training significantly improved running economy, and strength in the upper and lower body.

To achieve full potential as an endurance athlete and remain competitive in challenging events, an individually designed resistance training program should be implemented. Each athlete, regardless of sport, brings to the training table a set of unique talents and abilities that can be molded and shaped into a more complete athlete with the addition of a regular resistance training program.

Resistance training is any activity that overloads muscles more than the road bike. Resistance training does not require special equipment, or long hours in the gym.

Resistance training can have five benefits for the endurance cyclist: a) Increasing core strength and creating a stable platform for pedaling power; b) Developing leg strength, which can be turned into increased power on the bike; c) Improving the balance among muscle groups, resulting in increased pedaling economy and efficiency; d) Strengthening connective tissues, to reduce the risk of injury; e) Improving upper body endurance and comfort on the bike.

Any strength training program should follow these general principles of resistance training: a) Activities that are weight-bearing and/or use free weights (e.g., hiking, lunges) require more balance and motor control and thus stress connective tissues more than strength training with machines; b) Exercises that work multiple muscle groups and joints (e.g., lunges, wall squats) are more efficient at developing strength than activities, which work a single muscle group (e.g., hamstring curls); c) Resistance activities which move in the same forward-backward plane as cycling, and have a similar motion to road cycling (e.g., snow shoeing, mountain biking) will translate more directly to improved cycling than activities which are more general (e.g., squats); d) Since most of us have a dominant side, exercises which work each leg separately (e.g., one-legged pedaling, lunges) are better than activities, which work both legs (e.g., rowing); e) Exercises which work a single muscle group (e.g., hamstring curls) are useful for addressing specific muscle imbalances.

Doing resistance exercises three or four days a week will improve your performance off the bike and reduce the risk of injuries. Recommended exercises are illustrated at www.ultracycling.com/training/training.html

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Upcoming Club Rides

4th Annual NewYear's Day Century:

A few years ago, Val Phelps and some other club members decided to start doing a century ride on New Year's Day. For that first ride, it was snowing down in the southern part of town, but the weather turned out quite nice on the roads actually used for the ride. What started that year as a small ride for a few people grew to over 40 riders last year under sunny skies and cool, but not cold, temperatures. Be sure to join us for the ride this year! We start at 8:00AM from the Wagon Road Park-n-Ride at 120th and Huron. The course takes us up to Lyons and Apple Valley, then east, and back to Northglenn. Shorter options are available if you don't want to do a full century. This ride is not a hammerfest, as most of us aren't really in mid-season form; instead, it is more a fun pace. Hope to see you there. Contact Jim Kraychy at 303-776-1906 with any questions.

Show-and-go-rides:

In December and January, our longstanding Saturday show-and-go out of the Wagon Road Park-and-Ride (120th and Huron) will be happening. A "show-and-go" ride is one where each week's route is determined by the ride starter based on conditions. These rides, which are generally 30-50 miles in length, have become quite popular. This is a great way to stay in some sense of cycling shape over the winter! As always, the meet time for these rides is 10:45. Contact Tom Foss (303-233-4972) with any questions.

We also have show-and-go rides on Sundays. These rides start at 10:45 from the Ken Caryl Park-n-Ride at Ken Caryl Ave. and Shaffer Parkway, just east of C-470. The rides are thirty to forty miles in length. For more information, contact Tom Boyle (303-948-8947) or Rick Melick (303-730-7322).

Lastly, the Sunday fixed-gear rides are back! These rides go out of Meadow Sweet Park (318 Wheat Berry Drive) in Erie. Please note that the meet time for these rides is **9:45AM**. Mike Prendergast is the ride starter. He can be reached at 303-344-6326.

A Note on Weather:

Rides are conducted in all weather, subject to the final decision of the ride starter at the starting point on the day of the ride. Rides are canceled if conditions are too dangerous. In the extremely rare instance that a ride is canceled ahead of time, you can check for this on the website. Otherwise, if you have volunteered to start a ride, do show up at the ride start on the day of the ride. Frequently conditions are bad in one area and okay in another.

Writers Wanted

Chain Chatter is always in need of good contributions like Steven Williams' article this month. You may think your story is not that interesting, but your fellow club members love to hear about your adventures on the bike. If you have an idea for an article, please contact the editor, Mark Michel. He can be reached at michel95@comcast.net.

Want Ads

For Sale: 2004 Zipp 404 tubulars with Continental sprinter tires. very low miles, only used in a few races last season, never crashed. Very fast, very light wheels. Shimano 9 Speed but easily converted to campy. Must sell !!! Call Tim @ 303.956.7245

Happy Holidays!

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