



Rocky Mountain Cycling Club Presents:

A NEW Series of Rides: Tired of Criteriums and Short Road Races?

THE 2009 CHALLENGE SERIES

RMCC recognizes there are limited long distance road events for competitive cyclists in Colorado. So, new for 2009, RMCC presents our RMCC 1-2-3 for competitive long distance riders.

In the RMCC 1-2-3 events, riders carry a card on which times are recorded at checkpoints and the finish. All events are self-supported – most checkpoints are at convenience stores, where water and nourishment are available. Finishing is most important and competition is encouraged.

Results will be grouped by age and gender. Winners of each group will receive special recognition.

The RMCC 1-2-3 is a Multi-Stage Open Road Timed Events (a 100 k (60 miles) 4/12/09, 200 k (124 miles) 5/2/09, and 300 k (186 miles) 5/23/09) with the winners determined by lowest total cumulative time for the series.

The challenge series also includes some single day events, the first two are – the Foothills Climbfest May 31 - 94 miles with 12,000 vertical ft and the Copper Triangle June 27 78 miles with 6,000 vertical ft.

All Challenge Series rides are Open Road Timed Events - failure to follow traffic laws or loss of time card will result in disqualification (no IPOD's). Aero bars are not permitted since drafting is allowed. Entry is limited to the first 100 participants.

Membership in Rocky Mountain Cycling Club is required to enter the challenge series events.

Age Groups will be as follows

18-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70+up

There is a \$ 20 non refundable cost recovery fee for the RMCC 1-2-3, and some other challenge series events.

You must finish the series to be officially recognized.

For registration, more information, or information on our other Challenge Series events, please see our web site: www.rmccrides.com/challengeseries.htm .



Texas Ride Report

A Birthday Permanent (or a Permanent Birthday ?)

by Jim Kraychy

I recently had an opportunity to visit Texas and ride with fellow RMCC club members Val and Robin Phelps, along with a group of their friends from Lone Star Randonneurs (LSR) in the Dallas – Fort Worth (DFW) area. Last Saturday was Val's birthday so he got to pick the route. Val chose his favorite ride: a 200 km permanent called "Kickapoo Joy Juice" established by George Evans who joined us on the ride.

For those of you who have not visited the state, Texas is HUGE, big enough that there is a tremendous variety in terrain and vegetation. My very limited first impressions came from traveling through the pan handle on I40 through Amarillo some years ago, and more recently in the Stephenville area which is about 80 miles or so South West of DFW.

The Amarillo area looks like Colorado along our Front Range East of I25, relatively flat (to us) and few trees. Stephenville is more wooded, by shorter mostly oak (I think) trees, but still relatively open ranch land. What I saw North East and South East of DFW ranged from heavily wooded areas with rolling hills to flatter plowed farm fields, pleasantly changing my impressions a bit.

The Kickapoo route is an out and back, meandering South from Canton, Texas (East of Dallas along I30), through Athens to the turn around at Palestine, mostly on back roads. These roads were the best part of the route for me. Picture, if you will, a narrow country lane, almost driveway size in width, with enough tall deciduous trees on both sides with enough branches overhanging the pavement so you could easily imagine you are riding through a tunnel. It was like that for mile after mile after winding mile. Further South, closer to Palestine, the oaks were replaced by huge pine trees, mostly with 5 to 6 inch needles, and the soil became more sandy in composition, and the hills became steeper and longer than earlier in the ride.

This route was absolutely loaded to the max with "small" rollers. I couldn't believe Val before the ride when he told me to expect 8000 feet of climbing in 125 miles (in Texas ??). These hills are really short (a few hundred feet to maybe a few hundred yards or so long) and small (a few hundred feet max). But there are hundreds of them !

This type of terrain seems to me more difficult to ride than longer climbs like we have in Colorado. In the mountains on long climbs you can settle into a rhythm best suited for you on both the climbs and then the descents. On those short Texas hills there is not enough time to find that rhythm before you reach the top and have to shift to descending mode. Much easier however to use your momentum for the next hill.

After the ride I checked the GPS device I brought along. It had recorded over 10,000 feet – no joke – so that confirms the huge number Val told me ! The elevation profile looked like continuous teeth on the gnarliest bucking saw (a little old time lumberjack lingo there) you ever will see. Nothing I have ridden in Colorado compares to this rolling topography.

Visually, the whole ride was a real treat. Some green grass in places, bright yellow flowers the size of tulips or irises were in full bloom, and singing birds made it feel like spring ! Very nice on the eyes after the gloomy days of winter around Denver.

We had mostly overcast skies, with a short section of very light rain for an hour or so early on. Just enough to wet the pavement but not enough for much of a rooster tail. Although the high temperature was somewhere below 50 degrees, the drizzle was actually pleasant compared to Colorado rain up at elevation where hypothermia is a major concern even in the summer. And it was clean in comparison to here at this time of year (February – mag chloride and sand – yuk). The wind was a bit stiff out of the North so we had a nice push on the way to Palestine. Of course we paid for it on the return leg but all the trees and hills broke up the wind, so the conditions weren't demoralizing.

Same as around the Stephenville / Glen Rose area, animals (mostly horses and cows) we saw would, more often than not, stare at cyclists as we rode by. Some would run the other direction, some would race along with us to the limit of their pasture, being cheered on by riders on their iron horses. I can only guess that the livestock doesn't see many people out riding bicycles around there.



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Loose dogs were plentiful, more per capita than evident in Colorado. Most all that ran out to “greet” us responded well to a loud, firm “NO”. I think it helped that they heard it from several riders. (We also had an encounter with a Texas cat the following day but that is a tale for the next ride report).

OK, a downside to the ride might have been the somewhat rough pavement in a few sections, but that is to be expected on such lightly traveled roads. What cars we saw gave all the riders plenty of space, even driving part way in the ditch to give us room. Drivers would wait patiently to pass until it was safe. I’ll take that courtesy as more than a fair trade for some rough chip seal and a few pot holes !

By far the best part of the ride was the people, both riders and people we met at the check points. Everyone we encountered was very friendly, and would go out of their way to talk with us, asking questions to satisfy their curiosity about us.

The Lone Star club has some of the most experienced riders I have ever met. Some have completed multiple Brevet series in one year (“easy” to do in Texas since there are so many rides offered because of the mild weather spring, summer and fall – Brevet heaven !) and competed in the Race Across America, etc. These cyclists know how to ride ! LSR’s style of riding is different than what you might experience in Colorado. For the most part, Brevets are ridden in groups of various size. Riders stay together. Times are not important. Finishing the ride with the riders you started with, come what may, is paramount.

Constant chatter and joking in the group kept the mood light, even with the cloudy skies, drizzle and wind. Lots of ride stories, some old, many new were told. Laughter made the day and miles pass all too quickly. Sad that the ride had to end. After, we met for a recovery and celebratory Italian dinner, with even more conversation and hilarity.

Many thanks for a great ride to Val and Robin, Richard, Brenda, Vickie, and especially George (for coming up with the route) ! Rides like that I could do permanently (sorry for the “pun”). A wonderful break from winter in Colorado and a fun way to celebrate Val’s birthday.

If you are looking for a place to ride some Brevets outside Colorado, Texas is well worth considering. Don’t let my attempts at describing the terrain on one ride put you off (see also Brent Myers’ recent ride report). Val and Robin extend an open invitation to all RMCC members to ride with them.

PS. For those who know him, Val is just as incorrigible as ever, even more so now as he has new material and people to “work” with. “Say hello to everyone !” he asked.



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VARIOUS TIDBITS, etc.....

Mark on your calender the date of March 18, 2009. Rocky Mountain Cycling Club's Rick Russon, who is an expert level USA cycling certified coach, will be conducting a seminar entitled “**Breaking the Century Barrier**” It's free, it's at REI and it's a 6:30 p.m.

Please don't be shy, we are looking for ride volunteers. Tim Kalisch pointed out recently that all you need to do is volunteer to start just one ride and that would be a great help. Oh, and we can really use some help for our new Challenge Series events.

Also, please check out RMCCRIDES.com. Mark Michel does a fantastic job and keeping us up to date with the following:

- *upcoming ride start
- *latest up to date news on bicycle legislation (when information becomes available of course)
- *information regarding our new Challenge Series and the RMCC 123 (please see first page)
- *RMCC Cycling Chicks
- *And many more!!

You can also sign up for an email or RSS feed that will alert you when the website is updated.

Last but certainly not least, don't forget to check out rmccrides.com/brevet.htm and all the wonderful work that John Lee Ellis has done to promote and encourage Brevet riding in Colorado.