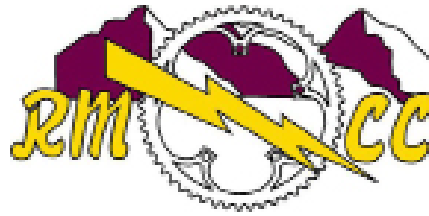


Rocky Mountain Cycling Club

For People Who Love to Ride

Chain Chatter

Winter 2012



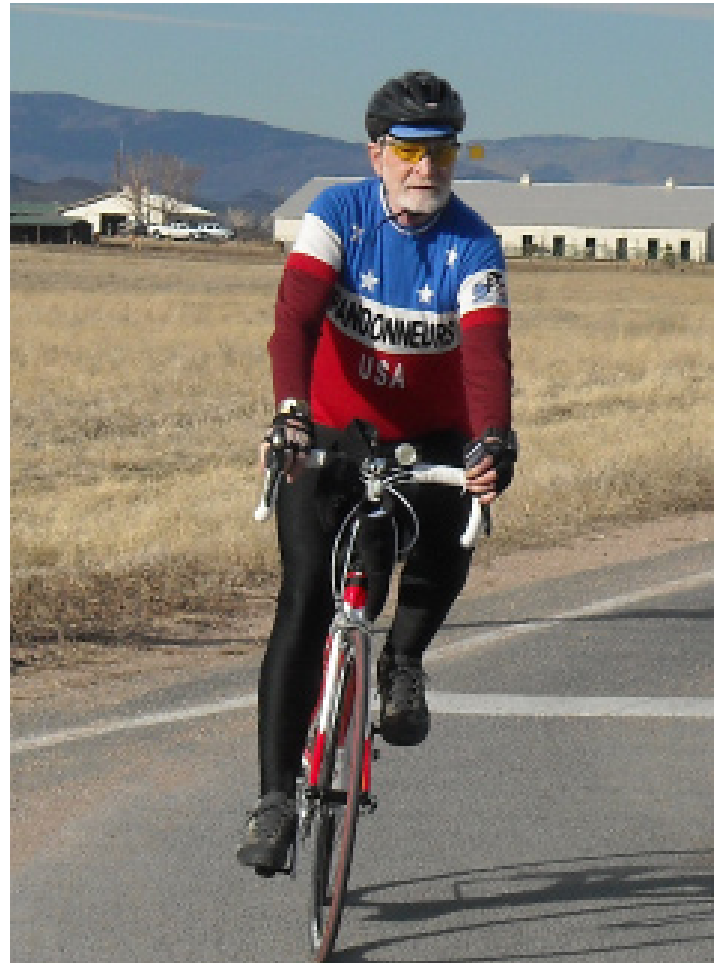
Riding in the Snow and Cold

By John Klever

I can only be off my bike for so long. I have experimented with the vomitron, but I found that after about ten minutes on a stationary bike, I couldn't take it anymore. There is just no substitute for riding outside. As I share my experiences on biking on snow-covered roads and/or in the cold, please note that I am only writing from my own experience. Most of you will no doubt be warmer or colder blooded than I am. Most of you will have greater or lesser tolerance to two wheels on snow and ice. For a more exhaustive look at riding in the snow and cold, www.icebike.com is a good place to start.

The first thing to know about riding on snow and ice is *don't*! Your goal should be to ride on the pavement, so as you ride on a slopped up street, do so with an eye toward maximizing your time on pavement. If possible, use the entire road, the parking and the sidewalk to find the best surface. If you have to ride on snow, pick snow of the least depth; it's closest to the pavement. Thick, packed snow has a tendency to give way, which makes for unpredictable handling. If the packed snow is shiny, it is ice, so treat it as ice. If you must ride on ice, pick the smoothest, shortest stretch possible and make sure it is not wet. Do not pedal on ice; maintain a straight and upright line. Do not ride on wet ice. Walk if riding is too hazardous.

If you do fall, you will feel it coming for what seems



John Klever on a winter ride, photo by John Elmlad

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For People Who Love to Ride!

Chain Chatter

Winter 2012

like minutes, so you have time to plan. Unclip, tuck into a ball, and wait for the snow. After you look around, pick yourself up and assure everyone you are just fine, you will see that snow is a lot kinder surface than pavement. Injuries are unlikely because of the slick and soft snow and your lack of speed.

Riding a mountain bike on single-track is a good place to develop balance and the quick action necessary to keep the bike upright on sketchy surfaces. A mountain bike is a good choice for riding on snow and ice because the perch is closer to the ground and the tires offer better traction. East-west running streets tend to have the slowest snow melt. North-south running streets melt more quickly. North-south running streets, which slope north and up, melt the fastest. All bets are off where tall buildings obstruct the sun.

Following my own good advice, I did yesterday's ride on my mountain bike. The tires, while wide at 2 inches, were slicks—not the best choice, but that is what was on the bike. Most of the time I was able to find the pavement. When I had to ride on snow, my tires tended to collect it, especially if they were wet, which added to the traction. I avoided the ice, but the few icy patches I encountered—no pedaling here—were not a problem.

Riding in the Cold

The most important consideration when dealing with the cold is knowing whether or not it's freezing. If it's above freezing (32 degrees Fahrenheit or 0 degrees Celsius), you will not get frostbite. You might

Upcoming Educational Events

Long Distance Cycling: What's a 200K and Why

RMCC seminar with key tips to training and strongly finishing a cycling event in the 100-mile to 125-mile range.

Wednesday, March 7, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Denver Flagship REI, 1416 Platte St.

<http://www.rei.com/event/35442/session/44504>

Kickstart your Century and 200K Training

Free webinar by John Hughes and Dan Kehlenbach, which will provide detailed information on how to get ready for your first, or next, century ride and 200K! Learn how to build your baseline endurance with cycling, cross-training, strength and flexibility activities. Then find out how to train specifically to peak for your event! Also discover how to fuel those training rides.

Thursday, March 29, 2012, 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon CDT

More information and registration:

<http://tinyurl.com/7okek8f>

Ultra-Distance / Expert Randonneuring

RMCC seminar

Tuesday, April 10, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Denver Flagship REI, 1416 Platte St.

<http://www.rei.com/stores/18>

www.rmccrides.com

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die from hypothermia because you are riding into a 40-knot headwind while wearing a wet, cotton t-shirt and Bermuda shorts, but you will not get frostbite. The more below freezing it is, the more likely frostbite is. To know what the temperature is, it's a good idea to have an accurate thermometer. REI sells one for about \$4 that is both light and accurate. The weather forecast you brought up on the Internet on the morning of the ride is a guide; the weather station is not likely to be exactly where you are riding. Get a thermometer.

As long as you can feel your fingers and toes, you are not being bitten by Jack Frost. The pain may indicate that Jack is on his way, but he hasn't made it there yet. When you feel no pain in your numb fingers and toes, he's there, and you are in trouble. Don't let this happen. Always err on the side of too many clothes rather than too few. You can always decloak and delaminate, but you can't wear that which you didn't bring.

What usually gets cold are the hands and feet. Keeping your body warm also helps to keep your hands and feet warm. To protect my feet, I have had good luck with sandals—thank you Bob Barday for this tip—the heaviest socks that REI sells, and the largest neoprene booties I could find at Performance. To protect my hands I use Head ski gloves that I found at Costco for \$15. I wear an extra, extra large pair of orange gloves over the ski gloves. After my hands warm up, I can switch to a light pair of thermal fleece gloves, which hang from my handlebars. I also carry chemical warmers that I can insert into the sandals and/or a pocket in the ski gloves. I haven't had to use these yet, but more is not a problem.

So far, I have only used a cycling hat (above 39 degrees) or a light nylon skull cap (below 40 degrees). Above 65 degrees I wear cycling shorts, between 50 degrees and 64 degrees I wear the shorts plus light Lycra tights, and below 50 degrees I wear the shorts and heavy tights. I like a warm neck, so I wear one or two gaiters. I use layers for my torso: wool undershirt, a long-sleeved wool undershirt or two, a wool jersey, a wind vest, and a lightweight windbreaker. As my need for warmth decreases I slip off the layers: wind vest, windbreaker, under shirts. Wool is prominent in what I wear because it maintains 80% of its insulating properties when wet. What this means is that if you get wet from rain or, more likely, sweat you will still stay warm. Wool also can be worn for days on end without stinking, but that's another story. I also carry a light as in four-ounce, single purpose backpack for stashing the excess clothes from the decloaking operations.

Two things happen to me when I warm up. Just before my body begins to sweat, I feel a flush. That is the signal I use to open zippers on my windbreaker, wind vest, and jersey to moderate the heat. My hands deliver a similar signal. If my hands seem warm and a slight tug of the gloves shows resistance that's the beginning of sweat, so it's probably time to change to the lighter gloves. The real cold around Denver makes its appearance when it's dark; daytime temperatures usually get above freezing. If you plan colder riding, you need to check out www.icebike.com.



(L-R) Jane Yant, John Klever and Leslie Sutton on a winter 200 km. John Lee Ellis photo.

The P-12 and R-12 Awards

Persistence Pays Off!

By John Lee Ellis

What are your 2012 cycling goals? More miles ... better performance ... more events ... more comfort ... less misery? If so, maybe you should consider the Randonneurs USA (RUSA) P-12 and R-12 awards.

The **R-12 Award** (http://www.rusa.org/award_r12.html) is earned by finishing a 200 km (125 miles) or longer randonnée in each of twelve consecutive months starting in whatever month you choose. The rides must be events on the RUSA calendar or be foreign events sanctioned by Randonneurs Mondiaux or Audax Club Parisien or RUSA Permanents: predetermined routes that you ride on a date of your own choosing known. All you have to do is finish one a month. How hard could that be?

The **P-12 Award** (http://www.rusa.org/award_p12.html) is like the R-12 Award except that the rides must be 100 km-199 km (62.5-124 miles) in distance: RUSA Populaires, Permanent Populaires, or RUSA Darts under 200 km. The P-12 is a great way to ride with folks who are just getting into randonneuring, or keep up a monthly ride in severe climates, or for other folks for whom this is a good distance to ride. To plan rides look at the full Colorado Brevets schedule (including Populaires)

Why do I make it sound like R-12 and P-12 are training panaceas? Well, they're not, of course, but ... they:

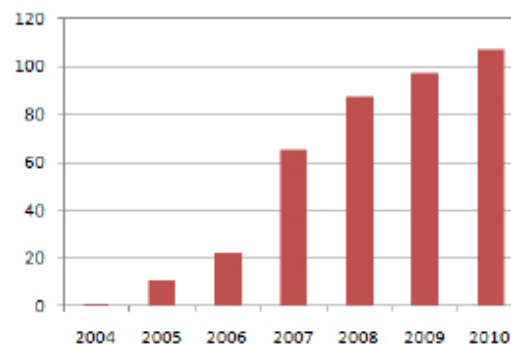
- keep endurance in the training equation during the cold months,

- give you a structured monthly goal,
- allow you to hook up with like-minded endurance folks and egg each other on,
- keep you mentally and physically tough, attributes that carry over to your big high season events.

The result is that you emerge into the high season with good training volume and conditioning and you have not lost all of the conditioning you worked so hard to build up last season. Plus, you have a goal that carries you forward month after month, whatever else may be driving you.

The R-12 is one of RUSA's most motivational awards and has directly influenced the success of the Permanents program. At least two local riders—Andrea Koenig and Leslie Sutton—started their rando careers with a September 200 km brevet, and then dove into the R-12 through the next fall and winter. So it's not just seasoned rando veterans who pursue the R-12. I created my first permanents routes in 2005 so I could give the R-12 a try!

R-12 Awardees Per Year



What kind of crazy awards are these? Since the R-12's introduction in 2004, it has really caught on.

The P-12, introduced this year, could be the same. Just for temperate climates? Check out the local riders who've achieved the R-12!:

<http://www.rmccrides.com/brevetaward-r12.htm>

You can find out who plans on riding Permanents and would like company on the Colorado Randonneuring chatlist:

<http://groups.google.com/group/colorandonnee>. And for further planning, have a look at the full Colorado Brevets schedule:

<http://www.rmccrides.com/brevet2012schedule.htm> and RUSA schedule if you're travelling farther afield:

http://www.rusa.org/cgi-bin/eventsearch_GF.pl

Training: Building Your Base

By John Hughes

Hughes is the author of *Distance Cycling*

Depending on your personal calendar, the off-season is over or soon drawing to a close. The off-season was a time to recharge your batteries without serious training and work on weight management, core strength and flexibility. Whatever your goals, as winter moves into spring you should be building your endurance through base training as well as improving your general strength and continuing to work on your core strength and flexibility.

Base Training

Training is like building a house. You want a strong foundation so the subsequent structure won't be at risk of damage or collapse if subjected to heavy loads like the high winds we're experiencing in Boulder. You want to lay a good base for your training now so that later in the season your body can benefit from harder workouts rather than getting injured and you'll be fit for your summer of riding.

Ed Burke, Ph.D., describes the benefits of base training, which improves:

- The endurance of the cycling muscles by increasing the number of mitochondria where aerobic energy is produced.
- The respiratory system, providing more oxygen to the blood supply.
- The efficiency of the heart so it can pump more blood to the muscles.
- The capacity of the liver and muscles to store carbohydrates.
- The neuromuscular efficiency of pedaling.
- The capacity to burn fat during long rides.
- The thermoregulatory system by increasing the blood flow to the skin.

Ed Burke, *Serious Cycling*, Human Kinetics, Champaign, IL, 2002.

Base training is the classic long slow distance training (LSD), riding at an easy conversational pace. The club's weekend ride schedule includes rides of the appropriate length on both Saturday and Sunday, progressing in distance week by week:

<http://www.rmccrides.com/schedulecurrent.html>

The club also offers informal weekday rides:

<http://www.rmccrides.com/weekdayrides.html>.

If you can't get out, riding the trainer is a rather boring alternative. Or you could take an organized class such as Spinning. Whether on the trainer or in a class, have a purpose and structure for each workout. One intense workout in the winter will complement your other endurance activities; however, most of your exercise should be LSD. When riding the trainer warm up, do a main set and cool down. For the main set I tend to listen to the Grateful Dead (yeah, I'm that old) and ride to the music. You could also do some form of some form of structured intervals. Here's a classic pyramid: one minute hard, one minute easy, two hard, two easy, three hard, three easy and then back down two hard, two easy, one easy. Depending on fitness and tolerance you could go farther up and down the pyramid. Or you can just do a ladder, climbing the pyramid only. Or you could descend starting at the top and doing progressively shorter repeats—the pain decreases as the workout goes on!

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You can also build endurance through other sports such as snowshoeing, XC skiing and jogging. As with cycling do these at an endurance pace. The RMCC weekend rides increase in duration at an appropriate rate; if you are cross-training increase your long distance workout(s) each week at about the same rhythm.

General Strength Training

When asked how to improve, Eddy Merckx famously replied “Ride more!” He’s right; however, certain off-the-bike activities should complement your riding.

I’ve been coaching for almost 20 years and learned that there are two kinds of riders:

- Gym rats like me who enjoy strength training.
- Pure riders who don’t want to lift anything heavier than their bikes (and try to shave every ounce).

Take it from a professional coach and confessed gym rat, strength training offers advantages for all:

1. Building general leg strength more efficiently than on the bike, leg strength which then can be turned into cycling power.
2. Correcting muscle imbalances. Cyclists tend to have very strong quads and relatively weak hip flexors, hamstrings and gluteals, which leads to a less than optimal stroke.
3. Strengthening connective tissue to reduce the potential for injury.
4. Improving upper body endurance for greater comfort on the bike.
5. Building core strength to provide a stable platform against which the leg muscles pull resulting in greater efficiency and comfort.

The Resources section of my website has simple general strength training and core strength training exercises that can be done at home without a lot of special equipment:

<http://www.coach-hughes.com>

Core Strength and Flexibility

When my good friend Pete Penseyres was training for the Race Across AMerica (for which he still holds the solo all-time speed record!) he stretched every night after dinner while eating ice cream and watching TV! He recognized the importance of stretching both for performance and comfort on the bike. If Penseyres could fit it in along with a full-time job and RAAM training, so can you ... and for similar reasons.



(L-R) Pat Heller, John Lee Ellis & John Hughes building endurance and having fun. Carol Garnand photo.

Stretching regularly will reduce improve your recovery after hard rides, reduce the risk of injury, decrease the probability of cramps from overly tight muscles and make you feel good! In the Resources section of my website I show the seven essential stretches and other beneficial stretches. I’ve also added more advance core strength exercises:

<http://www.coach-hughes.com>

Keep laying your foundation: stay active developing your endurance on the bike outdoors weather permitting, on the trainer or cross training—just remember to exercise at a conversational pace. Work on your general strength and continue to improve your core strength and flexibility. In the next issue I’ll describe how to utilize your strong base of endurance and strength as the foundation for the next level in your structure, building power for our wonderful riding in the Rockies!

Gary Lancaster and Tom Miller

Triple Crown 2011

By John Hughes

“The lighting was surreal climbing up High Grade in the dark with headlights. It was my first night ride and just an awesome experience,” said Gary Lancaster describing the start of the 2011 Denver-to-Aspen ride. Denver-to-Aspen is part of the Colorado Triple Crown along with the Death Ride and the Grand Loop. Gary and Tom Miller rode all three events last year, although they hadn’t planned to do the series.

Tom said, “I didn’t plan on doing the Denver-to-Aspen at all! Riding it never entered my consciousness until the day before registration closed. Gary and our mutual friend Dave Ratcliff signed up for the Denver-to-Aspen. After signing up, Dave called me the day before registration ended and said ‘Gary and I are doing Denver-to-Aspen, and I signed you up, too.’ I thought about it for a minute, then said, ‘Well, okay, if you signed me up, then I guess I’m in.’ Dave paused

a moment, gave me time to recant, then said ‘Are you really in?’ He then had to tell me that he was kidding and that I actually had to sign myself up and quickly to get in the ride. From thinking about doing the ride to actually doing it was a very short process for me...”

Gary had previously ridden the Triple Bypass six times and Tom four times. In 2011 in addition to the Triple Crown they rode the Double Triple from Evergreen to Vail on Saturday and then back on Sunday.

Gary was in racing shape from having completed an Ironman in St. George, UT in May. As a good athlete he used June to rest and maintain fitness in preparation “for getting ready for Ironman Arizona in November, so the Aspen ride provided a nice kick off point. Unfortunately I was not in decent climbing shape so the Aspen ride was by far, for me at least, the toughest ride.”

Triple Crown 2012

Joe Lookingbill Denver-to-Aspen Classic

Saturday, June 16, 2012

180 miles/13,500 feet

From Littleton through Conifer and Bailey, over Kenosha Pass (10,001 ft.), through Fairplay, Buena Vista and Twin Lakes, over Independence Pass (12,095 ft.) and through Aspen to finish in Woody Creek.

Colorado Death Ride: *“They say it can’t be done!”*

Sunday, July 1, 2012

225 miles/16,000 feet

Across southwest Colorado’s spectacular San Juan Skyway from Ridgway through Ouray, over Red Mountain Pass (11,018 ft.), through Silverton, over Molas (10,910 ft.) and Coal Bank (10,640 ft.) Passes, through Durango, Mancos, Dolores, and Rico, over Lizard Head Pass (10,222 ft.), through Telluride and Placerville and over Dallas Divide (8,970 ft.) and back to Ridgway.

Tim Kalisch Memorial Grand Loop: *“For those who double dare!”*

Saturday, July 28, 2012

200 miles/15,500 feet

From Golden through Boulder, Lyons and Estes Park, over Trail Ridge Road (12,183 ft.) through Granby and Winter Park, over Berthoud Pass (11,307 ft.) and through Idaho Springs back to Golden.

New This Year Cripple Creek Crippler: *“Better get out the granny gear—this one’s gonna hurt!”*

Saturday, August 11, 2012

207 miles/17,000 feet

From Littleton through Conifer, Pine Junction, Deckers and Woodland Park, around a scenic (but steep) loop through Cripple Creek (9,494 ft.) and then back through Woodland Park, Deckers and Pleasant Park in the reverse direction.

More information: www.rmccrides.com/challengeseriestriplecrown.html

In between Denver-to-Aspen and the Death Ride, Gary's training was, "Rest, ride, rest, swim, run, bike and rest. Eat in between!.... Plus the Double Triple." His preparation for the Grand Loop was similar, "Rest, ride, swim, run and eat. Not necessarily in that order."

Tom didn't train specifically for Denver-to-Aspen, but "had logged a lot of miles in the previous year, including riding as much as possible throughout the winter, a 500-mile Texas Hill Country Tour in April and many weekends of 80-100 miles per day in the hills during spring and summer." Although he didn't train specifically, he trained effectively by combining this endurance training with speed work to build his power, racing some local events and "two weekly fast-paced pickup rides of 50 and 25 miles each, which were essentially 'races amongst friends' I probably rode anywhere from 200-350 miles per week." After Denver-to-Aspen Tom just kept up

his regular season riding schedule. Intelligently, he "rested more in the days before the Death Ride than I had before Denver-to-Aspen. The name 'Death Ride' and the distance had me a bit worried."

Tom and Gary rode the Death Ride together and as



Tom Miller (L) and Gary Lancaster after the Death Ride.

highlights Gary remembers, "The porcupine on Red Mountain Pass and the vertigo-inducing morning light as we climbed out of Silverton." They also had four flats between them. Gary double flatted at one point when he was drafting Tom and failed to look ahead and see some road debris. They also had a blown sidewall on Tom's rear tire. Fortunately, at the stop before, Charlie Henderson, who was driving sag, noticed that Tom's tire looked a little nicked and so Gary pulled the spare tire from his sag bag. When Tom's tire blew maybe 10 miles later, they were ready.

Gary also notes, "Mark Lowe's accomplishments get a little lost. The speeds he with which he covers these three rides is inspiring. I consider myself a strong rider, but the only time I saw Mark on the Death Ride

Keep In Touch



We have many ways to keep in touch:

Ride Calendar: <http://www.rmccrides.com/schedulecurrent.html#topofthepage>

Web Updates by E-mail: <http://www.rmccrides.com/subscribe.html>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=49954761259#topofthepage>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/#!/RMCCRIDes>

Club Blog: <http://rmccrides.blogspot.com>

Brevets: <http://www.rmccrides.com/brevets.htm>

Brevets Blog: <http://coloradobrevets.blogspot.com>

Challenge Series: <http://www.rmccrides.com/challengeseries.html - topofthepage>

Triple Crown Blog: <http://coloradotriplecrown.blogspot.com/>

was in the parking lot at 1:55 a.m.” Mark finished the Death Ride (226 miles with 15,000 vertical feet) in 12:29, almost four hours faster than Gary and Tom.

Before the Grand Loop, Tom went on a weeklong backpacking trip and returned with “severely inflamed sesamoiditis on my right foot (inflamed tendons under the ball of the foot). It was so bad that I was having trouble pedaling, and certainly putting down any power. Two days before the Grand Loop, I went to my podiatrist, who (luckily for me) is an endurance runner...after I explained what finishing the Triple Crown meant to me, he offered me a cortisone shot. I jumped at the chance. I could pedal, but my foot hurt the entire ride, and towards the end of the day it actually went numb. I know people who are reading this will think I’m stupid and/or crazy for riding in that condition, but I was determined to finish what I’d started (the Triple Crown).”

Gary and Dave Ratcliff rode the Grand Loop the week after the club ride “and this was only possible because

of the help from Tom who sagged for us to the top of Trail Ridge road and to Dave’s wife Xuann who sagged all the way back to Golden. Huge help!” He remembers, “stopping twice at McDonalds, a first for me! Incredible scenery through the park...”

Both praise the club. Gary says, “It really is a pleasure to know the members, just very friendly, open people honestly looking for new riding members.” Tom says, “I just love the friendly folks (especially Charlie Henderson and Mark Lowe) and how low key and casual everyone is. Not to say that they’re not exceptional cyclists, and competitive ones at that...but everyone is super friendly and welcoming to new club members and folks like me who are new to long-distance events.”

Join these friendly riders to extend your distance riding. Start with one and see what happens. Mark Lowe has designed a new ride, the Cripple Creek Crippler and in 2012 if you complete any three of the four long rides, you earn the Colorado Triple Crown!

Colorado Triple Crown Series 2012

The Colorado Triple Crown—the most difficult events of the RMCC Challenge Series—are a series of timed, double century bicycle events designed to push cyclists to the limits of their endurance.

Events

Date	Start Location	Register By	Event	Miles	Gain	Time Limit
Sat. 6/16	Ken Caryl	6/9	Joe Lookingbill Denver-to-Aspen Classic	180	13K ft.	17:00
Sun. 7/1	Ridgway	6/24	Colorado Death Ride	225	16K ft.	19:00
Sat. 7/28	Golden	7/21	Tim Kalisch Memorial Grand Loop	200	15K ft.	18:00
Sat. 8/11	Ken Caryl	8/4	Cripple Creek Crippler (New!)	207	17K ft.	18:00

Challenge Series Short-Course Events

The RMCC Challenge Series Short Course events, which range from 50 to 100 miles in length, are for those riders who are looking for a challenging day on the bike with lots of climbing!

Date	Start Location	Event	Miles	Gain	Time Limit
Sun. 5/6	Boulder	Boulder Fearsome Five (New!)	100	13K ft.	10:00
Sat. 5/26	Ken Caryl	Foothills Climbfest	81	8K ft.	7:00
Sat. 6/23	Golden	Mt. Evans Challenge	48	9K ft.	6:00
Sat. 9/8	Copper Mtn.	The Copper Triangle	80	7K ft.	7:00

More information: <http://www.rmccrides.com/challengeseries.html> - [topofthepage](#)

Bike Safety: You Are Invisible

By Brent Myers

My second accident with a car was with a machine of joy borrowed from my older brother, a Schwinn Continental with an awesome ten speeds! I had cut through construction cones in front of a grocery store and was surprised when a station wagon was turning next to me. I followed the car pedaling into the entrance leaving circular pedal scratches on the side. I was miffed that my Weinman pedal had gotten bent. Ah, the innocence of youth.

Road safety is another matter when pitting at most a couple hundred pounds to multiple tons. The result is obvious. Rule: **You are invisible**. This is a good attitude to keep. The one thing I learned from my accident with the station wagon is that the driver just didn't see me. Being in the right doesn't keep you alive. **You are invisible**.

Riding with a group is best. RMCC has a training schedule that can introduce you to the best rides along the Front Range. One important criterion of any ride is whether the route is the safest in an area? The canyons along the Front Range can be "hot points". They are fun to ride, but from a driver's viewpoint on the trip home, you may be the final stress of a long day.

Don't be an easy target to an angry impulse. Ride with a partner. Be considerate to the drivers. Our roads can be narrow and efforts are being made to improve them, but money is always a consideration. **You are invisible**.

Pick the routes that are the safest. The cities have been making bike routes for years and motorists are used to seeing bikes. Utilize bike paths and be respectful of pedestrians. Maybe the karma will follow you to the road. If you are in a sketchy situation and drivers are not giving you room, stay in the right part of the lane to force them to slow or pass. Taking risky and gutsy moves is not advised.

Refer to the rule: **You are invisible**. I have begun riding with little blinking LED's front and back on even in the daytime. These can be seen from a distance and work with the rule: **You are invisible**. Wear a mirror and use it and your ears to anticipate oncoming traffic. Be aware of the road conditions that have deteriorated and made the road unsafe. Has rain caused sand and gravel to be left on the road?

To summarize, most of all remember to make yourself as visible as possible.