

❖ SPOKE'N'WORD ❖

The official newsletter of the Fairbanks Cycle Club
P.O. Box 83424, Fairbanks, Alaska 99708

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July 1998

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Auto Service Company's Subaru provides a fine ride. Driving down the Parks Highway in comfort with the soothing sounds of the Beastie Boys beating out of the stereo, made driving 350 miles to do a 2 mile bike race almost worth it! The Tour of Anchorage included a 2 mile prologue on a Thursday night this year, but that didn't keep Jonn Stroebele, Scott Wynne and yours truly from the competition. Usually a long drive makes it difficult to get into a rhythm, but 2 miles was a good start and by race-end I was only 20 seconds behind Rod Smith and 10 down on Jonn. Scott, inspired by his time, moved from B-racer to A-racer. Competition is a strong motivator.

Jonn, Scott, and I met up for a movie matinee the next day and to shop at the motorcycle shop before stage 2 . . . a 2 mile hillclimb.

There comes a time in a riders life, much like any demanding activity, when you realize the amount of preparation has fallen short of the immediate demand. This was my time. In 8:00 minutes I found out how out of shape I have become. Jonn finished in third place behind Tim Lamb and Rod Smith. Scott finished two seconds ahead of me with a strong burst to the line. I became calm in the feeling 'nothing comes from nothing.' No training brings no results, but tomorrow is a new day and I look forward to it without looking back. Noah Mery, another Fairbanks rider joined the Tour at this race.

In great spirits, we began the 10 mile Moose Run Time Trial the next day at Ft. Richardson. Although nervous, we were confident and excited. The result of this energy secured Jonn 3rd place overall and me 4th place. Scott finished within

seconds of men twice his age.

The Kincaid Road Race was 74 miles: 20 laps with a great climb in each. Time bonuses were to be awarded for the first three up the climb on the 13th lap. I raced to conserve energy hoping to win some of the bonus and increase my 10 second lead over John Weddleton for 4th. Scott and John were content not to contest the sprint and it looked like 10 seconds were mine for third behind Tim and Rod when Rod went down and I rode over him and landed on my head, elbow and knee. John Weddleton rode by us for 2nd in the sprint and 20 seconds. In would have to take 4th place back.

My anger at my misfortune overcame my earlier conservative tactic and I could only think of a breakaway

LAST YOUTH MOUNTAIN BIKE RACE

AUGUST 7TH
BIRCH HILL

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NEW '98 FCC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Articles or items for the Spoke'n'Word are welcome. We hope to go to press 7 times a year with issues in March, April, May, June, July, August and October. Editor will pay \$5 for short pieces published and \$15 for feature articles published.

HOTLINE #

459-8008

**Call Mark at 479-2494
to update.**

FROM THE PRESIDENT (cont.)

finish. As the lap count dropped down to two remaining, Tim Lamb and Rod Smith broke away. Tim chased Rod, and with my vision going blurry to catch Tim, I passed him in a fury of speed and caught Rod right before a corner. Thoughts of pulling away from the group became a realistic goal. Unfortunately, my speed was too great for the corner and I slid out - my good day gone bad. I finished the race many minutes behind my competitors, but finish I did, to cheers to bring me over the line. I finished far from where I had begun and thoughts of continuing seemed grim.

I was in no shape to race the next morning. My wounds were deep and my morale was beneath what I showed on the surface. My Tour of Anchorage was over for this year. Cheering on Jonn and Scott was my part for the criterium, the last stage of the race. Rod Smith had lost his lead overall to Tim Lamb by 37 seconds. Anchorage riders walked around the finish talking about no time would change during a 20 mile, 25 lap criterium. Rod Smith was of another opinion. The race was impressive to watch as Rod dropped a very tired Tim Lamb, by 50 seconds on some laps, in tandem with Anchorage rider Walt Nestle. (Both Rod and Walt were in Fairbanks for the District Time Trial Championship earlier this year.) With no one to help him chase, Tim sank further behind Rod's wake. If I had to sit out a race, this criterium was a good pick - very animated and exciting.

Jonn finished third in the last two stages and third overall. Scott finished very strong in fifth place overall. I'll be O.K. and will do all I can to stay upright in the future to save my skin. Next month my test will come racing down in the states.

Enjoy a beautiful summer, and see you soon.

Your FCC President,
Mark Knowles

Mark Knowles will be down south racing for most of August, during which time the club will be leaderless. Monday Night Training Rides will continue to meet sans Mark. Dave Kelly will take over the HOTLINE. There are no race organizers for August races, so call Dave Kelly and volunteer if you want to see a particular race held. Be sure to call the HOTLINE for updates before any event.

BIKE BYTES

Since it is July, here are some Tour de France stats.

- Jan Ullrich - 1997 winner: only German Tour winner
- Ullrich's resting heart rate: 34 bpm
- Youngest Tour winner: Laurent Fignon in 1982 (22 years, 11 months)
- Avg. speed 1997 Tour: 24.37 mph
- Smallest winning margin: 8 seconds, Greg LeMond in 1989
- Number of vehicles in Tour caravan: 1500
- Most Tours completed: Joop Zoetemelk (16, including one win and six second places)
- Most stage wins: 34 (Eddy Merckx)
- Number of riders who wore yellow from start to finish: 4 (the latest was Jacques Anquetil in 1961)

Bicyclist

Believe It or Not . . .

Before the advent of the modern chamois, racers would place a thin slice of raw meat in their cycling shorts where the crotch contacts the saddle to protect against boils during long events. At the end of each day they'd throw the piece of meat out and place a fresh one in their shorts the following morning .

bike ride

By Dave Leonard

Part Two

Poised on the edge of the hill, I look down and see loose rocks—the bottom is not visible. I decide to use my middle chain ring in front and the third largest cog in the rear. I twist the Grip Shifts to place the derailleurs where I want them, and then lift up the bike by the seat post and spin the crank with my hand. The chain shifts onto the designated gears. I straddle the bike, grab the bars, pull my feet off the ground, clip into the pedals, push the cranks parallel with the ground, slip my fingers over the brake levers, and shift my weight to the rear of the bike.

On the quick descent, my front wheel suddenly goes perpendicular, sliding on the loose rock. Off the front brake, lean and turn out of the skid and let the wheel roll free! Rear brake hard to snap the front wheel straight! It is. Now, front wheel pointed down and true, lightly on the rear brake, I grip the bars tightly, turn the cranks parallel and let the full suspension work. I feel the bike roughly springing below me as the shocks absorb the bumps, sticks and rocks. My bike is my transporter. I descend.

Full suspension serves a descent at high speed. Now the rocks are gone, replaced by dirt, dry then damp. Suddenly there is no dirt, just low growth, leaves and stems. My eyes have to be fast, reconnoitering the trail and informing my hands. A dip! Brace for the jolt and possible free air. An erosion ditch! Over to the left where it's smooth—quick. The willows begin to crowd in on both sides, slapping my arms and face. My spokes swing forward, catch and tear the leaves. A blind curve approaches. Hard on the rear brake; off and on the front brake, I lean around the curve and encounter a huge erosion ditch.

Standing at the ditch edge, my ears ring with the silence. My skin smart and itches from the willow leaf slaps. I feel blood on my right thigh from an unnoticed scratch. The sweat dries again

and cools my skin. There is a small runoff stream at the bottom. I hoist my bike by grabbing the frame and step into the hard dried dirt of the ditch. Large clumps of hardened mud form its two perpendicular sides. I step heavily from one platform edge to the next, down. At the bottom, the runoff water sparkles in the sun, makes a gurgling sound. I step over the water, my bike swinging from my hand and shoulder and reverse my efforts to upward. The dried mud makes a slight dust that finds its way to my mouth putting grit on my teeth. I step out of the ditch and grab my water bottle to wash off my teeth.

Now my trail tracks through humid bog surrounded by brush and low growth, interrupted by dry rises into the trees. I remount, shift into my lower gears and ride forward slowly. The dry trail slowly transforms to damp, then wet, then grassy with water. I search the trail for the firmest pathway, moving my front wheel onto the higher rises of mud. Sometimes this works. Sometimes my tire sinks deep in the mud and I have to lift and push it forward. I pedal smoothly, lifting my front wheel when I can to clear especially sticky, muddy spots. No stopping allowed here. The first bog passes behind me and I grab the bar ends to ascend the dry rise. The trail is dusty and my bike drips water, mud and grass. I glance at my rear cassette and it has grass twined around it.

The dry trail slowly transforms to damp, then wet, then grassy with water. I search the trail for the firmest pathway . . .

Both brakes are matted with grass. As I clear the rise, I reach down and pull the grass from my front brake, reach back and clear the rear brake. The day is mine; the solitude is mine. I continue on, into the next bog.

This one is too big to ride through. The growth on either side of the water is too thick, too tangled to ride or walk through. I'm going to get wet no matter what I do, so I enter the small pond to the left, at the extreme edge. I'm in my lowest gear, but even then the sucking mud and water make pedaling very hard. I don't want to stop, but I go slower. The water comes up to my hubs and my feet go under water, splashing as I pedal. My

wheels are stuck and I stop. Quick! Twist free of the pedals! Left foot is out, but right foot is at the bottom of the pedal stroke and doesn't come free! I lean, first slowly, and then I'm in the water, my right foot fastened securely to the pedal. Instantly I twist, come free of the right pedal and grab up my bike and trudge through the water and the mud out of the bog. I climb onto the dry ground and wipe the grass and mud from my arms, legs, pants, shirt. Water droplets are on my glasses, but it seems that my head at least did not get dunked. I take my bike by the stem and seat post and bounce it on its tires, jarring loose the water and mud. Finding a stick, I clear the mud away from the frame and derailleurs. The oil still looks good on the chain. The hot sun begins to dry me. This is my day. This is my ride. I remount and pedal on.

At trail's end, I ride my bike slowly to the pickup. I sit upright and steer with just my fingertips on the bar. I pull alongside the truck and step down to pull the water bottle free for one last drink, first cleaning the gunk and grim from the spout. My once clean bike is now covered with mud and bits of grass and leaf. No matter.

“It's freeing, the sense of detached awareness found only on the best mountain bike rides. I'm no longer me. I'm a rolling ball of intent. Ride over that rock. Go wide on the curve. It's hard but there's no place I'd rather be. There's no place but here. No time but now.”

COACH'S CORNER

Apres le Crash

I notice more bicycles on the roads and bike paths each year, and for more of the year. Unfortunately, there are also more cars on the roads and they are in a bigger hurry than ever before. If you're a bike rider and you're hit by a car, you may find it tough to get compensated. Should your bike have an untimely meeting with a car, know what to do.

First, even if you are not spouting blood and your bike looks O. K., don't assume you are both fine. The adrenaline that flows through your body often dulls the pain and brain. This is not the time to be macho. If you even suspect any damage to bike or self, get as much of the information given below as possible. It could make a BIG difference when it comes time to settle with an insurance company or go to court.

- the vehicle's license plate number and insurance information.
- driver's full name, address, & phone #
- owner's full name and address, (if different - from the vehicle registration)
- names, addresses, and phone numbers of independent eyewitnesses are essential
- enlist someone to call the police for you and don't leave the accident scene until they arrive
- explain what happened carefully and truthfully
- if you are seriously injured or it looks like the case will go to court, you need a lawyer. Having a lawyer who knows bikes is important. The lawyer should handle your case on a contingency basis - you pay only if you win, and it's a fixed percentage (usually one-third) of the settlement amount.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FCC BOARD MEETINGS

All club members are welcome to attend board meetings and bring their interests to the attention of the board members. Call the **HOTLINE** for location and time.

VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED!!!

Call Dave Kelly at 474-8184 if you can volunteer to put on or help at a race. **All races in August need organizers and will be canceled without them!**

Volunteers are also needed to ride bikes and lead the runners in the **Mapco Half Marathon** on Saturday, August 8th. Call Shawn at 456-4911 (work number) if you can help out.

FCC JERSEYS TO BE ORDERED

Mark Knowles plans to order 50 jerseys of the same design as the club warm-up jacket. Let him know if you want one. The club jackets are also still available from Mark at Beaver Sports.

USCF RACE IN VALDEZ SEPT. 6TH

Race up Thompson Pass - call David Thomas Savage for info. (914) 835-3500.

CLASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE:

- ◆ **Litespeed Tellico 6/4 Titanium mtn. bike frame, 17", brand new, \$1995 OBO.**
- Klein Team Super 53 cm road frame, fork, bottom bracket, seat post, \$700 OBO. Rocky at 455-6837.**

RACE REPORT

Dave Kelly reports that the inaugural **Fox to Circle Hot Springs Race** was a big success with the 7 enduro-entrants, and that you can expect to see it on the FCC calendar in years to come. The 125 mile race started at the Fox Weigh Station and enjoyed a tail wind along the Steese Highway, over 3 summits, and 80-some miles of gravel roads to Circle Hot Springs where everyone got a free soak in the hot springs pool. Everyone had to carry all their own food and a water filter so they could get their own water from streams. A support vehicle carried sleeping bags and tents. No drafting was allowed. Dave Delcourt took first in 8 hours flat on a cyclocross bike. He was followed in by Dave Kelly, Andy Stearns, Keri Peterson (the loan female entrant), Bill Kootch and Mike from Anchorage and Richard Haimann from L.A. who finished in 10 hours 30 minutes. Special thanks to Stacey for driving the support vehicle!

Another first time event, the **Ride for Kids** on July 12th was fun for racers and families. **Geoff Wool** of **Hot Licks** put on the event as a fund-raiser for the Resource Center for Parents and Children. There were 3 different distances (ranging from 1 mile to a loop around the Old Nenana and Parks Highway) so that ALL could participate, and a barbecue was held afterwards with lots of good food and Hot Licks ice cream! This was especially appreciated by Noah Mery and Tommy Lokken who somehow managed to do the long loop without bonking and finished well ahead of some of the adults. Make sure to participate in this event next year!

The **Fox to Henderson road race** on July 16th was held despite the rain and **Sue Thompson** stayed with the lead pack of racers most of the way. With just a day in between to recover, she did the bike leg of the **Sourdough Triathlon** 1/2 Ironman on the winning (and all female) relay team. New FCC member, **Tonda Lomangh**, did the 13 mile run for the team. The bike leg is 56 miles and Sue completed it in 2:36:34 faster than all but the top four men! The same team competed in the **Beaver Sports Triathlon** and blew away the competition.

Gail Koepf volunteered for the umpteenth year to lead the Gold Discovery 16 mile running race on July 26th. I wear my brightest clothing, put on my best smile and wave very friendly-like (from the wrong side of the road!) to warn oncoming motorists of the 100 or so runners to come. It is a great way to see the action at the front and provides a valuable service to Running Club North.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Yes, it is August, the time for summer burnout, and yes, the weather has left something to be desired for bike riders. However, there is still some summer left and FCC still has some great rides on the schedule. The longest mountain bike race of the season, the Tour of the Mining Country, has been rescheduled for late August. Also, the grueling mountain bike race over the Equinox Marathon course held the day after the marathon is coming up in September. This is also a service to Running Club North as we clean the course, so if you just want a leisurely ride on part of the course and help strip markers, it would be a big help. Simon is already selling Snow Cat rims for those who are eagerly awaiting the exciting winter trail rides. Dave Kelly is already planning a multi-sport enduro winter race. As you can see, it is no time to let your fitness slide!

So, get out and ride and support your club events. FCC needs help putting on some of these events and soon it will be time for elections for the '99 board. Seriously consider making a commitment to bicycling in Fairbanks and get involved!

Thanks

This value of a newsletter is measured by the information it communicates. Please help us make this a great newsletter by submitting articles, classified ads, cartoons, art, notes, or whatever others in the bicycling community might enjoy. Or let me know what you would like to see covered!

SPOKE'N'WORD

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P.O. BOX 83424
FAIRBANKS, AK 99708**

Inside This Issue

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1998 POINT SERIES UPDATE
TIPS FOR BIKE/CAR ACCIDENTS*