

AMERICAN RANDONNEUR

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The visit to Dr. Vince's practice was very exciting for me. His holistic inputs, explanations and advice were very helpful for me. For example, we checked the foot position on the pedals. Adjusting the rotation of the lower leg and more activity with the tibialis anterior muscle already resulted in more watts at the same RPM. At the RAAM 2023 I implemented them directly and managed a successful performance. In addition to all these tips, the top adjusted infinity bike seats also helped me. I use 3 different models. All from the Elite Series, the E3 for the flat with my TT bike, the E2 with my all-round bike and the E2X with my mountain bike. Thanks to the Infinity Seats I had the right points relieved in every position and was able to concentrate fully on my race.

*Comments RAAM 2023 Overall Winner
Isa Pulver*

- ♥ Review X-rays and MRIs
- ♥ Bike Fittings: Inhouse and via Zoom
- ♥ Decrease bad habits to increase performance and endurance
- ♥ Neuro-muscular diagnostic testing
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COVER — Rachel Monderer, Kristie Summers,
Misha Heller, and Alison Carey on Endless Flats in May.

PHOTO PATRICK CHIN-HONG

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President's Message: Share the Road?

You don't have to ride your bike very long to collect a wide variety of car/bike interactions, both positive and negative.

Perhaps nowhere is as varied as in Florida, although many of you could provide examples from your home states. I once had someone drive past me, stop, get out of their car and yell at me because I wasn't using the bike path that their taxes paid for. This person was ignoring the fact that there are "Share the Road" signs and that said bike path is busy with walkers, littered with tree branches etc., and not suitable for cycling. I once had someone reverse direction to come back and throw a water bottle at me. On the flip side, there are people who will hold up traffic for you. In general, however, Florida roads and drivers aren't bicycle friendly. We have a right to the road: there's a 3' law, and riders are permitted to ride two abreast, but it seems that neither the drivers nor police are aware of those rights and rules.

I just completed a ride in Virginia – one of many that I've enjoyed on VA roads. I found the drivers to be better than Florida but even so, when a car passed me and my eye caught something rolling in the ditch beside me, I realized that a water bottle had just missed me. Do people realize that being hit by a water bottle might cause one to crash and die in traffic? Do they care?

Elsewhere in the world, my experience has consistently been better than the US and Canada. I've found European drivers to be very cycling aware; we have the right to be there and they give us space. The drivers are focused on what they are doing, they aren't distracted by their phones.

Asia, on the other hand, is as varied as the cultures. Japan is very orderly; Thailand isn't quite as orderly but you have a right to the road. The Philippines is a melee of all types of vehicles – you are simply part of the traffic that is expected to be there.

Recent impressions stand out, of course, and others fade over time. I don't remember having issues with Brazilian drivers on a 2018 ride but the roads weren't friendly. Uruguay, just recently, was amazing. In Uruguay, at least from my experience, drivers would give you the right of way at an intersection even when it was clearly their right. I was told that Brazilian cyclists come to Uruguay to ride.

I realize as I write this that I've been lucky to have all these riding opportunities. When European or Asian riders say that they want to do a ride in the US should I tell them how little regard the drivers have for cyclists?

In a recent ride briefing we were warned that drivers don't expect to see us on the road and don't expect us to hold them up. I think that's the big difference – in some countries the drivers expect to see cyclists anytime of day or night; in some countries we are unexpected but accepted; in North America, we are not expected and not wanted. That's a huge generalization, but it's my collection of riding experiences.

Be safe out there!

—Dave Thompson
RUSA President
president@rusa.org

We continue to be in a strong financial position with a little more than 1.5 year's expenses as a cash reserve. As usual, our two major expenses are insurance and printing+postage. Insurance costs remain stable so far.

RUSA FINANCIAL REPORT 2024

FEES AND DONATIONS

Advertising	3,844
Interest	10,014
Membership Dues	110,095
Perm Program Fees	9,490
PayPal & Bank Fees	-4,208

Net Fees and Donations **\$129,235**

RUSA STORE

Revenue	18,563
Inventory Sales	-7,178
Shipping and PayPal	-3,952

Net Store Profit **\$7,4342**

EXPENDITURES

ACP/UAF/SR600 fees	7,827
Insurance	34,423
American Randonneur	50,727
Website, Admin & Tax	8,640
Promotion / Video	2,404

Total Expenditures **104,020**

Net Revenue **\$32,649**

ASSETS

2024 Membership Dues	57,780 ¹
2025+ Membership Dues	21,870
Cash Reserve	204,181
Store Inventory	14,289

Net Assets **\$298,119**

NOTES:

1. We started 2025 with about 1,926 members having already renewed for 2025 in prior years.

See page 21 for a special award highlight!

From the Editor

One of my favorite quotes comes from one of my favorite poets, Robert Burns. From the often-misquoted *To a Mouse* is the line “The best laid schemes o’ Mice and Men/Gang aft agley,” an appropriate lament for so many reasons in life. No matter how meticulous we are in our planning, or how carefully we think we organize things, fate has a way of throwing a wrench into our lives.

Early this cycling season I was supposed to try bikepacking and check off a dirty bucket list ride. It was all planned for before the SR series brevets in Colorado started in earnest, and before it got too hot in the desert. I have been cutting back on my riding and spending more time in the gym lifting weights, so I am more selective about the rides I do, as there are fewer of them. I don’t love riding off-tarmac, but the appeal of new roads and different scenery often outweighs my dislike of dirty socks and shins.

The bikepacking trip, which a friend invited me on, was actually an organized group trip to expose a bunch of first-timers – like me – to the joy of getting off the beaten track and then sleeping there. It’s something I’ve been thinking of doing for a while (and it’s got to be more comfortable than napping on a post office floor on a 600k) but Mother Nature had other ideas. Thanks to an early spring snow storm the trip was canceled and it looks like it will be months before I can find time to make another go of it. In the meantime, I will be referring back to David Weigel’s *An Introduction to Bikepacking* to make sure I have everything I need once I do finally head out.

Summer is when I get out of my comfort zone and off pavement.

—PHOTO CORINNE WARREN

As for the bucket list ride in the desert? That will now have to wait until fall with the cooler temperatures it brings. But most bucket list rides happen in the summer. Case in point: Misha Heller recounts her 40th birthday trip to Italy – such a beautiful country! – for the stunning Miglia 1001 with her twin brother Luke. And because you can never have too much of Italy, there’s a story of a 200k on the Italian Riviera as well . . . you can almost taste the atmosphere on that ride. Continuing the European theme, Laurent Chambard writes about PBP from a decidedly French perspective; it’s interesting to get his take on the ride American randonneurs revere.

On a somber note, Sarah Rice addresses a serious subject: head injuries. She gives us guidelines for when to seek medical attention after a crash, and a few words of wisdom on dealing with the aftermath. I have to admit that I am guilty of getting back

on the bike when I shouldn’t have after going down. I’m thinking I will clip her chart and keep it in my bag with my tools for the next time a ride goes amiss and someone (even me) needs to be assessed for a head injury.

And finally, everyone dreams of vacationing in Hawaii, and most of our readers would love to ride there, of course! Mike Turek recounts his plan to put together and ride a perm on Kauai this past March, where his Quality Assurance skills failed him. I hope you get a chuckle out of his story as I did.

Cheers to the summer riding season, and I wish you better luck with planning and execution on your riding adventures than either Mike or I have had recently!

—Corinne Warren
Editor, American Randonneur
editor@rusa.org



Bucket List Ride: Miglia 1001

It's been a while since we wrapped up the 2024 Miglia 1001 Green Reverse, but the memories and challenges are still fresh in my mind from this quintessential bucket list ride that occurred late last summer. For those unacquainted, the Miglia (*Mil-leah* – the “g” is silent in Italian) is a ride hosted by our rando friends in Italy and is self-described as the longest and most extreme cycling randonnée on the old continent, traversing 1001 miles through the Appenines Mountains and across Tuscany, on top of the dikes of the Po River, starting and finishing in Milan.

I think this ride was another pipe dream for me: it coincided with Luke and my 40th birthday and I figured, why not give it a shot? The worst that can happen is that he says no. To my

surprise, he said yes, and I'll forever be grateful to his wife for giving us her blessing to celebrate four decades with another grand randonnée on our birthday.

The lengthy ride afforded us 135 hours to finish 1001 miles. At the end of the day, our bike computers logged over 55,000 feet of climbing after kicking off a night start at 7 p.m. on Friday, August 16. The first 100k was not easy and we probably averaged around 100 feet per mile. Miraculously, we arrived at the first checkpoint atop a mountain with giant metal cyclist statues adorning the bald spot atop this berg right at midnight, where our friends dutifully wished us a Happy Birthday. It was not a bad way to get the party started, as we had a long day ahead and likely over 24 hours until a sleep stop.

To be honest though, threading the needle on the story of this tale is going to be a bit of a challenge. It was a hard ride and I didn't take a lot of pictures, as I was in survival mode for much of those 130 hours. Mostly I just have little vignettes of all the crazy things that happened, which I will do my best to highlight as follows.

I do remember that after the first control we continued through the night – a pack of about five or six of us – comprised of hearty Seattle and Asheville randonneurs, Bradford Tanner, and our loyal Norwegian companion, Juan Pablo. As I yawned, I reminded myself that there are very few people on the planet who could say



Sunset on the way to Castelnuovo.

—PHOTO MISHA HELLER



The crew at check-in.

—PHOTO UNKNOWN

The Sexy Spank Boys en route to Dicomano and one of their last big climbs.

—PHOTO MISHA HELLER



they celebrated their birthday in this manner and I continued to put power on my pedals.

What the route provided in terms of challenging terrain was complemented by the nonstop rewarding views. It's not an understatement to describe the land as the "old continent" but you kind of have to see it for yourself, as the photos don't do justice to the splendor of Italy. Every building and church has centuries more history than most things we pedal past in the United States. It's an aesthetic treat to ride through the Italian countryside, which has equal parts natural beauty and old town charm and history. We weaved our way through the majestic and old Apennines along the western coast where we enjoyed views of Cinque Terre and more mountains.

We got caught in more torrential downpours than I care to remember and they were severe enough that I replaced the brand new replacement

bottom bracket immediately following the ride. We took shelter in so many random Italian buildings to spare ourselves from the beatings being handed down by weather gods. Mark Thomas and I made it to the top of a climb alone and contemplated getting rooms in the BnB there as we feared no let up from the deluge. But somehow we peddled on, reconvened with our comrades, and managed to continue making progress.

I woke up on Day 3 in a serious deficit – I must have interrupted some REM sleep as I just couldn't get myself together and quickly fell into a million pieces. I convinced myself I would quit at the next control; I didn't care how much money it cost me to rent a car or hop on a train, or beg someone to take pity on this pathetic American girl; I was determined to be done. Nothing left in my tank, I was falling off the back as my pals peddled easily up the 1,500-2,000' climbs. My heart sank as my climb profile previewed what was

ahead. Now, I am not one for self pity, as it is extremely unproductive and a huge waste of energy, but I was in that pit of despair. I felt that I was letting my team down by being so slow off the back and I just couldn't handle holding them up any longer.

Halfway up the climb I saw that Luke, Bob, and Mark had stopped to wait for me. I burst into tears and let all of my disappointment overtake me. I insisted they go on and leave me to die and told them all the sad things I could think of to push them away but they were resolute in not abandoning me. They simply told me that I wasn't holding them back and that they'd let me know if I was. I had to keep going. Bob put his hand on my back ("the hand



Sometimes you're butter,
sometimes you're toast.

—PHOTO LUKE HELLER

everyone around me to take caution when braking or stopping around me as I couldn't guarantee that I would remain vertical. We got to a safe spot and I inspected my situation: the sole was literally halfway off the bottom of my shoe. Oops. (By the way, according to Strava I estimate these shoes had over 20,000 miles on them). Thank god for innovative randos, a little gorilla tape, and Bob's old school toe strap; we quickly Macgyvered a fix to my predicament and secured my sole with the newfound materials. Luckily we had less than 100 kilometers left, otherwise I'm not sure the circulation in my foot would have endured this.

Riding on dikes, in the middle of the night, guided by friends and moonlight, high off the energy of riding 1600 kilometers across Italy, we knew this ride was in the bag. We came across another rando from China and started talking to him and he began yelling about how he was too fat for this ride. I thought this was so funny because it was so obviously untrue – I told him he wasn't and he was getting it done. We then dropped the hammer on that last segment and coasted into Parabiago. It was a satisfying finish that felt truly earned – we endured the toughest terrain, the toughest conditions, and the toughest mental demons. I couldn't have done it without my friends, who earned themselves the nickname "Sexy Spank Boys" on the Miglia 1001 Green Reverse.

Of all the rides I've done, this was the best and I recommend it to anyone looking to do a Really Hard Thing that is also beautiful, lovely, and complemented by warm people, delicious food, and good energy. Thank you to Italian Randonneurs, Hamid and Shab, and of course my Sexy Spank Boys for helping me get through this one!! 🚲

Randonneurs reflective vest – Sam, if you are out there and reading this, we're still waiting!!!

Dozens of espressos and pastries later, we were finally in the home-stretch. The last 400k of this ride was flat and some of us let out giant sighs of relief upon completion of the final big climb. We finally felt a little safe; we had a good time cushion, and the flats couldn't slow us down the way the mountains did. In other words, it was time to start the party!! We found ourselves at a checkpoint that resembled a castle and offered riders the opportunity to imbibe should they so desire. This is Europe after all. Mark sustained a flat here and instead of wine I chose a nap – this decision served me well as I had important responsibilities ahead of me as captain of the party train.

We were out of the castle and making progress, checking off kilometers en route to the cosmopolitan capitol of Lombardy, Milan. Spirits were soaring; we were in the home stretch, we had

gotten an incredible team together, we were telling jokes, riding on dikes, just coasting along and loving life. All of a sudden we hear a female rider yelling "Beep Beep" as she barreled her way through our 2-abreast peloton, nearly taking Bob Brudvik out in the process. We were shocked by the behavior and relieved that no one was hurt or ended up in a dike.

Then, an oasis appeared: heaven on earth, a café open at one in the morning and serving espresso and gelato and anything else we wanted! Of course the party train was obliged to stop at such a watering hole. Accordingly, we filled our bellies and bottles with nourishment and geared up for the final push home (by the way, Hamid Akbarian had boarded the party train by this point, which was super cool). We closed up shop and proceeded onward; maybe 100k to go.

Shortly thereafter I noticed that I couldn't undclip my shoe from my pedal. Something was wrong and I warned

An Introduction to Bikepacking

BY DAVID WEIGEL

One of the reasons I got into bikepacking, and cycling in general, was my interest in completing some longer backpacking routes with fewer vacation days than I would need on foot. As it turns out, cycling is my ideal speed: fast enough to make progress and see changing views, but slow enough to appreciate those views and take in nature at a pace where I can capture it all.

I enjoy camping, but not the normal crowds associated with car camping. It seems that the general population has no interest in venturing even a couple hundred feet away from their vehicles. So carrying in your camp gear just a few miles off of a trailhead dramatically reduces the potential crowd down to just backpackers and fellow bikepackers.

The freedom of bikepacking is hard to duplicate. Other modes of transportation allow for the “home is wherever you set up camp” experience: RVs, car camping, motocamping, or by horseback. Bikepacking, however, makes pushing, lifting, or carrying your own vehicle a more realistic prospect.

Exploring less traveled roads and trails creates a sense of adventure, not to mention a greater chance of seeing wildlife. Getting away from light pollution unveils the true night sky. And when you do cross paths with other

people, they seem to be more friendly than the average stranger, whether they are locals or also on a trip.

What is Bikepacking?

There isn’t a simple, universally accepted definition for bikepacking, as it’s unique to each person. To me, bikepacking is self-supported, self-contained, unpaved cycling with camping. You might argue that’s basically the same definition as bike touring, and you’d be correct. There’s no clear delineation on the bike touring vs.

bikepacking spectrum. The difference comes down to the roughness of the surfaces ridden, which will dictate equipment, remoteness, preparation, and resupply points.

To elaborate, riding over rougher surfaces generates more vibrations. Bike components aim to reduce those vibrations. The remaining vibrations are managed with compact, light-weight, and a minimal amount of gear specifically packed into thoughtfully selected bags.

Weight is important, but not always the driving force in equipment choice. Compactness is arguably more important. Space is at a premium, and the further away equipment is from the connection point on the bike, the more vibrations are amplified.

Bike

In general, a bikepacking bike will be more robust than a thin-walled racing/climbing bike, but lighter and more minimal than a full-on touring bike. Most will have greater tire clearance than a typical road or touring bike.

No concerns of traffic on the San Rafael Swell in eastern Utah.

—PHOTOS DAVID WEIGEL





They could have either flat or drop bars, and either be rigid, hardtail, or full-suspension - typically without massive travel on the suspension. Slack geometry, low gearing, and a dropper post can combat the steeper grades that are often found on unpaved surfaces.

Bags

Bags are the most recognizable part of bikepacking. They typically consist of three main bags: a seat pack, frame bag, and handlebar bag – with other smaller bags for additional storage such as a top tube bag, feed bag(s), fork bags, and a downtube bag. Available options are going to depend on the bike's size, geometry, and components: a dropper post will reduce the seat pack's capacity, drop bars will narrow the available handlebar bag area, and suspension will reduce the size of a frame bag.

That isn't to say that equipment not typically associated with bikepacking can't be used. Rear racks are becoming more popular, especially with dry bags. Secure panniers are possible as well, but consider if a significant

amount of pushing the bike is possible and if panniers (or any other bags) would get in the way. Bags mounted directly to the fork seem to mostly replace front racks, but on the other hand, "basketpacking" is a thing. Depending on the route, pulling a trailer isn't completely out of the question.

Sleep System

A sleep system typically consists of a sleeping bag, sleeping pad, and a tent, which all work together to provide warmth and water resistance. The sleeping bag could be a quilt instead, and can be down (packs smaller, more expensive) or synthetic (more water resistant). The pad is usually either fully inflatable (packs smaller, potentially warmer and/or more comfortable) or a foam pad (fast setup and robust). The tent is frequently one- or two-person, and usually two-walled (inner mesh and rain fly) to allow for more airflow and reduce condensation.

Tents could also be replaced with a bivy, a tarp or hammock setup. Consider the environment when selecting a tent or tent alternative:

Pushing up a steep hill while listening to the band of coyotes across the valley.

non-freestanding tents can be difficult to set up on too-soft or too-hard ground. Hammocks are not the best choice for places without trees or only skinny trees. Traveling with a partner opens up the option of sharing a tent and using two-person pads and bags, or bags that zip together.

Electronics

Redundancy is important, especially with electronics. Bike computer mounts break, charging cables get damaged or lost, water damage happens. Physical maps are a good backup for navigation. Keeping your phone on airplane mode will still allow for photos, but will save battery by not attempting to connect to changing or non-existent signals (although I am surprised how often I'm able to find a signal on high points). A satellite messenger is good insurance for unforeseen events – a crash, illness, significant mechanical issue, etc. Some

cell phones and/or services are starting to provide satellite capabilities, so keep an eye on that evolving technology.

Unless it's a race, I will most likely want to see the views and will avoid riding in the dark, so lights are used more at camp than on the bike – headlamps are good for this. Front lights that can be used as a powerbank can also be a good option. A rear light is mostly just-in-case a detour takes me on a section of real road. I typically carry a 10,000mAh powerbank, but will double that capacity if I expect longer stretches between charging. Dynamo lighting and charging can be a good option for some if not most routes, but rougher surfaces might not allow for fast enough speeds to make them effective. I haven't found a use case for solar panels yet, but they might work for you.

Food and Water

I used to think a stove was required for camping, but I am starting to leave it behind for shorter and faster trips to save weight, space, and time – both setting up camp and getting rolling in the morning. On longer trips though, the variety of meals added with a stove, plus the comfort of a warm meal, outweighs those savings. I assume that if I was more of a coffee or tea drinker, the stove would be an absolute requirement.

Ideally, food for bikepacking would be lightweight, high in calories, and

compact. Dehydrated food is a good option that meets most if not all of those criteria, whether it's pre-packaged or homemade meals, ramen, dry peanut butter, dehydrated refried beans, etc. Oatmeal and couscous are other good options, which can also be dry-soaked. "Sports nutrition" can be packed for a few days' supply, but longer trips will require resupply stops

that probably won't have the gels, bars, and powders you might be used to and will have to be replaced with more widely available options: tortillas, single-serving tuna and chicken packets, peanut butter, Nutella, honey, maple syrup, pop tarts, candy bars, and gummy worms, to name a few. Some packets of mayo, mustard, salt and pepper go a long way. Catching up on calories at a local restaurant is something I always look forward to.

Filling water at potable faucets is quicker than filtering, but many times a stream or cattle tank is all that's available. There are good and affordable membrane filters available, which is my preference. I will also bring some purification tablets in case there's an issue with my filter or if I'm desperate



Opening and closing makeshift fence gates in southern New Mexico.



Waking up and warming up on a former mining railroad.

to fill up at a particularly questionable water source (usually livestock-related). Others will skip the filter and just go with tablets or drops.

Other Equipment

Even if you don't bring a stove, a small lighter is still a good addition to start an emergency fire, sanitize a needle, or singe some fraying threads. Either gear for a bear hang or a kevlar-lined sack with an odor-resistant bag might be needed – not just for bears, but to keep your food safe from smaller critters as well. Bear spray is a must in grizzly country.

Bringing a first aid kit is recommended, along with the knowledge of how to use it. Keep in mind that it's supposed to be the first aid: enough to get you (or someone else) to further help. Alcohol prep pads, antibiotic ointment, bandages, gauze, and butterfly bandages are a good start. Wrapping various tapes (electrical, duct) around a

pump is a common practice. Don't forget medicine as well – acetaminophen, antihistamine, anti-diarrheal, anti-itch cream, etc.

Expanding the usual repair kit is also advisable: needle, thread, and super glue for tire slashes, spare brake pads, shift cable, valve core, and derailleur hanger, tent and sleeping pad patches, and a small set of pliers are a few options to consider.

Toiletries will include a toothbrush, toothpaste, chamois cream (I recommend something with lanolin), multi-purpose soap, wet wipes for when a shower or dip in a creek/river/lake isn't possible (or too cold). Leave your makeup and deodorant at home. Bring a trowel to dig a cat hole (know and adhere to the Leave No Trace principles). You'll need sunscreen (and lip balm), but full coverage clothes



That feeling when a perfect campsite appears at the end of a long day.

with adequate UV protection is better than having to cover your arms, legs, neck and ears with sunscreen. Strongly consider bringing bug spray or even a bug net. Dental floss can double up as thread if clothes, bags, or tires need stitching up.

Where to Sleep

There are many options for places to sleep, especially on routes through public land. Most public lands are open for dispersed camping, unless posted otherwise. Adhere to leave no trace principles.

Developed campgrounds are another option. Reservations are sometimes possible, but not always feasible



or desired. Some states have a “No Turn Away” policy for bikepackers and thru hikers, and some campgrounds outside of those states might have similar policies or even specific sites. Which makes sense; bikepackers don’t require much space or amenities and typically don’t hang around for too long.

The remoteness that comes with bikepacking opens up sleep options that would be difficult to come across otherwise. Routes will typically go through more rural areas, and some establishments will not only be friendly towards cyclists, but model their business around them. This could be private ranches, lodges, snowmobile shelters, ski huts, hostels, restaurants, bars, churches, town parks, fairgrounds, or even a converted jail cell.

Warm Showers is another option, but typically in more populated areas. Of course, hotels are always an option, too, especially every once in a while on longer trips to take a proper shower, charge electronics, use Wi-Fi, and sleep in an actual bed.

How to Get Started

Avoid “analysis paralysis” (if only I could take my own advice). A perfect setup doesn’t exist. There might be an ideal setup for one specific surface type, but each route will likely have multiple surfaces. Also, technology keeps changing, with new equipment options each year. So don’t overthink it: use the bike and equipment you already have, and consider borrowing or renting the equipment you don’t have. Get creative with carrying your gear: use that old commuter bike rack; strap an old, oversized sleeping bag to your handlebars, etc. Worst-case you can bring a backpacking bag – just keep the distance short to not injure yourself.

For your first trip, keep the route simple. Match the route to your existing bike’s capabilities. Go on a short, sub-24 hour overnighter (S24O). Don’t underestimate how much a fully loaded bike can weigh, and how much that weight can slow you down – especially if there’s a significant amount of climbing. My general rule is to take what I

Bike packers trading notes with goat packers.

think I could do on an unloaded road bike and cut it in half. But for a first trip I would reduce that distance/elevation even further and think of it as a camping trip instead of a biking trip. Either reserve a campsite or have a few known dispersed sites picked out to reduce the potential stress of not knowing where you’re going to sleep.

After the trip I suggest removing all bags, checking for signs of wear, and protecting or adjusting accordingly (my bike is nearly covered in heli-tape). Consider what went well and what could be improved, and make those improvements. 🚲

GOOD RESOURCES

bikepacking.com
adventurecycling.org
Int.org (Leave No Trace)



**HUMMINGBIRD
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SCAN ME!

Italian Riviera 200K Serendipitous Brevet

BY MATT STRASSBERG

Imagine a late winter 200k brevet with manageable climbing for the early season (5,577'), roads perched on high cliffs overlooking the sea, protected bike lanes for almost half the route, and great roadside food around every bend. Welcome to the Italian Riviera 200K by Ride and Smile. Ride and Smile was recently founded by Patrick Garnier in order to promote randonneuring along the Riviera. This was their first ACP registered brevet and the execution was flawless.

It was serendipitous that I ended up riding the Italian Riviera 200K. My wife and I planned to escape the long Vermont winter in the relative warmth of Southern Europe. I was working remotely; even baby boomers can be digital nomads. While I was bringing my bike and hoped to ride nearly every day, this was not planned as a bike-

oriented trip. Our primary goal was exploring potential places to winter in the future. Of course, the luxury of riding outside in beautiful locations instead of on my trainer in the basement was not lost on me.

We started out in the Costa Blanca region of southeastern Spain hoping for some sun and warm weather with

a side of paella. I didn't know that virtually all pro cycling teams spend December and January training in the Costa Blanca region. It's the cycling equivalent of spring training in Florida or Arizona for professional baseball teams. On every ride, pelotons of Pro Tour riders zoomed past me and then I would see them later relaxing at cafes during mid-ride espresso breaks.

Several weeks later we found ourselves in Menton, nicknamed the "pearl of France." Menton is on the Riviera next to the Italian border, and culinary specialties from both countries abound. That enabled me to follow the carbo load version of the Mediterranean Diet: pain au chocolat for breakfast from a French patisserie, baguettes smeared with melt-in-your-mouth goat cheese, inexpensive and delicious pizza, and of course my daily gelato fix.

In order to maintain caloric equilibrium, I looked into whether there were any upcoming brevets nearby and learned about the Italian Riviera 200K. It was only a couple of weeks away, and the start was literally right across the street from our apartment. That gave me motivation to increase my saddle time, a prospect made more inviting given the spectacular riding out of Menton. One can choose from relatively flat rides heading east along the coast in Italy, or go vertical and climb



The best part of Italian riding: Italian food.

—PHOTO LUC MINETTI



Riding along the Mediterranean in short sleeves – in early March!

—PHOTO LUC MINETTI

numerous mountain passes to the north. The climb of the Col de Madone, used so often by a former racer from Texas to test his fitness before the Tour de France that Trek named a road bike after it, starts just outside Menton. In 9 unrelenting miles it rises over 3,000 vertical feet.

French bureaucracy is infamous, so I shouldn't have been surprised that registering for the 200k was more similar to registering for PBP than for a 200k in the U.S. There were numerous hoops to jump through, such as getting a medical clearance letter from my doctor and purchasing separate insurance. Patrick helped me procure insurance for the event as a "cycliste étranger" (foreign cyclist). Between my high school French that has not improved despite a few PBPs, Google translate, and Patrick's generous assistance, I managed to register. Next, I was e-mailed a ticket with a QR code, like a ticket to watch a sporting event or concert. Despite the

French randonneuring bureaucracy, there was a relaxed vibe at the start, similar to brevets in the U.S.

While I brought rear and front lights with me, I didn't have the mandatory reflective vest. When I mentioned that in my inquiry to Patrick, he e-mailed right back and said he would loan me one. I had no excuses. It was time to ride and burn off some of that gelato.

Winter temperatures in the Riviera typically range between a low in the high forties and a high in the low sixties. The brevet was in early March and the temperature at the 6:30 a.m. start was around 50F. I was wearing a jacket over a merino blend short sleeve jersey, with arm and knee warmers that I could take off as the temperature rose to close to 60F. Some local riders seemed dressed for the Iditarod bike race with full tights, jackets, neck warmers, face masks, and booties. It reminded me of how people in the

U.S.'s banana belt break out down vests when the temperature drops south of 60. I observed that, like the riders on the 200k, pro riders generally wear tights during training rides when it's below 60 degrees. Maybe they know something I don't because I'm the one who's been icing his knees regularly for the past 30 years.

There were a couple dozen riders on the 200k, with a mix of ages from the 20's through 60's. While I saw many women riding during the time I spent on the Riviera, there was only one randonneuse on the 200k.

Patrick invited me to join the Ride and Smile WhatsApp group and introduce myself to the Riviera randonneuring community. I sent a message that I was in Menton escaping a cold winter in Vermont and also the political turmoil in the U.S. Several members welcomed me to the group and later introduced themselves to me at the start.

We rode together as a group for a couple of miles until the first climb when, as typical on brevets, we broke into small groups based on pace. Although I was never a super-fast rider, over the years I learned from experienced randonneurs to keep moving and minimize time off the bike. The Brits have a perfect phrase "faffing about" which means using time ineffectually. During brevets I typically try to minimize the number and length of any stops. I quickly learned that this ride was going to be different.

After roughly 12 miles, a few small climbs were behind us and we began riding on the flat 20 mile coastal bike path from Ospedaletti to Imperia. The path was formerly a single-track rail line that was converted to a bike path in 2014. Almost immediately after Ospedaletti, the route enters a well-lit, mile-long tunnel dedicated exclusively



In the black jersey on the left, enjoying riding with my new Italian buddies.

—PHOTO LUC MINETTI

for use by cyclists and pedestrians. Signs throughout the tunnel celebrate past winners of the Milan-San Remo bike race and other Italian cycling legends. Exit the tunnel and voila, you enter the beautiful city of San Remo.

Paris-Nice and Milan-San Remo bike races were just a few weeks away and the bike path is so spectacular that pro riders who typically would never be seen on a bike path trained on it. In fact, one day Tadej Pogacar zipped past me in a blur clad in the rainbow stripe jersey as the current world champion. The bike path hugs the sea and there are near-constant breathtaking views.

Less than 20 miles into the ride, just past San Remo, Italy, we stopped for our first of several espresso breaks. It was evident that this ride was about “*joie de vivre*,” not about achieving a personal best. My goal was to ride with other randonneurs so I needed to let go of my minimalist stopping strategy

and embrace faffing about. The riders on the 200k may not ride as fast as the pro cyclists, but they compete with them on the frequency and length of coffee breaks.

After the bike path, the ride follows a “lumpy” course with lots of small climbs before dropping down to villages once again at sea level, then climbing back over another ridge. This part of the route is part of the Milan-San Remo race course. One of the controls was to take a selfie at a monument along the route celebrating all the prior winners of the race.

As we approached the turnaround village of Finale Ligure, I imagined we would grab a ready-made sandwich, eat standing up, and be back on our bikes in no time. Instead, we rode into the center of the medieval village and sat down at a restaurant on an historic piazza and enjoyed pizza, focaccia, and salad. Some riders even enjoyed mid-ride wine with their meal. When

A mile long bike tunnel is part of the route.

—PHOTO MATT STRASSBERG

one rider saw my expression as his wine was poured, he said “This is the French way. In America I would be called an alcoholic.” An hour and a half later, with unsurprisingly stiff legs, we resumed the ride.

For the most part I was riding with a group of five cyclists. They were all friendly and supportive but occasionally one teased me about American politics by shouting “America First” when I was leading our small group. I took the teasing in stride, as they were aware of my political leanings.

A couple of espresso stops later with about 50 miles remaining, just as our legs were feeling supple again and we were cruising along, we passed a gelato shop. We had probably passed several dozen previously on the ride, but the timing must have been right because one of the riders called out the

phrase that is music to my ears, “Gelato break?” Fifteen minutes later we were back on our bikes amped up with a sugar buzz.

Once back on the bike path with about 30 miles to go, without any spoken words, or at least words I could understand, it was time to make a final push to the finish. It was by far the slowest 200k I have ever done but perhaps the most fun I ever had riding that distance. Part of that was due to the beautiful course and part due to breaking all my unwritten “rules” about randonneuring.

There is no one way to be a randonneur. Ride fast to finish in as little time as possible or ride at your own pace. Stop only when necessary to refuel at convenience stores or sit down and have a full lunch with wine. In the end, it’s not just about your finishing time. It’s about the good times you had along the way and the friendships you make with the people you ride with. Bon route et bon courage. 🚲



Some of the beautiful buildings that line the coast.

—PHOTO LUC MINETTI

An advertisement for Dill Pickle Gear. It features a photograph of a bicycle with blue panniers and a blue bag on the handlebars. The bicycle is parked on a wooden deck. The text "Dill Pickle®" is written in a stylized font, with a pickle illustration. Below it, the text "Gear for the extra mile." is written. To the right, there are three bullet points: "• Lightweight", "• Customizable", and "• Functional". At the bottom, the website "www.dillpicklegear.com" and the text "• Designed and built by RUSA #3597" are displayed.

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Paris-Brest-Paris 2023, From the French Side

BY LAURENT CHAMBARD

I happened to be living in my native France in 2022 and 2023. Although I had promised myself I would never attempt PBP (nothing exotic to this French-born randonneur, ordinary scenery compared to my North American 1200k's, and not much chance for any decent quality sleep), it slowly dawned on me, with a bit of nudging from Janice Chernekoff, that if there were ever going to be a year when it would make sense for me to have a go at it, it would certainly be 2023.

I was already in the country and wouldn't have to deal with jet lag. I have a brother who lives 120 kilometers south of Rambouillet, where I could prepare and accumulate sleep in the days leading up to the start, and I had a qualifying series of moderately difficult brevets available only 60 kilometers away from home. Also, I am not getting any younger and am starting to enter the age brackets where the PBP failure rate begins to creep up, meaning I certainly wasn't going to be any stronger 4 years later.

I expected my lack of brevet riding during 2022 would kill any chances of getting a slot at the start. But because I hold both French and US passports, it turned out that a single 200k ridden in the spring of 2022 from Longjumeau was enough for me to pre-register as part of the French contingent, in the 90 hour group, and with a perfectly fine 21:00 start time on the Sunday night (last rider of the last wave!) That settled it, I was

going to go for the PBP 2023 edition.

This started a process of discovery of how the French do it, which led me to an unexpected number of surprises along the way. For the sake of cultural education, let me share the main ones.

Lesson 1: PBP is definitely not a French event.

Come to think of it, neither is randonneuring really. I should have remembered that throughout my first 34 years in France, I had never heard of PBP nor of brevet riding, even though I was interested in all things road cycling and did a fair bit of cycle touring. It took moving to England to discover this Audax thing, indeed a big thing over there, and how quite a few British touring club members seemed very excited by the prospect of going to France every 4 years to ride from Paris to Brest and back in under 90 hours.

My next move, to the USA in 2003, confirmed that PBP is indeed

a big thing amongst American randonneurs. Had I really missed something big over all these earlier years in France? Well, not really. My local club, AL Lons-le-Saunier, organizer of *Cyclo-Montagnarde du Jura*, some 120 members strong, couldn't care less about brevets or *le Paris-Brest*. To the point that when I joined after having shared my past cycling pedigree, I was asked, with a bit of anxiety in the tone, what *exactly* it was I was expecting to get from the club.

It didn't seem much better at other local clubs, and even in the Bourg-en-Bresse club, which proved to be the location closest to home for starting a brevet, the head organizer said that he runs a full SR series only in PBP years, because other years he would hardly get anyone. And that's pretty much the same in much of France; I have heard of riders living in the southeast of France who had to go to Italy to qualify for PBP, for lack of local options.

The exception, and it's a big one, is the northwestern corner of France – Brittany, Perche, southern Normandy, pays de Loire – and to a somewhat lesser extent the Paris region-at-large. There, PBP is indeed a very big thing, with many locals participating either on the road or on the roadside. It makes PBP a *Northwestern France* event for

On my 1974 Mercier at PBP
in 2023. Last to start!

—PHOTO MAINDRU

sure. Don't go bragging about it elsewhere in France though; you will get more blank stares than admiring praise.

It's a real paradox to find PBP to be legendary amongst cyclists in the most remote corners of the globe while being near-completely ignored in much of France; however that's indeed how it is. But don't tell the French, if you don't want them to take all the slots! For the first time ever, I believe, French national TV shot a documentary on the 2023 edition of PBP. So they may end up telling the French after all!

Lesson 2: It's not a race? Well, more often than not it feels like one.

Scouting for a suitable qualifying series was an interesting experience. I was quite unbelievably lucky to have the Bourg-en-Bresse series, offering

events of moderate difficulty with average climbing rates actually lower than on PBP, only some 60 kilometers from home. Because when I started seriously looking at the level of difficulty offered by alternate series within a 'reasonable' radius from where I lived, I found pretty much nothing else that would qualify as 'reasonable' to this slow-ish randonneur. You get the distinct impression that the race is on to pile up as much elevation as the organizer can possibly find, and tough luck for whoever is not a *cyclosportive*-practising mountain goat.

While on the *Cyclomontagnarde des Vosges du Sud*, I actually got a chance to discuss with a couple of randonneurs from Belfort in eastern France the rather excessive hilliness of their 400 and was quite happy to discover they

You can distinctly feel the racing background of PBP on the event, if only because the course is not at all designed to be pleasurable.

shared exactly my view. As long as this state of affairs lasts, there won't be that many PBP starters coming from the east of France.

For the record, this slow-ish randonneur qualified on the moderately difficult Bourg-en-Bresse series and completed PBP comfortably within the time limit a shade under 86 hours.



So don't come tell me that such super-hilly qualifying events are *necessary* to prepare one for *le Paris-Brest*... You still have two full months between qualification completion and the start of PBP to shape those climbing legs, and that's surely less risky to do this then rather than during the qualifiers!

More generally, on PBP itself, you certainly get a higher proportion of riders in there to faire un temps (achieve a good time, clock-wise), and talking and behaving like it, than I was used to seeing on the other 1200k's I have done. You can distinctly feel the racing background of PBP on the event, if only because the course is not at all designed to be pleasurable – it offers hardly anything in terms of spectacular views – and is much more suited for providing a demanding, wearing terrain for measuring oneself against the clock. The first 100km or so get covered at a crazy pace that is in fact hard to resist after such a long wait before taking off. A lot of participants are in their own bubble and won't engage in conversation (face coverings and/or earplugs don't help), making the enjoyment of the international crowd rather less than I was expecting, and certainly less than I have seen on smaller field events where you always see the same faces, hence get much more chance to socialize and make it last, while on PBP your neighbors always change.

Lesson 3: Self-sufficiency it is!

On all the longer-distance events I rode in the UK and the US – that's some 44 events altogether, of distances 300 to 600km – on *all* of them, the organizer either made sure that the control was open during the brevet time window if it was a commercial establishment, or arranged a volunteer-run control instead. You pretty much always have a chance at every control to meet a human being, find a dry, heated place to rest a bit, and find something to eat and drink. I found nothing of the sort on my French qualifying series. The organizer waves you good-bye at

the start, says 'See you at the finish!', and you are on your own along the way. Night controls were more often than not a mere phone picture of the (deserted) village sign-post, and for food and drinks you are left to forage along the way. Fortunately even the most desolate corners of rural France remain a bit more populated than, say, deepest Wyoming; every French cemetery has a (presumably drinkable) water tap; and local folks will most generally be very generous towards a cyclist at any time of day or night. I remain a bit emotional thinking of the incredibly kind pizzeria manager in very rural Lurcy-Levis continuing to offer, well past 11:30 p.m., plates of delicious pasta to us starving riders on our 600.

A word on French cue sheets: in the UK or the US, just by following the cue sheet, you can perfectly well follow the route all the way to the end without having to wonder. If you try that with a French cue sheet, you will promptly end up lost beyond saving. Cue sheets over there are a mere list of villages and towns you have to go through, with the ID number of the road getting you there, and that's it. No indication whether left or right, no hints of where exactly the turn is while crossing towns, you are really on your own navigation-wise. On the Bourg-en-Bresse series I had the good fortune that the totality of their routes, as does PBP actually, use *departementales*, that is, double-lane secondary roads which are generally well-signposted and quite well maintained. If I had entered a series using a lot of *chemins vicinaux*

I remain a bit emotional thinking of the incredibly kind pizzeria manager in very rural Lurcy-Levis.

Every village is a big roaring party.

– single-lane, local country roads – I would probably still be out there trying to find my way back home.

The funny thing is that if there is a 1200km event out there where you hardly need any self-sufficiency, that surely is PBP. On the 90 hours format you don't really have to navigate since there is nearly always a string of riders ahead of you; the route is lined with local people offering you food, drink, their bed; and you can get pretty much any service you may need, from medical to mechanical and everything in-between, at every control. So I guess this is a tale of two extremes between the qualifier and the event you are qualifying for.

Lesson 4: What a party!

PBP is certainly many things to many people. However, if you need just *one* reason to go for it, here it is: the unbelievable generosity of the locals, all the way from Perche to Brittany and back. Every village is a big roaring party, especially on the third and fourth nights; the whole village is on the roadside clapping, cheering you, filling your bottles, offering you food, their bed, their bathroom. A lady I talked to who works on the roadside on both Paris-Brest and the Tour de France was adamant that she likes Paris-Brest, and the people on and along it, so much more. When you think of it, these people, as well as volunteers at the controls, probably don't sleep much more than we do for the four nights of the event, yet they are there for us just the same. And they do it just right, not over-the-top; you get just a touch of northern reticence, not the loud southern exuberance, and that makes the welcome feel all the more authentic.

Being in Brittany, ancient Celtic territory where folks very much love

their music, you get plenty of live performances of all possible styles while crossing the villages or the controles, and the locals don't just **work** for you, they also **have a great time** doing it. I had the chance to talk to a few kids working along the road, and I can tell you there ain't no moody teenagers on PBP. They are there because they like it. The real, true heroes of PBP aren't us riders, they are all these people who weren't asked by anyone yet are well and truly there just so that you can continue riding. How could we not?

The highlight of the experience is the return control in Villaines-la-Juhel, kilometer 1018. They make you sneak in between two rows of grandstands where the whole town is cheering you, giving you a rock-star welcome. Then they cheer you some more as you push open the door of the control. Where a volunteer grabs you, explains that his job is to make you cut all the waiting lines because you deserve it – and **everybody in the line lets you cut it**, in France of all places! Once you have filled your tray, the volunteer insists on carrying it for you. And once you sit in front of your tray, they grab your bottles and go fill them for you. When you are ready to leave the control, you get the cheers again from the whole town as you depart. I found it tough to leave this paradise. I would really have loved to spend some more time there; you see, until then nobody had ever woken up in the middle of the night to cheer me on the bike, and I am pretty sure nobody will (or should!) ever do that again. But hey, the clock was ticking, I really had to reach Mortagne to make the last day relaxed and secure the ride, I just had to go. . .

Will I do PBP again? Who knows. The clock is ticking and not in my favor. However, with 2031 being the centenary edition of the randonneur version of the event, there may well be even more fun than usual on the roadside. It would be a bit of a shame to miss that, wouldn't it? 🚲

4C1200k ISR Award

As many of you know, I administer the International Super Randonneur award for Les Randonneurs Mondiaux. In a nutshell the award is given for completing four rides in four different countries, comprising 200k, 300k, 400k, and 600k; longer rides can be substituted for shorter, and may be ridden over any length of time. The recent Chuy Montevideo Colonia 1200k in Uruguay provided many an opportunity for credit in another country and of course another continent, for those not residing in South America, and chasing the ultimate ISR - the 4 Continent 1200k. After the results were filed

with LRM, I received a few ISR applications including one from Pam Wright, whose 4C1200k ISR spanned 2007 to 2025!

We don't carry gender in the ISR data but to the best of my knowledge, Pam is the only woman to achieve the 4C1200k ISR as a RUSA member. One other woman with a RUSA riding history, Judith Swallow, has a 4C1200k to her name, though Judith's home is in the UK.

Please join with me in congratulating Pam, one of only 27 people in the world to have achieved this award!

— Dave Thompson



Random Thoughts BY CHRIS NEWMAN

The Philly Bike Expo

The Philly Bike Expo, founded in 2010 by Steven Bilenky of Bilenky Cycle Works, is an annual weekend-long celebration of most things cycling. There are vendors, exhibitors, demos, rides, parties, and even a kid's arena.

I have attended most iterations of the Expo and have seen it grow from a local event held at Philadelphia's 23rd Street Armory to *"...one of the largest cycling trade shows in the US. Last year's sold-out show hosted nearly 200 exhibitors and 5,000 attendees."* The Expo has always been a fabulous opportunity to see old friends, learn about the latest bicycle technology, and purchase way too many items I didn't even know I needed!

This past December an email arrived from Membership Committee member Nigel Greene seeking volunteers to work at the RUSA Booth at the 2025 Philly Bike Expo – a new venture for RUSA and an innovative way to hopefully recruit new members! Dawn Piech, RUSA board member and indefatigable RUSA booster, was the leader for this venture, and she soon had all volunteer shifts filled for the weekend. In addition to the information booth, several RUSA members presented a seminar, "Randonneuring: The Art of Going Long." And because

we love any chance to hop on our bikes, a 107k Populaire was held on Saturday morning in honor of International Women's Day.

Over the following months, Dawn reached out to the volunteers with frequent, informative, and always upbeat updates regarding the booth and how we would entice the attendees to visit us. I have never had so much information delivered on such a regular

basis; Dawn is truly an inspiration in the thoroughness, organization, and communication realms. Her modest goal was to educate cyclists about our unique sport with the loftier goal being the recruitment of new members who would, hopefully, use their phone to immediately join RUSA while succumbing to our randonneur charm! Anyone who signed up in this manner would be given a small gift of their choosing, which included RUSA socks, reflective RUSA leg bands (very popular), or a RUSA pin. And anyone who engaged with us in any manner received a sticker and an issue of American Randonneur. (We achieved our goal of clearing out Nigel's substantial collection of American Randonneur back issues!)



The scene at the Philadelphia Bike Expo.

—PHOTOS DAWN PIECH



Some of the RUSA members working a shift at our table at the Expo.

Doesn't need explanation!



I was scheduled to volunteer on Sunday and so, unfortunately, missed Saturday morning's Populaire and afternoon seminar, but both were very well attended. The "International Women's Day 107k Populaire" hosted 69 riders, 16 of whom completed their first brevet – truly impressive numbers for a chilly, early March, early morning ride. The comments I heard the next day were uniformly positive, and folks seemed excited to have participated. The seminar was standing room only, and I also heard numerous positive comments from attendees who stopped by our booth.

I arrived early for my Sunday shift, and I was quite pleasantly surprised to be greeted by an Expo volunteer who signed me in and handed me an official Expo Exhibitor badge. The doors were not open to the public yet, so I engaged in blatant reconnaissance of the vendor booths to be properly prepared for later-in-the-day shopping.

The RUSA booth was festooned with a banner and tablecloth, and the table was covered with the stickers, magazines, and sign-up bonus items that every conference attendee knows act like magnets to draw folks in.

We had between two and six volunteers at any one time, and I think we all enjoyed chatting with the attendees who had questions about the sport.

Many people had heard of randonneuring but were sure they could never finish the distances or expressed how they had doubts about that "crazy sport with the insane distances." I think many of us have all exhausted our family and friends with epic cycling tales, but here were fresh faces who seemed genuinely interested in what we were saying! At one point the official videographer for the Expo interviewed Emily O'Brien at length, allowing her to share her knowledge and philosophy of our unusual sport. I'm not sure where that video is going to show up, but it seems likely that it will generate additional positive exposure for RUSA.

I was able to leave the booth for a bit, and the Expo vendors were as friendly and knowledgeable as always. I did detect a shared camaraderie with the vendors when they saw my Exhibitor ID tag. And better than the camaraderie was the 30% discount all vendors offered to each other and to us. I'm not sure I needed the chain waxing system, but after listening to several of my fellow riders rave about it for the several hours we spent together, the discount was all I needed to justify the purchase. I calculated that if I hadn't ordered a custom bike from one of the many builders at the Expo, I was exercising admirable restraint with anything else I purchased.

The Expo was scheduled to shut down at 4:00, and we started to pack up shortly beforehand. That's when one last attendee was enticed by the offering of RUSA ankle reflectors and decided to sign up on the spot. Dawn's enthusiasm never waned during the repeated technical difficulties encountered throughout the 30 minutes it took to sign up this new member. This new member was also exceedingly patient, showing he has what it takes to deal with the challenges of randonneuring. He might also have received an extra pair of reflectors for his extreme patience!

I don't know how many folks we recruited, but I am sure Dawn and her crew were effective and enthusiastic representatives for this sport we all love. If you have a local bike expo, swap meet, etc., please consider establishing a RUSA presence. The weekend was great fun, and I am sure I will be found at the RUSA booth for Philly Bike Expo in 2026! 🚲

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The Canti Lightning Bolt is a lightweight road/ randonneuring focused bike. Tig welded, heat treated chromoly construction, and designed to flex and feel like you're actually floating millimeters above the road on top of Dynamic clouds. This planing sensation will leave you feeling like you're the star of the Brevet, leading everyone into a marshmallow and ice cream victory meal. The Champagne, Lilac and Light Sea Green frames feature our new Gran Trajet Fork Crown. The Gran Trajet fork crown fits a 48b tire and is designed to perfectly mimic the arch of a fender like the Honjo Smooth 62, leaving a seamless look. The newer fork also features Imperial Oval fork blades, which are believed to provide the optimal passive suspension. This leads to greater over all comfort and speed, making the bike they're attached to a true randonneuring machine.

SINGLE-SPEED LIGHTNING BOLT



The Single Speed Lightning Bolt shares the same geometry with the other Bolts, but opposed to having vertical or thru axle dropouts it has rear facing horizontal dropouts. It also has 120mm rear spacing to accommodate your typical fixed/ flip flop hub. It makes for a super fun Randonneur style bike, commuter, or all-around-do-whatever bike.

The Galaxy Black has a different fork crown, which means it fits a 42b tire perfectly, but a 48 is too close a squeeze in the fork. If you want to run fenders we suggest 38s. Like the other Lightning Bolts, the Galaxy Black is designed around a 650b wheelset.



The Transformative Power of Community and Shared Experiences

BY DAWN PIECH WITH SARAH RICE AND LYDIA TROTT

Many books and resources have been devoted to community building. There is power and shared value in community. I like to think that coming into the right community helps me unearth my values, desires, and abilities. In the right community alignment, I grow more as an individual and enlarge my sense of purpose. So, I pose some questions for you: How do you find your people? How do you create your community within Randonneurs USA? What story will you tell?

I reached out to some members to ask them to share the Top 5 Things they do to build community within their respective region and membership. Here's what some organizers shared with me:

Sarah Rice, Regional Brevet Administrator of Chicago Randonneurs

1 – The Chi Rando Oath (adapted from San Francisco Randonneurs):

"I, [state your name], will make good decisions, respect others, and not do stupid sh*t". "Respect others" is something Chi Randos added because it's just as important to us as the rest of it. We intentionally left it very open-ended; it's the golden rule in two words. We say the Oath before every ride.

2 – Make Rides Accessible:

Chicago Randonneurs is a big-city club. We're not a destination region; rather, we serve a large urban community. We strive to make all our ride starts available to randonneurs who may not have cars by syncing our ride starts with the Metropolitan Rail trains that serve Chicagoland and by having ride starts centrally located in an area that the majority of our riders can get to. This can be as simple as adjusting the start time for a ride by 30 minutes. Based on our experience, we prioritize start accessibility above having inexpensive parking and bathrooms exactly at a ride start. You can ride to the start from a nearby lot or bathroom, but if you have no way to get to the ride start, you aren't going to show up to the

ride. I encourage all urban RBAs to be familiar with their regional transportation schedules when determining start times and locations for rides.

3 – Chicago Randonneurs SLACK:

We have a SLACK (chat and messaging app) that is open to all club members as a forum for advice and discussion about rides, training, equipment, and season goals. It is a way for club members to interact and feel that they are part of something even in winter months when we are riding together less frequently.

4 – Chicago Randonneurs Community Events:

We have held five club meetings and community outreach events this year that are randonneuring-focused but open to the public. At these events we discuss how the club is doing and unveil plans for the upcoming season for a few minutes, and then we let the riders mingle. It's an amazingly diverse crowd of people who are bound by the common thread of resilience. These events make randonneuring feel like a community rather than just a collection of riders on individual pursuits.

5 – Social media recaps of rides:

We do a recap of each of our rides on Instagram. We boast, show good photos from the ride, and most importantly, highlight anyone who did their first ride, achieved a personal long, or

Hollie Long and Dawn Piech on the Monticello-Mt. Vernon 300k in June.

—PHOTO ROBERT BOOTH

had another significant achievement (RUSA award, etc.) on the ride. This lets Chi Randos riders know that their fellow clubmates know them, are cheering for them, and want to celebrate their milestones as they test their limits in randonneuring.

Lydia Trott, Indiana Randonneurs Advisory Board Member

1 – Supportive Culture:

I prioritize connecting with new members and riders, offering encouragement, support, guidance, and helpful tips to build a strong sense of camaraderie. We maintain this support on and off the bike, extending it even into the off-season. A great example is how at least five of us are currently tackling the R12 award (or keeping our streaks alive), regularly checking in with each other, helping with ride planning, and providing that extra bit of motivation to keep pushing forward. We also strive to offer a wide variety of ride distances and levels of difficulty,

ensuring there's something for all skill levels, from beginners to seasoned randonneurs. And, of course, we document our adventures with selfies and photos before, during, and after the rides, sharing our stories and experiences with the wider community.

We believe in recognizing and celebrating the achievements, big or small, of all our members.



2 – Diverse Events and Inclusion:

We are committed to offering a range of events, such as IWD: Together We Ride, specifically designed to uplift, support, and create a welcoming space for those who are traditionally less represented in the cycling world. The board actively encourages greater inclusivity and welcomes minority voices, understanding that their active involvement is crucial for making the club more welcoming and accessible to everyone.

3 – Celebrating Achievements:

We believe in recognizing and celebrating the achievements, big or small, of all our members. We do our



Dallas Harty, Ernie Reiker, Bo Daley and Sarah Rice at the Chicago Randonneurs Two Brothers Campton Hills 100 in March 2024.

—PHOTO DAWN PIECH

I make a point of offering to ride at a new member's conversational pace, ensuring they're not left to ride alone unless they specifically express a desire to do so.

6 – Beyond the Bike:

We recognize that building community extends beyond just the rides themselves. Offering post-ride activities and other off-the-bike events helps to foster friendships and creates a stronger sense of community among our members. These social connections are invaluable. We also recognize that randonneuring is about more than just the miles; it's about the shared experiences, the camaraderie, and the stories we collect along the way.

best to highlight these accomplishments, from someone completing their first 100k to celebrating Indiana's first K-Hound finisher, primarily through our social media channels. We understand that every finish line has a story, and we encourage our members to share theirs.

4 – Partnerships:

We maintain close and collaborative relationships with the Ohio and Chicago Randonneurs. We coordinate our event schedules to avoid conflicts and actively cross-promote each other's

major events throughout the year. We also make sure to give each other shout-outs on social media, highlighting successes and upcoming events.

5 – Role Model and Inspiration:

As one of the active women in the club, I hope that my presence and participation serve as a positive role model and inspiration for other women (and other underrepresented groups) who might be considering randonneuring. Seeing someone like them actively involved can make the club feel much more accessible and welcoming.

Dawn Piech, Driftless Randonneurs

In the fall of 2023, my local bicycle club (Elmhurst Bicycle Club) had four members in Randonneurs USA. Over the course of 9 months, we grew this number from four to 18. How were we able to grow our community and membership in Randonneurs USA? Here are some things I did with assistance from my local bike club to help me spread the word:

1 – Sharing Videos

Once a month for 6 months, we shared each of the Randonneurs USA marketing videos from 2022 and included 3-4 bullet points about how to get started, for example, talking about 100k's offered and possibly doing a

Offering post-ride activities and other off-the-bike events helps to foster friendships and creates a stronger sense of community among our members.

Post ride fellowship after the Chicago Randonneurs Bull Valley 200k.

—PHOTO WAITRESS AT TEMPERANCE BREWING

P-12. I thought these were good entry points into our Big Tent of Cycling. This consistent message, although varied month by month, continued to share randonneuring monthly with the 400+ members of my local bike club.

2 – Travel Buddies

I invited any club members to join me on any RUSA events I was traveling to, providing transportation to/from events and organizing the accommodations to make planning easier. In addition, this allowed me to share the adventure and travel to Minnesota and Iowa with someone who had never ridden their bike in those states.

3 – Off-Bike Meet-ups

I scheduled monthly meet-ups at local restaurants/coffee shops and breweries for people to come and informally ask questions about randonneuring. On one occasion we even met at a local brewery, ate pizza, and played pinball while connecting due to the allure of randonneuring.

4 – Paper Handouts

I printed out a one page resource handout that I shared in person as well as on our club's list-serve. I tried to share things that were simple about randonneuring, offering entrance lanes (i.e., American Explorer, P-12, R-12, and our new gravel program) as a start.

5 – Celebrations!

I celebrated the success of all club members that attended any RUSA event. This helped recognize their achievements and also generated buzz from others who may be considering joining Randonneurs USA.

I hope you found some of these shared ideas helpful. A few more questions to reflect on and answer:

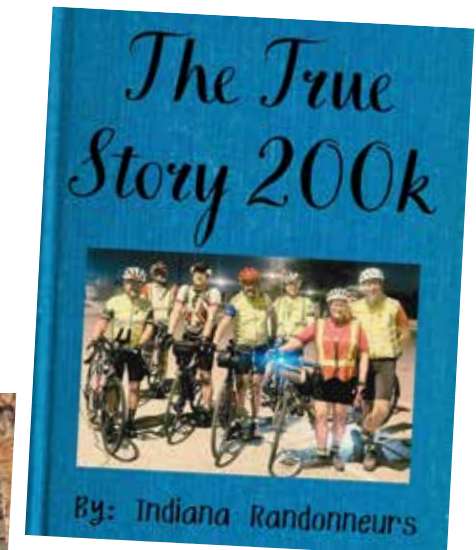
- Do you have some ideas that you would like to share on building community and shared experiences?
- How do you diversify your community profile?

- Where do you put your Randonneurs USA community energy?

I would love to hear some of your ideas and answers to these questions. Feel free to reach out to me, and let's chat. I welcome you to collaborate with me on a future article to continue this theme of growing your community in your region and Randonneurs USA. 🚴

Dawn Piech – dawnpiechrusa@gamil.com.

True Story 200k photo book.
—PHOTO INDIANA RANDONNEURS



Handling a Head Injury: Don't Deny, Don't Delay, Don't Despair

BY SARAH RICE (#9480) PT, DPT, PHD

DON'T DENY — Head injuries are unfortunately a common occurrence for cyclists. A 2018 survey of 2,792 avid cyclists found that 23.8% of them had experienced a head injury, with even higher rates among cyclists who logged over 200km/week.¹ All of us know someone who has had a head injury and many of us have had one ourselves.

You're 300k into a 400k ride and... it happens. You're on the ground. You sit up, check your body, bike, and helmet. Your bike is fine but your helmet has a little crack. You're dizzy. Your neck hurts. One of your ride mates is concerned and tells you that you hit your head. You don't think you hit your head. You don't remember hitting your head.

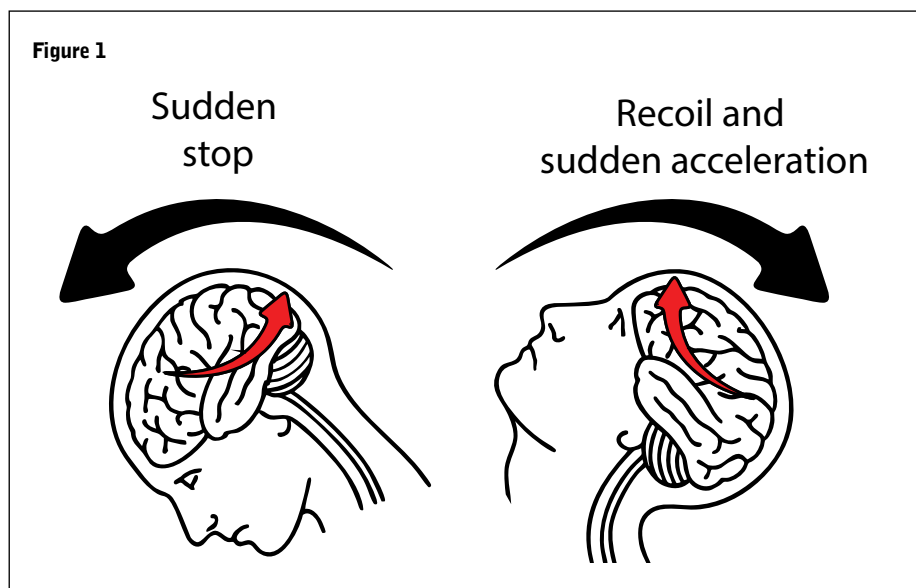
We fear head injuries. We don't want to face them because of the possibility of long-term debilitating side effects. After any crash, especially a potential head injury crash, we're likely to have impaired judgment. As randonneurs, it's our nature to shake off hardships and keep pedaling. All of these factors can lead to denial, and cause riders with head injuries to continue when they shouldn't. My collaborator Dana Kotler at the Spaulding Rehabilitation Cycling Medicine Program and I published a survey-based study of 337 cyclists who were injured in a crash. Ten of those cyclists had loss of consciousness, post-traumatic amnesia, and significant helmet damage after their crash and yet denied a head injury.² Not only

do we all know someone who had a head injury, but we all probably know someone who injured their head during a ride and kept riding despite it.

You want to shake it off. The crack in the helmet is small. You don't feel that bad. You want to eat something and then finish your ride. You don't want to quit. Your ride mates have gone 300k with you and you don't want to make any of them quit.

Denying a head injury and continuing to ride can be very dangerous. Even minor symptoms from a head injury crash leave a rider more prone to a second incident and further injury, and a severe injury is not always obvious. Head injuries are insidious. It often isn't apparent that someone has a subdural hematoma or a cervical fracture after a head injury, whereas if you sustain a large bruise or break a bone in your arm or leg, you usually know it. Immediately after any crash, be aware of three signs of an unequivocal head injury: **loss of consciousness, post-traumatic amnesia, and helmet damage.** Also be aware that you don't have to damage your helmet to get a head injury. Whiplash from a high speed crash can lead to a traumatic brain injury (Figure 1, below).

Figure 1



Head Injury Symptoms Warranting Emergency Care

You were struck by a motor vehicle

You are 65 or older

You have a bleeding or clotting disorder (including non-aspirin anticoagulant therapy)

You have any of the following symptoms:

Loss of consciousness

Disorientation: Confusion on person, place, time, or event

Deficits in short-term memory

Abnormal behavior

Vomiting more than once

Headache that gets worse over time

Fluid or blood draining from nose or ears

Vision changes

Ringing in the ears that is persistent

Slurred speech

Dizziness

Physical evidence of trauma above the collarbones

Neck pain

Weakness in arms or legs

Coordination/balance deficits

DON'T DELAY

Clinicians have developed checklists of symptoms that may indicate a serious medical issue resulting from a head injury: the Canadian CT Head Rules, Canadian C Spine Rules, and New Orleans Criteria clinical decision rules, as well as the Mayo Clinic head injury guidelines.^{3,4} Regardless of head impact or helmet damage, go to the ER or urgent care immediately if you have any of the symptoms shown in Box 1 (above) after a potential head injury.

Even if you have none of the listed symptoms and you do not feel that you need emergency care, don't keep riding after a possible head injury. Call your emergency contact and have them get you. Have a ride mate stay

with you until they come. Helping you after a head injury certainly falls into the category of an unforeseen issue that may prevent your ride mate from finishing within the normal time limits, so an RBA should and will grant your ride mate time credit (Box 2). Waiting with you does not jeopardize their finish.

You feel fine, but you decide to play it safe. You call your emergency contact and let them know that you need to be picked up. Your riding partner stays with you for 2 hours until your emergency contact arrives, then continues on to finish their ride. By the time your emergency contact arrives you're glad you stopped because your headache and neck pain are worse.

Extra Time to Finish, excerpted from RUSA Rules for Organizers

The organizer may extend the closing time for the finish check-point for one or more riders if an unanticipated issue has arisen that delays or prevents finishing within the normal time limits. Issues may include road or weather safety issues, or road closures and detours, including those caused by police actions...If the rider's time is greater than the max for the event, but extra time has been allowed because of an issue during the event, the rider is credited with the max time for the event.

Serious symptoms can appear several hours or even a few days after injury. If you start to experience any of the listed symptoms in that time frame, seek prompt medical attention. Regardless of symptoms it is not a bad idea to see your medical provider within a few days of a head injury.

The headache gets bad. You decide to get checked out at the ER. They do imaging and determine that there's no fracture or bleed. They send you home after a night spent in the ER with instructions to rest.

The clinical rules used to determine when someone should seek emergency care for a head injury have 100% sensitivity, meaning that they are designed to catch absolutely everyone who may have a serious issue like a bleed or a fracture. Their specificity is much lower, meaning that if you go to the ER with the symptoms above, the scary stuff will most likely be ruled out. You are still doing the right thing by going to the ER! Even the best clinicians cannot tell who has serious sequelae of a head injury without a thorough exam and imaging. If you have symptoms, seek emergency care. The most likely scenario is that you will wait several hours to be told that there's no bleed

or fracture and that you need to rest for at least a week.

Your head still hurts the next day so you call work and take a couple of days of PTO. By day 3 you feel OK enough to work but it's frustrating because you feel mentally foggy and you have trouble focusing on your computer screen. You take the week off from cycling and exercise.

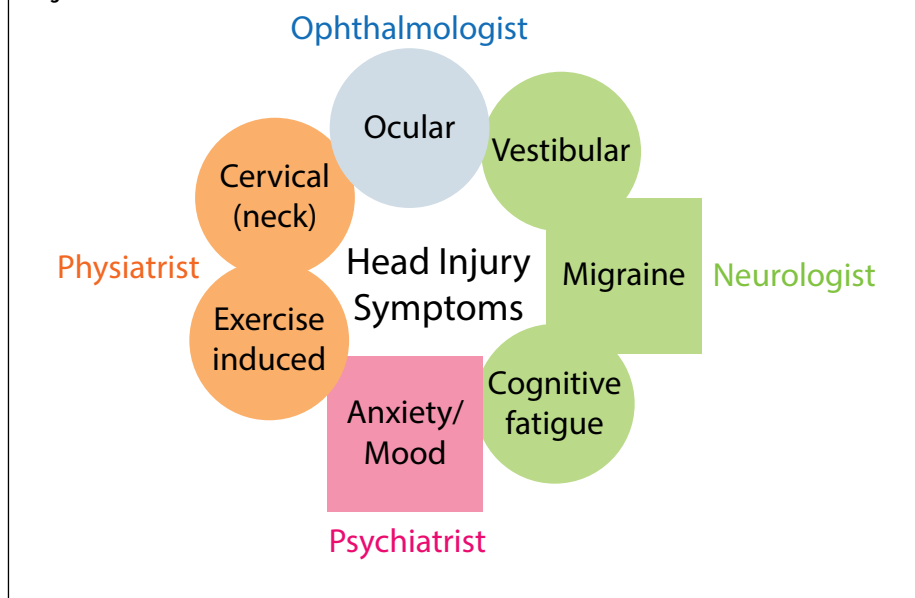
DON'T DESPAIR

Your brain is marvelous at recovering but give it a week off. Cerebral blood flow and glucose levels in your brain are reduced for about a week after a mild head injury and other metabolites are altered as well as the brain heals itself.⁵

One week off the bike turns into three. The neck pain and headache are mostly better but you still don't feel the same. You feel lazy and stupid for crashing. You're irritable. The mental fog is thick. You're worried that you may have permanent brain damage. You have to think to do your job, and you're anxious because you've been unproductive at work. You still can't see the darn computer screen. You want to ride again but are anxious about that too. You feel hopeless.

If you have head injury symptoms that linger, talk to your provider about them. About 80% of the time symptoms resolve within two weeks. This means that about 20% of people who have head injuries suffer lingering effects. Common lingering symptoms fall into several categories: Ocular, cognitive, post-traumatic migraine, cervical (neck), anxiety/mood related symptoms, and dizziness.⁶ For some people, lingering symptoms worsen with intense exercise. The most important thing to know is that lingering concussion symptoms are treatable. In fact, the course of treatment need not be long. I have seen many patients with lingering post-concussion symptoms in my PT practice and most have drastic improvement within 6 weeks (Figure 2, above).

Figure 2



The anxiety and mood related symptoms that can occur post-concussion deserve special mention. Please do not downplay or ignore these symptoms if you experience them as they can be severe; both the prevalence of suicidal ideation and the actual suicide rate are doubled post-

concussion.⁷ Fear and anxiety can also delay your return to cycling.⁸ A psychiatrist or talk therapist can help you to manage these symptoms and get you rolling again.

So remember: Don't deny, don't delay, don't despair. Head injuries are treatable! 🚲

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Riding with the Rocketmen

"I heard you're training for a big ride in Europe next year. Is it the Tour de France?" Anyone fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to ride in Paris-Brest-Paris has undoubtedly heard this question at some point, which reflects the profound ignorance of professional cycling in our country. That said, here we have a memoir written by a recreational middle-aged cyclist who did ride in the Tour de France, well at least L'Étape du Tour, the annual *cyclosporitif* event that's been open to anyone who wants to tackle one of the stages of the official Tour since 1993.

Each year, over 16,000 riders clip in to sample a day in the life of a WorldTour cyclist just days before the pro peloton rolls through town. In this entertaining book, *Riding with the Rocketmen*, veteran cycling journalist

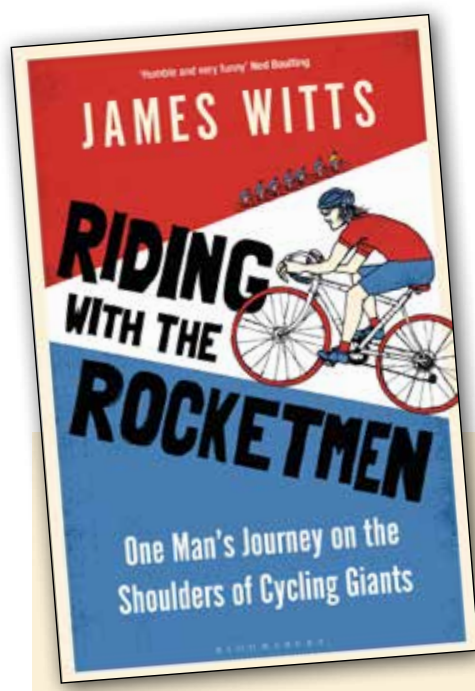
James Witt walks us through his year of preparation for this big event during which he pulls in quite a few favors from his many friends in the professional cycling world to see if aligning his training with what the pros might experience will pay off on the big day.

As business writer Jim Collins has argued, leaders and organizations are often well served by creating and seeking to achieve a "Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG)." This concept is familiar to randonneurs, of course, and one that cycling enthusiast James Witt applied to his 2022 cycling year as he turns 45 and seeks to shake things up a bit. As a goal, he selects the 2022 L'Étape du Tour, which was designed to follow

the exact route the pros follow on the Queen Stage of the Tour de France that features three Hors Catégorie (beyond category) climbs including the fabled Col du Galibier, Croix de Fer, and ending atop Alpe D'Huez itself. All told, there would be 4700m (14,763 feet) of climbing in just 167 kilometers (103 miles). Witt's plan is to see what might happen if he applies the science, advice, and techniques found in the well-supported pro peloton to his own effort.

After securing a spot in this event, Witt opens his metaphorical rolodex to identify professional contacts to help him get ready. While designing and following a periodized training plan is familiar territory for most committed cyclists, what's unique about Witt's approach is his ability to draw in techniques from all corners of the professional cycling stratosphere that have been designed to shave minutes if not seconds off race results. The coaches, soigneurs, cooks, doctors, and others associated with the most successful teams in professional cycling share their expertise with Witt and us in ways that paradoxically humanize the pros and make them seem quite superhuman at the same time. Through these stories and exercises, readers learn more about techniques both familiar and mysterious which may or may not be appealing, affordable, or even safe (!) to apply to our own lives.

Witt begins this journey in January with professional coaches and trainers to assess his fitness level with tests to measure VO2 max, lactate threshold, functional threshold power (FTP), metabolism, strength, and more. The



Riding with the Rocketmen

JAMES WITT

Bloomsburg Books

288 pages. 2023

“you can’t improve what you don’t measure” philosophy seems to be the bedrock of this entire training phase, which Witt describes as a way of “marrying nature with nurture.” Sadly, the lingering COVID pandemic made it impossible for him to travel to southern Europe to attend one of the many pro training camps, but he connects with coaches on Zoom and does his best to combine a mixture of outdoor and indoor riding to lay down his essential early season base close to home. Next, our author dives into the importance of bike fit, gear selection, riding position, and the power of measurement and making small mechanical adjustments to achieve big gains. In addition, he also digs deep into the science of nutrition, physiology, and the various chemical adjustments riders may make, which leads him to discover both legal and illegal, safe and unsafe methods used to enhance performance. With information in hand, Witt takes to the road

to apply what he has learned. Like the pros, he also boosts his training by participating in local cyclocross races and even makes a point of traveling to Belgium to take part in a cyclosporitif held alongside the Tour of Flanders, one of the so-called five Monuments of the Spring Classics season, to test his fitness and prepare for what lies ahead.

If you’re curious about taking on Étape yourself, there are several ways to go about it. General registration opens just a week after the official route for the upcoming Tour is announced in late October each year. As cycling events go, it’s priced quite reasonably and if you miss the initial registration, it’s still possible to sign on to participate by purchasing a tour package or by committing to raise funds for one of several approved charities. In addition, this year will be the first time that the Tour de France Femmes will include an event of this type so there may be two L’Étape du Tour events each year moving for-

ward. If you do decide to make this one of your BHAGs, Witt suggests that you also make it a SCALED UP goal, that is, one that is specific, clear, achievable, layered, exciting, with a deadline to keep you positive.

What sets this book apart from the field is the fine writing and self-deprecating humor the author brings to the job, and unlike many memoirs written about cycling, this one is written by a writer who sometimes rides rather than a rider who sometimes writes. The result is an informative, funny, page-turning account which sets a good pace that builds toward a dramatic conclusion. I might have liked to see a bit more written about the actual cycling Witt did in preparation for the big day, but the unique window he opens into the world of professional training covers subjects typically unavailable to the average reader and helps us better understand this crazy and magical sport. 🚲

Building a bicycle frame starts long before the torch is lit.

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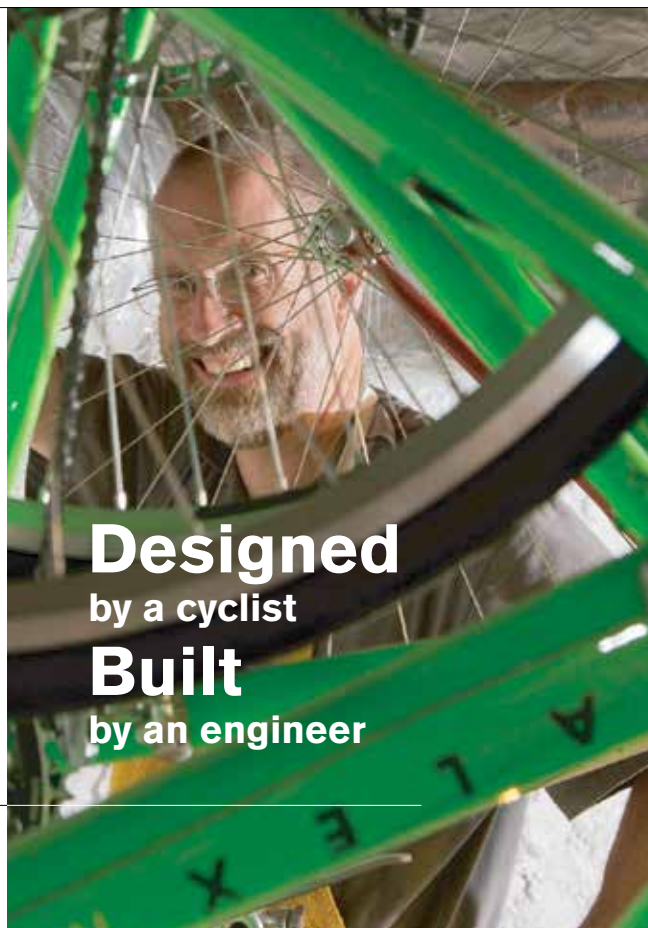
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Gravel Perm Design Lessons from a Quality Assurance Geek

BY MICHAEL TUREK

As a self-proclaimed Quality Assurance (QA) geek, I've spent years in my day job obsessing over systems – layering controls like stacks of Swiss cheese to catch hazards before they turn into failures. Turns out, designing a permanent route for RUSA isn't all that different. Each slice of “cheese” – local knowledge, pre-rides, environmental awareness – matters.

My latest creation, Route #5333 “Kauai Canyons and Coastal Cruise,” taught me this the hard way, through a muddy misadventure on Kauai's Polihale Beach road.

The initial hazard in this process was my single-minded focus: “I need to create this course and need to get to a certain point.” Here are seven QA-inspired steps to help you create a safe and enjoyable permanent for other RUSA members, followed by a chart of the steps that allowed my hazard to “escape” and cause system failure. Learn from my mistakes!

So, how to avoid disaster?



1. Know the roads – if you haven't ridden the route before STOP - ask someone who has or a local familiar with the roads before you even put dots to RideWithGPS or Strava Maps!

2. Know the environment – Colorado gravel can be a muddy mess, Hawaii gravel is almost always a muddy mess.

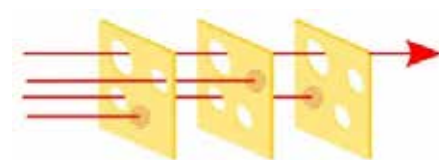
3. Create the route and share with locals, they'll know the pitfalls and concerns.

4. Pre-ride the route – don't just drive! Take careful notes and pictures of all concerning cues, road conditions, and traffic areas. Most importantly check support locations. Verify hours of stores – not just via website – call them. It might make the difference in your fellow randonneurs' late night success.

5. Submit the route, noting concerns to permanent reviewers; collaborate on evaluation of route safety.

6. Ride the route – as approved. Verify the cues, stops, and dangerous points as if you were an out-of-town rider. Make changes as necessary.

7. Re-ride the route annually if possible. While there are no longer route owners per se, if you created it, ride and review it occasionally. If things change, remove the route until you can fix what needs to be fixed.



Confirming the Gravel / Unpaved Distance

- I am familiar with the route and the gravel sections and total gravel distance largely agree with ridewithgps - OR -
- ☐ I have ridden the route to confirm the gravel distance

Notes / Are you familiar with the roads on this route?

Your answer

Ernest Hemingway once said: “It is by riding a bicycle that you learn the contours of a country best.” Sweating up Kauai's hills and coasting its descents taught me more than any car trip could. My Polihale fiasco was a hard lesson in QA and route design – but it birthed a better Route #5333. Next time you plot a permanent, stack your Swiss cheese tight. Your fellow randonneurs will thank you. 🚲



TIMING	EVENT	HOW WAS SLICE BYPASSED?
Prehistory	Windward side of Kauai, gravel = mud.	"But if it's been dry for a few days..."
1980's	"Road leading to [Polihale State] Park is an unimproved dirt road that may flood and become impassable." – Hawaii.gov	"I've ridden worse I'm sure."
2020	"Above all else, be smart and be safe. Do not ride on roads or trails which are closed or you do not feel comfortable using just to complete the perm route as designed." – Jake Kassen, RUSA gravel guide	I ignored this advice.
Dec 2023	Drove the muddy route to Polihale – took the photo of the coast. (opposite left)	"It was bad, but it had rained, I'm sure it will be in better condition for my ride."
Dec 2024	Decided to create 200k for my vacation in Kauai – including breathtaking Polihale Beach.	Had to schedule for the day we flew out. Sister's flight @ 3p.m.
Dec 2024	Included the Polihale State Park turn around in the RWGPS route, despite the dirt road and the fact the beach is not actually accessible by bike.	Fixating on need to include that photo control of the coast moved the hazard through the three important slices of cheese – local knowledge, pre-ride, and environmental awareness.
Dec 2024	Clicked the box, "familiar with route and gravel sections."	I'd ridden or driven all of the route.
Dec 26 2024	Kauai Canyons and Coastal Cruise Route 5333 approved.	Perm committee knew I was an experienced route creator. They focused on route cues, trusted my judgment on gravel sections.
Feb 15 2025	Wife (Grace) seriously questioned my riding alone as well as the route.	This was the most critical slide of cheese; she's pretty tolerant of rides, but fearful of my solo riding and she knew the Polihale mudpit.
Feb 24 2025	Wife's conditional approval based on pre-driving course – I decided to skip Polihale.	Because the bar would open soon.
Feb 27 2025	Rain.	'Nuff said.
Feb 28 2025	Rented a bike.	It was a pure road bike.
Feb 28 2025	Sister (Allie) and even brother-in-law (Mike) questioned the wisdom of riding 200k day of departure.	Sister is super easy going, but when she asked, "Do you know what you're doing?" I became defensive.
Feb 28 2025	Wife raised the tension level.	Things were pretty tense – kinda like "scary movie music" – but I'd created, committed, and scheduled my R12 200k for March.
Mar 1 2025	2:45am – Departure - fog enveloped Waimea Canyon.	Could fog = wet?
Mar 1 2025	7:20am – A sign appears: Unimproved narrow dirt road... floods during rain.	So fixated on getting that turnaround photo – "Even if I bail, I'll have it!"
Mar 1 2025	7:45am – Fell in mud... bike caked in mud.	At this point – 3 miles to go – would have been able to turn around without destroying bike.
Mar 1 2025	9:05am – Finally, the money shot.	Tire flat – clear damage to rims – but I need to make it out... family can't drive out here. Ride is DNF.
Mar 1 2025	10:05am – Called sister to bail.	Damaged rims, drive train, bottom bracket...
Mar 1 2025	1:30pm – After dropping off family, returned bike.	System Failure: Easy going shop owner was incensed. We negotiated purchase of wheels by me, but I'll never be allowed to rent there again.
Mar 2 2025	3:00pm – Submitted route cancellation.	Immediately removed pending resubmission.
Mar 9 2025	"Kauai Canyons and Coastal Cruise Route 5333" resubmitted.	Altered route to include proven asphalt roads where I have actually ridden successfully in the past.

Far left, the money shot – the beautiful Napali coast from Polihale State Beach.

Left, the road to Polihale State Park.

—PHOTOS MIKE TUREK

Together We Ride. Together We Inspire.

COMPILED BY DAWN PIECH

This year marked the **6th annual International Women's Day Together We Ride** that started back in March 2020.

Despite the weather challenges of riding in early March, it's always been a ray of sunshine, and this year was no exception.

International Women's Day began in 1911 in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland, and celebrated its 114th year in 2025. It is held annually all over the world on March 8th. It is a global day to celebrate the social, economic and cultural achievements of women and raise awareness about gender equality, promoting women's empowerment and advocating for change.

Together We Ride.

This year, there were 19 Randonneurs USA events in 16 regions held on March 8th through March 11th. There were distances of 100k, 200k,

300k, and 400k. Some regions hosted multiple rides, like the San Francisco Randonneurs and Minnesota Randonneurs, which hosted three and two events, respectively, over that weekend.

I invited the Regional Brevet Administrators (RBA's) of all regions with events to share their ride with a short summary and/or a photo, if they were so inclined. I hope you enjoy the sunshine + positivity received from the Pacific Coast Highway Randonneurs, DC Randonneurs, Pennsylvania Randonneurs, Indiana Randonneurs, Arizona Randonneurs and Seattle International Randonneurs.

Pacific Coast Highway Randonneurs: Terri Boykins and Kerin Huber

The Pacific Coast Highway Randonneurs hosted the Joshua Tree Audax Club Parisien (ACP) 300k brevet with 27 participants that began in Twentynine Palms, California and finished in Joshua Tree National Park.

Terry Boykins shared "The PCH Randos inaugural Joshua Tree 300K Brevet and International Women's Day celebration are in the books. There were 27 riders who departed in very chilly 38 degree temps from Twentynine Palms, CA at 6 a.m. At approximately mile 18 they entered Joshua Tree National Park via the north entrance and by this point in the ride what was once a sizable group began to dwindle significantly to solos and smaller groups of 3-4 riders working together to fight the cold winds. By the time they reached Keys View Overlook at over 4,300 ft of elevation, the winds were howling and gusting with patches of snow and ice on the ground. The weather would improve significantly thereafter... for the most part.

After entering the Park, there is nowhere to obtain food or water for at least 70 miles, but after exiting there is one opportunity at the Chiriaco Summit truck stop. This ride is only possible with SAG support due to the remoteness of the route, which passes through deserted and or low populated areas with no services.

A robust turnout for the Philadelphia Randos at the start of their Philly Statuary IWD ride.

—PHOTO CJ ARAYATA





We were able to assemble an incredible volunteer team of eight, all with extensive cycling backgrounds: Susie Bump, her husband Rick, Peg Miller, Terry Hutt (sweep), Kermit Ganier (with Cesar his loyal cycling event dog), Tiger Teresa Beck, Chris Lindensmith, and Regina Henderson (aka Brook Henderson's daughter). They worked long, hard, and efficiently to ensure all riders were taken care of, fed, watered and accounted for (no one left out in the desert for the vultures!) Riders Jay Nadeau and Brook helped out beforehand with assembling PB&J sandwiches and tracking down bicycle passes respectively.

With 191 miles and 9300 climbing, the first rider finished in under 12 hours and five others just over 12 hours total time. Two riders were on fixed gears. And 100% finished, with everyone in before midnight.

This is a beautiful course, and

definitely a bucket list destination for cyclists.

A big thank you to our RBA Kerin Huber for indulging my wish to put this ride on our 2025 calendar. Although it was a lot of work for a few months including "issues" with the National Park Service permit office, in the end it all worked out. I'm so very proud of all involved in this project and humbled that so many riders came from far and wide to experience this epic brevet."

DC Randonneurs: Emily Ranson and Bill Beck

The DC Randonneurs hosted a 106k populaire aptly named Over to Ladiesburg, out of Frederick, Maryland with 19 participants. Emily shared, "DC Randonneurs had pretty good turnout, despite an unpleasant wind forecast that had us returning into a much stiffer headwind than we enjoyed on the way out."

Terry Boykins pleased at how the Joshua Tree 300k came off.

—PHOTO MARCO ENSING

At the Philadelphia Bike Exposition with Pat Dixon, member of Space Coast Runner's Hall of Fame.

—PHOTO DAWN PIECH



*"Shine a light, shine the light
Shine a light, won't you shine the light?"*

— ELTON JOHN, PHILADELPHIA FREEDOM LYRICS

PCH Randos starting the
Joshua Tree 300k.

—PHOTO TERRY BOYKINS

**Seattle International Randonneurs:
Nicole Truesdell, Elizabeth Smith,
Kristi Harrington and Rose Cox**

The Seattle International Randonneurs hosted their Divas Populaire, a 100k route out of Kenmore, Washington with 38 participants. The ride was organized and led by Nicole Truesdell, Elizabeth Smith and Kristi Harrington.

**Indiana Randonneurs:
Lydia Trott**

Indiana Randonneurs hosted the Boiler Up 100k led by Lydia Trott out of West Lafayette, Indiana with 12 participants. Lydia Trott and Indiana Randonneurs shared, “Wind? Cold temps? Forgotten gear? We didn’t let anything stop us! A fantastic group of riders (Lydia, Bill, Brian, Jeff, Tommy, John, and Alan) joined us for the Boiler Up 100K IWD Together We Ride! Lydia kicked things off with a forgotten helmet but a local friend came to the rescue, and Bill.... well Bill rocked the ride without his cycling shoes! Talk about dedication! The day started brisk, but layers were shed as the sun peaked and temps rose to almost 50. The wind picked up, testing our grit, but the scenic Wabash River views and quiet country roads made it all worthwhile. Purdue highlights included Lydia showing us her work, Tommy’s selfie with Neil Armstrong, and Brian’s nostalgic fountain memories.



Most importantly, we shared meaningful conversations about allyship and how every contribution matters. We finished strong at Brokerage Brewery with delicious Greek’s Pizza (Bruno’s, we’ll catch you next time!) and cold beers. A huge thanks to everyone who braved the elements and rode for change. It was a day of camaraderie, resilience, and celebrating International Women’s Day Together We Ride!”

**Arizona Randonneurs:
Mike Sturgill**

Arizona Randonneurs held the Foothills 100k, out of Phoenix, Arizona with a total of nine riders. Mike Sturgill shared “We had three women ride with us, including my daughter! This was her 1st RUSA event and her longest ride ever. I rode with her the entire event and she rode wonderfully. It was a real treat for me to get to ride with her. We had a beautiful day in the Valley of the Sun. I had a sag setup at the Sundial in Carefree.” Congratulations to Angela Visco (#17952) on her first Randonneurs USA event!

**Pennsylvania Randonneurs:
Ello Shertzer, CJ Arayata
and Chris Nadovich**

Pennsylvania Randonneurs held the Philly Statuary Populaire out of Philadelphia led by Ello Shertzer with 69 participants. The ride concluded at the Philadelphia Convention Center, coinciding with the 14th annual Philadelphia Bike Exposition.

Ello Shertzer shared “The IWD Populaire was a wild success, with 58 finishers (and 3 pre-riders), including 16 people for whom this was their first randonneuring event. We ended up raising \$720 for the Philly chapter of Little Bella’s! This was one of the highest turnouts for a PA Rando event in recent years and we are so glad that we were able to raise money for a good cause.”

Chris Nadovich commented “A chilly but pleasant morning greeted the 66 starters this past Saturday for the International Women’s Day 107K Populaire. Temperatures rose to around 50 degrees as riders explored Philadelphia’s Fairmount Park and the suburbs to the northwest. In all, 58 riders and 3 pre-riders finished the ride in good time for a 92% completion rate. Congratulations to all the finishers. The large starting field was a good mix of veterans and riders new to the sport.



The Over to Ladiesburg Populaire
ridden by the DC Randos.

—PHOTO BILL BECK



This ride boasted 16 (!) freshly minted randonneurs! Noah Abbot, Stephen Arrivello, Hala Asraf, David Bacher Hicks, Christopher Costes, Bing Dai, Sayantan Kahn, Bella Kuhl, Andrew Maloney, Peter McLoone, Erik Orvik, Tracey Sikora, Malissa Sullivan, Michelle Sun, Emma Trallon, and Olivia Walling all posted strong finishes. Well done and congratulations to you all. The ride also served as a fundraiser for Little Bellas, a mentorship program that gets young women and girls on bikes. 100% of the proceeds from this ride was donated to Little Bellas. Each rider's entry fee earned them a sweepstakes ticket with items donated from members of the community and beyond. Sweepstakes winners received prizes that ranged from bike tune-ups and haircuts to art work and acupuncture. In all, through entry fees and sweepstakes ticket sales, we raised over \$720.00 for the organization. Thank you to all who supported."

Together We Inspire

Dawn Piech shares, the entire Together We Ride global community was able to collaborate and raise funds to build one Buffalo Bicycle for World Bicycle Relief with the purchase of patches, stickers, and Empowerment Packages as well as donations. Since we began fundraising (back in our second year in 2022), we have built a total of six Buffalo Bicycles for World Bicycle Relief and also assist with funds for the Siihasin Bike Program in the Navajo



Arizona Randonneurs Foothills Tour 100k with, l. to r. Teresa Fukumoto-Beebe, Angela Visco, and Carolyn Beck.

—PHOTO MIKE STURGILL

Below, Indiana Randonneurs on the Boiler Up 100k.

—PHOTO LYDIA TROTT

Nation of southwestern Arizona. We continue to strategically identify and partner with like minded individuals/organizations that align with the mission of Inspyrd Movement/Together We Ride. Inspyrd Movement is a 501c3 with the mission to inspire individuals to elevate diversity, equity and inclusion through the act of movement.

We are excited to announce the dates for the 7th annual International Women's Day Together We Ride on March 8th through March 11th, 2026. I hope you and your region will consider hosting a 100k, 200k, 300k+, a Rouleur ride and/or a gravel ride in our 7th year.

Four days. Four rides on your Freedom Wheels. 🚲



"The story of women's struggle for equality belongs to no single feminist nor to any one organization but to the collective efforts of all who care about human rights." Gloria Steinem



New RUSA Members

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
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17859	Anderson, Krista G	Calgary	AB
17875	Symington, Stephanie	Calgary	AB
17871	Rigueiro, Jeremias P	Kenai	AK
18023	Apathy, Peter P	Sitka	AK
18107	Pilz, Johannes	Wien	AT
18039	Williams, Christopher M	Tucson	AZ
17952	Visco, Angela	Phoenix	AZ
17926	Boyer, David	Union City	CA
17922	Ching, Kiki	Santa Cruz	CA
17917	Tenscher, Seth	Santa Cruz	CA
17936	Bagamaspad, Precious Mae O	San Jose	CA
17921	Salem, Shyam	Santa Cruz	CA
17937	Patterson, Rick	Berkeley	CA
17920	Dickinson, Neal W	Quincy	CA
17919	Gracik, Stefan	San Francisco	CA
17940	Adair, K Eric	Newhall	CA
17918	Orban, Jacob	Folsom	CA
17929	Hespen, Chuck	Oakland	CA
17916	McGuire, Grace	San Francisco	CA
17903	Despres, T	Berkeley	CA
17912	Terry, Ian Michael	Santa Cruz	CA
17856	Godwin, Jamie	Berkeley	CA
17862	Gonzalez, Courtney L	Berkeley	CA
17866	Nguyen, Vu H	San Jose	CA
17872	de La Sayette, Paul	Berkeley	CA
17879	Jacob, Mathew	San Jose	CA
17880	Sharma, Vishal K	Pleasanton	CA
17915	Cunningham, Skovran S	San Francisco	CA
17881	Turano, Tony T	San Diego	CA
17890	Bowers, Jake	Redwood City	CA
17895	Huynh, Lien T	San Jose	CA
17896	Dang, Dung V	San Jose	CA
17898	Armendariz, D	Oakland	CA
17947	Anders, Jenna	Berkeley	CA
17906	Hoang, Anthony	San Jose	CA
17889	Steele, Greg	Pleasanton	CA
17962	McGarvey, E	Lafayette	CA
17965	Tanner, Eli	Emeryville	CA
17958	Spencer, Shandi	San Diego	CA
18086	Kaneko, Keith Hisashi	Sacramento	CA
18087	Kimball, Michael	San Diego	CA
18089	Gilberd, Adam	Lafayette	CA
18091	Lampe, Rowen V	Quincy	CA
18093	Vargas Zeppetello, Lucas	Oakland	CA
18105	Milewski, Alex	San Clemente	CA
18116	Frohreich, Andrew D	San Diego	CA
18080	Andrade, Rico	Palo Alto	CA
18117	Frohreich, Saralyn L	San Diego	CA
18141	Cao, Sophia Y	San Francisco	CA
18144	Fan, Vinson	Berkeley	CA
18149	Kim, David D	Fullerton	CA
18151	Mc Casland, Dru	Arcata	CA
18152	Poree, Cybele	Arcata	CA
18155	Blinn, David	Berkeley	CA
18167	Jalkio, Michael	San Diego	CA
18120	Smith, Christopher A	San Francisco	CA
18075	Norton, Charles P	Sausalito	CA

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
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18070	Yang, Royce	San Diego	CA
18069	Walklet, E Courtney	San Diego	CA
17847	Rivera, Ernesto	San Diego	CA
17971	Klieman, Michael	Belmont	CA
17992	Golod, Lev	Encinitas	CA
17995	Gonzalez Maldonado, Arturo	San Diego	CA
18006	Gandee, Katie	San Diego	CA
18007	Lund, Chelsea R	Laguna Hills	CA
18014	Kmetec, Jeff	Palo Alto	CA
18018	Evashwick, Ellen	West Toluca Lake	CA
18025	Sidarta, Aga	San Francisco	CA
18033	Nowak, Tom H	Long Beach	CA
18041	Thooppal Vasu, Kartik	San Francisco	CA
18046	Mulvane, T	Los Angeles	CA
18047	Rethore, Toussaint	Los Angeles	CA
18048	Chavez, Phillip	Fremont	CA
18050	Kuelper, Kerri	Rough and Ready	CA
18065	Fletcher, Thomas	Grass Valley	CA
18067	Maziarz, Shana	Nevada City	CA
17954	Rapmund, Kathy A	Walnut Creek	CA
17842	Potter, Melissa	Berkeley	CA
18170	Clarke, Caroline	San Diego	CA
17820	Bituin, Adrian M	San Francisco	CA
17796	Yee, Victor	Oakland	CA
17791	Wilson, Jac	El Cerrito	CA
17759	Agbabiaka, Oluwafemi Anthony	San Francisco	CA
17821	Pettingill, Lindsay M	Berkeley	CA
17800	O'Sullivan, Brandon	Walnut Creek	CA
17805	Brown, Shannon E	Livermore	CA
17828	O'Neill, Jessica	San Francisco	CA
17797	Roldan, Joseph	San Francisco	CA
17778	Gallagher, Laura Catherine	San Diego	CA
17785	Wilson, Russ	San Francisco	CA
17782	White, Isabel	Oakland	CA
17806	Kuhn, Eric Brian	San Francisco	CA
17792	Kotb, Mohammad	Sunnyvale	CA
17786	Arellanes, Steven	Chino	CA
17787	Arellanes, Gloria	Chino	CA
17783	Carranza, Eduardo	Moraga	CA
17755	Dewey, Tyler	San Francisco	CA
17802	Alt, Wyatt	San Francisco	CA
17766	Schwei, Thomas	Berkeley	CA
17812	Randall, Paul	San Ramon	CA
17798	Bossert, Claudia	Lafayette	CA
17807	Brisbo, Peter	Walnut Creek	CA
17817	Boone, J. Troy	Santa Cruz	CA
17762	Machado, Michael D	San Francisco	CA
17830	Opfell, N A	Daly City	CA
17963	Schulte, T J	Pine	CO
18142	Kleinstuber, Michael	Parker	CO
18063	Vogel, Bryan A	Englewood	CO
18073	Hylton, David N	Arvada	CO
18024	Brodbeck, Pat	Franktown	CO
18071	Leon, Gene M	Longmont	CO
17886	Reimers, Troy L	Golden	CO
17905	Hardman, Talbot Dale	Glenwood Springs	CO
18064	Whitaker, Jeffrey S	Boulder	CO

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
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18133	Iven, Samuel H	Fort Collins	CO
17813	Kessler, David	Highlands Ranch	CO
18106	Peros, John G	Denver	CO
18030	Sommerville, J A	Denver	CO
18059	Colangelo, Gian	Greenwich	CT
18022	Coban, Fikret	Bloomfield	CT
18021	Meeks, Lori Ann	Bloomfield	CT
18060	Koushouris, Louis A	Hamden	CT
17789	Salit, Joshua	Danbury	CT
17974	Weiss, Zachary M	Bethlehem	CT
18157	Pierce, Lawrence D	Manchester	CT
17935	Hayes, Pedar M	Wethersfield	CT
18154	Bova, Elijah	Storrs	CT
18166	Valmiki, Shreyas	Norwalk	CT
18004	Morin, Landon H	Kent	CT
17769	Orefice, Andrew	New Haven	CT
17831	Moskovitz, David A	Washington	DC
18029	Sciabarassi, Angelo F	Lauderhill	FL
17868	Pereira de Castro, Rafael	Orlando	FL
18137	Curran, Chris	Brandon	FL
17808	Depre, Cedric	Roquefort La Bedoule	FR
17867	Dickerman, Dan	Valdosta	GA
17799	Brown Jr, Richard Eugene	Marietta	GA
18053	Hurley, M Daniel	Atlanta	GA
17849	Spera, Kim A	Savannah	GA
17860	Muse Jr, David P	Perry	GA
18123	Borovyi, Mykhailo	Atlanta	GA
18108	Wilcox, Laurel	Marietta	GA
18054	Hurley, Isaac L	Atlanta	GA
17956	Mitchell, Tom F	Ankeny	IA
18102	Knights, D	Iowa Falls	IA
18156	Wells, Ethan J	Johnston	IA
18114	Costello Jr, Dean M	Chicago	IL
17765	Gulotta, Don	Naperville	IL
17946	Foster, Leigh Mills	Chicago	IL
18015	Belyusar, Daniel	Chicago	IL
18011	Rosenbaum, Sheri	Buffalo Grove	IL
17939	Ricker, Christopher C	Chicago	IL
17774	Acosta, Benjamin	Chicago	IL
17957	Taino, Jove V	Brookfield	IL
17923	Chu, V	Aurora	IL
17933	Michel, Elliot J	Chicago	IL
17944	de Stefano, Jason	Chicago	IL
18092	McLane, James	Chicago	IL
17846	Gorski, Steve	Oak Park	IL
17772	Ramesh, Nathan	Chicago	IL
18043	Moirano, Christopher Hugo	Chicago	IL
17771	Brennan, Patrick V	Lincolnwood	IL
17784	Horjus, Jonathan	Hillside	IL
18040	Wilcoski, Matt	Normal	IL
17758	Conrady, Matt	Chicago	IL
17865	Soto, Fernando J	Chicago	IL
18037	Kapocius, Keith	Marengo	IL
17870	Oleniczak, Sheryl	Wheaton	IL
18081	Garrity, Patrick F	Chicago	IL
17874	Rangel, Pete	Brookfield	IL
17877	Hogikyan, Allison	Chicago	IL

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
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17827	Biecker, Matthew	Chicago	IL
17824	Seals Sr, Donnie	Wheaton	IL
18110	Mandava, Guna	Chicago	IL
17911	Karkhoff, Michael	Bolingbrook	IL
17909	Boone, Lawton T	Westmont	IL
18136	Futtner, Christopher R	Chicago	IL
17892	Kremer, Chris James	Chicago	IL
17818	Parks-Fried, Colin M	Chicago	IL
17900	Zak, James	Chicago	IL
17901	Warren, Sasha	Chicago	IL
18027	Detanico, Adrienne	Chicago	IL
17934	Beauvais, Wendy	West Lafayette	IN
18078	Rosbrugh, Brian	Fort Wayne	IN
17878	Kim, Soekyeon	Busan	KR
17852	Park, Jungmin	Busan	KR
17853	Yongjun, Cho	Busan	KR
18138	Berry, Steven Mark	West Lafayette	IN
18055	Larson, Dwight S	Olathe	KS
18000	Kane, Michael	Lexington	KY
18012	Bartram, John H	Frankfort	KY
17770	Sorbo, Jeffrey S	Easthampton	MA
18084	Lippe, Hannah W	Falmouth	MA
17975	Marts, Yvette	Arlington	MA
17979	Carpenter, Laurel	Lexington	MA
18097	Seixas, Filipe	Medford	MA

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
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18096	Skirkey, William	Pepperell	MA
18098	Chhoeng, Ralzaly	Chelmsford	MA
17994	Townend, Bruce	Windsor	MA
17987	Ribeiro, Rodrigo	Billerica	MA
17988	Schneider, Eric	Hanover	MA
18076	Scott, Edward	Medford	MA
17996	Kamishlian, David M	Cambridge	MA
17815	Handorff, Tyler	Kingston	MA
18113	Edmonds, Niki	Boston	MA
17848	Theberge, Steve	Florence	MA
17836	Von Holten, J.	Somerville	MA
18158	Connors, Cormac Michael	Boston	MA
17757	Bailey, P	Ipswich	MA
18035	Hawley, David B	Cambridge	MA
18145	Arevalo, D A	Everett	MA
18031	Johnston, Dan	Boston	MA
17899	Kungl, Brian	Somerville	MA
17908	Troxel, A	Somerville	MA
18139	James, Dayle A	Concord	MA
18085	Tschuy, Brendan	Boston	MA
17943	Solus, Tom A	Amherst	MA
17941	Atwood, Frederic	Cambridge	MA
18010	Marple, Justin	Malden	MA
17930	Threatte, Kermit	Lincoln	MA
18016	Vollinger II, Mark E	Watertown	MA

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
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17816	Radack, Josh	Boston	MA
17841	Roth, Michael	Port Republic	MD
17925	Pramod, Sai R	Towson	MD
17760	Coleman, Christopher R	Baltimore	MD
17888	Fernandez, Sergio	Joint Base Andrews	MD
18129	Atadika, Kafui	Frederick	MD
18036	Letze, David I	Sanford	ME
18079	Yarnell, Charles	Northport	ME
18051	Moss, Oliver	Whitefield	ME
18062	Gilman, Peter D	Alfred	ME
18074	Diehl, Edward	Ann Arbor	MI
17999	Jowski, Frank M	Canton	MI
17991	Elhajj, Hiba	Dearborn	MI
17840	Sheets, Joyce	Southgate	MI
18103	Lacey, Scott	Clarkston	MI
17981	Stanziola, Nick	Clinton Twp	MI
17768	Gilmour, Kathy	Sterling Heights	MI
18094	Rafeld, Eric	Novi	MI
17795	Osborn, William P	Grand Rapids	MI
17834	Popp, James M	Ferndale	MI
18163	Emmons, L J	Harrison	MI
17893	Usher, Charlie G	Royal Oak	MI
17810	Holmes, Loretta	Saint Joseph	MI
17913	Butcher, Christopher M	Zeeland	MI
17767	Huneke, Doug	Sterling Heights	MI



Do you have a story to share?

Maybe a tale of an epic adventure?

Or a ride gone comically wrong?

If so, we'd like to hear about it!

SUBMISSIONS should be up to 2,000 words, include photos or other visual elements, and be saved as a Word file. (No PDFs, please.) Please send photos as separate files.

The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, brevity, and accuracy.

SUBMISSION DEADLINES:

Spring issue – December 15

Fall issue – June 25

Summer issue – March 25

Winter issue – September 25

QUESTIONS? Please contact Corinne at editor@rusa.org.

SUBMISSIONS ARE WELCOME

New RUSA Members

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
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17910	Martens, Andrew	Golden Valley	MN
18153	Jay, T	Chanhassen	MN
17882	Floerke, Shaun R	Duluth	MN
18128	Ray, Aaron	Northfield	MN
17891	Menti, Rob	Maple Grove	MN
18032	Hernandez, Erick	Rochester	MN
18148	Shuipi, Nick J	Minneapolis	MN
17885	Bransky, Aaron	Duluth	MN
18165	Dunn, Colin	Minneapolis	MN
18115	Miller, Jordan E	St. Paul	MN
18112	Bassett, Eugene Robert	Minneapolis	MN
18028	Schendel, Evan	Shoreview	MN
18100	Henderson, Mike	Winona	MN
18147	Perkins, Marvin J	University City	MO
17928	Joswich, Robin	Kansas City	MO
17814	McCann, Curtis	Chesterfield	MO
18057	Keating, Stuart Phillip	Saint Louis	MO
18001	Lauber, M D	Ballwin	MO
17873	Sullivan, David S	Hernando	MS
17850	Hoecker, Tyler	Missoula	MT
17804	Barojas, Everardo J	Cdmx	MX
17776	Romero, Tadeo	Tijuana	MX
17902	Peele, Catherine M	Charlotte	NC
18111	Nickerson, Thomas	Kearney	NE
18119	Reetz, Allan	Meriden	NH
17883	Hamblin, Stacey	Carneys Point	NJ
17884	Nixon, Jessica	Carneys Point	NJ
18088	Rowland, D	Bordentown	NJ
18121	Baez, Andy	Woodbridge	NJ
18140	Dai, Futao	Edison	NJ
17819	Kane, John Michael	Logan	NJ
17989	Singh, Kamaljit	Monmouth Jct	NJ
18104	Aly, Khaled	Hamilton Square	NJ
18058	Osborne III, Michael	Lafayette Township	NJ
18124	Czyzyk, Brian M	Medford	NJ
18099	Senechal, Joseph Louis	Albuquerque	NM
18143	Marshall, Ray	Gardnerville	NV
18130	de Haan, Rick	Brooklyn	NY
18118	Thornton, R. Shawn	Croghan	NY
18160	Martin, Peter	New York	NY
18161	Rasmussen, Caroline N	Lansing	NY
18162	Silva Felsenthal, Eric Jordan	Floral Park	NY
18134	Giardi, Valentina	Hagaman	NY
18077	Gorzeman, Evan Miles	Hudson	NY
18146	Harrington, Matthew	Victor	NY
18168	Richard, Valerie	New York	NY
18127	Anderson, Kenyon R	Brooklyn	NY
18049	Matejka, Kurt	Albany	NY
17754	Homenick, Richard E	Schenectady	NY
17960	Balchunas, Anna	Astoria	NY
17897	Carls, Sean	Oneonta	NY
17978	Rossitz, Amanda	East Elmhurst	NY
17977	Schneppenburger, Michael	East Elmhurst	NY
18002	Sanchez, Coby K	Brooklyn	NY
17788	Colarusso Jr, Nicholas R	Fishkill	NY
17835	Kaplanian, Aram	New York	NY
17854	Bruccoleri, Marcus	Brooklyn	NY

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
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17949	Sampson, Steffan	Troy	NY
17950	Kim, Andy Jin	Watervliet	NY
17951	Costes, Christopher C	Brooklyn	NY
18169	Forrest, Deirdre M	Brooklyn	NY
18045	Gannon, Jason	Washingtonville	NY
17969	Neese, Adam	Brooklyn	NY
17907	Ferrigno, Michael	Rochester	NY
17794	Gleason, Sylvia A	Dayton	OH
17822	Gosser, Aaron	Troy	OH
17764	Shivak, Jeffrey T	Avon	OH
17931	Bradshaw, Gary	Urbana	OH
17973	Sheehan, Jared	Chagrin Falls	OH
17927	Minor, KeSean	Dayton	OH
18008	Grover, Daniel	Avon	OH
17959	Hatfield, Dustin M	Kenton	OH
17844	Waldy, James D	Oregonia	OH
18013	Hotelling, Dann	Dayton	OH
17756	Stoychev, Ivan	Columbus	OH
17894	Charland, Michael	Wellesley	ON
18083	Grant, Jesse	Eugene	OR
17955	Cowan, Jeffrey A	Portland	OR
17825	Wright Sr, James Alston	Portland	OR
17997	Herlihy, Joseph	Portland	OR
18109	Hall, Kyle	McMinnville	OR
17803	Thompson, Eric James	Portland	OR
17763	Jilot, Trish	Portland	OR
17779	Lee, R	Portland	OR
17855	Trollan, Emma	Philadelphia	PA
17942	Bacher-Hicks, David	Philadelphia	PA
17864	Mantuano, Andrew	Philadelphia	PA
17851	Liu, Peter	Philadelphia	PA
17948	Sullivan, Melissa	Philadelphia	PA
17837	Sikora, Tracey	Philadelphia	PA
17845	Glenn, Max	Philadelphia	PA
17838	Seeger, Allison C	Philadelphia	PA
18159	Shah, Bhavin S	Bensalem	PA
17801	Burns, Michael S	West Chester	PA
17932	Reinagel, Charles W	Philadelphia	PA
17858	Hunt, T J	Philadelphia	PA
17938	Khan, Sayantan	Bala Cynwyd	PA
17869	Piperato, Jamie	Drexel Hill	PA
17914	Rutkoski, Thomas J	Philadelphia	PA
17833	Burke, Tim	Philadelphia	PA
17904	Arlyck, Matthew B	Philadelphia	PA
17861	Lynch, Anna L	Philadelphia	PA
17863	Dai, Bing	Philadelphia	PA
18150	Altea, Matthew M	Philadelphia	PA
17876	Hiller, Zachary	Philadelphia	PA
17829	Pilla, Jenine	Philadelphia	PA
17857	Arnobit, Judy	Philadelphia	PA
17823	Sun, Michelle	Philadelphia	PA
17780	Wieme, John	Philadelphia	PA
17773	Asby, Nick	Penn Valley	PA
17990	Garrity, Michael P	Philadelphia	PA
17984	Forelli, Cris A	Damascus	PA
17983	Bedoya, Warren	Philadelphia	PA
17993	Staten Jr, William E	Drexel Hill	PA

RUSA#	NAME	CITY	STATE
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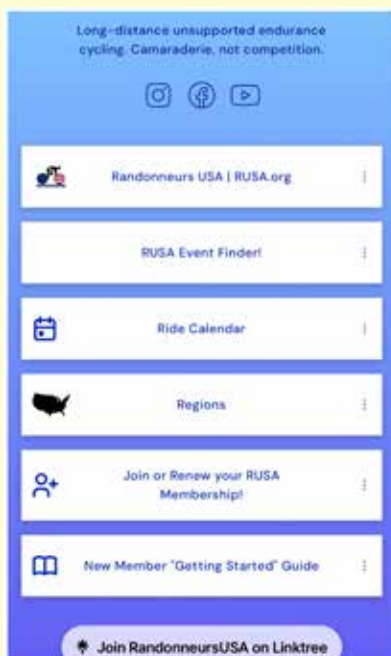
17961	Maloney, Andrew	Philadelphia	PA
17982	Kraft, Samantha	Philadelphia	PA
17839	Asraf, Hala	Philadelphia	PA
17986	Bonus, Joe	Philadelphia	PA
17976	Means, Jacqueline	Philadelphia	PA
17775	Dixon, Erik	Bala Cynwyd	PA
18068	Catrambone III, Bruno J	Philadelphia	PA
18066	Wendel, Joseph	Philadelphia	PA
17968	Bodnar, J	Pittsburgh	PA
17967	Kuhl, Bella	Philadelphia	PA
17966	Abbott, Noah	Philadelphia	PA
17964	Wasserman, Ellie	Philadelphia	PA
17972	Kenzakowski, Don C	Eagleville	PA
17985	Philipbar, Denise	Philadelphia	PA
18122	Casquero, Mark	Quezon City	PH
17809	Araujo, Trey	Barrington	RI
17790	DiNolfo, Anthony	Memphis	TN
18082	Covert, Layne	Knoxville	TN
18042	Bussey, Trey	Nashville	TN
17781	Oconnor, Casey K	Austin	TX
17945	Cruz, Ryan K	San Antonio	TX
18019	Nightingale, Martie	Salt Lake City	UT
18020	Nightingale, Sage	Salt Lake City	UT
17980	Cunningham, Adam B	Farmington	UT
18101	Kennedy, Mark	Salt Lake City	UT
18164	Barton, Connor	Salt Lake City	UT
18056	Miao, Norman	Taylorsville	UT
18044	Clyde, Bryson H	Mona	UT
18126	Howell, Mark	Salt Lake City	UT
18052	Gines, Bryan	Salt Lake City	UT
18135	Dewey, Nicole R	Sandy	UT
18132	Rigby, Matt	Salt Lake City	UT
18003	Brubaker, Philip	Brattleboro	VT
17843	Rodrigue, Paul	Brattleboro	VT
18038	Cabamalan, Erwin S	Covington	WA
18034	Frias, John L	Bonney Lake	WA
18026	Cole, Morgan	Seattle	WA
18061	Dean, David A	Bellingham	WA
18017	Nguyen, Madeline T	Olympia	WA
17953	Tucker, Jonah	Lacey	WA
17832	Kucera, Luke Daniel	Bothell	WA
17811	Mills, Abner J	Seattle	WA
17777	Minter, Thomas L	Bellevue	WA
18095	Robertson, Deenie L	Woodinville	WA
18009	Wyland, Rob	Olympia	WA
18072	Harper, Michael S	Seattle	WA
17998	Kirchmeier, Robert R	Olympia	WA
17887	Ryan, Tyler	Tacoma	WA
17761	Gamponia, Villamor	Renton	WA
18125	Young, Adam Alexander	Redmond	WA
17924	Kanervisto, L	Seattle	WA
17970	Emery, Dmytry	Seattle	WA
17826	Brown, Jeff	Madison	WI
17793	Nordstrom, Dan	Madison	WI
18090	Woodburn, Sean J	Madison	WI
18131	Mullery, Ryan M	La Crosse	WI
18005	Richards, Jason C	Cottage Grove	WI

RUSA Awards

For a list of requirements for each award, please see the RUSA website. Click on **Members** and then **Awards** on the drop down tab, where each award and the qualifying rides for it are listed.

RUSA American Explorer Award

NAME	CITY, STATE	TOTAL STATES	APPROVED
Barankay, Iwan	Philadelphia, PA	14	2/28/25
Chin-Hong, Patrick	Amherst, MA	36	2/22/25
Fambles, Millison D	Olympia, WA	48	4/22/25
Fox II, Phil	Chicago, IL	29	4/27/25
Gagne, Rick	Lebanon, ME	10	2/25/25
Geisert, Rodney D	Columbia, MO	34	4/21/25
Lentz, Richard	Vineland, NJ	18	2/15/25
McHenry, Thomas	Pasadena, CA	25	4/3/25
Myers, Brent D	Denver, CO	14	2/19/25
Newcomer, Robert C.	Atlanta, GA	35	2/22/25
O'Brien, Emily (F)	Medford, MA	15	3/10/25
Ray, Joseph	Bernardville, NJ	25	2/28/25
Shopland, Ian	Olympia, WA	29	4/13/25
Wright, Pamela [1] (F)	Fort Worth, TX	8	3/27/25



Attention Members

American Randonneur is mailed via third class mail to the address on file of all current members. It is important that you inform the membership office of any change of address, so that your magazine will reach you in a timely fashion.

Update your address online at:

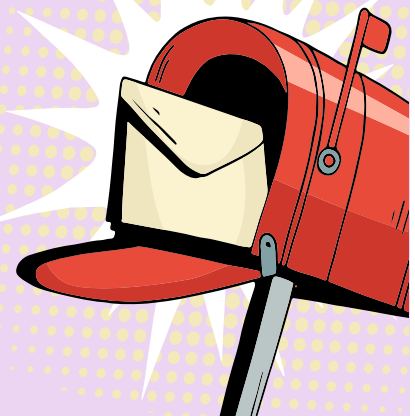
rusa.org/cgi-bin/memberaddresschange_GF.pl

And, don't forget to renew your membership!

Memberships run from January through December.

Renew online at:

rusa.org/cgi-bin/memberrenew_GF.pl



RUSA Awards

RUSA Coast-to-Coast Award

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Laurent Chambard	Summit, NJ	3/10/25

Galaxy Award

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Robert J. Booth	Madison, WI	3/19/25
Daniel S. Diehn	Black River Falls, WI	4/27/25

RUSA Cup Award

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Dan Hallman	Washington, DC	3/31/25
Mark S Schenkel [2]	Orlando, FL	4/1/25
Thomas S Southwood	Westfield, IN	3/31/25
John Stroh	Westwood Hills, KS	3/25/25
Pamela Wright (F) [8]	Fort Worth, TX	3/13/25

Challenge Lepertel Award

NAME	CITY, STATE	YEAR
Chin-Hong, Patrick	Amherst, MA	2025

Whitehorse Mtn comes into view as riders approach Darrington, WA, on the SIR 400k this spring.

—PHOTO CALVIN PATTERSON



RUSA Rouler Award

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Dan Driscoll [5]	Arlington, TX	2/9/25
K A Evans	Kansas City, MO	3/23/25
Gary P Gottlieb [5]	Aledo, TX	2/9/25
Allison Hogikyan (F)	Chicago, IL	4/16/25
Chuck Judy	Chicago, IL	4/16/25
Spencer Klaassen	Saint Joseph, MO	4/19/25
Rob May	Arlington, TX	2/9/25
Doug McLerran [4]	Aurora, IL	4/9/25
Dana A Pacino (F) [5]	Aledo, TX	2/9/25
Peter Rajcani	Arlington, TX	2/24/25
John Stroh	Westwood Hills, KS	3/23/25
Brian Westerhoff	DeMotte, IN	4/16/25
Pamela Wright (F) [5]	Fort Worth, TX	2/9/25

Mondial Award

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Dan Driscoll [8]	Arlington, TX	4/10/25
Peter W Dusel [2]	Ontario, NY	2/5/25
Art Fuoco	Palm Bay, FL	1/22/25
Ann Benoit Jurczynski (F) [2]	Box Elder, SD	1/28/25
Tim Mason [2]	Davis, CA	1/22/25
Kaley F McCumber (F)	Cupertino, CA	2/12/25
Brian R McGuire	Phoenix, AZ	3/9/25
Christopher D Michels, Sr	Houston, TX	2/6/25
Andrew P Sapuntzakis	Seattle, WA	12/3/24
Matthew Vining	San Gabriel, CA	3/1/25
Eric Walstad	Nevada City, CA	3/13/25
William Watts	Indianapolis, IN	4/28/25
Kevin J Williams	Carmichael, CA	1/19/25

R-12 Award

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Mike P Campbell	Shakopee, MN	1/12/25
J Andrew Clayton [9]	Canal Winchester, OH	3/14/25
Matthew D Close [3]	Woodinville, WA	1/19/25
Daniel S. Diehn [7]	Black River Falls, WI	4/6/25
Clif Dierking [3]	Severna Park, MD	1/21/25
Jon Dowling [3]	Canton, MI	3/9/25
Peter W Dusel [13]	Ontario, NY	3/30/25
Kimberly A Freitas (F)	Redwood City, CA	3/12/25
Rick Gagne	Lebanon, ME	3/19/25
Rob Gauthier, Jr	Springvale, ME	4/4/25
Christopher M Gross [3]	Washington, DC	1/27/25
Che Hale	Baltimore, MD	1/19/25
Dustin B Harding [4]	Loveland, CO	2/4/25
Tracey Hinder (F)	Brooklyn, NY	3/7/25
Jim Howell [6]	Niwot, CO	4/13/25
Betty Jean Jordan (F) [11]	Monticello, GA	3/2/25
Ken A Lanteigne [9]	Gresham, OR	4/3/25
Richard Lentz [8]	Vineland, NJ	4/30/25
Robert Mann	Whittier, CA	1/13/25
David R Marsh	Apple Valley, MN	3/13/25
Kyle R McKenzie [2]	Falls Church, VA	2/27/25
John D Nguyen [6]	Seattle, WA	2/7/25
Gary D Pastirik	Woodbridge, NJ	2/26/25
Mark Z Rada	Kokomo, IN	3/10/25
Joseph Ray [8]	Bernardsville, NJ	3/11/25
Jerry Riccardi [5]	Prairie Village, KS	5/1/25
Sarah E Rice	Chicago, IL	1/12/25
Michael Riley	Colonia, NJ	2/7/25
Mark S Schenkel [10]	Orlando, FL	3/6/25
Thomas S Southwood	Westfield, IN	2/2/25
Ben Swartz [2]	Washington, DC	1/27/25
Michael Gerald Turek [9]	Longmont, CO	4/20/25
Ray Whitlock [2]	Seattle, WA	2/26/25
Julia Wortham (F) [2]	Leeds, AL	1/16/25
Jasmine Wu (F) [3]	Cupertino, CA	4/23/25

RUSA Awards

R-12 Ultra Award

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Mark S Schenkel	Orlando, FL	3/4/25

P-12 Award

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Charlie A Martin [6]	Oak Harbor, WA	3/15/25
Bill Bryant [5]	Santa Cruz, CA	3/8/25
John Buten	Cambridge, MA	3/4/25
Greg Cardell [4]	Valencia, CA	2/4/25
Alison Carey (F) [3]	Ocean Springs, MS	2/2/25
Janice Chernekoﬀ (F) [8]	Lyon Station, PA	1/14/25
J Andrew Clayton [9]	Canal Winchester, OH	3/10/25
Dan Driscoll [16]	Arlington, TX	3/17/25
Peter W Dusel [5]	Ontario, NY	4/4/25
Jason L Hansen [4]	Seattle, WA	3/27/25
Jim Howell [4]	Niwot, CO	4/13/25
Angela Lakwete (F) [8]	Auburn, AL	3/22/25
Brian Leu	Hillsborough, NC	3/17/25
Kat Leyh (F)	Chicago, IL	1/20/25
Charlie A Martin [6]	Sunnyvale, CA	1/21/25
John D Nguyen [2]	Seattle, WA	2/9/25
Shan Perera [14]	Seattle, WA	4/3/25
Eric Peterson [2]	Naperville, IL	2/27/25
Jay Scott Readey [2]	Flossmoor, IL	3/15/25
Sarah E Rice	Chicago, IL	1/12/25
Graham A Ross [4]	Portland, OR	2/7/25
Gregory H Smith [7]	Richland Center, WI	4/6/25
David N Staats [10]	Columbus, OH	4/13/25
Wei P Sun [2]	San Diego, CA	4/18/25
Ben Swartz [2]	Washington, DC	2/11/25
Tibor Tamas [9]	Fort Worth, TX	3/19/25
Andrew D Thomas [2]	Newburyport, MA	3/25/25
John Vincent [8]	Rochester, WA	2/21/25
David Weigel [3]	Wheat Ridge, CO	1/11/25

Rando Scout Award

NAME (25-49 unique routes)	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Allen, Jared	Upper Arlington, OH	4/7/25
Billing, Michael A	Greenville, SC	1/14/25
Creyts, Timothy T	Brooklyn, NY	2/2/25
Evans, K A	Kansas City, MO	3/16/25
Hardianto, Fransiscus	San Diego, CA	2/11/25
Harrison, Mark A	Naperville, IL	4/16/25
Keenan, Ben	Wilmington, DE	3/12/25
Kunsak, Steven	Coraopolis, PA	4/21/25
Medina, Anthony M	Bainbridge Island, WA	1/13/25
Noguchi, Takahiro	Berkeley, CA	2/12/25
Olson, James	Kenmore, WA	3/24/25
Polansky, David	Seattle, WA	3/24/25
Vreeland, Jim	Piscataway, NJ	2/2/25

NAME (50-74 unique routes)	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Arnoco, Renato B	Fremont, CA	4/20/25
Colavin, Osvaldo	San Diego, CA	1/13/25
Ende, John Capn	Asheville, NC	1/14/25
Hosokawa, Takeshi	Poway, CA	1/13/25
Walstad, Eric	Nevada City, CA	4/5/25

NAME (75-99 unique routes)	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Foley, Paul A	Golden, CO	3/25/25
Lawrence, Joel	Santa Clarita, CA	3/31/25
Morse, Josh	Olympia, WA	4/21/25
Newcomer, Robert C.	Atlanta, GA	3/30/25
Smith, Gregory H	Richland Center, WI	4/14/25
Thompson, W David	New Smyrna Beach, FL	3/30/25

Ultra Randonneur Award

NAME	CITY, STATE	APPROVED
Gary M DelNero	Leawood, KS	4/6/25
John Lee Ellis [3]	Lafayette, CO	1/8/25

IQ-XL



This new dynamo headlight from Busch & Müller is extremely bright. Select either 200 lux or 300 lux for the low beam, or switch to high beam at 250 lux. The light ships with a fork crown mount. Handlebar mounts are available separately.

The 200 lux setting will be enough for almost any situation, except perhaps when riding at night in the rain, with lots of automobile traffic, and pot-holes, like what I used to do 50 years ago in Boston.

Then, you will be glad you have the 300 lux setting. Yay! Drag from the dynamo hub will be a bit higher at the 300 lux setting, so most of the time you'll be at 200 lux. Boo!

Download the instructions here.

<https://www.peterwhitecycles.com/downloads/iq-xl-instructions.pdf>

PETER WHITE Cycles

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603 478 0900

www.PeterWhiteCycles.com/schmidt-headlights.php

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