



# B.C. RANDONNEUR Marathon Bicycling



Founding Member 1983

The Newsletter of the BABC Randonneur Committee  
February 1992

## 1992 EXECUTIVE

### EDITORIAL

Deirdre Arscott and I have taken over the organizing of the Vancouver Pacifique Populaire. A meeting was held at Deirdre's recently and a keen group of volunteers learned how to make Sushi while discussing what jobs need to be done for the ride on April 5th. Volunteers are always welcome, so give me a call (876-5228) if you'd like to help out, or if you need information about the ride. See entry form enclosed with this newsletter.

No one has owned up to the photograph in December's issue of Bicycling magazine. The B.C. jersey is clear - the rider's face is not.

It's not too late to send me your Paris-Brest-Paris stories. I'd especially like to hear from the bike shops who had to do last minute things for us PBers.

Send your articles to me, Barbara Lepsoe, 4720 Quebec Street, Vancouver, B.C. V5V 3M1 (604) 876-5228 or send facsimiles to me c/o the BABC (604)738-7175.

### SOCIAL NIGHT

**SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 1992**

**7:30 pm**

**ANZA CLUB  
#3 West 8th Avenue,  
Vancouver, B.C.**

Enjoy an evening of fun and entertainment meeting new friends and reminiscing with the old.

The cost is \$5.00 per person, payable at the door, to cover food costs.

Please phone Jim Cave (987-8262) or Anna Bonga (420-9509) to reserve yourself some food!

Jim Cave is putting together the entertainment for this event, so if you'd like to show slides, put on a skit, give a speech, or entertain us in any other way, please let Jim know as soon as possible.

#### Chair:

Stephen Hinde.....246-2097  
P.O. Box 1417, Chemainus, B.C. V0R 1K0

#### Vice Chair:

Manfred Kuchenmuller.....253-4858

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Awards: Anna Bonga.....420-9509

Social: Jim Cave.....987-8262

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT FRANCE, OCTOBER 1991

The Centennial PBP has been over for a month and a half now, and it was the 6th I have completed, and even though it was the very best one for me, I must confess that I have taken advantage of these days to rest, and haven't even been on the bike except for the "Ciclista Catalan" event in Montserrat, a sort of Festival akin to the French "Paques en Provence" which brings together 1500 cyclotourists from our region.

Now, as President of Randonneurs Mondiaux, I must first thank you all for supporting my candidacy, and tell you that I am open to your suggestions, especially if they are intended to raise the status of all randonneurs.

I have given a lot of thought to the PBP and I am concerned about the high percentage of non-finishers, as well as the large number of participants finishing outside of the control times, in spite of the hour of grace that the organizers wisely allowed.

The latest data tell us that the percentage of non-finishers is 19%. The explanation given this year for this high number was the strong winds and the high mid-day heat; in 1987, rain was blamed for the 18% of non-finishers. Will we always have excuses? What happened in 1983 when only 9% abandoned? It's true that the 1983 PBP had no untoward incidents, leading us to believe that 9% is a minimum which must be counted on from the start.

In fact, abandoning is a major decision for the cyclist to take, a decision rendering null and void all his/her dreams and hopes of so many months. It is a serious decision, but it is made to put an end to the pain, but when one returns to normal and realizes its irreversibility, it can traumatize a person to the point of forever hating bicycle riding.

We have read many times that randonneur cycling requires mental fitness from the participant, as compared to other forms of cycling which demand physical fitness. This is the main difference, as compared not only with Audax but with all other forms of cycletouring, and physical fitness is a given for randonneurs. To take part in PBP one needs a sort of sporting guarantee, the brevets, which, apart from providing the necessary physical fitness, should also enhance the participant's mental capacity. Seeing the high number of non-finishers makes one think that large numbers of participants have not reached even minimal levels of mental fitness.

In a 1200km ride, one always goes through low periods, but if the participant is unable to recover, it follows that he/she will abandon, having used up any cushion of time built up to that point. In principle, we can say that it is not the purpose of the brevets to make the riders endure pain, but when the final results show 19% non-finishers, it seems to us that many were in pain, and we are alarmed for two reasons: PBP is not organized so people can go in it and suffer; and, it seems that 19% of the participants have not yet learned how not to suffer.

I believe that any effort we can put into reducing the number of non-finishers, without prolonging any rider's suffering, will be of vital importance for the continued progress of this form of cycling which unites us.

I hope that randonneurs from the world over will have recovered from the PBP and from the great journeys you undertook to make the centenary reunion possible. With the holidays fast approaching, I will conclude by wishing all of you a prosperous 1992.

Francesc Porta

President, Randonneurs Mondiaux

(Translation from the original Spanish: G. Pareja, V.P., B.R.M., Canada)

(Ed. note. Francesc Porta has made up a questionnaire for those who did not complete the PBP. If you have not already received a copy, and would like one, please contact either Gerry Pareja, or Barbara Lepsoe)

## TRAINING FOR PARIS-BREST- PARIS 1995

There are some riders who are already thinking about PBP 1995 and I think it timely to offer some advice that I'm probably too lazy to follow myself. This isn't aimed at those with some racing experience, but at those from the touring end of the spectrum who have yet to get into the nitty-gritty of the real long distance stuff.

As a club-level time triallist in Britain I never had any contact with, nor any knowledge of Randonneuring. Vague rumours had filtered through about people across the water in France staggering along at about 9mph getting from Paris to Brest and back, but I didn't know anything about the setup and anyway it was organised by the French and what did they know about fair-play in sport and all that rubbish? It was 1971, I think, before any British riders found out the hard way what PBP was all about and I had been in Canada seven years by then.

Since returning from PBP 91 I have given some thought to what sort of ride I might have expected to achieve in PBP 56. Based upon about 12 years of time trialling from 25 mile time trials to 24-hour time trials, I guess I would have got round in about 55 hours. At least that is what I think I would have been capable of.

If you are capable of riding at 30kph, then 20kph is going to feel comfortable. But if 20kph is all you are used to doing then obviously it will be difficult to maintain it through a long event. To get your system used to higher speeds, try time trialling. The B.C. racing scene isn't designed to attract the average tourist - it is too specialised. Time trialling is a pastime all on its own that doesn't get much attention even though TT results have often decided the result of the Tour-de-France. An all out TT ideally should see the rider collapse at the line with all effort spread evenly through the distance, whatever it may be. But you don't need to go that far, and you don't really need a time keeper; computers do the job well enough.

Select a route you know and enjoy. Avoid, as much as possible, traffic lights and stop signs. A circuit is good as you can cover it as many times as you like. Aim at exceeding 30kph and restrict your distance to 40 kms. Once in awhile try something like my 100 mile route. The Billy Miner Pub, by the Haney By-Pass, is just 50 miles from Harrison Hot Springs. Hitting Woodside at 60 miles or so is good training as well.

Touring bikes are not geared for this sort of effort. The gear steps are too wide. If you can manage it, have a bike set up for speed work, with close ratio gears. Try and keep your cadence up for most of your riding. As part of the strength training do some big gear, slow pedalling speed, but not too much. Speed involves fast pedalling, not hard slogging. Big gears are okay in short bursts, but for sustained speed, a cadence of about 90 rpm is about right. 32kph at 90 rpm requires a gear of about 75 inches which is about 42 X 15, 48 X 17, or 52 X 19.

The required off-bike training, weight-lifting and all that gruesome stuff I will leave for others to advise on; I never did understand it.

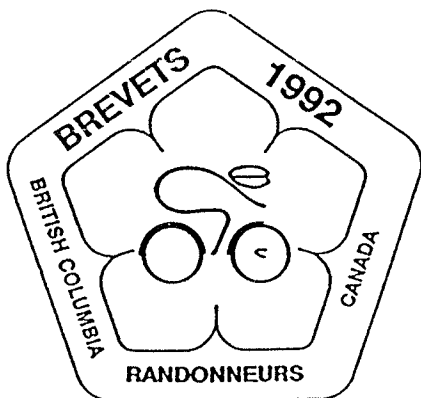
(Harold Bridge)

(Ed.note: Having written this article, Harold wasn't sure if he'd said what he'd meant to say. He pointed out that the French riders can take more time for rest stops because they generally ride at faster average speeds. What Harold wants to emphasize is the fact that one should try to get away from the tourist thought, and learn to ride faster.)

### LOGO COMPETITION

Once again Dan McGuire has come up with a winning Rando logo. Dan's design will be used for the 1992 season.

For those anxious to put pen to paper, the 1993 logo competition has been extended to July, 1992. Please send your logo concepts to Anna Bonga, 8330 Aspenwood Place, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 3V3



## HARRISON HOT SPRINGS RIDE

**APRIL 11 & 12, 1992**

Leave at 8:00am from the White Spot on Lougheed and Gilmore to ride all the way. Any pedal pushers or crank attacks needing information can contact Bruce Hainer at 298-7060

OR

Car-pool to Mission and cycle to Harrison Hot Springs. Start at 9:00am from the Pollard's - 214 East 24th Ave., Vancouver. Phone Marilyn at 873-2384 for more details.

### SINGLE SOCK SENTURY

**MAY 3, 1992**

**A 100K OR 50K RIDE AROUND  
VANCOUVER**

**FOOD AND FLUID SUPPLIED**

Twist those chains, flex those rims and remember to pick up your sock at the end. Contact Ian Faris at 438-4022, or Bruce Hainer at 298-7060 for more details.

## THE NAKUSP 300 - MAY LONG WEEKEND

The date of this ride is Sunday May 17. Nelson has been chosen as the starting point for this ride as it will allow two days travel time for both Alberta and B.C. riders.

The course will go northwards from Nelson, past Ainsworth Hot Springs and continue along the west shores (and hillsides) to the historical mining town of Kaslo, where randonneurs can be assured of good food and local sights while fuelling up for the climb out. The route then swings westward past old mining communities (now abandoned), climbing up through the Monashees and finally descending 9km into New Denver. This descent is fast and exciting with guaranteed adrenalin surge for even the most sedate of randonneurs (if such an animal exists). This is followed by an out and back leg into Nakusp, returning to New Denver.

The final part of this exceptionally scenic route continues south above the shores of the Slokan Lake, then winds through the pastoral Slokan Valley to the Junction of

Highway 6 and 3A. The final leg is an easy 23km into Nelson on good flat highway with wide paved shoulders. Overall, the route is moderately difficult with some extended but gradual climbs west of Kaslo, interspersed with shorter steep(er) hills on the Ainsworth-Kaslo section. The final sections are easy (wind allowing) for a cruise into Nelson.

Emergency vehicle support only, will be provided for this randonnee - details to follow.

There will be a follow-up breakfast planned for the Monday morning, so the group can share stories of their adventures before parting company and driving home.

Please contact Bob Boonstra, 2287 Omineca Drive, Kamloops, B.C., V2E 1S8, (604) 828-2869 if you are interested in this event.

(Submitted by Bob Boonstra)

## **HOW NOT TO RIDE THE PBP** **(if you want to finish under 50 hours)**

My hopes of finishing somewhere near the front of the 80 hour group were dashed at the start as I found about 600 cyclists strung out in a long line ahead of me moving at breakneck speed. For over two hours I went all out, advancing slowly along the line, bridging gaps that opened as cyclists dropped off the pace. Occasionally, I would look at my cyclometer and shake my head as the digits flashed 50 km/h. This pace was unsustainable. I knew that I would pay for it, but still I pressed on, determined to get to the front of the pack. I succeeded, but at a heavy cost. I spent some memorable moments in the lead though, alone with the pace car, cruising through the little villages. It had to end sometime though. Eventually, I was pulled back in. I had told Joe and Silia (my support crew) that we were unlikely to make the first checkpoint in less than 4 1/2 hours. However, we swept through in a great wave before 4 hours had elapsed. As I stopped to exchange water bottles, cyclists flew by. I lost ground and was despairing of ever seeing the leaders again when I was overtaken by a couple of Americans on a tandem. These guys were motoring! I later learned that the captain of this dynamic duo was Pete Penseyres, two-time winner of the Race Across America. I floored it, tucked in behind the tandem and hung on desperately as they rocketed down the hills. In short order we had rejoined the group. I eased up, but they sailed right through the crowd, intent on catching the real leaders. As it turned out, there was a small group consisting of two singles and a tandem somewhere ahead of our group of 25 or so. We pulled into the next checkpoint, 221km into the ride after 6 1/2 hours. By this time we were well into the hills, I lost my group again coming out of the checkpoint and had to persevere alone to regain the lost ground. The pace had slackened enough by this time that I was able to catch up, although my legs were gradually dying. I was only able to stay with them for about an hour longer before they dropped me while climbing a hill. From that point on I was on my own. I checked in at the 300km point after 9 hours 42 minutes, about 15 minutes behind the rest of the group.

We had been cycling through the night. The day dawned bright and sunny. The temperature rose throughout the day reaching a high of about 33 degrees celcius. Sometime in the afternoon, I felt myself starting to nod off on the bike, so I pulled off the road into a field and laid down for a short nap. I made the mistake of staying in the sun. When I awoke and tried to mount my bike, I slipped and fell. I must have gone briefly into shock because my heart started to beat so wildly that I feared my ride was over. Fortunately, it settled down after a few minutes and I was soon on my way again. After losing contact with the other cyclists my pace had slowed considerably. It wasn't until late in the afternoon that things began to pick up. I made Brest in about 24 hours. All things considered, that was not bad. As always, Joe and Silia were there to meet me.

This is where I made my second big mistake (my first was not arriving at the start early enough to get in the front line). I should have slept for a couple of hours. Instead, I climbed on my bike and headed out with the sun setting at my back and the wind in my face. A strong wind it was, too. It was slow going, alone, battling a brisk breeze, climbing continuously in the darkening dusk. As night fell, I encountered an unbroken chain of oncoming cyclists, a thousand incandescent dots strung along an invisible thread (not to be confused with George Bush's points of light). My brain decided it was time to close up shop. Sensory information was coming but it began to be ignored. The road would come in and out of focus. It would disappear and then reappear. The images became too infrequent to navigate. I stopped and laid down in the thorny grass for a while. I don't know how long I slept. This scenario repeated itself a half dozen times or more throughout the night and the next day. I may have slept for 15 minutes, or half an hour or an hour - I didn't keep track. For the most part I soldiered on alone. Occasionally, I would be overtaken or I would overtake another solitary cyclist or a pair or trio.

I developed a mild case of diarrhea the second day, probably as the result of the action of the heat of the previous day on the contents of my water bottles which contained a high carbohydrate drink. I frequently had to duck behind the nearest hedge to relieve myself. On the third night, upon waking up after dozing for an indeterminate interval at a roadside bus stop, I was overtaken by a small group. We joined forces, but the pace fluctuated so much as we exchanged front line duties that eventually three of us forged ahead to challenge the headwind on our own. The simple presence of another set of wheels, of another rider shifting position in the saddle was enough of a novel stimulus to keep my brain from tuning out. After several hours though, I was struggling again. Now there were only two of us. I had to concentrate on every pedal stroke. As the world disappeared, I would shake my head and jolt my body in a vain effort to make it reappear. With a Herculean effort of will I managed to keep the sensory channels minimally engaged over the last 10km to the checkpoint. There I slept for a couple of hours in preparation for the final push to Paris. I didn't stop again.

Even after missing a turn and losing about an hour before getting back on track. I pressed on steadily into the wind. As Paris approached I attacked the wind with renewed vigour.

I pulled up at the finish line, having ridden about 1250km in 64 hours 11 minutes. I learned later that I finished first among Canadians and set a new Canadian record in the process. I'm already planning my strategy for the next PBP; I'm convinced that it's possible to master this course in under 50 hours.

(Ted Milner, President, Les Randonneurs de Montreal)

## TO ELAND BACK

In England there's an even longer ride! As if Paris-Brest-Paris isn't long and challenging enough.

Twenty nine riders partook in the London-Edinburgh-London in July of 1990, covering a distance of 1382kms. Twenty six completed the gruelling course within the overall average speed limits of 30 to 13.3kph, making the total time allowed about 102 hours. Discussing the article from England's Cycling Weekly, Harold Bridge comments that it's only another 12 hours of riding. Judging by the article, riders go through the same scenarios as those who've done Paris-Brest-Paris are familiar with. Anyone interested in an AUK event can obtain details from the AUK Membership Secretary, 22B Kings Ave., Lower Parkstone, Poole, BH14 9BQ, England. Enclose a self-addressed-envelope.

## **LE RAID PYRENEEN WORLD'S TOUGHEST RIDE 450 miles and 50,000ft of climbing**

The two riders were desperately cold. The wind chill factor was in the thirties; the rain was falling in bucket loads, and the wind which had started as a breeze was now gusting to gale force.

They had been riding since 6am and now, thirteen hours later, they were still going at it. And yet before being able to grab a life-saving few hours of sleep, there was still the Col de Portet D'Aspet to be tackled. It would be sheer hard work, 2000 feet of climbing in three miles.

Mike Barry and Mike Brown were tired, absolutely knackered. Out of the last 39 hours they had been riding for more than 30.

Slowly they made their way up the mountain. At one point Brown became disoriented, took a wrong turn and wasted some of the very few resources he had left trying to ride a sheep track. That was understandable. There was no moon. In fact the sky was blacker than any I have ever seen anywhere, and here were these guys covered in blackness, following the beams from their tiny headlamps projecting ten feet in front of their bikes.

Eventually they arrived at the top. To complain about the pain was meaningless. It had been there so long, they couldn't imagine anything else.

And now that they were at the top, they knew that their torture wouldn't end. There was still the descent!

If the climb was sheer hell, the descent would be the same times two. Everything would be worse; the wind chill could increase, and the rain would be like thousands of needles being driven into them. And if their legs would get some respite from climbing, then the muscles in their shoulders and backs would cramp in agony from the effect of physically trying to hang on as their bikes rocketed down the mountain.

Still there was no moon. They had only their headlamps and prayers to guide them away from the edges of the road. Their brakes screamed as the corners rushed up at them. Were there to be any gravel or sheep dung on the road, well that would end it all. In some places the drop over the edge was literally hundreds of feet.

I sat in the warm and secure car after they passed and wondered why they did it. Why do two grown men hurl themselves across mountain tops? Why do they torture themselves this way? I knew that their goal was to ride 450 miles across the complete width of the Pyrenees, climbing 18 passes in less than 80 hours of total time. But how would they verbalize the whys and wherefores? In reality I knew they wouldn't. They'd simply do the ride and let the rest of us wonder why.

For years, the "Raid Pyreneen" as it's known, has been the ultimate test for serious riders in Europe. But until Mike Brown and Mike Barry did it, no North American had ever even attempted, let alone finished it.

The Raid Pyreneen is not an organised event. You can set off anytime between April and September when the passes are open. Ralph Lapp and Ged McLean plan on doing the Raid in 1993, so if you'd like more information contact them - OR - write in French to M. Jean Beguere at 4 Rue des Violettes, 64000, Pau, France, and tell him of your interest. He'll send you a book outlining the rules and regulations and an application form.

(Source: Cycling 1981, provided by Harold Bridge, and Ralph Lapp)

## HOT OFF THE PRESS

Ken Bonner has big plans this season: to set a world record for 1000km. You may recall that he posted a sizzling 46h46m in 1991; it turns out that the all-time record is 46h30m, by Andre Canaud of C.C. Troyens in 1954, a surprisingly slow time considering the 1200km PBP has been done in under 44 hours by a few riders over the years.

Robert Lepertel from Audax Club Parisien wishes him Godspeed, as do we.

More in a later issue.

(Gerry Pareja)

## B.C. RANDONNEURS - 1992 SEASON SCHEDULE

	<u>GR. VANCOUVER</u>	<u>FRASER VALLEY</u>	<u>VANC.IS.</u>	<u>KAMLOOPS</u>
100	April 5		March 22 June 14	June 14
200	April 26	April 11	April 4 August 15	May 2
300	May 10	May 2	April 25 June 27	May 9
400	May 23	June 6	May 9	June 6
600	June 13	July 11	May 30	
1000	August 1		July 17	

### OTHER EVENTS

FLECHE PACIFIQUE - April 18, 1992 - phone Dan McGuire, 942-3235

BOSTON-MONTREAL-BOSTON - August 20-23, 1992  
For information and an application form, send a self-addressed envelope to Hauke Kite-Powell at 135 Langley Road, Newton, Massachusetts 02159.

NAKUSP 300 - May 17, 1992 - see details elsewhere in this newsletter.

### INSURANCE DEMYSTIFIED FOR NON B.C. RIDERS AND NON BABC MEMBERS

Non-BABC members, and non-B.C. riders will be charged a \$5.00 (Cdn) event membership fee which will cover the organizer only.

All non-B.C. riders must have their own insurance. The BABC can not offer insurance to the individual rider from out of province.



## **Bicycling Association of British Columbia**

332 - 1367 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V6H 4A9

Hotline: (604) 731-RIDE (24 hrs)

Telephone: (604) 737-3034 • Fax (604) 738-7175

Affiliated with the Canadian Cycling Association  
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through the Physical Fitness and Amateur Sports Fund

THE WEEK STARTS ON TUESDAY - KEEPS LONG WEEKENDS TOGETHER.

1992  
KILOMETRES

