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## British Columbia

# Randonneur

## Marathon Cycling

### President's Corner

*Doug Latornell*

Summer is finally here and with it comes long hours of daylight for long rides, temperatures warm enough to chase away the memories of riding bundled up in fleece, and the wonderful fitness that come from having lots of kilometers in your legs. Plenty of kilometers we have! As a club we have ridden 156,000 kilometers of events up to the middle of July, and the total keeps going up every week.

Even though we are in the midst of the cycling season I have to ask you to start thinking ahead to October and the Annual General Meeting. The AGM will again be held October 1<sup>st</sup> at Bedford House in Fort Langley. More details about the event will appear in the next newsletter. Details of resolutions to be considered at the AGM will also be published in that newsletter. Its press date is August 31<sup>st</sup>.

What you need to think about now are the elections for next year's executive. If you are interested in getting involved in the running of the club at the executive level (President, Vice-President, Secretary, or Treasurer) please contact me or one of the other executive members for information about the positions and so that we can pass your name on to the Nomination Committee. Likewise, if you're interested in one of the other jobs listed on the left, let us know. Our club depends on people volunteering to do the jobs that need to be done. The more we can spread the work around from year to year, the less risk there is of "volunteer burn-out".

### Editorial

*Susan Allen*

This newsletter is the fifth published under my editorship. Thank you for all the great submissions, Keep them coming!

I believe I have smoothed-out most of the process of generating the newsletter. I am producing two versions of the newsletter: a

paper version and an electronic version. If you have web access and an email account I would encourage you to consider the electronic version. If you switch to the electronic version you will receive an email when each issue is ready. The email includes the data report as an attachment. I admit that the major beneficiary of more electronic subscribers is I. It's fewer newsletters to fold and stuff (or staple). If you would like to switch to the electronic version: 1) go to the web page <http://www3.telus.net/randonews/> and download this newsletter. Check that you can read/print it. And 2) send me an email at [stoker@telus.net](mailto:stoker@telus.net) to change your status.

If you are on the web and want something to read remember that all the stories go up on the web as they are received.

### It's About Time You Got Dressed

*Danelle Laidlaw*

We have the new blue and yellow BC jerseys in sizes S - XL for \$65

We have Rando tights - L - XXL - \$50

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And we have gloves - XXS - XXL - \$18

The mean-spirited Executive will not let me order more clothing until our stocks are reduced, so call me - 737-0043 or toll-free at 1-877-606-BIKE

## Tales of the Unprepared (or: Knowing When to Quit)

*Lyle Beaulac*

With my better half's encouragement getting the better of my better judgment, I decided to have a go at the Triple Mountain Challenge on June 3. Not having been on the bike much since the 300 to Concrete, I ought to have known better, but most people would claim that sanity isn't really a randonneur's strong suit. What with sunny weather forecast and the prospect of a bit of climbing, I threw my usual caution to the winds and pared my pannier load down to a bare 5 pounds or so, compared to the usual 15 or more. Yep, travelling light, I was.

Morale at the Grouse parking lot start was high. Danelle and Rainy collected fees and handed out route sheets. There was the usual kibitzing over the route as those who knew the area tried to picture it in their minds. Once the pesky autos let us cluster together long enough for a group photo, we were away.

The first bit was fantastic. Isaac Newton notwithstanding, heavy objects on bicycles tend to roll downhill faster than lighter objects (with the exception of objects named Milner, it seems). Being one of the heavier objects in this group, I soon found myself near the front with Bob Marsh and Manfred. Wheeee. Oops, just as the downhill fun levelled off, we realised that we had missed the turnoff onto Edgemont whilst avoiding impact with a pickup truck, so a quick U-turn, a little climb and we

were back on course.

By now the sun was getting pretty high, and the gradual climb up Edgemont and Queens Road soon had everybody peeling off layers. At the turn onto Lonsdale, it looked like we were going to get another downhill ride, but just around the corner onto 29th St. awaited a nasty surprise. Looming ahead of us had to be the steepest bit of pavement in all of North Van. Most riders were walking up this little monster, but I figured it was time to try out my new 28-tooth cog, so it was "hello Granny" and I huff'n'puffed my way up the pitch. I didn't see any grade signs, but it had to be more than 18% at the crux.

While I was letting my heart-rate come down, Manfred coasted up behind me looking as fresh as if he'd just started. We chatted a bit on the way down the hill through Lynn Valley: I expressed surprise that Real wasn't on this ride. He told me that Real had elected to do the Interior 400 instead, deeming it the easier of the two rides. Urk! Coming out of Lynn Valley we had another lovely bit of downhill, taking advantage of a traffic light change to swoop past Karen and Danelle.

The 4.3 km. of Mount Seymour Parkway were forgettable, I just kept looking for a sign to tell me where to turn. Eventually there it was, and now there was just the small matter of the first mountain to deal with. Even though the grade was gradual, I opted to go to my basement gear right away and spin up the hill. Passing the "Fed bear is a Dead bear" sign (Oh Gawd, do bears eat Powerbars?), I could hear Danelle and Karen chatting merrily away as they caught up to me. Gasping a quasi-coherent reply to their cheery greetings, I could only gaze in envy as they pulled away, still chatting as if they were on a casual pedal on River road. About a kilometer later, Manfred caught up and passed me, chasing Danelle and Karen. Somewhere during that interminable climb I started seeing the front-runners on their return leg: first Ted, then some more that I didn't recognize. I actually heard Rainy before I saw her: she was whooping up a storm as she swept around the bottom switchback, with Joe drafting right behind.

By now I was in survival mode. I just kept plugging away at 9 km/h., noting the elevation markers as they slowly went by, calculating the average grade between markers (Ok, most people would enjoy the scenery or something. Engineers do things like calculate average grade.) Finally the top loomed into view, with only bicycles and cyclists to decorate the otherwise empty parking lot.

What? No concession stand? Oops! Ok, so I choke down a Powerbar with some water, refill the bottle and chat a bit.

"Nice bike."

"Yeah, I'm glad I put the ten-speed cluster on.

"Ten-speed??" (me, not keeping abreast of the latest gear. How many cogs can they stuff back there? I find my 8-speed has too much dish already.)

"Did ya see the bear?"

"Bear? No, where?" (me again)

"On the first stretch. You really didn't see it?"

**British Columbia Randonneur Marathon Cycling** is the hardcopy newsletter of the BC Randonneurs Cycling Club. The BC Randonneurs are a founding member of the Randonneurs Mondiaux (1993). The club is affiliated with Cycling BC and the Canadian Cycling Association.

The opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the article authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, club executive, Cycling BC, the CCA, or Randonneurs Mondiaux.

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Editor: Susan Allen

**Submissions:** Please send articles to me. My preference is Word or plain text files and digital photos in JPEG format to [stoker@telus.net](mailto:stoker@telus.net). Or mail (preferable a diskette) to Susan Allen, 2356 W 6<sup>th</sup> Ave, Vancouver, BC V6K 1V9

Next publication deadline is August 31.

"Um, no."

"So how many of these randos have you done?"

This last from a fellow who was contemplating getting into the sport. Glad to get off the subject of bears, I made what I hoped were positive noises about randonneuring. The inquirer and I then got on our bikes to relish the reward for the punishment we had just endured: the descent!

My excess baggage was once again an asset as the hard-won kilometers slipped under our wheels. We got to play "crit racer", hanging out our inside leg as we leaned into the switchbacks. On the final downhill stretch, doing about 60, the bear suddenly appeared to our right. He was running in the ditch alongside the road, his black pelt rippling in the sunlight. Just as we caught up to him, he turned away from the road and surged up into the forest, apparently startled by our sudden appearance. Whew! Didn't even have time to be scared.

All too soon, the downhill jollies ran out and it was back to reality. I lost my downhill companion somewhere on the Parkway and then stopped in confusion at the turning to Fern (there isn't a street sign on that corner). Eventually another rando came along and we determined that the only way back was over the overpass, so over we passed.

Upon getting onto Keith Road and seeing the hill awaiting us there, I decided to forego the scheduled attempt on Cypress in favour of limping back to the car as best I could. At the top of the Keith Road hill, I turned right, loath to lose any of the altitude that I had just gained. Making my way back through Lynn Valley without a map, asking locals for directions, I somehow found myself at the top of Mountain Highway, contemplating taking the Baden-Powell trail to Grouse. Whilst enjoying a refreshing Kool-aid purchased from two young entrepreneurs at the trail-head, I asked one of the local mountain bikers:

"This Baden-Powell trail. Is it steep?"

He simply nodded. This silent affirmation was all I needed to send me back down the hill in search of a paved route back to my car. Turning onto Dempsey, I was greeted by a long, steep winding hill. Admitting defeat, I got off and walked for about a half kilometer. Once back on the bike at the top, I endeavoured to make my way west while

losing as little altitude as possible. Unfortunately, this strategy didn't work quite well as I had hoped, and I ended up taking impromptu tours of some of the more remote neighborhoods in North Van. Saw some nice houses, though.

Eventually, after asking directions from several residents, I found myself back on Nancy Greene Way, pointed uphill. Just as I was about to tackle the tough bit, Tim and Rita Pollock came driving down the hill with Wayne (?) in the back seat. Tim pulls over and announces that they're going down to Edgemont Village to "get some vittles" before tackling the Grouse Grind. If I wanted to, I could join them in the village and he would drive me and my bike back up the hill. I needed very little convincing, so I quickly got pointed downhill and followed Tim's car to Edgemont Village. On the way down, I counted the bikes on Tim's roof rack. There were two. I then counted the number of bike mounts on Tim's roof rack. Also two. Uh-oh. Tim must have noticed me counting, because he pulled over and explained that he had a trunk-mount carrier in the trunk. Phew

After a much-needed snack at Starbucks, we bundled back into Tim's car and headed back up the hill. We passed several front-runners on the way up, including Rainy and Joe, still going strong. Back at the parking lot I loaded the bike into the car and motored home, humbled by the experience. Rainy was kind enough to offer me a pin for the event, but I declined, feeling that I hadn't earned it. Next year, perhaps

## North Van, Squamish, Whistler, Pemberton, D'Arcy and back, 400km ride, May 27, 2000

*Val White*

Woke at 0300 to the sound of rain pelting against the bedroom window. Those who wanted this particular 400km ride moved to May to avoid the heat of July had their wishes granted as the rain poured down and dawn was only a slight lightening of the grey sky. Astonishingly, fifteen brave and eager riders showed up to attempt one of the hilliest routes on the randonneur calendar for this year. All registered quickly and efficiently, making my job easy; even the two Americans had Canadian money with them. Sharon and

## Coming Events

*L. Mainland 300 km – Jul 22*  
6 am, Albio

Ted Milner 291-3499

*Victoria Populaire – Jul 23*  
50,100, 150 km  
9 am, Oak Bay High School  
Mike Poplawski 250-882-1239

*Rocky Mtn. 1200 – Jul 27-30*  
Kamloops  
Danelle Laidlaw 737-0043

*L. Mainland 400 k – Aug 12*  
6 am, Boundary & Lougheed  
Keith Nichol 733-5697

*Island 200/300 km – Aug 19*  
7 am, Yellowpoint  
Stephen Hinde 250-245-4751

*Seattle 1000 km – Aug 25-27*  
5 am, Duvall  
Mark Thoma 206-612-4700

*L. Mainland 600 – Aug 26-27*  
6 am, Lougheed Mall  
Keith Fraser 737-7850

*L. Mainland 200/300/400 –  
Aug 26*  
John Bates 856-5818

*Island 400 km –  
Sep 2*  
Stephen Hinde 250-245-4751

*OnRoad/OffRoad 200 – Sep 9*  
100 Mile House  
Adrian Messner 250-791-5742

*L. Mainland 200 km – Sep 17*  
Also 50, 100 and 150 km  
7 am, Albio  
Tim Pollock 939-8166

*AGM Ride & Brunch (\$18) –  
Oct. 1*  
10 am, Fort Langley  
Jude Morrison 879-3661

Roger Street showed up to lend support and advice prior to taking on their role at the secret control. Sean Williams (what a nice guy!) came to bring something for Keith Fletcher. At 5 the usual aggressive types were off while others dawdled and Hank Berkenbos dithered about whether he was going to ride in the rain. I left with Bob Bailey to ride the route as far as D'Arcy and then help with the organization in the latter half. I guess Hank decided to go back to bed, smart man, as he never passed us. I can't comment on the early part of anyone's ride as we were at the tail end, taking our time, enjoying the scenery!! and getting flats. (Mine required a boot after I hit a piece of sharp rock, which had fallen off the cliff above the road, and which slit a one inch gash in the tire and tube; I had been carrying this boot material, that Danelle had given me, around for years and was glad to get a chance to try it out and, surprisingly, it lasted for the rest of my ride.) Stopped for a double espresso latte and scone at the Starbuck's in Squamish and then a few minutes later to chat with Roger and Sharon who had seen everyone through the secret control. Then the climbing really began, but it didn't seem too bad; as Roger said, you feel like you are getting somewhere, rather than the up and down from North Van. to Squamish. Once the blue sky peeked through and I thought it might clear up, but no luck. I do remember how long it seemed from the first Whistler sign to the Creekside Petrocan where Susan and Doug were waiting after just shooing Bob Bose and Keith Fletcher on their way. The four of us had a substantial lunch at a very homey cafe, just next to the Husky station before the Petrocan on the left side. Then we were off on the easy part to Pemberton where we decided to call it a day and where we had arranged for Bob's friend Theo to pick us up. We drove up to D'Arcy seeing many of the riders starting on their long way back, all of whom seemed to be in good spirits, considering what they had been through. For a short while the rain stopped, and again it seemed as if it might become decent, but no such luck.

We then drove to Whistler (after picking Theo up where we had left him to watch the hockey game in the bar of the Pemberton Hotel; each to their own!) to Bob's cousin's place so I could get a shower and we could all go off to the Keg for a great meal while everyone else was out slogging in the rain which had begun again in earnest. Alex called to say he was waiting for Bob and Keith to check in at Pemberton, and then he joined us. We six had a great meal. The plan then was for Bob Bailey to go to the Creekside Petrocan and wait till Wayne Harrington, Bob Bose and Keith arrived to see if anyone was bailing and needed a ride as the conditions had become truly horrid again with nightfall. Alex and I were going to head down to Squamish, checking on people as we passed them. However, no sooner had we reached Brandywine Falls, where the rain was almost snow, when the cell phone rang and it was Bob asking us to return to Whistler as a lot of people were quitting due to the atrocious conditions. When we got back to the Petrocan, Bob Marsh was there and was already loading two bikes into his truck, Bob Bailey was loading up a few others and Alex went off to find Bob and Keith. Danelle and two others went to her condo in Whistler, and with us taking a few bikes, everyone and their bike was taken care of or transported back to North Vancouver.

Meanwhile, Karen Smith was staffing the finish control at Tim Horton's, planning to stay there till 0800 the next morning, but now finding that she would have a relatively early night. We got back there at 0140, just as Keith Nichol, Dave Johnson, Michel Richard and Noboru Yonemitsu were finishing and congratulated those who had made it through the deluge. (It was amazing how many people there were at Tim Horton's at 0200!) In all, only six of fifteen completed the ride that day. Three others completed on different weekends riding on their own: maybe they knew something about the weather that we didn't!

A few comments from us as the organizers. Some people were very well dressed for the weather: Wayne Harrington as an example, while others must have thought they were in a tropical downpour: Ted Milner, for example, who had to be lent a jacket by Susan Allen. Even though these were really extreme conditions, some people need to give more consideration to their rain gear and having enough layers of clothes on to be warm, if not dry. (I still have a jacket, with hat and gloves in the pockets, which was given to us somewhere along the way, and which I have washed; somebody please claim it!) Alex, Bob and Karen used cell phones a lot; we felt much more comfortable knowing where everyone was and how they were doing given the weather.

My solution for this route: make it a 300 km ride from North Van. to Pemberton and back. It is too nice a route and too challenging to give up entirely, but making it shorter would allow people to finish by midnight and so not have the daunting task of spending a whole night on that highway, which truly was dangerous in those foul weather conditions. Similarly, if the weather was very hot, as it was on the previous running of this route, the shorter ride would make it less extreme, but still take in almost all of the climbing.

Our thanks to Sharon and Roger Street, and Susan Allen and Doug Latornell for helping with the controls; to Bob Bailey for riding with me to Pemberton and for transportation when I had told him he was back-up, and probably wouldn't even be needed; and to Bob Marsh for turning up at just the right time.

## So what happened? - a 600 odyssey

*Danelle Laidlaw*

So what happened - didn't we have good weather for the Populaire and the 200? So what is up now? My booties have never had such a workout and all my socks are blue!

14 of us huddled around John Bates van hoping that the rain would stop before we had to start riding. Stu Wood kept trying to boot us out, but we weren't moving. Eventually, we decided just to set off, though one person thought better of it and headed home.

The route from Abbotsford out towards Mission is a familiar one and very pleasant. We mostly stayed in a group for about the first 40 km or so, and then a few of us decided that if we were going to complete this 600, we had better back off a bit. The rain stopped within the first 20 kms and by the time we got to Hope, it was time to take some of the heavy duty wet gear

off.

Has anyone ever been to Allison Pass when it hasn't snowed? There was no exception this time, but it was a short-lived shower of slush and by the time we got to Manning Park Lodge, it almost looked like it might clear. But no, just before Sunda Summit the hail hit and that was a little painful. Thankfully, the storm was brief and cleared before the wonderful descent into Princeton.

Our cards look really boring - Stu Wood, Stu Wood, Stu Wood - Stu did a great job of staffing the controls - he was in Hope and Manning and Spence's Bridge. Bob Marsh was out as support slut - his new by-line is that he will pick up anyone, and he picked up Harold in Princeton. Harold was doing well, but thought the better of going on in the dark on his own.

The route between Princeton and Merritt is a gem - it is so pretty through that area. The climbs are not too bad with rolling hills and lots of lakes. We encountered some road works and unfortunately, it looks like the Ministry has taken a good road and plans to cover the entire thing with chip seal. The sign said 32 km of gravel, but it was only 14 or so and some of that we were able to ride on a small strip of asphalt on the side of the road. All other traffic was piloted through the area, but we were allowed to go at our own pace. This meant there were little batches of traffic and then none for quite awhile. Wonderful.

The descent into Merritt was a "cracker", though like all the hills we rode, I ended up pedaling just to keep the boys in sight. I wonder if I will ever be able to plummet down hills like that. The stretch from Merritt to Spence's Bridge was enchanting - the moon was bright, the river was roaring, the road was quiet, it wasn't too cold, what else could we want. And there was Stu waiting for us with a motel key in hand for our favourite stop (actually, my favourite motel is in Kamloops, but that is another story).

With way too little sleep, we set off the next morning in brilliant sunshine. So promising that I sent ALL my rain gear back with Stuart. Big mistake.... But our ride into Canyon Alpine was great - warm, fairly quiet roads, no problems except a little hunger and what a view. We did start to get a bit of a headwind around Lytton which made us a little grumpy, but it is the canyon - right? It is always windy

Val White and I had ridden the canyon four weeks previously. Now, I am sure that at that time, the Tunnels Café was closed and the Canyon Alpine was no longer 24 hours - but, not so on Sunday - everything was as per usual. I must have been on drugs or something when we rode it in May

It was a real treat to hit the top of American Creek hill and know that that was the last major climb of the day - no Woodside - yes! That was a great variation on the route. I mean, I like Woodside and everything, but at the end of a 600, it was really, really nice to have no huge hills in the last 80 km. We thought we were home-free when we pulled into SeaBird Café. Unfortunately, the start and the finish were going to resemble each other - it started raining shortly after we left SBC and it was still pounding down when we got to Abbotsford Park and Ride. It was great to be able to pace-line all the way in and it

certainly was warm for me tucked in behind the boys.

I think the finish went like this - Barry Chase was first in as he couldn't sleep in Spence's Bridge; then came Eric Fergusson, Peter Stary, and Hank at around 31 hours; next was Dave Johnson and Michel Richard at about 35 hours, then there was Nobo; and then the gang of five - Manfred, R Himschoot, Neil Jorgenson, John Bates (still on sabbatical) and myself.

And let me tell you - it was a good thing Harold dropped out because his bike got cannibalized at Canyon Alpine - Eric took his chain, Nobo took his tire - it was like a garage sale! Our only mechanical was one flat tire - that was a bonus.

I love this route. The weather could have been a bit better and it might have been nice to get a little more sleep, but isn't sleep deprivation what rando riding is all about? I hope we see this route on the calendar again soon - it's a winner.

## Island 400-May 13: Thus Rode Zarathustra

*Mike Poplawski*

The Island 400, starting from Victoria, turned out to be a solo event, although I did have some company at the very start. Ke Bonner, who appears to be riding every randonneur event under the sun (or moon) this season, had my control card ready at the Highway 1 at Tillicum Chevron. The lack of starting line confusion (Ken, a storekeep and myself) allowed us to start on time without any problems.

Within 3 km, Ken was out of sight. (I wouldn't see him until about 11 AM heading in the other direction not far south of Union Bay).

I had learned a lot from the Island 300 km ride, mostly that I needed to keep eating, and that there was no way this ride was going to be as difficult as the 300 km. I'm glad that prophes came true.

I guess my first scare came near Shawnigan Lake when a young driver stopped their vehicle about 300 m ahead of me. With some trepidation, I passed with some room to spare, exchanged "Hi"s and went on my way. I'm pretty sure it was a relief break in the woods.

Riding over the Malahat at 4 in the morning is quite an experience, and there was a good amount of moonlight to make it even more dramatic. The descent was good, although my hope of encountering no traffic at all didn't come true. I didn't have the whole road to myself and therefore had to check my speed and my line more than I would have liked. The other bad news, albeit minor, was that the descent down Mill Bay Road wasn't part of the route!

I was making good enough time, and the winds were cooperating. However, one thing Ken mentioned to me at the start, and which I ultimately was not prepared for, was how cold the Cowichan Valley is at daybreak. I was wearing regular cycling gloves, and I had to stop on several occasions to get the blood in my fingers flowing again, including taking a seat on the side of the road at Beverly in Duncan for about 5-10 minutes. At least I could keep myself busy by eating and

drinking, and I managed to put some duct tape on my fingers as an experiment in wind-shielding. It didn't really work.

The conditions for the ride, save for the temperature in the aforementioned spot, were perfect. I rode with a jacket half the time, and my long-sleeve jersey was perfect during the warmest parts. Again, the winds were agreeable, the roads were dry and clear enough, and visibility was very good, giving me lots to look at. I did have one worry as I passed Chemainus. I felt a little nausea, but a couple of well-considered breaths solved the problem. I wouldn't have any problems like that the rest of the way.

I checked into Nanaimo, having spent very little time off the bike. My average speed was in the 23s, which I thought was pretty good. The 7-Eleven had plenty of randonneur delicacies--I chose some Gatorade and a Snickers to go along with my pre-ride stores of PowerBar gels and Clif Bars and I was on my way again.

I can't remember where I saw the other 400 km riders first pass on other side of the road, but I was glad to see them out there. They had started their trips from either Nanaimo or Ladysmith, I believe, and had started a little later than Ken and I. You all looked good out there!

I kept cruising along the highway, seeing this area for the first time by bike. I especially enjoyed north of Parksville and Qualicum Beach, with their ups and downs, and lots of people out on this beautiful Saturday morning.

The northern part of this route was once the main highway to Courtenay, which was always hectic and packed with cars, trucks and all else. With an inland bypass, the route is now a lot less busy and even more scenic, and I'd call this a great route!

I was a little disappointed that what I thought was Union Bay, and the turnaround, was actually Buckley Bay, which is the terminal for the Denman & Hornby Island ferry. Union Bay was still 6 km to go. Nevertheless, I got off the bike and quickly made feral work of the Snickers bar before deciding to get myself a Subway footlong sandwich. Unfortunately, despite my intense hunger, my stomach was not accommodating and I had to toss half. This is the downside of being built like a rail--my eyes probably are, in actuality, bigger than my stomach!

I continued on north after exchanging pleasantries with another rider--"Nice color", she said about my bike, a few moments before I spotted that she rode a red Cannondale herself. She and her partner were taking in the sights at the ferry terminal at a more leisurely pace than I was.

At Union Bay, I got to experience an authentic German corner store, complete with all sorts of interesting lawn ornaments--you've got to see them. Anyway, after some more Gatorade and Mentos purchases, I was on my way south and back home. I had ridden fairly quickly between Nanaimo and here--my computer showed an average speed now of 24.3 km/h. I hope I hadn't dug my own grave.

I saw the other Rando folks again around Qualicum Beach, all looking great. I would hope at least a few of them had figured out that I was riding a 400 km, too--who else would you see

twice in one day like this?

The Parksville Thrifty Foods was my next destination--I was running low on gels and I needed some batteries for my auxiliary headlight. They had gone dim coming up the Malahat, and darn it, wouldn't you know that the headlight came apart coming up Island through Ladysmith? (Do Carol and Stephen Hinde ride randonneur just to give them an excuse to not have the ride the brutal main road in Ladysmith?) Anyway, I was well-taken care of at Thrifty's, including an escorted bathroom trip with the helpful fellow there being well aware of what I was doing that day. (Don't get me wrong, the business of my pit stop was done solo--I wasn't quite in that bad a condition.)

Refreshed, with new batteries, food and fluids, I was on my way once again. I caught a little bit of a break, and company, near Nanaimo. A rider named Bob pulled alongside--he was out doing a 50 km training ride on his own, and he had heard of the Randonneur series (he knew Stephen Hinde, and Stephen thinks his name is Bob Simpson) and we spoke of rando, Seattle-to-Portland and other fascinating things until he had to turn off. (Curiously enough, we ran into each other at the Wenatchee "Ride the Sunny Side" Century 3 weeks later. Bob has a good memory for faces, or at least some pieces of my equipment. Small world, until you consider that nobody I talked to during that ride was actually from Wenatchee.) At the Nanaimo control, my speed was now over 24.5. I would have been delirious with delight if I wasn't already delirious with fatigue.

My next stop was in Cobble Hill, where I was able to garner my now-traditional late ride Coke and chips (but no bathroom privileges--rats!). My taste buds now satisfied, and darkness setting in, I proceeded through the toughest part of the ride, that being the rough roads and steady climbs through Shawnigan Lake.

I sneaked off the road to do what I couldn't at Cobble Hill, and took it easy enough through the winding climb to give myself enough energy to push it towards the finish. Yes! My average speed had kept increasing throughout the second half of the ride, and I now had a mission: 25.0 km/h average speed or bust!

I managed to keep things going smoothly on the descent towards Goldstream, with the traffic being a little hairier than I would have liked, but the drivers showed their courtesy by not colliding with me. The scene was getting darker, and I couldn't always see my computer clearly, but I could see that I was keeping my speed above 25 most of the time, and I knew I had a chance to meet my newfound goal.

By the time I was at the Colwood underpass, my average speed had already crept up to 25.0. The remainder of the ride in the darkness was along the highway where I commute to work, and I knew, barring collapse, or a turn of the winds, that I could make it.

As I hit the Chevron parking lot, I nearly stumbled to check my computer in the lights. I finished the ride at an average speed of 25.1 km/h, in exactly 16 hours of riding. My overall time was 18:41, finishing at 9:41 PM. A nice full day!

I'm glad I had watched 2001: A Space Odyssey that week--it

gave me a little soundtrack to play in my mind as I made my ascent into, well, a rider who had finished his randonneur ambitions for the year. (I'm going to save the multi-day stuff for a while...) I hummed *Spake Zarathustra* more than a few times that day, and you had better believe that there was plenty of time to whistle *The Blue Danube* over and over in a 16-hour ride!

Here's to doing this ride again in 2001, maybe with someone else riding this great route for the first time!

## 600 in 24: Kamloops to Valemount & Back

*Raymond Wagner*

Could we? Should we? 600K in 24 hours. Sounds like a hell of a thing to do! Pete Mahr and I were pretty much toasted after the Interior 400 and as we sat at Tim Hortons after that ride it seemed perhaps more of a challenge than our state of mind could fathom. A few days before the 600K I gave Peter a call to see where his head was at and like mine we would give it a whirl. With a ride plan in mind including a bail out option we met at the start, Heffly Creek store for the 06:00 departure. With 15 minutes to start no one else was visible, but then Bob and the few others appeared. I looked at my watch as it was now 6:00 am and although the rest of the participants didn't seem in too much of a rush, we were off. The first part of the route was a 7 loop. Halfway through we saw the rest of the randos on the road. We would soon see them again. Ten minutes later I get a front flat. Ever being one to monitor the time, the change was going slowly. I pulled out a spare tube and handed it to Peter who promptly noted a patch on it. "You cheap #\$%^@%" recall hearing. Not to be insulted in such a manner I reached in my bag and grabbed a new tube. Upon installation I noted my pump seemed defective and then also Peter's. This 'new' tube was pulled and the trusted 'patched' spare was put into service. Magically my pump was now working. Turns out the new tube had a manufacturer's flaw with a ½" slit in a seam. Of course during this time everyone passes us with such quotes as "welcome to randoneurring".

The ride to Valemount is a gentle rolling road upstream along the North Thompson River. Beautiful wide paved shoulders for the most part and lovely scenery. After the flat tire we eventually catch up to Bob & partner on a tandem who have made a pit stop. A little wave and we continue to eventually ride along with another tandem and single. We hang together for a while but eventually part company with the tandem. The three of us, now including Michele Richard, take our pulls. After a stop at the control in Clearwater, Michele continues with us a bit further but his ride plan calls for an easier pace and a planned sleeper in Blue River so he lets us proceed ahead. We are making good time moving along at an average of about 30 kph, having a few rain showers, and giving ourselves adequate break time to pace a 24 hr finish. A tail wind near Valemount speeds us to the turn around but in return delivers a headwind we would rather do without. Fortunately the wind disappears and at one point we feel like Tour de France riders as we move

along with a slight downhill at 40 kph. We meet everyone on the return leg with a smile and wave. Night fall sets in just after Blue River and we begin the 'follow the white line ride'. wonderfully fresh painted white line is easy to see and follow in the light of your headlight. A few times through the night my eyes want to close. My legs are all right with pedaling but can't I do it with my eyes shut for a while? Soon twilight appears and with it rain. The last 2 hours we are soaked but press on. We arrive happy to finish in 23:25. A high five, off for some breakfast and sleep. 600 in 24. Proud to say we done it; not too keen to do it again. However there still remains the Rock 1200!

## The Night of a Thousand Icy Raindrops:

### My Heroic Fleche Ride with Team Time Trial (a.k.a. 'Quads') through

### Some Very Poor Weather in Some Very Uncomfortable Lycra

*Eric Fergusson*

I survived.

## A Point of Clarification on Rando 500/1000 Medals

*Eric Fergusson*

A rider can not use a successfully completed Fleche Pacifique ride towards her/his Randonneur 500 or 1000 medal tally. This is in line with the rule for earning a Super Randonneur pin where the Fleche also can not be credited towards a rider's total. The Fleche is however a mandatory component of the Super 5000 award.

## Sun Shines On The Righteous

*Harold Bridge*

During the week prior to the inaugural Canada Birthda Randonnee the temperatures climbed up into the high twenties or worse & there were visions of flaked out bodies to be collected on those long open stretches across Sumas Prairie. Then the weather persons announced the arrival of Cloud! Great! That was followed on Friday by predictions of showers! Bad! Summer showers during a ride have some benefits, but complicate protection of the paperwork at the start & at the controls.

The day dawned with high cloud cover & barely a zephyr to disturb the sign-on sheets. Despite a lack of direction from the organiser his volunteers, Maureen Mol, Crystal Dalyce & Keith Fletcher, kept things rolling so that the majority of the 71 entrants got away by the 09:00 start time. In compliance with municipal requirements to avoid large enmasse starts we allowed some of the newcomers to get away early. The first

away were Cheryl Lynch & Keith Nicol who had volunteered to staff a control but wanted to do the ride as well. So they got away at 08:00 to give them time to open up Straiton Community Hall at the first control at 38.8 km. Later, Ian Faris arrived with a copy of the start sheet & took over the control from them.

Once over Sumas Mountain it was virtually billiard table time all the way to the 63.8km control at Vedder, in the shadow of closed down Canadian Forces Base, Chilliwack. There, Bruce Mol & Thomas Johnson were doing a roaring trade in water, bananas, & muffins at this, the turn around point. The inevitable result of riding east is that one has to turn round & face the wind for the run home. Although flat, there are enough turns to keep riders on their toes with regard to route directions into the back of Huntingdon. There, right by the border customs control, Nobo Yonemitsu and Doug Cho were relaxing in their chair awaiting the hungry, thirsty hordes. They also had an excellent view of the long line of car bound folk intent on spending the Canada Day holiday in the USA.

Strictly speaking, there should have been a control at or near Aldergrove Lake Park @ 111 kms. But the threat that there MIGHT be one was good enough. With the finish control opening at the Fort Pub at 13:13 there was a possibility that Ted Milner would get there ahead of the forward sweep vehicle. But fortunately, he had gone off course & had a flat so it was a few minutes after control opening times before he appeared.

His arrival at the Fort at 13:24 opened up a 5 hour session on the covered patio in which food & Guinness (others chose lesser brews) got intermingled with signing cards, writing down names & handing out pins. Once Bobs Bose & Bailey arrived the decorum went down & the noise went up. Don't be fooled by their white hair! It was probably the noisiest finish control we have encountered, everyone was in high spirits despite having to share the patio with smokers. About 17:30 Cliff Green, who spent the day driving "Sweep", arrived to announce that the last 2 riders on the road, Bob Marsh & Wes Sheldon, were closing in on us. They duly arrived at 17:49 to finalise the finish control. Wes confirmed that the route is a long tough one for someone who hasn't been riding a bike very much!

With the paperwork & one or two imbroglios sorted out, it became evident that there were 68 finishers. Neil Jorgensen we knew about, he had to quit due to a back problem. But his wife & son completed. A phone call to Roger Amy explained the other 2. Roger had taken that tricky descent on 56th Av, at about 16km/hr, too fast & finished up doing a face plant in the bushes on the bend. That was no problem, but he folded up his front wheel. His companion, Ron Neifer, went back for his vehicle & took Roy home. Missing rider problem solved.

The anticipated rain did not materialise & the temperature appeared to be ideal. The most difficult climb, from Clayburn to Straiton, about 5kms up the west side of Sumas Mountain was a struggle for some. But it is such a beautiful ride, largely through the trees, that no one complained. We have to enjoy it while we can, before real estate interests take over.

As we drove the 1km or so to the Albion Ferry enroute for home it started to rain. The Sun does certainly shine on the

Righteous!

## Peace Region Y2K Summer Solstice 600 Km Brevet [read 622 km]

*E. W. [Wim] Kok,*

*Peace Region Ride Co-ordinator.*

This ride was scheduled for June 17/18, 2000. Since no-one in the region qualified for this ride, except yours truly, it was another case of "the lone rider on the prairies." The forecast called for good weather, mainly cloudy conditions and W and SW winds for the next two days. A definite bonus, since most of the 335 km of the first day would be cycled eastward. Leaving Fort St. John at 5 am first going north, then an eastward steep descent into, and a similar ascent out of the Beatton River Valley, all within the first 15 kilometers. Definitely awake by now. Rolling along at a good pace to Goodlow [control # 1] near the BC Alberta border in no time. An hour or so into Alberta, another steep descent into, and out of the Clear River valley this time. Incidentally, a highways flag person was wondering if I was going in the right direction, since cyclists on this road are a rare commodity indeed. I indicated that I knew exactly where I was going.

After a brief pit stop at the Cleardale general store, I found myself competing with a coyote who was racing alongside in the ditch in order to find a safe escape into the bush. Finally it found its way. A lunch break at Hines Creek [control # 2] was certainly welcome. Then an hour into the wind, followed by a stop at Fairview [control #3] to have one of the cranks tightened. Eastward again with a great tail wind, at times reaching speeds between 30 and 40 kph. [O Shelley, now I know why you wrote your "Ode to the West wind"]. Meanwhile large thunderstorms to the south moved in the same direction as I did, making me wonder where and when our paths would cross for a heavenly shower. Luckily we did not! The downpour reached Peace River [control # 4] well before I did. Just when I thought that I had escaped the weather gods for the day, they had a surprise. I should know better by now. The next 65 km of the course went south; but this was now also the wind direction, which means: where the wind was coming from! The laws of physics dictate that when two objects travel in opposite direction toward one another, friction results. The laws are right! This tough section took me to Girouxville [control #5], a small French community in the Alberta Peace region. Here I found a small hotel in a hamlet which definitely had seen better days, but who complains about a \$ 25.00 per night charge. Unfortunately, the grocery store and hotel kitchen had both closed. Luckily a local snack-bar provided the essential calorie requirements. With something like eight hours in hand on the ride so far, a sleep break was well deserved. Or at least I thought so.

Daybreak came early and at 4 am the wheels were rolling again, this time eastward for a distance of some 200 km with a steady west and head wind. O blast -- no pun intended -- why couldn't Shelley write an "Ode to the East wind ?" I guess as a poet, he must not have been into randonneuring! How could I forget. A

brief stop at Rycroft [control # 6] and onward to Dawson Creek through miles and miles of bush, some farmland and little or no settlement. While the wind persisted, I decided to ignore it. A sprinkle of rain and a flat tire, just as I was developing some 'bragging thoughts' about those great tires. Another great wisdom acquired: "don't praise the quality of the tires before the ride is over." [A few days after the ride I found out that I also rode part of this brevet with a broken rear axle.] Soup and pasta in Dawson Creek [control #7] tasted awesome. Another 75 km or so to go. Less wind, but more hills. I started to figure out how many ups and downs to go - and that I would make it. The long downhill 'sail' into the Peace River valley was sheer joy, followed by one more uphill battle out of Taylor. Two of our kids greeted me at the top the last hill: how sweet! The last few kilometers would be easy. Then the 'infamous' Baldonnel railway underpass where the course goes west. The west winds picked up again [oh Shelley!], and rain started to come down now. The law of benefits of fenders was also proven! At 7:20 p.m. I checked in at the last control [# 8] knowing that the 622 km had been completed in 38 hours and 20 minutes. An average speed of 16.2 kph including all the breaks. Pure riding time has been calculated at about 30 hours for an average speed of about 21 kph. What a ride. Recovery time!

## les Randonneurs Mondiaux:

### President's Letter #1

October 1999

*Réal Préfontaine, President*

The President's Letter, scheduled twice a year, is our official means of communication. My first letter will give a brief overview of my objectives for my term of office. Evidently, priorities may change and flexibility will be required.

First, there is communication. I plan to have a Presidential Letter in October and March of each year. For this Letter to be of interest, I need your input. Your events and activities will only become news if you communicate them. The office of les RM does not have the facilities to send the President Letter to individual randonneurs, it therefore behooves each member country to determine the best means to re-distribute the information to the randonneurs of their country. If you wish to duplicate the complete letter, or part thereof, I encourage you to do so. My Letter will be available in the English and French languages. For other languages, regrettably you will have to do your own translation. To the President's Letter, may be attached as need arise, comments and news items from our Treasurer Robert "Bob" Lepertel. Bob always has items of interest for all of us.

Second, promoting the sport of randonneurs. All of us, in our respective countries are in the best position to determine how we can encourage and develop randonneurs cycling in our respective country and whenever feasible in our neighboring countries.

Third, recognize and applaud the efforts of participants. Much

of this has been accomplished in the past year with the creation of a unique RM medal. This recognition must be encouraged by letting all participants who complete, or have completed a brevet of 1200 km or more, of the availability of the RM medal. For your information, since the organization of les RM in 1983 and through the astute record keeping of Bob Lepertel, 844 randonneurs from eight different countries are recorded as having completed brevets of 1200 km. All those who have completed a 1200 km or more since 1989 are eligible to purchase the RM medals created in 1998.

Fourth, since les RM were founded in 1983, the organization has assumed additional responsibilities and the need to consolidate our rules is becoming apparent. With the guidance and direction of Bob, in the course of my term I plan to compile in one document: a) a "modus operandi" of les RM; b) the rules we now apply for the validation of our 1200 km or more brevet; and c) a description of the responsibilities of les RM and their rapport with the Audax Club Parisien. Such a document could benefit all of us and serve as a reference document to answer the many questions we are asked individually.

Finally, with a new millennium starting shortly, our mentor Bob Lepertel has challenged us (members of les RM) to organize a 2000 km brevet in the year 2000. As randonneurs thrive on challenges how can we refuse. At a global rate of 12.0 km per hour (as approved at our 1999 meeting) this equates to a total of 166.5 hours. In anticipation of several Clubs accepting this challenge I have asked our informatics expert to prepare a program for the opening and closing time based on the ACP rules. More details on this program in my March 2000 "President's Letter". For my March Letter, can I aspire to have a list of Clubs who will have accepted the challenge of "a 2000 in 2000"? Oh Yes, Bob has agreed to prepare a special certificate for this unique event in addition to the RM medal !!!!!

## les Randonneurs Mondiaux:

### President's Letter #2

March 2000

*Réal Préfontaine, President*

WELCOME TO THE 21st CENTURY !

You should all have received the results of the 14th PBP. A hearty THANK YOU to Robert and Suzann Lepertel and all the ACP team for an excellent report. The reading brings back fond memories.

As we look forward to 2000, you will remember the challenge of a 2000 km brevet in 2000. To date three clubs have accepted the challenge. (\*\* See page 2) Rules for this brevet are the same as the Brevet de Randonneurs Mondiaux of the ACP. The minimum global time is 166.5 hours for an average speed of 12 km per hour. Any other club planning a 2K in Y2K should send me their coordinates to ensure validation.

The General Assembly of les RM in 1999 unanimously approved that the registration fee for all events to be validated

by les RM include the cost of the RM medal (50FF) or pin (35FF). These may be purchased from the President using Canadian or US currency equivalent. In addition to the medal or pin, successful participants will be awarded a special Diploma. As your President I invite a competition to design a special Diploma. I ask all recipients of this Letter to convey this information to all randonneurs in their country. The design should be in color, camera ready, and sent to Robert Lepertel; 7, avenue de Normandie; 93220 GAGNY, France, who will have the Diploma printed. (The winner of the competition will be duly recognized by les RM.)

In my Letter # 1, I made reference to the need to consolidate our "modus operandi" or "modus vivendi". This is not an undertaking that can be accomplished by one person. Consultation with all members is required and several drafts will no doubt be necessary before a final document can be presented to our General Meeting in 2003 for approval. The age of electronics (E-mail) provides us with a rapid and inexpensive means of communication. All members of les RM, founding members, elected members and associate members are asked to provide me with the name and E-mail address of a member from their country with E-mail to act as a corresponding member towards this task. I will form a small work group to prepare a preliminary draft, then all members, through their corresponding member will be asked for input. I realize this endeavor will require many hours of volunteer work, but I am confident with the spirit of cooperation that exists amongst randonneurs we will accomplish this project.

Remember the rush to purchase a T-shirt and/or other souvenir on Registration Day at the 1999 PBP? Well Don Briggs, Vice President will be exploring the feasibility of a unique and representative Randonneurs Mondiaux Jersey, and maybe even a T-shirt. This is his project and we will hear further from Don in the future.

## Around the Globe

Italy: Italy was represented at the PBP for the first time with over 100 participants from one Club. Three additional clubs have now been organized. BRM of 200, 300 & 400 are planned for 2000 as well as a 1000 km September 7-10 along the coast of Sicily. (Contact: Eligio Doglio: bici@sail.it).

South Africa: For the first time since 1987, S.A. was represented by sixteen participants at the 1999 PBP. Audax Randonneurs S.A. has two full series of brevets in 2000. T.E. Thomlinson. Australia: Members of Audax

Australia have revised their organization structure and consolidated the activities of all of their States and Territories. They use "teleconferencing" as a means of communicating. Interesting approach that could be considered by other geographically large countries. One 1200 km events is planned for 2000: Perth-Albany-Perth, Oct.14-17. (Contact: Don Briggs)

United Kingdom: Audax UK with over 3000 members is possibly the Club in les RM with the largest membership. The list of their BRM and many other brevets is accessible via <http://www.audax.uk.com>. AUK also administers the International Super Randonneurs award. The challenging

London-Edinburgh-London is scheduled for 2001.

United States: The consolidation of several individual clubs has resulted in a new randonneurs organization: Randonneurs USA (RUSA) ([www.rusa.org](http://www.rusa.org)) formed in 1998. With over 950 members registered in the first year of operation, RUSA is now the largest Randonneur club in the USA and has been recognized as the representative of USA to les Randonneurs Mondiaux. Over 130 BRM events are scheduled for 2000 including the now world renowned Boston-Montreal-Boston, August 17-20. (Contact: Jennifer Wise)

Canada: In addition to over 38 BRM scheduled, Canada will be hosting two 2K in Y2K \*\*. The British Columbia Randonneurs Cycling Club will be hosting the bi-annual Rocky Mountain 1200 km July 26-30. This is an outstanding scenic circuit from Kamloops through Jasper National Park, Banff National Park, Lake Louise and the north Okanagan valley. (Contact: Danelle Laidlaw)

June 24, Canada: Real Prefontaine; British Columbia Randonneurs Cycling Club; #4 - 35035 Morgan Way; Abbotsford, BC; V2S 5T7; Tele.: 604 853 9594 E-mail: Real\_Prefontaine@telus.net

July 1, Canada: Ted Quade; Prairie Randonneurs; 2805 - 23rd Avenue; Regina, Sask. S4S 1E7 Tele.: 306 584 0479 (Residence); 306 566 3075 (Office) E-mail: tquade@ip51.net20483206.cr.sk.ca

BREVET - 2000 KM in anno 2000 June 1, Sweden: Johannes Kristiansen, Audax Randonneurs Denmark; Lyngby Bygrade 17; DK-3540 Lyngby. Tlf.: 4818 7771; - Mobil: 4083 7771; Giro.: 380 3708

## Stupidity and Wet Wool

*Harold Bridge*

In my account of the West Kooteney 300 I mention that I'm not very well known for thinking ahead. Take yesterday & today (May 25th 26th) for instance.

The Mariposa took a bashing from the weather on Sunday. Gear changing was haphazard & the chain looked like it had been soaked in solvent & dried. Tuesday, as if I hadn't spent a time in motor vehicles the day before, I decided to drive the Canada Birthday 133km route. Got 134 kms, just about right. Decided I would ride it Thursday. But Wednesday evening I felt the Mariposa needed some attention & decided to deal with that first. Besides, I would miss "Thirstday" at the Gilnetter (glad I went, Tim Pollock, his brother Pat, & at another table, Stuart Wood were all there, as well as my colleagues from ISE). It was nice out on the patio overlooking the confluence of the Pitt & Fraser Rivers.

When I got home I finished putting the sparkling Mariposa, complete with new chain, back together. It looked good. Unfortunately, the weather was due to change for the worse & I was reluctant to take a brand new chain into doubtful weather. Decided instead I would take the CBS with its mature transmission. Glad I did, it was very wet the whole way. Descending the south side of Sumas Mountain with its 12%

grade & in pouring rain was accomplished with the brakes on. Likewise 264th St hill down to River Rd. Got back to Fort Langley with 134.7 kms on both computers. (I lie, the Vetta is running off the back wheel which is shod with a 700Cx23 tyre. The Cateye Micro is running on the front wheel with a 700Cx20 tyre & is calibrated for a 23mm tyre. It gave 135.63 kms. Divide by 2095 & multiply by 2080 & that gives 134.659 or 134.7 a near a dammit).

The stupidity is that with a bit of thought I could have ridden the CBS in Thursday's sunshine & spent today indoors working on the Mariposa. It would have meant missing Thirstday, but what the hell?

I have had some uncomfortable rides this year; too cold down hill & too warm uphill. I think improper dressing has something to do with me not finishing 2 x 300 randonnees. But 2 wet rides were quite comfortable. They were the trip with Francis Caton to Harrison for the Fléche & today's soaker. The big difference was that I was wearing an old woolen racing jersey rather than any of this fancy high tech fabric. Hi-Tech looks pretty in pictures but in our climate tends to be useless except in the height of summer. Let that be a lesson to you!

## Is D'arcy Another Word For Hell?

### Not At All

*Danelle Laidlaw*

What is it about this ride that makes it so intriguing? I really want to do this brevet again because I know I can do it - I just couldn't do it on May 27th.

Look at the terrain and look at the scenery and this has got to be one of the best rides going. But there is no doubt - conditions have to be right for it to work. And they were not right for 9 of the 15 who started out from the BC Rail Station in North Vancouver. And for some, it was a disastrous start. Dave Blanche didn't see a median in the pouring rain and drove his car right into it, so that was the end of his ride.

The rest of us managed to get started amid a cacophony of "my computer is not working", "my route sheet is getting wet", and "oh my god, why are we doing this?" The route followed the lower levels road out to Horseshoe Bay and then Highway 99 up to Squamish. Some people think that the Sea to Sky Highway is really congested and dangerous, but I don't agree. Certainly on a rainy Saturday morning, the traffic was hardly noticeable. The rain showers we encountered were relentless, but several times let up just enough for us to think that it was finally going to clear up - no such luck. By the time we got to Squamish, we were ringing out the gloves and booties and focusing on staying warm.

The route out of Squamish was the old highway and Sharon and Roger staffed a secret control in Brackendale. They were disgustingly cheerful (of course they were cheery - they were inside eating breakfast) and sent us on our way in record time. The old highway is very quiet and gently climbs up to the base of the Cheakamus Canyon before joining the highway. Despite

the rain, the ride was fun. We had a wonderful view of the Royal Hudson steaming its way along as we sloshed our way up to Whistler. Doug and Susan had warned the PetroCan staff that we would be hanging out for a bit trying to dry out and the were most accommodating. Whistler seems to be a real siren to which we get drawn. Eric was captured by it on the way up. He had been plagued by flats and was having a tough time getting patches to adhere in the rain. Out of the mist came his saviour in the form of Barry Chase and his wife. They got him back on the road and then a broken skewer turned him back to the comfort of Barry's mountain retreat. Eric was down for the count.

I like not being the first person into an unstaffed control. You don't have to go through all that explanation stuff of "you are doing what?, in one day?". And that was the case for us at the Pemberton Hotel. After waiting for a few minutes for a train to pass, and then deciding just to go around it instead, it was a relief that the woman behind the desk just looked at us, shook her head, and without comment held out her hand for our cards and then pointed in the direction of the washrooms.

Our stay there was brief as we were anxious to get to the 1/2 way point. I used to not like out and back routes because I would see other riders who were so far ahead of me that it was depressing, but now I like them. It is the only way that I get to see a whole bunch of the folks that ride these events. About 5 km outside of Pemberton, we encountered the Terminator Twins (Ted and Keith). We had heard that Ted had come totally unprepared for the downpour and had to beg a jacket from Susan at the Whistler control. They paused long enough to say hello and wave and then the heads went down again and they were off. Between Pemberton and D'Arcy we crossed paths with Michel Richard being chased by Nobo, Dave Johnson riding with Keith Nichol, and Manfred on his own. We timed things right though - when we got to D'Arcy in sunshine and thought, stupidly, great - the weather has cleared. Yeah, right... Alex got us fed and watered which was quite a feat as there were no facilities in D'Arcy and pushed us out of the control where we were quite happy to enjoy the sun for a bit.

I had been riding with Ron Himschoot (now known as single speed Ron), John Bates (on sabbatical), and Jean Marc Boudreau. Jean-Marc had a deadline, so he decided to go ahead while we dawdled our way back down to Pemberton. Now it was our turn to shout encouragement to Wayne Harrington on his own and Keith Fletcher and Bob Bose riding together. On the way back down to Pemberton, we met Val and Bob Baile who had ridden as far as Pemberton and were now providing sweep on the route, and Bob Marsh who decided his penance for not getting up at 3 a.m. in the pouring rain to come out and do his second 400 was to drive up and be the support slut - a role he plays very well - trust me, I know.

I am not sure what delayed us in Pemberton but we seemed to spend more time there than we should have as it was getting dark by the time we left, maybe it was another train, or another shower - who knows. The ride back into Whistler was not much fun for me. I was having a lot of difficulty seeing the edge of the road in the dark, and when cars approached, it was just blinding. By the time we got to Whistler, I was very tense in anticipation of the next segment of road.

At Whistler, the siren had captured Manfred and Jean-Marc. They had both decided that with the cold and the rain, and the offer of a lift back to Vancouver, it was better to abandon than to risk a harrowing ride. It was also getting very cold. Well, abandonment is like an infectious disease. Once the idea started to take shape, well, you've had it. Our siren was that we had a place to stay in Whistler, so after some agonizing (not that muc agonizing), we too pulled the plug and decided to abandon the brevet and finish the ride in the morning. Subsequently, Wayne was persuaded to quit and Keith and Bob were also glad to be picked up and taken back to Vancouver. We knew that the TTs had finished and the other 4 were well on their way. Karen, Francis and Bruce were doing a great job of staffing the finish, but as soon as th group of 4 were in, their job was over.

Our adventure continued the next day after bidding farewell to our hosts (the rescue team we called them), we set off in light rain, but in dry clothes. B Brandywine, the rain had stopped and we were stripping off. The weather improved all the wa into Vancouver. Barry Chase chased us down and we had a leisurely lunch with him in Squamish. He told us about Eric's demise and we told him about the others. We all agreed that this was the ride to conquer. The only other time it has been run, of 8 starters there were only 2 finishers. That time it was heat that made it difficult.

I don't like abandoning brevets and I will get this one yet, but I also believe that we have to put safety first. It is after all, only a bike ride and sometimes things just don't work out. For my part, I really enjoyed the ride and coming back down the highway in glorious sunshine with a vista that is hard to beat was just the crowning glory. But I will be back to try that one again. My kudos to Val and Alex and all their helpers for providing superb support on a difficult ride.

NB. Ian Stephen (I think he needs an S on his name for superman) did the ride on his own the week before the official date, and Eric and Peter Sary finished the ride the week following. Barry started with them but got caught in the Whistler web!

## Report on the 300K and 400K Brevets in the Peace Region

*E.W. [Wim] Kok, Co-ordinator.*

### 300 K Brevet

The 300K Brevet took place on May 20, 2000 with an intended three riders participating. Susan and Doug came up from Vancouver for this event. Canadian Regional Airlines unfortunately let them down, by not taking their tandem up. They had to wait till the next day. That left one rider for th Saturday ride. Doug and Susan were so kind to get up early Saturday to see me off at 5:30 am. The first stretch went north from Fort St. John to Charlie Lake, then onto Highway 29 west to Hudson's Hope. A headwind accompanied me on the "up and down" route through the Peace Valley. Very scenic with numerous deer along the road as a bonus. Just before Hudson's Hope Terry Stone, a member of the Blizzard Cycling Club, met

and cycled with me to Moberly Lake. A nice change from cycling alone.

Then the headwind turned tail/side wind, which was great on the long climb out of the valley. The grades of this section were not as tough as expected - only long - and the descent into Chetwynd was certainly a relief. A bowl of soup, some buns and a half hour break re-energized me for the trip toward Dawson Creek. Two long hill climbs were awaiting me: one out of Chetwynd and one out of the Pine valley. Luckily the Gods were smiling from ear to ear, because a vigorous tailwind just "ushered the bike along" at speeds of 30-40 kph. There's justice after all!! A break after the ascent out of the Pine River valle had to be aborted, because a black bear sauntered around the rest stop. No need to add "randonneur-rare" to his diet. The remainder of the trip went smooth. A short break at Ted's Service, then north along the Mason Road to the Alaska Highway with long rolls into Taylor. Just as the finish line came in sight, a headwind provided the last 10 k challenge, however not enough to spoil the satisfaction of completing the 300 K Brevet. Doug and Susan successfully completed the Brevet on Sunday.

### Report 400 K Brevet June 3/4, 2000

This was the ride of the lone rider. The 400 K ride went from Fort St. John south via Ted's Service to Tumbler Ridge, then north via Gwillim Lake to Chetwynd, Hudson's Hope and Charlie Lake, just north of Fort St. John. The two 95 km legs in and out of Tumbler Ridge have virtually no settlement, lots of wilderness and wildlife and little traffic. For that reason the start time was set at 9:30 am, so that a sleep break could coincide with nightfall at the 260 km in Chetwynd. No need for cycling in the dark on long stretches of emptiness. The initial section of the ride consisted of incessant hills and headwinds. A mini whirlwind [dust-devil] picked up lots of debris, which subsequently came down. Its downfall proved that helmets are good for more than than breaking falls and collisions. A half hour break in Tumbler Ridge supplied enough energy for the leg north to Chetwynd. The intial section out of Tumbler Ridge was brutal, long and arduous, only to find out that the summit was named after the guy, who gave us Tumbler Ridge: Phillips Summit. No wonder. A short but good sleep in Chetwynd was certainl enjoyable. Up and riding again at 4:00 am with immediately a long climb, - if that does not wake you up - followed by a long and chilly descent into Moberly Lake - that certainly did it. There was even frost on the grass along the road. Being well dressed was no luxury!!! From Hudson's Hope to the finish line proved to be tough. The hills became hotter and longer - there was one 8 km climb in addition to others, but ultimately the 400 K brevet could be chalked up as another accomplishment in 25.5 hours [including a nice 6 hour break!] While the climbs were long, and at reaching many a crest, often another climb loomed, but the bonus often included snowcapped peaks and stunning views. Cycling here shows that not only is spring o so slowly moving north, it's also slow in creeping up the hills. Many trees above an elevation of 1000 meter a.s.l. did not have leaves on them yet. Was the ride worth it all? You betcha!! On to the next one.

## 2000 Km Brevet In 2000

(a.k.a. 2K-Y2K)

*Réal G. Préfontaine*

On June 24, 2000 at 06:00 an International group of Randonneurs, gathered for a memorable photograph, the start of a 2000 km brevet in year 2000. From Audax Ecosse (member of Audax UK), George Berwick; from Seattle Randonneurs, Ron Himshoot and Dave Johnson; and from the BC Randonneurs, John Bates, Manfred Kuchenmuller, Michel Richard, and Réal Préfontaine. Noboru Yonemitsu and Dick Nicholls regrettably had to cancel out at the last minute. The former for work related reasons and the latter for health reason.

The ride was organized in 7 stages, with an pre-identified stop every night (Control Point) and a group start in the morning. The 7 stages totaled 2010 km and had to be completed in 166.5 hours. Mac Cooper drove the Support Vehicle.

Stage 1 (June 24): Abbotsford to Kamloops (308 km)

The group rode together to Hope in intermittent showers that lasted to the toll booth. The climb to the Coquihalla toll booth quickly separated the "climbers" from the "flatlanders". By agreement a regrouping was planned at the Dairy Queen in Merritt. On our way to the Quilchena Control, I lost concentration for one second, clip Michel's rear wheel and took a fall. Luckily only road rash resulted which were quickly bandaged with the help of Manfred and we were on our way through the picturesque and quiet Nicola Valley. One last climb and we arrived in Kamloops at 22:30 hours where our support driver had checked us in at the Hostel International. A wise action as reception was closed and doors are locked at 22:00 hours.

John Bates, due to prior commitments had to differ his start June 25 in Kamloops. (He would complete the last stage on Jul 1 in Kamloops). Noboru Yonemitsu although not participating in the ride accompanied the group to Quilchena.

Stage 2 (June 25): Kamloops to Valemont (325 km)

Start at 06:00 followed by breakfast at Denny's before taking to the road. John Bates had joined the group. Quickly he and Michel Richard took the lead and left a dust trail for the remainder of the group to follow. This stage proved uneventful on a bright sunny and hot day. We arrive in Valemont at 00:15 with all establishments closed. We spent some time looking for our hotel until a local person re-directed us to the north end of town. Mac was patiently waiting for us at the roadside to flag us in. After a quick Pizza dinner we hit the sack for a 05:00 wake up call. The accommodation proved excellent as we had a lodge to ourselves.

Stage 3 (June 26): Valemont to Prince George (301 km)

On the road by 06:00 we had to go through road construction for some 20 km (to Tête Jaune) before leaving highway 5 for highway 16, still the Yellow Head, but the Prince Rupert section. From McBride to Purden Lake the rolling hills were

really rolling with multiple climbs and descent. Yes, some of us saw bears, others only bear droppings, several moose and other wild life were also spotted. At every casual stop, mosquitoes were out in force. The last persons to arrive in Prince George, Manfred and I, came in at 01:42. Nobo had warned us about the last 1 km climb before getting to our Bed & Breakfast lodging.

Stage 4 (June 27): Prince George to Sob Lake Road (71 km)

Sob Lake, where is that you say? When the route sheet was prepared, different Road Maps were used to evaluate distances between control points. Different maps gave different distances. To arrive at the required distance for the turn around point of 1005 km we had asked Mac to record every riders bicycle odometer reading at each Control Point on the way out and average them out. The average reading at our overnight stop in Prince George, indicated we had to complete 71 km for a total of 1005 km. This distance was reached at the intersection of Highway 16 West and Sob Lake Road. We left for this stage after 07:00 as we were returning to Prince George and the same accommodation for the evening. This was a particularly hot day and also a critical day for me. In spite of lightening my on bicycle load, due to recent and recurrent problems, I could not keep up with the group and decided to abandon.

Stage 5 (June 28): Prince George to Blue River (390 km)

This was a 390 km stage. In retrospect not a distance you would want to cover on your fifth day of riding. The 04:00 start went well as the weather was clear and winds favorable. However the skies quickly overcast and by early afternoon the riders were submitted to multiple downpours and showers interspersed by periods of sunshine. Leaving McBride, John and Michel started with a 40 km tailwind and tried to out run the storm. The didn't. Luckily the ride from Valemont to Blue River (89 km) had more downhill than climbs. The last rider checked in 02:30. Considering that everyone was up at 03:00 the day before it was a long day. A noteworthy incident on this stage occurred on arriving at the Motel when Manfred ran over a policeman, a "sleeping policeman" that is !!!!!!!!

Stage 6 (June 29): Blue River to Merritt (325 km)

After breakfast at the Husky Restaurant the day augured well. The weather was cool due to light fog. Winds were not significant. Within two hours the sun had burned away the fog. Mac and I, in the support vehicle had proceeded to the interim control point of Clearwater. John and Michel, having had a good night rest (over 6 hours), were well on their way before tragedy struck. Some fifty km before Clearwater, Michel caught John's rear wheel and crashed. He sustained severe injury to his right elbow and right rib cage. After ten minutes of rest he was able to get back on his bicycle and continue to Clearwater at a slow pace followed by John. At Clearwater I examined Michel and concluded he likely had broken rib(s) and serious injury to right elbow. Abandoning the ride at this point was raised. However after bandaging the road rash of his elbow and shoulder, Michel decided to continue the ride and re-evaluate his situation as he went along. By the time he was ready to leave the Clearwater interim control, George and Manfred had arrived and the three left together. Ron and Dave were soon to follow. It

was decided that the support vehicle would make more frequent stops to ensure Michel was able to continue. The road did not present major climbs at this point. Unfortunately a head wind picked-up some 20 km North of Kamloops, the next interim control. Michel again evaluated his situation and after a rest and food intake decided to tackle the climb out of Kamloops. After seeing Ron and Dave leave the Kamloops interim control, Mac and I had a quick dinner and took to the road. Michel in spite of his injury was on the descent towards Nichola Valley by the time we caught up. The head winds were gusting to over 30 km per hour. Michel decided to continue contrary to medical advice. It was agreed that I would drive Mac to Merritt, arrange to obtain the hotel keys for the riders and I would return to check on the riders progress, especially Michel.

Manfred and George were progressing well against the head wind, Michel one hour behind them had to take numerous rest stops. At this point Ron and Dave were one and half hour behind Michel. They had taken a longer dinner break in Kamloops. Due to pain and strong head winds, Michel consider abandoning. When I rejoined him, the winds had relented somewhat and he decided to try for the Quilchena Control. At this point Michel set himself short distance objectives with re-evaluation at the end of each objective. With a minimum of analgesics but loads of courage, determination and inner strength that came from "God knows where" he reached the Merritt Control at 01:28 AM, one hour behind Manfred and George and one and one-half hour before Ron and Dave. It was a long day and one that will not be forgotten.

Stage 6 (June 30): Merritt to Abbotsford (219km)

Breakfast was called for 06:00 AM with the departure to follo with an understanding of a regrouping in Hope were othe Randonneurs would be waiting for the final leg of the journey to Abbotsford. John readily took the lead, followed by Manfred, George, Ron, Dave and Michel. The Cold Water River Road proved difficult for Michel. Although not a long climb the rolling hill and rough section were painful and challenging. B the time the Coquihalla was reached the group had separated. To ensure that Michel would not be left to himself the support vehicle kept behind him. Needless to say the climb to the Toll Booth against a headwind required more determination. The descent to Hope was easier than anticipated. Michel arrived at approximately 16:15. Karen Smith and Dick Nicholls wer waiting with Manfred, George, Ron and Dave. John, who would not finish his ride today had left with Danelle and Rainy and Joe for Abbotsford. After a rest of one hour for Michel he left with the group who would ride together to the finish in Abbotsford. Mac and I continued to the Final Control in Abbotsford.

On June 23rd , day before departure, I had mentioned to the Manager of Save-on-Food at Abbotsford Village Plaza about our 2000 km ride and anticipated finish at the Village between 16:00 and 18:00 hours. He volunteered to have a snack read for the participants and accompanying riders. (This was a quick and last minute arrangement and details were not outlined). On arriving in Abbotsford at approximately 06:30 PM, I checked with the clerk at the Service Counter who was not aware of the arrangements. Regrettably I did not ask for the on-site Manager and the issue of a reception at Save-on-Food was not pursued.

The next day I met with Fred, an Assistant Manager at Save-on-Food, who informed me that arrangements were in place and he and his staff waited until 22:00 hours. The group arrived at th Final Control, Abbotsford Village Plaza, at 21:45 hours. As the organizer of the ride, I apologized to the Manager and his Staff at Save-on-Food for the unfortunate misunderstanding.

In Summary, six of the seven starters finished. The Stage Ride approach proved feasible for long distance rides and demonstrated that less support staff is required for the controls. Will other multi-days ride be organized? I would expect so, but a 2000 km in Y2K, that is unique.

P.S. As most of you may have heard by now, Michel Richard injuries were more serious than both he and I had foreseen. He required major surgical intervention to his right elbow. At the time of writing this report he is recuperating well and he plan to participate in the Flatlander in September. I venture to say you will see him on his bicycle well before then.

## Pin Designs Requested

*Gord Cook*

In the past we have had very few submissions for pin designs so this year we are giving you lots of notice. We need pin design for next year's series so, get the creative juices flowing and get your ideas on paper and send them to any of the executive. A special invitation for pin design goes out to our new members of the Yukon and Peace River areas.

## Island 200-April 1: Tour of the Cowichan Valley

*Mike Poplawski*

Below is a brief account of a ride my partner, Joanne Metz and I did to introduce ourselves to the world of Randonneur riding. We rode the 200 km ride starting in Chemainus on April 1. It was the first ride of that distance for either of us, but not the first time we had ridden on a ride with cue sheets and controls. We prepared ourselves by riding a 150 km route four weeks earlier around our home in Victoria.

The Ride Itinerary:

- ◆ Chemainus
- ◆ Crofton
- ◆ Maple Bay
- ◆ Cowichan Bay
- ◆ Mill Ba
- ◆ Shawnigan Lake
- ◆ Cobble Hill
- ◆ Glenora
- ◆ Dunca
- ◆ Lake Cowichan
- ◆ Youbou
- ◆ Somenos
- ◆ Chemainus

We arrived in good time in Chemainus after having a

McMuffin/hash brown/orange juice breakfast-we had plenty of time to fill out the forms, check our bikes (and gawk at everyone else's) and get settled in to the pre-ride atmosphere.

Stephen Hinde, the ride organizer, was in fine form before the ride, making sure everyone's mount was up to code, explaining the origins and pronunciation of Youbou, and warning us of the 60 km gravel road detour around Youbou\*. Carol Hinde was there as well, doing much of the paperwork.

The ride was fairly well attended with no fewer than 23 riders, most certainly due to the anticipated good weather and with a contingent of no less than 14 riders from the Lower Mainland!

We started out at 7:09 AM and wisely let most of the field get ahead of us. A group of eight of us or so would stay together until Crofton as we warmed up.

(What would a randonneur ride be without one wrong turn? Joanne and I missed the turn on to York in Crofton, putting us well behind the pack which we would not ride with again. I was feeling confident that it would be our last navigational error, and losing a minute was not so bad at all. I also managed to drop my cue sheet while riding on York, another tradition of mine.)

The route from Crofton to Maple Bay and then on to Mill Bay is quite attractive, save for the climb coming out of Cowichan Bay. Stephen and Carol greeted us at the top as they were waiting for a rider who was riding 150 km that day; their explaining that the Cowichan Bay climb was the worst we'd see was encouraging. They pointed us in the direction of Cherry Point and we got to ride a pair of steep descents (and another climb, which I think was steeper than Cowichan Bay, although nowhere near as long).

We found our way on to Telegraph Road. The Dire Straits tun (a favourite of mine) of the same name popped into my head as we enjoyed riding this road the opposite way (I have ridden from Mill Bay to Crofton several times before). We were soon in Mill Bay and on our way to Shawnigan Lake.

The father of Joanne's kids lives in the area and they visit him, so we have had the chance to ride around Mill Bay. It was a treat to ride Shawnigan-Mill Bay Road on bikes, rather than in a car, to gather in some of the sights, sounds and smells of this country.

The first checkpoint in Shawnigan Lake gave us a little break. Thank you Sharon (hope I have your name right) for the banana bread and cookies! We refilled our water at the General Store and rode on clockwise around the lake.

The west side of Shawnigan has plenty of rollers on rough roads and I'm sure it's a popular training ride as we were passed by a trio who I don't doubt rode up from Victoria that morning.

We meandered along Cobble Hill Road until we hit the highway near Cowichan Bay and ran into Stephen once again. He warned us about a missing street sign up ahead. Thank you, Stephen! The roads were not too hard to ride or navigate and we found ourselves in Glenora in good time to meet up with the checkpoint folks and fill up with water. Thanks again, Stephen!

We were told that we were just behind another group but I didn't

think we'd see them. Our pace was steady, but not fast as we made our way out of Duncan and towards Lake Cowichan, a stretch which we found to be quite attractive, with some nice side roads and a bit through the woods.

We felt good coming in to Youbou, and after we doubled back on the road we would find out why. We arrived too late to meet the staffed checkpoint (and the edible goodies) but a cheerful gas station attendant signed our cards and wished us luck.

The highway back towards Duncan, the Cowichan Valley Highway, was, to be blunt, grim. Most of it was perfectly straight with some longer climbs and a relentless headwind that made me believe that there was something physically wrong with my bike. We were not encouraged by drivers passing us at 100 km/h on a 2-lane road, either. Joanne and I basically sucked wheel for almost 2 hours along this stretch (could somebody get us a tandem, please?) and when we finally reached the Tansor turnoff near Somenos I gladly said goodbye to the highway. There was a brisk descent shortly before Tansor, but not enough to win my heart!

As we rode through Somenos, we saw plenty of graveyards. Fortunately, they were merely scenic, not symbolic.

After turning on to the highway, Joanne and I found ourselves with a brisk tailwind as we flew through a construction zone. I was relieved that my bicycle was all okay as I was now cruising uphill at around 30 km/h after struggling to hit 20 for almost two hours on the Cowichan highway.

This stretch of tailwind was all too short but the turn towards Chemainus was still welcome as it meant our ride was drawing to a close. We rode the hills and over more railroad tracks than I remembered from that morning and finished the ride with a little sprint towards the finish in Chemainus in a time of 10:45, which represented an average speed of over 20 km/h and about an hour off our bikes.

We earned our pins! We were also lucky to have the company of several of the other riders at Wing's restaurant before many of them headed back to the mainland, and in one case, Terry from up island in Courtenay. Chinese food combinations and milkshakes never tasted so good!

The main physical challenges I had during the ride were tightness between my shoulder blades, fatigue in my triceps (it took all I had to give a "thumbs up") and a weakness in my left leg. I have a problem with my left knee which makes it weak laterally, and I had a hard time unclipping my SPD pedal. The good news is that it was not that long ago that I would have felt the same way after riding 50 km (our bodies and brains are amazing things!). Further on the plus side, I believe I ate enough and Joanne and I both drank enough, judging by the number of times we got off our bikes to "dehydrate". There was no serious heat or cold to give us any problems, either.

To sum up, this is an amazing ride and one that any road rider could look forward to doing. You see a lot, there's no shortage of people out and about to say "hello" to, and it can be done easily in a day. I imagine it's one of the more pleasant randonneur routes; I'm keen on riding the longer distances, but I think it's going to be lonelier on the highways, instead of the byways...  
\*April Fool's! Thanks, Stephen...