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# Randonneur

## Marathon Cycling

### President's Poem

*Frances Caton*

Have you ever wondered what Randonneurs do in the wintertime when the rain comes down and riding's a chore?

- ◆ Tiny designs to reward the miles
- ◆ Jerseys that delight, in red, black and white
- ◆ Workshops informative to all PBPers
- ◆ And route sheets for reasons, to ride through the seasons
- ◆ Brochures and newsletters, insurance and socials
- ◆ Spinning and training, oh dear, it's still raining

Thanks to everyone's efforts, the coming season is sure to be a success.

### See you at the Social

*Susan Allen*

March 15 is the social ride and social party. Details of the ride are not available at press time. Keep your eyes on the webpage ([www.randonneurs.bc.ca](http://www.randonneurs.bc.ca)) or give the organizer (Michel Richard 604-732-0212) a ring. The party starts at 7:00 pm at Moose's Down Under (830 West Pender St, Vancouver).

### Two Canada Jerseys... Say What?

*Eric Fergusson*

You will notice that there are two choices for the Canada jersey intended to be the national jersey for Canadians at PBP 03. After months of discussions between the six Canadian club Presidents, a consensus was reached. There was also a tentative agreement to adopt the words "Randonneurs Canada" as a name - a focal point - around which the provincial clubs could be sorted in the minds of people from elsewhere in the world. "Randonneurs Canada" could also be stamped in big bold letters on the PBP 03 Canada jersey - it would be an easily understood national

marker. Plans are now being made to build a rail line from Halifax to Vancouver to make solid this "Rando Can" national dream... OK, maybe not a rail line, but perhaps a web page with six links.

At the moment the decision was being made in favour of the modified Garneau 'flames' design as national "Randonneurs Canada" jersey, PBP hopefuls from BC were getting together for Réal's February 8th PBP workshop, and casting votes for the their jersey preference. There had been a buzz for some weeks about Ali Holt's reinterpretation of the O'Hagan Cycle's 'geese' design, and at the workshop this was the overwhelming fave.

So what do you do when your club votes one way and the national committee votes another? Well I guess if you're BC Randonneurs you say "yes" and "yes". Ali went back to the drawing board - MAC board - and fine-tuned the goose design yet again, this time producing a jersey aimed squarely at BC Randonneurs riders.

The two designs you see posted prominently on the web site are the result of a lengthy jersey selection process, involving 14 jersey submissions, and numerous variations on some of the designs. (All the submissions remain posted on a separate page on the web site.) The official Randonneur Canada jersey and Ali's Canada goose are both available - follow the ordering instruction on the web site or take a cheque to the Spring Social. Orders close mid-March.

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And one more thing. Ali has removed the references on the jersey to PBP 03 so the jersey might appeal to members who do not intend to go to PBP in August. Ali's goose now replaces the "PetroCan" design as the club's Canada jersey.

If I could make an itsy bitsy comment at this point - if you're planning to go to PBP, I encourage you to consider getting both jerseys. In 1999 there was a national photo, and there are tentative plans to do this again in 2003. I plan to ride PBP in my goose, because, well, it's fantastic... but wouldn't it also be great to have a national photo with everyone wearing the same national "Randonneurs Canada" jersey. This is not a new dream...

In the years leading up to PBP '95 Harold Bridge had the idea that all Canadians could wear one common jersey, which could be individualized for each provincial club. Given the struggle to forge a consensus this time around it seems all the more remarkable that Harold was able pull this off in '95 - the result was the PetroCan jersey. Harold wondered if it could be done again for 2003, and he is the person that started the wheels in motion for a new national jersey.

Well Harold, we did it.

Kevin Jardine from Victoria acted as facilitator in the process. Thanks also to Graham Hallward from Randonneurs Ontario who brokered the national consensus, and to Ali for her multiplicitous design talents and technical advice.

## Fraser River Crossing

*Ian Stephen (BCCC Rep.)*

A small series of open houses regarding the future Fraser River crossing concluded Thursday Feb 13. There are two options still under consideration, one is a bridge, the other a combination of tunnel from the north side to Barnston Island and a bridge from

**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 (1983). 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.

The newsletter is published in hardcopy form approximately every six weeks. Articles and notices are posted to the club webletter at [www.randonneurs.bc.ca](http://www.randonneurs.bc.ca) as received (or a little later if work or riding get in the way) and subsequently edited and formatted into this newsletter. If you are happy with the html or pdf version on the web and do not wish to receive further paper newsletters please send me an email at [stoker@telus.net](mailto:stoker@telus.net). I email the data reports as pdf.

Editor: Susan Allen

**Submissions:** Please send articles to me. My preference is plain text files or Word 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 Early April.

Barnston to the south side. Either will involve public/private partnership and tolls.

Whichever option is built will replace the Albion ferry that currently runs between Albion and Fort Langley (and presumably the Barnston ferry as well if the tunnel option goes).

The bridge option includes shared use sidewalks for cyclists/pedestrians. The tunnel would have bike lanes.

These developments will impact a number of lower mainland randonneur routes, so I would like to voice a position on the options as a club.

For my own use, I would rather a bridge than a tunnel. Less noise, less exhaust fumes, better view. Either option will work though.

One concern as a cyclist stems from a meeting with Translink last year. Cycling groups stated that their preferred crossing would be a bridge with cycle lanes on both sides of the bridge deck (road surface). This was met with opposition from Translink's people in part because (we were told) as traffic volumes increased we would likely lose our bike lanes when the bridge deck was restriped to make more motor-vehicle lanes.

If that was true of a bridge, why is it not true of a tunnel?

As a resident/tax-payer/road user I am also concerned that the tunnel option would cost \$100-150 million more to build and \$1-2 million more yearly to operate according to figures given at the Surrey meeting Feb 13. In spite of this, rumblings I am hearing indicate a preference for the tunnel option among powers that be.

Another concern may be any agreements made as part of public/private partnership on the project. In light of the large investment involved, could guarantees made prevent Translink from implementing demand management measures that would otherwise make sense for the region?

Information is available at [www.translink.bc.ca/frasercrossing](http://www.translink.bc.ca/frasercrossing). What are your thoughts and concerns? Bridge/vs tunnel, access to and from either option, elevation changes, pedestrians, safety...?

With the club's permission I would like to compose a letter to Translink, based on discussion here, stating the club's position on the options.

## Lots and Lots of New Clothing

*Danelle Laidlaw*

It is time to spice up your duds - and we have lots of choices for you this year. By the time of the social (March 15), we will have a NEW JACKET in the BC jersey design (bumblebee). This is the second time we have offered jackets and the first time for this design.

We will also have a NEW JERSEY DESIGN - nicknamed "the goose", this will replace the old PetroCan design. For this first order only, we are requiring pre-payment and orders by March 28th, so that we can have the order in time for "the big one" - PBP.

We are also getting in new SHORTS and new BC JERSEYS. And

we may even have some gloves later in the year, if sales go well.

"I just don't have anything to wear" will not cut it anymore. Give me a call for prices and sizes and we'll have you fully outfitted in no time - Danelle 604-737-0043 or dplaid@attglobal.net

## Wishing David Blanche a Speedy Recovery

*Harold Bridge*

On Sunday February 16 while David was descending a Surrey hill toward the Pattullo Bridge a car pulled out in front of him. David apparently went thru the driver's window so the driver as well as the cyclist went to hospital. David suffered a compound fracture to his right arm and now has a steel plate and 36 screws in there. I went to Royal Columbia Hospital on Tuesday evening to visit and he seems in good spirits. He is due to be released today, Friday February 21.

## Veni, Vidi, Vici: My First RM 1200 !

*E. W. [Wim] Kok*

### Anticipation

Kamloops here I come. Finally the moment I had been dreaming of and preparing for the 2002 RM 1200 had arrived. The 1,200 kilometer bicycle ride from Kamloops-Jasper-Lake Louise-Salmon Arm-Vernon, and then to Kamloops in 90 hours or less. The route would take us through a stupendous landscape, breathtaking scenery, challenging climbs and daring descents. It would be my first big brevet. During the week prior, I had been closely watching the weather forecast for locations along the route (<http://weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca>). The satellite photographs showed only clear skies. I kept searching for the proverbial cloud in the sky like a drought-stricken prairie farmer. The 2002 event promised to be a scorcher. As a cool weather cyclist I was somewhat concerned about that. But as the saying goes, que sera, sera. As the date crept closer, so did the anticipation and anxiety. I felt like a kid for whom St. Nicholas couldn't come soon enough, wondering what he would bring? So here is my account of the event.

### Training and Preparation

Mentally I must have completed the course a

dozen times. I studied the route map and course profile in detail and read numerous accounts of other people's experiences. On the basement wall in front of my rollers/wind trainer was a route map, newspaper clippings, pictures of the 1991 Paris-Brest-Paris event [note\_1] and BC Randonneurs pamphlets. Roller training in the basement and with the Blizzard Bike Club (Fort St. John, B.C.), a few times per week, helped maintain the spinning edge. In addition, the northern winter provided good outdoor training opportunities in cross-country skiing and long track speedskating. When I finally decided to sign up for the ride, I was wait-listed as # 53. [note\_2] Would I be able to participate? Lesson learned: always do today what is due next month. Meanwhile training continued, followed by the populaires in a spring that never seemed to come. Actually, it snowed more in March and April than it had all winter; the ice on the local lakes disappeared two weeks later than normal. Global warming, I guess.

Finally the qualifying brevets. The 200 km in early May: cool and smokey from forest fires in Alberta. The 300 km under windy and warm conditions. The sleepless 400 km completed from before sunrise to after sunset, with a bright full moon as companion and bonus during the darker moments. Then the ill-fated 600 km with Bob Boonstra on the July 1 long weekend.

What promised to be a pretty good one, turned into a cold, windy and wet miserable event. Do I need to say more. After 250 km we decided to abandon in the Pine Pass. As Bob noted "it was not, that we could not do it, but a matter of did we want to do this. After all what was the real fun in this." I knew that I could do a 600 km, since I already had done so in 2000. Since every randonneur will have 'earned' at least one DNF somewhere in his travels, I figured mine might as well have been under these wretched conditions. Despite the DNF, questions arose as to what valuable lessons could be learned. Was I really prepared for the RM 1200. What gear and training were still needed? What else had I overlooked. Plenty I would say. I had another three weeks to work on the fine tuning.

### Equipment and Odds and Ends

My goal was to finish the RM 1200 within the 90 hours time limit, so I would start at 10 pm, ride through the night to Jasper, spend the next night there; and on day two cycle to Golden for another night's sleep. Vernon would be the destination on the third day, while the Kamloops leg was reserved for day four. As this was an unsupported ride, I prepared three drop bags, each containing spare clothing, Gatorade

## Coming Events

*Seattle Populaire – March 1*  
9 am: Redhook Brewery, 14300 NE 145 St. Woodinville, WA  
Mark Thomas 425-881-8442

*SpringSocialRide - March 15*  
Contact organizer.  
Michel Richard 732-0212

*Spring Social – March 15*  
7:00 pm: Moose's Down Under  
830 West Pender St  
Michel Richard 732-0212

*Seattle 200 – March 15*  
7 am: Greg Cox's House, 24308 147<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, Kent WA  
Greg Cox 253-639-2928

*Nanaimo Populaire – Mar 23*  
(50, 100 km) 10 am: Tim Horton' s at Tenth & Lawlor (Southgate Mall Highway 1)  
Stephen Hinde 250-245-4751

*Island 200 – Mar 29*  
50, 100, 150 also available  
Stephen Hinde 250-245-4751

*Seattle 300 - Apr 5*  
6 am: Mukilteo Ferry Terminal / Clinton Ferry Landing WA  
Ken kenneth.w.carter@boeing.com  
Carter .com

*Pacific Populaire – Apr 6*  
9 am: Riley Park  
Danelle Laidlaw 421-1717

*Peace Populaire I – Apr 6*  
50km : Fort St. John  
Wim Kok 250-785-4589

*L. Mainland 200 – Apr 12*  
7 am: Surrey Sports & Leisure Centre 16555 Fraser Highway also 150 km at 7:30 am and 100, 50 km at 9:00 am  
Dan McGuire 942-3235

*Peace Populaire II – Apr 12*  
100 km: Fort St. John  
Wim Kok 250-785-4589

*Fleche Northwest -Apr 18-19*  
Details to come  
[www.seattlerandonneur.org](http://www.seattlerandonneur.org)

*Kamloops 200 – Apr 19*  
Contact Organizer  
Bob Boonstra 250-828-2869

*Island 300 – Apr 19*  
Contact Organizer  
Stephen Hinde 250-245-4751

crystals, food, including cans of EnsurePlus and other items. The advice provided by Hubertus Hohl in his 2000 RM 1200 story "Of Bears & Bikers" was invaluable in this respect [published 2000 Issue 7].

Since feeding and hydration are important at the best of times, hot weather makes it even more critical, so I carried two bottles, one with Gatorade and one with EnsurePlus. Water for continuous replenishment during the ride was in my Camelback. The strategy was to use liquid food during the ride, and solids at the controls. Clothing consisted of cycling shorts, long-sleeved jerseys, and legwarmers for colder moments. BagBalm, as a preventative posterior skin softener would be invaluable, as was a ball cap worn underneath the helmet for sun protection.

And, last but not least, my steed. The 18-year old faithful 'Legge' with Shimano 600 components (yes that bike is definitely old), equipped with 14 a speed transmission (53/39 and 13-26). Two indestructible Arroyo rims with Specialized Armadillos tires (21x 700C), fenders and a rack. Carry on luggage would be stored in a handlebar bag and one rack pack.

### **Veni: The Approaching Event**

After driving 1,000 km to get to Kamloops, I stopped at friends outside Kamloops, who recommended Peter's Pasta as a great place for a quality pre-ride pasta meal. It did indeed live up to its fame. As I left the restaurant I noted a recumbent and another bicycle keeping each other company outside the venue; little did I know that these belonged to Peter Noris and Michael Koth, with whom I would be spending many kilometers during the RM 1200. At the registration site and bike check I met many of the volunteers and riders, who up to then had been only names. Now I could put faces to them. Neat!!

The registration and bike check were straight forward. I left the three drop bags for Jasper, Golden and Vernon. Once outside and doing some last minute preparations, I chatted with Othmar Altmann (and his support crew), who intended to, and indeed did complete the ride in 52 hours. It was a real pleasure to run into Grant McLeod from Saskatchewan. With a mutual "I know you" we crossed paths again. The last time this happened was in 1979, when each one of us was doing graduate studies at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg. Both our mutual, and then young, families lived at Uni-Village, the Co-op Housing for married students. Now we had an opportunity to briefly revisit our lives of the last 23 years.

Close to the start time, more last minute preparations -- I actually don't why -- but I'm sure it is a ritual that riders feel they must most go through, similar to dogs marking their territory. As the 10 pm start time approached the atmosphere became filled with excitement, anticipation. The moment of truth was about to arrive. Instinctively we knew how the gladiators felt. Our fate would be better. Ave Caesar, Cyclitori, te Salutant!!!

### **Vidi: Night and Day 1: Kamloops - Jasper: 443.3 km**

As the sun set, an envelope of hot and oppressive air surrounded us. Near ten o'clock some last minute instructions, bike lights switched on, cameras flashed to record the memories. After a

countdown, we were indeed off through the streets of Kamloops to Highway # 5 north toward Jasper. We came to a major intersection and the traffic lights turned green, exactly when needed. Evidence of how well organized the ride was! Quickly the pace picked up; we disappeared into the darkness, a string of lights marking our path and progress. The skies were partially cloudy; later the moon would make a conscious and successful breakthrough, illuminating our trail as we passed through Barriere, Little Fort and other small settlements. Trucks loaded with pulp chips passed us, leaving behind a waft of pine and spruce scent. Sawmills along the route, which used red cedar, marked their presence in similar fashion.

Anxiety set in after Clearwater, because the first control had not shown up. "Did we miss a turn-off, would we have to cycle back?" Since we did not see anyone 'back peddling', we plugged ahead. However, had we read the route sheet more carefully, we would have noted that the first control was north of Clearwater. Another lesson learned: if all else fails,..... read the instructions. Finally, there it was at 3:45 am, Control # 1: Clearwater (km 134) A quick break, refilling water bottles, a bite to eat, and exchanging experiences. Within half an hour however we were on the road again. Soon after, I caught up with Michael Koth from Germany. As we chatted, it became clear that our goals were similar, finish the RM 1200, enjoy the scenery and the people. Later on Peter Noris from Florida on his recumbent joined. As the night and the ride progressed, the temperature dropped. Ground fog appeared, which added to the chill. The mountain skyline showed so markedly in the light of the silvery moon, that one almost became poetic about the experience.

Past Avola, we cycled up and then down the Messiter Pass (765 m) on to Control # 2: Blue River (km 229), where we pulled in at 8:31 am. This place should be renamed Bug River, because swarms of tiny vampires enthusiastically welcomed us. After some solid food and refreshments, we crawled back on our bikes, escaped the mosquitoes and tackled the leg to Tete Jaune Cache, rough pavement and increasing heat. We stopped at Valemout to pick up extra water. The temperature soared to 33°C. It was a scorcher!!! The section Valemout to Tete Jaune Cache seemed to be never ending. Finally, the rusty railway bridge came in sight, followed by the Fraser River crossing. At 14:44 pm we signed in at Control # 3: Tete Jaune Cache (km 339). The rest and soup in a great little rustic restaurant along the fast flowing Fraser River with a marvelous menu, were great inspirations for the leg to Jasper, another 100 km to go.

After leaving Tete Jaune Cache, we passed Mount Robson, a most impressive and outstanding peak. Another long climb appeared. Having done this distance by car, I knew that the climb would be about 5 km with a 6 to 7% grade. The ride along Moose Lake was very pretty. At the Jasper National Park we paid our dues and moved on the Yellowhead Pass (1131 m). 'Climbing' this pass was a non-event, since it did not involve any climbing. Meanwhile Barb Henniger and Ron Himschoot caught up with us and together we arrived at Control # 4: Jasper (km 449) at 21:48 pm. Almost 23 hours and 443 km later, the first part was finished. At the Jasper control the incredible commitment of the volunteers was evident. They drove us to the showers, filled our plates, even washed our water bottles (!!!), noted our sleeping mat number,

and woke us at the requested time. Does one need to say more about the service. Three and a half hours of sleep went by too quickly, considering that the snoring crowd prevented others from going too deep.

### **Vidi: Day 2: Jasper - Golden (316.9 km)**

Day two meant an early start. The air was chilly and the skies overcast. Soon the first raindrops fell. We tried to avoid them for a while, but to no avail. We stopped at the Sunwapta to warm up and dry out. When we started our quest for the Sunwapta Pass (2035 m), the rain stopped. The mountains and clouds were awe inspiring during our ascent to the Pass. Needless to say that it was sheer delight. I could not help it, but my fellow cyclists had to endure a lecture on the physical geography of the surroundings. Thanks, guys for being such a patient (and captive) audience. The last bit up to the Icefields Centre was very steep, close to 13% and I was grateful for the 39/26 gearing. Next time I'll use a triple, which should make it easier. At 10:15 am we arrived at Control # 5: Icefields Centre (km 548.1), where we spent an hour chatting, sight-seeing, and getting ready for the descent. The downhill speeds were incredible, winds howling and whistling through one's helmet. What a rush. Hee-haw!!! Adults became kids again. Peter on his recumbent was nowhere to be seen. If recumbents are slow on the uphill, they more than make up for it on the descent. Michael and I called it the 'revenge of the recumbent.' The section toward Saskatchewan Crossing was familiar to me; I ran this part during the Jasper-Banff relay, some years ago. We stopped briefly at the Crossing to get ready for the long climb up to the Bow Pass (2065 m). The first 18 km I knew from another Jasper-Banff [note 3] relay run, because it was one of the tougher, but most memorable sections of that run. I ran it in the dark, some time after 10:00 pm. I was surrounded by snow-capped peaks; the moon came out and gave the mountains and lakes a fairy tale appearance. Quite poetic. Back to the bike ride up the Bow Pass. Cycling was slow now with grades up to 6 - 7%; Peyto Lake, Bow Pass, emerald coloured Bow Lake, Hector Lake and the long descent to Control # 6: Lake Louise (km 676.1), where we arrived at 18:48 pm.

Time for food, drink, bike adjustments, pictures by Don, and on the road again to Golden. Going up and through the Kickinghorse Pass (1,645 m) was as much a non-event as the Yellowhead Pass earlier in the ride. We only had to climb 112 m vertically over some 15 km to get to the summit, and then a wicked descent. Screaming downhill toward Field. Darkness had set in. What came next was probably the most unpleasant part of the entire event, mainly because of the narrow shoulders of road, the incessant and speeding truck traffic with its deafening roar. The quality of the shoulders also left much to be desired. There were numerous cracks in the pavement, which contrary to normal behaviour, ran in the direction of travel. In the dim headlight these cracks appeared like major crevasses, ready to swallow both bike and rider in one gulp. Afraid that this might happen to either me or Michael, I kept on yelling 'cracks ahead.' He must have thought what a 'crackpot.' In retrospect, I am not so sure that the cracks actually were that big. Maybe it was hallucination, something more riders appear to experience during the sleep deprived events. As we approached Golden, construction zones made things rougher yet, especially where much was poorly identified. At

23:52 pm we pulled into Control # 7: Golden (km 760.2). Time to catch a few hours of sleep. Zzzzzzzzzzzzzzz !!!

### **Vidi: Day 3: Golden - Salmon Arm (252.0 km)**

Morning came early. I don't know what happened (probably nothing), but according to Karen I did respond in word to her first wake-up call, but not in deed. A second call was necessary. Sorry, Karen. Quickly, I moved about, had breakfast, and was on the bike again. The early morning chill filled the valley with low lying fog. Past Donald Station the road started to climb steadily; the ascent must have taken more than an hour before things eased up. In our descent to the valley we noted the Heather Lodge display sign with "Visitors welcome." We responded to the message, to help boost our energy levels and the local economy, but we were not wanted. Not impressed! We continued, only to find out later that other RM 1200 riders had been welcomed in. Not impressed, again. Ah, well. Some you win, some you lose. The temperature dropped to a chilly 5°C, but as we started the climb to the Rogers Pass (1,330 m), the sun shone on our side of the valley. At the summit we stopped to enjoy the scenery and an outstanding smorgasbord at the Best Western. Time for a commercial endorsement here. The choice was a great variation of the "on the bike" menu of water, Gatorade and EnsurePlus. Well rested and recovered, we rushed down toward Revelstoke and back into the heat. At 13:47 pm we pulled into Control # 8: Revelstoke (km 908.7). More food and drink and back on the bike, but not before Peter had addressed his ancestral needs (he insisted, he must and should have Espresso Italiano before proceeding). We left Revelstoke, uphill again along a very noisy Trans Canada Highway, then through Craigellachie, where Donald Smith in 1885 forever nailed Canadian history. Here he drove the symbolic 'last spike', marking the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad.

After Malakwa, we wondered when we would get off the Highway. Truck traffic remained very noisy and busy. At the turnoff a metamorphosis occurred. Peace and quiet. Traffic was gone. Arcadia. The scene became pastoral, and the quality of the experience increased substantially. Just what we needed at that time. It did not last long however. As we cycled along the backroad, two big dogs suddenly popped up, refusing to obey their owners' command to leave us alone. Needless to say that our love for dogs did not increase at that time. It definitely influenced our approach the next time we were chased (for more on this, see 'doggone intermezzo' below). Too soon we were back on the Trans Canada Highway with less traffic now, but more hills. These unexpected climbs toward Salmon Arm required the utmost. Also, some 'people' in an old clunker thought it funny to closely pass cyclists and then yell. Not impressed. Soon however we arrived at Control # 9: Salmon Arm (km 1012.2). While I had planned to make to Vernon that day -- this is where my third drop bag was -- we decided to adjust our plans. First a good shower, a meal, some sleep, then leave early.

### **Vidi: Day 4: The Final Leg: Salmon Arm - Kamloops (182.2 km)**

The wake-up call came at 1:00 am. Stunned, I staggered into the common area, realizing that I needed a washroom; I must have

stumbled around disoriented, until one of the volunteers, who must have seen similar behaviour, commanded: "go straight, now turn left, then open door, turn left again." I did not need the next command: 'go do your business'. Looking in the mirror, I was convinced that whomever I was looking at, was definitely not me. So, I quickly washed that ghostly looking face, to my surprise discovered myself and went for breakfast. No matter how hard I tried, I simply could not force the pancakes down. Gagging reflections. Arrrrgh! Instead, I ate fruit and cookies. After the bike was re-loaded, we asked Nobo for directions on how to get to Vernon. He tried very hard, but I don't think I was coherent enough to understand the many left-right-left-right-left-right instructions. Luckily, Michael, as an experienced randonneur, got, and kept me on the right track as he piloted us in the dark through Salmon Arm neighbourhoods.

That first part included two of the toughest sections of the entire RM 1200. Some very short, but snappy hills, probably no more than 50 meters long, were so steep that my body revolted, the muscles resisted and screamed: "we can't do this, we won't do this, we refuse." I am sure that fatigue, the short sleep and too little recovery had a lot to do with it. So it became a case of mind over matter. I wanted to do this, and these two mole hills were not going to become my nemesis. Indeed, my mind ruled over my matter, and my matter responded, albeit it very reluctantly. Finally, we were on our way into the Salmon Valley. This was familiar terrain as I had cycled it over a year ago in the Interior 200 km Brevet. Not long after I discovered a slow leak in my rear tire. Re-inflation did not work, so it needed to be replaced in the wee dark hours of the night. We then continued amidst aromatic hayfields. Several kilometers later, phantom-like white horses were following us. Shivers up the spine. Eery I'd say. Then a regular clicking sound revealed the cause, sprinklers in the field with their 'tsk tsk tsk tsk' sound, large water jets rotating in sync. Phew!!! What a relief. As we approached the Salmon Valley Junction Store, an abandoned, illuminated, spooky looking tent along the road displayed the "Tour BC" sign. We looked left, and noted a shelter some 50 meters away: a secret control at about 4:00 am. A number of die-hard volunteers staffed the post at this ungodly hour.

The road to Vernon took us through a forested area. Dawn began to crack carefully. Turning left and right numerous times got us to the outskirts of Armstrong and Vernon. Then, an early morning siren of an RCMP squad car broke the silence and brought us to a surprising halt. What could we possibly have done wrong, two innocent randonneurs cycling before 6.00 am, wearing safety vests, and abiding by the rules of the road. The officer had received a call from a trucker in a hurry, who apparently wanted the entire road for himself (or concerned for our safety?), or felt that we took too much of the road. We expressed our appreciation for his concern, and had our rights as vehicle users under the BC Motor Vehicle Act confirmed. [It always good to know what one's rights and responsibilities are under the Act, although on second thought I wonder how much good it does when a cyclist meets a big truck, and ends up dead-right]. At 6:05 am Sunday morning we pulled in to Control # 10: Vernon (km 1087) with only 117 km to go. Time to refresh: a much needed shower, clean clothes, more food and drink, and then the final leg.

## "Doggone intermezzo"

As Michael and I departed from Vernon on a beautiful Sunday morning, a gentle tail breeze ushered us along. Out of the corner of my left eye, I noticed a woman leaving her house, shutting the door behind her. Meanwhile her dog took off. "Doggone," she must have mumbled. We did not pay much attention, until suddenly this black canine came after us in full speed. First reaction, shoo it off. No such luck. The dog persisted and tried again. I then tried another method, which, when carefully executed, can be highly successful; if not, it can be disastrous for the cyclist. By the way dog lovers, take no offense, but the method involves heading straight for the beast, hands on the breakhoods just in case it does not dawn on the dog that danger is imminent, and in case it fails to respond. Most semi-intelligent canines will heed the oncoming danger and wisely take-off: tail between legs. So too this one. "Doggone" we thought. We cheered too soon. With a vengeance the animal came back, this time from behind and in between us, eyeing up those two beautiful sets of fast-pumping well-tenderized calves. Which one too choose? Thoughts of 'veal cordon bleu au matin' must have crossed the salivating critter's mind. Ready for the attack and the final kill now. Sensing that we were in imminent danger, and entering the emergency zone, both Michael and I reached instinctively for our water (and Gatorade) bottles. Like well trained commandos we instantly reacted in self-defense, giving the canine a full spray from two directions. The animal must not have known what hit him (?), because it bolted at an incredible speed. "Doggone" we thought for the second and final time. Relieved we continued, until some five minutes later a car pulled up beside us. Passenger window rolled down. The driver yelled something like 'where did my dog go?' Had we seen it somewhere? Somewhat miffed, we shrugged it off. Did we care where this randonneur-attacking animal had gone? Did the owner really think that, after such a brutal-morning-disturbing-attack, we were ready to yield one ounce of sympathy? Did she really think that we would have taken her Blackie with us all the way to Kamloops? As far as we were concerned, doggie was hiding somewhere, recovering from the infliction, and licking its wounded pride, I mean Gatorade-covered hide. How sweet it was for the dog that is, probably not as sweet as calf muscles. After all, better to have Gatorade on the dog-tongue than in the distance disappearing "veal au matin". Maybe the owner was unaware of her sweet doggie's morning adventure. We were not about to stop and explain that the critter had a definitive nasty streak. We had work to do. Anyway, we had a good chuckle about the event. Unscathed and re-energized we continued.

## Vidi: Meanwhile, Further on the Road to Kamloops

Soon thereafter we met up with Peter again, who would subsequently be plagued with a series of small, but fixable bike problems. On one occasion he used some choice words - smelly, but not repeatable here -- at which time I remarked that, since he was in cattle country the locals would understand. As we neared Falkland, the valley widened. While it looked like we were descending, it didn't feel that way. Luckily the clinometer confirmed that there was a climb of about 3%. The descent was

an optical illusion, a deception. At the Falkland General Store we took a break, recovered again and pondered that in a few hours the finish line would be in sight. I was also dreading the vicious winds, which I had experienced during the 2001 Kamloops 200 k brevet. At that time the 'wicked winds of Westwold were wearing Wim thin' [note 4] In the meantime, the weather was about to change. We might be in for a cool and possibly wet finish. Having shed most of my extra clothing in Vernon, this was anything but appealing. A few riders assisted Peter when he had another flat, but I decided to continue. The temperature dropped, however the much feared winds did not wreak havoc. After a few more slugs of liquid food, Gatorade and water -- after all, one has to keep feeding the beast -- I found my rhythm. Then it dawned on me, that I was going to make it within the 90 hour time limit. This triggered many emotions and energies. The emotions ran from pure elation to almost choking; the body reacted as if a horse was smelling the stable. It gave me wings: "Pegasus was indeed flying!"

Through Westwold and along Monte Lake, where the course turned due North toward the Trans Canada Highway. The Thompson Valley was in sight, all that was left a fast descent, and some descent it was. The sweet reward for the many long uphill. Once on the TCH, the course went west. The clarion call 'go west (young ) man' beckoned for a response. The stack of the Kamloops pulp mill was visible. So close, yet so far, since there were another 28 km or so to go. Steady moving along the highway, Mount Peter and Paul coming ever closer. Then, the City Centre exit and turn off on to Battle Street. Excitement building. Under the overpass and a left turn on to Lorne Street, another mile to go. Organizers and volunteers along the final stretch applauding. The finish line! Overwhelming! How sweet it was. Wow! Vici!

### **Vici: I did it!!!**

Off the bike and then to the sign-in at 13:02 on Sunday. Eighty seven hours and a measly two minutes (87:02) after we left Kamloops, I was back 1204.3 kilometers later. What a trip. Within the next few hours the remainder of the riders came in including Michael and Peter. As we were waiting we reminisced about the event. The post-event victory banquet was excellent. We had worked up a great appetite for it. Later, everyone gradually dispersed, going home, savouring the experience, enjoying the accomplishment. What a rush, what an event. Reflecting some three months later on what makes the event so special, I realize there are many aspects. First, the organizers and the volunteers, who were just wonderful; second, the fellow riders and their camaraderie; third, the incredible setting and landscape both physical and human; and, finally an incredible sense of achievement. As Peter said at the end of the ride, you did it, and now you are an ancien. That designation might only be carried after completing the Paris-Brest-Paris, which I hope to ride next August 2003. Thanks everyone for a great experience.

### **Footnotes:**

1 - In 1991 I came across a randonneuring article in the Edmonton Journal. It heralded the challenges of the 1200 km Paris-Brest-Paris. While I have never participated in this event yet, I kept the

article as an inspiration for a dream to fulfill.

2 - While the limit was originally set at 50 riders, the organizers had decided to increase this number, so that everyone who registered could be accommodated, including those on the waitlist.

3 - The Jasper-Banff relay involved a 17-person relay running team. Each member would run a section of the 250 km distance from Jasper to Banff, which had to be completed in 24 hours. The limited entry event took place in the beginning of June each year. Part of the run took place during the night. Unfortunately, this magnificent run was discontinued a few years ago.

4 - For more info see: Kamloops 200 km Brevet, published 2001, Issue 5.

## "Get your stinkin' scissors away from my jacket!!"

*Tom Hocking*

Monday, November 4th, 2002. It was yet another one of those glorious days we'd been having this autumn. I felt joyful because life was good and I was out riding my bike. In two week's time my wife Janice and I were planning to toss a couple of mountain bikes and our beloved tandem onto our van and head south to Arizona for a month. It would be fun playing at being "snowbirds" and extending our riding season to mid December. We were planning on meeting some friends and fellow tandem riders there to ride "El Tour de Tucson". Since this is a timed event, I wanted to ensure myself that we could maintain a high enough average speed riding "two up" over rolling terrain. It would be a disappointment to have driven all that way only to DNF because we'd not finished within the allowable time limit. So, we'd been training with the tandem on some local roads that would mimic the route of "El Tour". We'd done well on our most recent training ride and I felt confident of our success in Arizona. Since Janice had to work today, I thought it would be fun to blow the dust off my road racer "half-bike" and I was also feeling the need to blow some of the cobwebs out of my own ever-ageing bod. This could be accomplished by doing a brisk 50 km ride with some long hills added to the mix.

I'd started out from home and rode south above Nanaimo on the Island Parkway to the Cedar interchange. I turned around and continued north, back over the long hill up to the university. The hill climbing was feeling good. I'd been able to stay on top of the gear while remaining seated for most of the way. Occasionally I would upshift a cog or two, stand up out of the saddle and count out 15 pedal revolutions before resuming the spin I liked to use while seated. I crested the summit and pushed the pace for another 16 km until I came to the lights at Superior Road where I decided to head for home. Feeling pleased with my performance I glanced at my computer to see that my average speed was around 26 kph. I was strong, the day had been fine, and I was thinking about how much I loved being out on my bike. As I turned for home, a quick glance upward revealed an ominous trough of low-pressure cloud closing off half of the sky. It looked like the

dreaded monsoon was finally going to make its cool, soggy appearance. The afternoon was wearing on and, with the sun gone, I decided to switch on my LED taillight to be more visible to vehicles approaching from behind. I recall thinking that, despite the noise and the fast moving traffic volume, this stretch of highway, with its wide paved shoulder, actually was quite a safe roadway. When my odometer read 42 km I knew I was about 20 minutes away from home where a nice hot shower and cup of tea would be a fitting end to another fantastic, life affirming ride.

The impact comes without any warning. I feel as much as hear the sound of crumpling sheet metal. My instantaneous reaction is one of total surprise. At some deep, primal level, I realise that I have been struck hard from behind and my reptilian brain feels the intense need to retaliate.

Then everything goes black.

Distant voices are now speaking. A voice says, "One, two, three...LIFT!" My eyes open and I am staring at the ceiling of a motor vehicle. I am vaguely conscious of a small group of individuals working over me with clinical precision and professional concern. I am dimly aware now that I'd been struck by a large, fast moving vehicle.

I am feeling no pain, or discomfort of any kind. A technician's face comes near and he speaks, "It looks like your bike is OK, man. Don't worry, we'll take good care of it for you." I feel strangely comforted and reassured by the idea that my bike has survived intact. My awareness seems to be coming in short film clips.

I am feeling very cold. My mouth feels very dry. The two most important things in the world now are warmth and water. I am in the ER of Nanaimo Hospital. A nurse is nearby and I ask her for a blanket and a glass of water. She produces a heated blanket and I seek comfort in its life-giving warmth. She tells me that water is prohibited until they determine the extent of my injuries. She inserts an IV of some colourless liquid that I assume must be saline or glucose. Now Janice appears at my bedside. She tells me that the RCMP phoned her from the scene, having found the ID and emergency contacts I always keep stowed in my seatbag. I reassure her automatically that the accident amounted to nothing, really, just a bump, and state that I expect to be back to riding on the weekend. Then I send her off to look after my bike.

A nurse approaches with a frighteningly large pair of shears and informs me that she intends to cut my clothes away from my body. I remember that I am wearing a brand new polypro shirt under my irreplaceable Randonneur's club jacket. This jacket earned its stripes in 1999 during my first 1200Km Paris-Brest-Paris ultra-marathon race and I tell her emphatically that her scissors will not come any closer to my jacket. She seems annoyed and disappears momentarily, only to reappear with an assistant who helps her to undress me the old fashioned, one-arm-at-a-time way.

I become aware that I have acquired a new accessory. It's an oxygen hose that thrusts up into both nostrils and reminds me of Lloyd Bridges from "Sea Hunt". I start to feel giddy about playing frogman but each time I try to remove it, some attendant places it back in my nose.

For the next several hours I am poked, prodded, examined, and X-rayed. Between procedures I lay naked and freezing under the once toasty warm blanket, long since grown cold. Gradually the pain and stiffness begins creeping in.

My mind begins to drift back to the accident, but the circumstances are incomprehensible to me. I have a bit of a headache; there is an ache in my pelvis that makes moving difficult. I know I've got some pretty serious abrasions, but over-riding all of this is a very sore right shoulder. I'm sure that I was on the right side of the white line, that there was a wide, paved shoulder to my right, and that high-speed traffic was moving past on my left. Why, then, was it my right side that was so battered? It didn't make any sense.

The attending physician parts the curtains, introduces himself and refers to his clipboard just as we've seen those docs on T.V. do. He states that the X-rays were negative, nothing is broken and, as I have not exhibited any obvious signs of a head injury, no CAT scan is needed and I can be discharged this evening.

Prior to my release, an RCMP officer takes a seat near me and informs me that I was struck from behind by a Dodge pickup truck travelling at highway speed. The driver had fallen asleep and drifted onto the paved shoulder between me and the concrete barrier bordering the ditch. It was the driver's side mirror that struck my upper back near my right shoulder. The force of the blow was sufficient to tear the mirror off. It was later located some distance away. The police sketch also shows fresh damage to the box of the truck. I had been unconscious for approximately twelve minutes.

The officer hands me my gear one bit at a time. My favourite Giro helmet is broken in four places. The right lens of my goggles is opaque with scratches from sliding across some surface, the pavement or possibly the truck itself. My right glove has been buffed through in several places, while the right thigh of my tights looks as if it took a direct hit from a shotgun. Even my right sock has a hole at the outside ankle. My shoes, however, are fine. I mourn the loss of my faithful helmet, which was my constant companion on all of my countless training rides and endurance racing over the past four years. Farewell, friend. You died saving my life.

The weekend came and went and I was not able to get back on the bike. As I write this, a week has passed since the crash. I feel like I've been hit by a truck. It hurts to walk. My right shoulder is still very painful. I've got real, honest-to-gosh, pro peleton-style road rash on my right knee and elbow. Many friends have been saying how lucky I was to have escaped more serious injury, but to be perfectly honest, I'm not feeling all that lucky. I'm just not there yet. Nor do I dwell on 'What if the truck had been two more feet to the left and had hit me square on?' I am, however, certainly glad that my helmet and glasses did their job. My last serious collision came when I was just 13 and during the past ten years I have ridden over 50,000 km without once kissing tarmac. Yet now I feel angry and frustrated to have suffered painful injuries, and I am impatient to heal.

Perhaps when my shoulder stops hurting and I am once more able to ride I will assume a more philosophical perspective. My trainer

says it's going to take time, but I haven't entirely given up on the idea of riding in the Tucson event. After all, I've still got my old Randonneur jacket which is going to look great topped off by a new Giro helmet.

## 12594~194032: 2002 Season in Review

*Eric Fergusson*

This was going to be the year that Ken Bonner would run out of ways to astonish us, or so I thought. Well, I guess I couldn't have been more wrong. Réal Préfontaine's single year event-distance record from 1999 of 7561 km was replaced by Ken's new record: 12,594 km. And he wasn't dawdling either - his times were as fast as ever. There was even a novelty stunt to surpass his Edge to Edge/600 (bike/run/bike) thing from last year. Like last year, Ken's new exploit began with a question: "I wonderif...?" But interestingly this time it was Stephen Hinde asking the Question... Stephen wondered if Ken could ride back-to-back 1000 and 1200 brevets. (Ken was thinking it couldn't be done.) Ken rode his 1000 km from Abbotsford to Boise in 52:35, got a ride from Stephen to the start in Boulder Colorado, and then rode the Colorado Last Chance 1200 in 59:05. Ken celebrated his 60th birthday this year by pushing his lifetime event distance total further into the stratosphere. His lifetime counter is now at 68,723 km after 15 years of randonneur cycling. He's still going strong. Once again this year, the most popular question around the Gatorade cooler was: "So like, someone's taking genetic samples of this guy for cloning, right?" [more on Ken's 2002 season in Note 1 below].

Ken's big year has perhaps had the effect of dwarfing some other big distance seasons for club members. An impressive seven riders were over the 5000 km mark this year, which is a club record (it was six in 2000). Among the seven were Henry Berkenbos (7300 km), and Michel Richard, whose 8265 was also over the previous record. Interestingly, neither Michel nor Henry was actively pursuing Iron Butt honours this year. Michel's personal goal was the same as it was two years ago: to ride 10,000 km in event distance in one season. In 2000 Michel fell short of his goal because, well, he fell - broken arm and ribs. This time 'round all he broke was a shifter cable (330 km into the Switchback 1000) but it was enough to end his ride. Henry Berkenbos was similarly aiming at a target quite different than the Iron Butt award. He was hoping to log a personal calendar year riding total of 28,000 km (which would be his biggest season ever) and his event distance total of 7300 km was to be just one part of this larger goal. When I saw Henry in September he was not optimistic about reaching the mark - there was a long way to go, and he was dreading all the rain riding he'd have to do. But Henry picked the right year to aim high... with that run of good weather we had this fall, Henry not only met his goal, but marched right past it. In the end he rode 29,572 km.

Also in the 5000 km club was last year's winner, John Bates, and tandem partner Danelle Laidlaw. Last season Danelle missed out on co-claiming Iron Butt honours because she missed riding one

event with John - this year they rode every event together but would have had to double John's winning distance from last year to catch Ken Bonner. Seattle speedster Ken Carter is also on the list with 5908 km, which includes a complete in-BC brevet series... the super-sized version - not just 200, 300, 400, and 600, but also a 1000 and the RM1200. Another SIR heavy hitter this year, Mark Thomas, was not on the list - he did 2200 km up here and 7100 overall, but is not on the Iron Butt list because he didn't meet the four brevet (200 - 600 at least) minimum requirement for out of province riders.

There were some notable firsts this year. Congratulations to our 8 new super randonneurs: Bob Bailey, Susan Barr (yes really, first time), Mike Eder, Jim Giles [note 2], Ali Holt, Darren Inouye, Benjamin Lewis, and Don Munro. It was a big year in general for super randonneurs - 39 in total. Many of you may be surprised to learn that although this is the biggest super rando figure in recent years it is not the biggest ever - in 1991 (the PBP centenary year) there were 43.

Other firsts this year include 8 riders who did their first ultras (...or is it eleven? [note 3]) Susan if-at-first-you-don't-succeed Allen finally got a cool temperature weekend for her (successful) second attempt at the Island End to End route. Another first-time ultra rider to complete this route was our Victoria area populaire impresario Mike Poplawski. Wayne Harrington did a new variant on the Okanagan loop 1000 on his way to a 4879 km season. Roger Holt and rookie superstar Ali Holt [note 4], along with last year's super rookie Ken Wright, jumped straight to the Rocky Mt 1200. Another rider to do this was Peace Region organizer Wim Kok who wrote about his experiences in Veni, Vidi, Vici: My First RM 1200! [in this issue] - it's recommended reading. Barb Henniger also complete her first ultra at the RM 1200 avenging her PBP99 DNF.

And speaking of the Rocky Mt. 1200. Wow! Wasn't it great? Organizer Danelle Laidlaw and Ride Directors Roger and Sharon Street led a fabulous volunteer effort - 60 persons, 11 full-service controls, serving 78 riders from 7 countries. As Susan pointed out in her November editorial, this event is something we can all take great pride in. As for the ride itself, despite some dodgy weather on day 2, there was only a 13% attrition rate resulting in 68 finishers. Some guy named Othmar from Austria shaved 3:34 (hr/min) off Ken Bonner's 2000 record - Othmar's new mark is 52:02. And for the first time there was significant female ridership - 9 women, which is 11% of the field... they all finished.

The club distance total for 2002 is 194,032 km, which is a club record [note 5]. In fact virtually every distance and participation record was broken this season. The few exceptions all come from 1991 [note 6]. There are a number of on-going, or records-in-progress sorts of records, which reached new marks this year. Super-rando man Peter Stary extended his run of consecutive super rando series to 16. With another successful Rocky 12, Manfred Kuchenmuller is now one of only two riders to have completed the event all five times. And this year Manfred became only the second BC Randonneur to pass the 50,000 km event distance mark (50,818). The milestone was reached without Manfred even achieving super rando status this year - something about a fallen tree across the road while night-riding the LM

summer 600... Only Ken Bonner remains higher up the club's total lifetime event distance chart: as mentioned above, Ken is now weighing in at 68,723 km.

Gary Fraser rode his first brevet this year since he left to become a lawyer after the 1994 season. Among his fast times that year was his remarkable 12:39 (hr/min) 400 km riding with Keith and Ted in May '94 - the ride famously recounted in Gary's "Team Time Trialing with the Terminator Twins" - more recommended reading and available on the web site. Gary's entertaining and amusing stories and articles are something that people had missed, and so it was a great treat to see his contribution to the May/June newsletter: Top Ten Reasons I Returned to Randonneur Cycling [note 7].

Last but not least, and perhaps most impressive of all, Harold Bridge, at 75 years, became the oldest club member ever to have completed a super randonneur series (200-600 km). The question has been raised as to whether he might be the oldest rider anywhere to have earned a super rando pin. Jack Eason and Frank Mumford from the UK are apparently other candidates... Unfortunately age information is not actively tracked... If Harold doesn't have the age record he's at least in a very select group. And on top of everything, Harold actually had a personal best time this year - his Flatlander 200 was 8:40. Harold is saying it's his last SR... But with PBP zero-3 beckoning to us all, who knows? What do you think 'arold... once more into the breach?

### Notes:

**Note 1:** More on Ken Bonner... Ken was riding his bike to work in March, and had the misfortune to slip on an icy road. He landed on his hip - an injury that kept him away from running for three months. Just as he was getting back to gentle jogging, he had his Rocky 1200 crash (cracked rib). So with one thing and another Ken's running plans were abbreviated this year. He did get back to running just in time for Victoria (October 13), and he ran one other fall marathon. Ken has actually run all 23 'Royal Victoria Marathons'. His lifetime marathon count is now at 137.

So how was Ken going to fill all those hours he had set aside for running? 12,594 km of event distance cycling later, I guess we know the answer. The total includes an astonishing 6 ultras (3 x 1000, and 3 x 1200) plus 4 fast 600s, and the rest in loose change. When I first saw the database report it dawned on me that in this one season, Ken had done only one less ultra event than I have done in my entire 10 years of randonneur cycling - and with his usual inventory of fast times. He had the two fastest 1000s in BC this year. (In his third 1000, the fall SIR event, Ken had "16 hours of sleep and 13 hours of rain". His time of 63:54 is a 'PW' - personal worst.) He was the fourth finisher at BMB (58:10) this year, and first finisher at the Colorado Last Chance 1200 (59:05) - though there were only 8 finishers in the latter. As alluded to above, his Rocky Mt. 1200 was not without incident - after a bad fall he persisted and managed to finish in 57:22, just 1:46 off his course record from 2000 - good enough to be fourth finisher.

I asked Ken to answer a few questions in preparation for writing this report, and he sent me back an e-mail response. I was going to summarize it and include parts of it here, but Ken's brief casual message really says it best:

### 1. Boise 1000 + LC1200

*\*\* This was a Stephen Hinde "wonderif" ... I initially did not think it was possible, but not wanting to disappoint Stephen, I thought "maybe", particularly if I could handle riding a VERY, VERY slow 1200!! So, we did it! Chased by an aggressive, drooling large-fanged monster through a section of Washington state; nearly crashing on the I-90 on Snoqualmie Pass in the middle of the night (caught the front tire in a crack in the road and abruptly swerved across 2 lanes of traffic --- fortunately there was a break in the traffic!!) stopped by the police north of Yakima -- wondered what I was doing there in the middle of the night; sleeping on the side of the freeway in the dark, just north of Boise, I was woken by someone checking to see if I was OK .... four large pick-ups and one large freight truck had stopped!!*

*2. How long between these rides? Finished the 1000 about 3 or 3:30 on the Monday PM; then Stephen drove us to a Motel 6 just short of Salt Lake City by 10:00 pm Monday night. Awoke early the next morning and drove all day Tuesday to arrive in Boulder about 8:30 pm. Grabbed a couple of hours sleep, then arrived at the 3:00 am Wednesday start in Boulder. By the last night on the road of the LC 1200 I could not keep my eyes focused .... but there was no place to lie down except on the secondary highway we were traveling on .... only trucks going by about 60 mph every 15 to 20 minutes; so I lay down on the road and tried to catch a few winks between trucks .... a little hard to relax when you are not entirely sure when the next truck is coming!!*

*Highly recommend the LC 1200 -- see my write up in the UMCA magazine (Nov/Dec issue) [See web page]*

*By the way, the next weekend I rode the SIR Cascade 1000 .... up in the interior of Washington, they warned me to watch out for the deer on the road at night (migration season!), not only watch out for the deer, but particularly watch out for the cars that swerve abruptly to avoid the deer. I saw so many deer carcasses that began to imagine it was only a matter of time before I joined them!!*

*3. Slipping on the ice. Just a dumb thing, riding to work on the only day Victoria had snow last year (1st day of spring); doing about 5 mph; look down for some reason, see ice ..... and bang, right onto my left hip. Back riding the following week, but no running for 3 months (cracked hip); Just get back to gently jogging around the block, when my fellow Californian randonneur unexpectedly and abruptly rides into me on the Rocky Mountain 1200 --- about 400 k into the ride, perfect road conditions, sunny --- end result, cracked helmet, bent front wheel and a cracked rib! No more running until just before the Victoria Marathon (about 50 miles); ran the Royal Victoria Marathon, (I've run all of them, which I think is 23) and then the following week ran the Humboldt Redwood Marathon .... pulled a hamstring which has limited my running until after Xmas! Not a good year for running, but did provide me with the time to put in the rando miles!!!*

*4. Yes, the marathon count is at 137 .... and yes, I turned 60 on October 10th .... and will be retiring from the Ministry of Children & Family Development on June 30th/03*

*You could add that I am starting to think seriously about an*

*attempt on the cross-Canada record in '04. So, would appreciate hearing from folks who would like to help in the planning and execution. (Funding Business Plan; best route; logistics; support crew & equipment, etc.)"*

**Note 2:** Jim Giles is a SIR (Seattle) rider who rode a super rando series in BC. He was the guy on the spiffy recumbent with the red covering. I have no information on whether he is a first time Super Rando or not. (Probably not.)

**Note 3:** Five SIR (Seattle) riders rode the Island End to End 1000 km in June. Ken Carter and Mark Thomas are not first time ultra marathoners, but the other three (Peter Liekkio, Peter McKay, and Wayne Methner) might be.

**Note 4:** Well no, Ali Holt is not exactly a rookie with 700 km in 2000, and 900 km in 2001. I'm defining a rookie as someone who, for the first time, makes it on to the Iron Butt contenders list - minimum 1500 km. By this definition Ali's jump to 3100 km is a significant leap into the fray: this is why she is my choice for rookie of the year.

**Note 5:** This figure factors out the many non-BC riders who rode the Rocky 12 - the 'all in' total was 257,632 km, which over 60,000 km more than the next closest year (2000 - also a Rocky year).

**Note 6:** These are interesting times for the club, but there have been other interesting moments as well. 1991 remains a fascinating statistical anomaly in the club's history. Although most of the participation records have fallen this year, a few still remain from 1991. There were 69 x 400km brevets in 1991 (2 more than in 2002), and 54 x 600km (the same as 2002.) As mentioned in the body of the text (above), there were more super randonneurs in 1991 (43) than in 2002 (39). A theory suggested to me earlier this year was that the difference between now and 1991 was that now fewer riders were doing much more distance. I instinctively agreed with this theory but it turns out that this is not so. Although some members are riding bigger distances now, there are also more members riding brevets now - there were 139 brevet riders in 1991, and 145 brevet riders in 2002.

So how do we explain the '91 blip? First and foremost is the fact that 1991 was the PBP centenary year, and that there was a drive to qualify for it. Not surprisingly, a significant proportion of the brevets in BC were ridden by riders from Washington State. No doubt these were riders looking towards PBP qualification at a time, which preceded the existence of SIR (Seattle International Randonneurs), and brevets in the Seattle area. Another factor is a more general one concerning the people involved in the sport at the time... Several years ago at a spring social I asked Gerry Pereja (a founder of randonneur cycling in BC) for his thoughts on the large participation numbers and the huge turn out for the Pacific Populaire (over 700 finishers) in 1991. He said it was because of the tireless publicity and promotional efforts of a number of key members in the late 80s and early 90s... David Johnston and Marty Wanless were names that came up. [This is not the same Dave Johnson, from Stanwood, that has ridden with us in recent years.]

In 1992 the bubble had burst - the frenzy was over. The club brevet distance was halved that year and many of the people who

rode PBP in '91 left the sport completely. Participation levels remained relatively low until the current renaissance that began to emerge in the late 90s.

**Note 7:** Top Ten Reasons I Returned to Randonneur Cycling by Gary Fraser was published in the May-June 2002 issue.

## How the Universe Expanded

*Tom Hocking*

My first bike appeared on a brisk autumn Saturday morning of my seventh year. Unannounced, my father had gone out and found a used two-wheeler to replace my neglected tricycle. I had quit riding the trike maybe a year or two before, having long outgrown it. It now sat idle in a dark corner of the cellar. I had tried to improve the appearance of that trike by brush painting the frame blue and the rusting spokes that supported its three solid rubber tyres white. But it was still a tricycle, one that had never travelled farther than the paved sidewalk of our own block-the limits of my personal universe. I had, in a childlike way, begun to sense that possession of a two-wheeler would define a difference between being a little boy and becoming something greater.

I sat cross-legged in front of our black and white television with its tiny screen and perpetually snowy picture while my new bike stood poised at arm's length. While I watched the conclusion of another serial of my favourite western, my attention continued to wander to this unfamiliar and exciting addition to my life. I studied the bike for a long while. It had, I was told, 20-inch wheels. The bike was a bit big for me now, but as with so many things acquired at that age, my parents said that I would "grow into it". It wasn't all shiny and sparkling new like the ones I'd admired in the hardware store. Instead it had a purposeful, almost military, no nonsense look about it with its dull brown two-tone paint marred by a chip here and a scratch there from some earlier adventures. The saddle was covered in faded-to-grey canvas, which had been worn away on the rear so that fuzzy threads grew out of it in all directions. But it was a big kid's bike, it belonged to me now, and it stood ready to take me beyond the confines of our little sidewalk. I remember smiling so much that the muscles in my face began to ache. I sat there eagerly anticipating Dad's call to wheel the bike outside.

The year was 1951 and the Korean War was in the news. We were living on the outskirts of an older neighbourhood. Behind our house ran the railroad with its clanking steam locomotives that belched black coal smoke and hot clinkers onto the washing that my mother would hang out in the back yard. The tracks marked a physical and cultural border of the neighbourhood. Exactly what lay in the land beyond was a mystery to me. It appeared industrial in a slightly ominous way and the people over there that I could occasionally glimpse through our fence seemed somehow different from us.

Finally, Dad announced that it was time for me to try out my new bike. I bounced up excitedly and wheeled it carefully out of the living room. The thing was a lot bigger and heavier than I expected and I struggled to get this ungainly monster down the steps from our front porch.

The lesson began on the sidewalk with me seated on the bike and Dad grasping that fuzzy saddle. It was worrisome to me that I

couldn't touch the pavement with both feet while seated. With Dad's encouragement, I eventually began to feel pretty confident about mounting, dismounting, and pedalling. Steering, of course, was another matter. There was no possibility of simply stopping with my feet on the pedals and lounging across the bars, the way I imagined Roy Rogers might have done. This was certainly no horse, nor was it even remotely like my old trike. No, I had to keep on steering or I would begin to list alarmingly first to one side then the other. After a countless number of unsuccessful tries, I began to feel exasperated at this unexpected difficulty. Dad decided that a break would be good for both of us and that, perhaps we'd try again later in the day.

Dad disappeared to do another of the seemingly endless chores that our house demanded of him while I sat on the porch steps, dejectedly considering my reluctant dream machine. Learning to ride was turning out to be a lot harder than I thought it would be. I pondered this for a long time. The bike was awfully big and I felt very small. Maybe I couldn't do it. Perhaps I was one of those kids that had something wrong with them. As my mother called me in for lunch, my smile of the morning was gone.

Saturday was the day that Dad would walk down to the corner store located at the far end of our block to purchase any groceries we might need for the weekend. He came over to the steps where I had returned, now disconsolately eyeing that stupid old bike with its worn out saddle. Dad sat down next to me and spoke quietly. He told me that he knew I would learn to ride if I just kept at it. After a while I began to feel better and the bike was looking okay again. We went down to the store together, me proudly, yet nervously astride my new steed and Dad trotting along beside, still grasping the saddle in his strong right hand. We were travelling faster and more smoothly now but still the occasional lurch to certain disaster was saved by that guiding hand. We arrived at the store; Dad made his selections and talked with Mr. Klein, the shopkeeper, while I looked over the trading cards and candied wax lips and moustaches on display. Before we departed, Mr. Klein congratulated me on getting my bike. "Use it well!" he smiled.

The return journey changed drastically in a new and terrifying way. Dad now held a large brown paper grocery bag cradled in his left arm and a carton containing six bottles of Pepsi in his right hand. As we began the homeward leg, Dad grasped the rear of the saddle again, the six-pack swaying from that same huge hand. As we were now on a slight downgrade, our speed began to increase. I recall Dad running along beside me as I wobbled precariously left and right. I knew that Dad was beginning to have some trouble, trying to carry the groceries and Pepsi, control my wobbles, and run all at the same time. I heard him start to breath harder and say some bad words. Then the panic hit. I began to wail, "Daddy! Daddy! Don't let me go!" And Dad's response, "I...I...can't (huff)...hold...it (puff)...any...more...." I knew I was about to go into the dreaded "death wobble", but then things seemed to get easier. I'd guessed that, somehow, Dad had managed to catch up and was holding onto me tighter than before. We were tracking smooth and straight. Then I heard Dad's voice coming from far behind. "Keep pedalling!" he was yelling. "Just keep pedalling!" Instantly I knew I was doing it. I was riding alone, unassisted. I was on my own, pedalling my own two-wheeler!

Maybe I got a little bit of what Chuck Yeager felt when he broke the sound barrier three years earlier. His little rocket plane nearly shook itself to bits as it approached that threshold then suddenly began to fly smooth and silent. And now I had mastered the art of balancing a bicycle. There could be no going back to the world of trikes. My next trip was a solo down the block to show Bobby Scott how I could ride. Although he was a year older, poor Bobby hadn't learned how to ride yet but I was too overcome with joy to feel pity. The following day I rode entirely around the block. No more sidewalk riding for me. I rode on the street just like the big boys.

By summer's end I had ridden throughout the neighbourhood. I had become mobile. Dad helped me to install a wire basket on the front so I could ride to the store on my own. Some days Mom would give me an envelope that I would hand to Mr. Klein and he would provide me with the family groceries.

In grade three I rode my bike to school every day. That was the year I began to meet other kids who rode. We started to hang out together after school. Of course there were crashes, many of those awkward, low speed, embarrassing dismounts and more than a few spectacular wipeouts, but we all survived with just bruises, scrapes, and the occasional stitch. Everyone's bike took on a distinct personality and got named accordingly. My bike came to be affectionately known as Fuzzy Jones, after one of our favourite cowboy sidekicks. Our little biker gang could ride down to the firehouse where they'd let us play on the fire engines. During the year that followed, we began to explore farther afield, to other neighbourhoods and even into that strange world on The Other Side of the Tracks. My universe was expanding.

## John Hathaway Trophy

*Eric Fergusson*

More commonly referred to as the Iron Butt Award, this trophy is given to the BC resident (or a non resident who finishes at least a Super Randonneur series within BC) who covers the most distance in successfully completed official distance (over 200 kms) brevets and flèches ridden anywhere in the world in a particular calendar year. To count in a rider's Hathaway total, a brevet or flèche must not begin before midnight December 31 (of the previous year) and must not end after midnight December 31 of the year in question in the local time zones where you are riding. All rides must be recognized by ACP or Randonneur Mondiaux.

John Hathaway died June 6, 1997 at the age of 72 after a life of impressive cycling accomplishments. A time trialist from England, John immigrated to Canada in 1952. In 1957 he set the cross-Canada record of 24 days 13 hours, a record which stood for 20 years. John is perhaps best known for his many long distance rides including his around the world tour in 1974-76 (50,000 miles in 100 weeks) which earned him a spot in the Guinness Book of World Records, and his 48 state tour in 1992-93. John was also one of the four original BC Randonneurs at PBP in 1979, and was a fixture at BC Randonneur events in the years to follow.

The award was introduced by Harold Bridge in 1997. The annual contender's lists include all bona fide club members whose event distance was 1500 km or more.

## 2002 John Hathaway Trophy: Winner & Contenders List

order, name, number of km ridden in events

1 **Ken Bonner 12,594** ♦ 2 Michel Richard 8265 ♦ 3 Henry Berkenbos 7300 ♦ 4 Ken Carter 5908 ♦ 5 Eric Fergusson 5875 ♦ 6 John Bates 5783 ♦ 6 Danelle Laidlaw 5783 ♦ 8 Wayne Harrington 4879 ♦ 9 Larry Voth 4279 ♦ 10 Keith Nichol 3800 ♦ 11 Karen Smith 3665 ♦ 12 Ron Himschoot 3524 ♦ 13 Ali Holt 3100 ♦ 13 Roger Holt 3100 ♦ 15 Deirdre Arscott 3083 ♦ 16 Stephen Hinde 3000 ♦ 17 Susan Allen 2900 ♦ 18 Keith Fraser 2894 ♦ 19 Cheryl Lynch 2800 ♦ 20 Mike Poplawski 2700 ♦ 21 Don Munro 2600 ♦ 22 Jim Giles 2400 ♦ 23 Harold Bridge 2300 ♦ 23 Barb Henniger 2300 ♦ 23 Wim Kok 2300 ♦ 26 Phil Jones 2265 ♦ 26 Gord Cook 2265 ♦ 28 Manfred Kuchenmuller 2100 ♦ 28 Ken Wright 2100 ♦ 30 Barry Chase 1975 ♦ 30 Peter Stary 1975 ♦ 32 Bob LePage 1883 ♦ 33 Bob Bailey 1880 ♦ 33 Keith Fletcher 1880 ♦ 35 Benjamin Lewis 1800 ♦ 36 Richard Blair 1700 ♦ 36 Carol Hinde 1700 ♦ 38 Mike Eder 1500 ♦ 38 Darreb Inouye 1500 ♦ 38 Jim Kirby 1500 ♦ 38 Doug Latornell 1500 ♦ 38 Ross Nichol 1500 ♦ 38 Roger Street 1500 ♦ 38 Sean Williams 1500

### Honourable Mentions

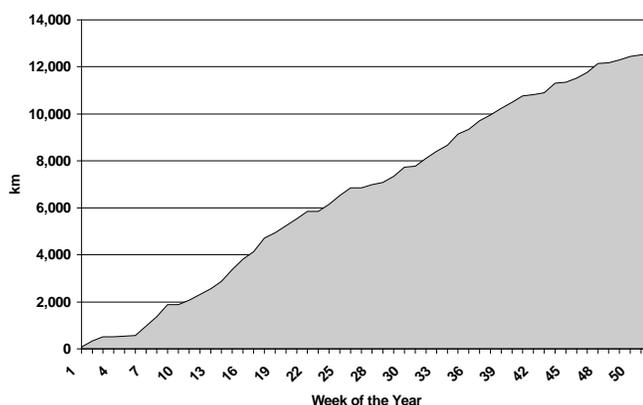
Mark Thomas 7100 ♦ Duane Wright 2763

Neither of these Washington State (SIR) riders rode the requisite 4 brevets in BC (a 200-600 series) to qualify as bone fide BC Randonneurs, and therefore were not eligible to be on the Hathaway list. However, each rider rode two big brevets up here this season, which pushed them both over the 1500 km mark. (Duane also tallied a 363 km Flèche Pacifique.) We would be remiss not to acknowledge their impressive seasons within BC and elsewhere in some way - so this is it. Mark in particular with his 7100 km would have been forth on this list, and if it was any other year...

## Miles Beyond Randonneuring

*Ralph Hildebrand*

Ralph Hildebrand Mileage



I note that I am not on the list of the John Hathaway Trophy

runners-up. I did do the 200 and 300 but did not have time to do the rest of the organized rides because I was too busy riding during the week and wanted so see my wife on the weekends. My total for the year was 12514 km. My goal was 12000. I attach my spread sheet which sets out my riding schedule in case you are interested.(Ed: I just include a graph).

Basically I ride to work, (during spring summer and fall using a longer 33 km route which strategically takes me away from destination first so that I do not get lazy and take a short cut) and ride at noon as long as it is not raining too hard.

## The Randonneurs Mondiaux Jersey

*Réal Préfontaine*

The Randonneurs Mondiaux jersey, will be on sale at a special initial price of 31 Euros, all taxes included. The jersey, made of the same material (light and breathable) as the 1999 PBP jersey, will be manufactured by "LA GRIFFE de l'EFFORT", supplier of the 1995 and 1999 PBP jerseys.

Orders for the jersey, at the special price of 31 Euros, will only be accepted between March 15, 2003 and June 15, 2003. See the [www.lesrm.org](http://www.lesrm.org) web page or contact Réal Préfontaine to see the jersey and get a copy of the order form. The special price of 31 Euros requires a minimum order of 250. Cheques will be returned to purchasers if this order quantity is not reached.

Jerseys ordered at the initial sale price, can be claimed EXCLUSIVELY at the Randonneurs Mondiaux display booth on Sunday, August 17, 2003, at the Gymnase des Droits de l'Homme, St. Quentin en Yvelines. Jerseys will not be sold nor orders taken at that time. Please note that les Randonneurs Mondiaux will not assume responsibility for jerseys that have been ordered but not claimed on Sunday, August 17, 2003. If you have your jersey claimed by a third party, be sure to provide him/her with a signed authorization including your name and complete address.

After the initial sale price, the cost of the jersey will be between 42 and 45 Euros, depending on the packaging and individual mailing cost in effect at the time.

Information on ordering jerseys in subsequent years will be provided at a later date. In principle, orders will be accepted once a year, in March for a delivery date in May.

## Getting Cranky

*Richard Hallett with Editorial Comments (in italics) by Harold Bridge. Reprinted with permission from the December 7th issue of "CYCLING WEEKLY".*

*Crank length is one aspect of bike setup that seems largely overlooked and I thought it worthwhile to ask CW's Editor's permission to re-produce it in "BC Randonneur".*

Crank length (CL) is the hardy perennial of cycling-related topics. Unlike saddle height, which can be adjusted to your preference, and concerning which there are several comprehensible - if not quite concordant- theories, CL is for all practical purposes fixed.

Adjustment is only possible by replacing one pair (of cranks) with another, at considerable expense and inconvenience. Again, where most cyclists will have experimented to a great or lesser

extent with saddle height, only a few will have tried more than a couple of crank lengths, then usually by accident, and rarely in an attempt to find an optimal length. The first theory to consider is the idea that CL should somehow correspond to that of the leg or thigh. Lance Armstrong at well under 1.8 m tall (5ft 9in), rides 175 mm cranks, while the lankier Mario Cipollini (6' 2"?) favours 172.5s.

A cyclist with a 760mm (30 in) inside leg riding 170s would, if leg and crank length scaled up by 10%, correspond with a cyclist with an 836mm (33 in) inside leg on 187mm cranks, which are hard to find.

The second is the notion that longer cranks generate more power. Sure, the same pedal pressure applied at the end of a longer crank generates more torque, or turning force, but pedal power is measured by multiplying torque by cadence. If you can press just as hard and fast on 5% longer cranks, your power output will be up by the same amount. Chances are, however, that you'll turn the longer crank arms more slowly or gently and end up producing the same power - or even less.

**Lastly, bear in mind that CL is only truly important when riding on the limit of performance, which itself varies according to duration of effort.** If you are tapping along at 90% of your best effort for any distance, CL is not limiting how fast you go.

Even when riding at full chat, CL's relevance is largely down to the limit it puts on cadence. Pedal speed is vital when racing because the higher the power output, the higher the cadence required. While the force a rider can apply to the pedals, and hence torque, diminishes as cadence rises, power-torque x cadence- increases up to about 160 rpm before falling away again. Naturally, the higher the power output, the shorter the duration for which it can be sustained, sprinters pedal faster than kilo riders, who pedal faster than pursuers. Excepting the rides by Jacques Anquetil and Graham Obree, the hour record has always been set riding at a cadence of just over 100 rpm.

Why don't all racing cyclists pedal as fast as possible? Traditional training rollers generate minimal resistance, yet they make for very hard work at high cadence. Very little power is being produced "at the back wheel", but a lot of work is being done, and it is being done to overcome the internal resistance of joints and muscles, obviously by the muscles themselves. The "internal work" is proportional to cadence, and at high revs a large amount of effort is expended without contributing to propulsion.

There is an argument that longer cranks are better for low-intensity riding, the unfit cyclist and for long climbs, since they allow a lower cadence at any given power output and reduce unwanted internal work. Cranks between 170 and 175 mm are comfortable for most people, regardless of leg length, at cadences of around 80 rpm and upwards. So, choose the longest cranks you can turn comfortably at your preferred cadence. Unless, like Armstrong you can learn to twirl 175 s at 120 rpm.

*I highlighted the bit about "performance varies with duration of effort" with PBP 2003 in mind. While randonneuring is seldom about maximum output the relationships between leg length, CL, condition of knees, weather and time on the road become quite critical over the 48-90 hour span of an event such as PBP.*

*Growing up in "Imperial" England, I was used to the*

*standard 6.5 inch long crank (165.1mm) and also used 6.75 in (171.45 mm) & 7in (177.8 mm). Since getting used to European and Japanese stuff I have used the standard 170 mm, 171 mm (Sugino), 172.5 mm (favourite) & 175 mm. On fixed wheel the 165 mm cranks were a definite aid when spinning (9 tailwind miles in 20 minutes on 48x16! = about 115 rpm).*

## New Years Day Populaire

Mike Poplawski

A happy new year to everyone from Victoria and the second annual BC Randonneurs New Years Day Populaire!

As it happened again, the weather was hung over from New Year's Eve, with the riders heading out in stormy weather, with good weather coming a day or two later. However, bad weather brings out the best in us, and we had a great time!

### Highlights:

24 riders showing up to ride their bikes in the storm, a dozen of them coming from out of town.

Riders waiting patiently at the Oak Bay Beach Hotel while having a starting-line photograph taken for the second time, with a backdrop of ocean whitecaps off Oak Bay in the background (can anyone pass that photograph along to me?)

Many stories told at the finish at Christie's Carriage House, and, in particular, Melinda and Trent telling me their stories of the road that day (broken helmet, a "boat ride") and of life in the Carolinas and Seattle, and Charles Willi's heroic first randonneur ride of any kind (he certainly got his Canadian dollar's worth!)

I'm glad I was able to ride a little bit with some of you, and spend time at the finish with nearly all of you. Special thanks must go to our volunteers who made the best of a wet and chilly situation--I received a lot of praise for your efforts at the finish.

I hope you'll join us again for this delightful "resolution ride" and that you'll bring a friend next time!

## History

Harold Bridge

Eric Fergusson said something about what little we know of BCRCC's early years relies on reports in the less formal newsletters of the early days. Not all events were reported though and so there are gaps in our history.

Since 1944, and I apologise if this is repetitive, I have been a member of the North Road Cycling Club in England. It was formed in 1895. Every month I get the North Road Gazette that contains reports on the Club's activities. 2003 January is numbered 1200. With it was a copy of Issue #1, dated January 1903! Much of the North Road Club's first 17 years has been lost and what we do know about those early days was due to some of the original members retaining their memories.

Growing up in with that background has perhaps given me a better appreciation of the value of record keeping. But there are many good writers in our Club, there is no need for gaps in our history.

