

The
Knickerbikers
of
San Diego County

www.Knickerbikers.com



A bicycle does get you there and more.... And there is always the thin edge of danger to keep you alert and comfortably apprehensive. Dogs become dogs again and snap at your raincoat; potholes become personal. And getting there is all the fun. ~ Bill Emerson, "On Bicycling," *Saturday Evening Post*, 29 July 1967

THE BULL-A-TON

APRIL 2009

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A funny thing happened on a bicycle ride one day.....

Forrest: While doing the IBBC ride with John, Jim, Roy, Joan, Barbara, Gail R., Lois, and others, we stopped for lunch at the Tin Fish (near Petco Park). While we were eating, a guy on a loaded touring bike (120 pounds of stuff) stopped by to chat. Barbara lured him to our table by offering him her French fries. We learned that he had been on the bike since 2007 and was winding up his around the world trip. He had just come from South America and Mexico and was biking to Alaska, then across Canada to New York where he would fly home to Germany. He is 6'8" forty-six and all the women seemed to think quite attractive. When we learned that he was looking for a place to put up his tent, I heard Joan tell Barbara that she should take him straight home with her. But since Barbara is bashful, Gail, Barbara and I took him to Little Italy for Gelato. While eating our Gelato and drinking coffee Kristian (that's his name, spelling may be wrong) told us that he had just joined a group called warmshowers.org. It is a site for reciprocal hospitality for touring bicyclists. After you sign up and are confirmed, you check the internet for people in your area who offer a warm shower and a place to put up your tent or other accommodations. We took him up to our condo to check the internet for a place for him to stay. Unfortunately on such short notice he could not locate someplace close. I would have offered our guest room but our granddaughter was going to spend the night. Barbara was too shy to offer her place, so I made a few phone calls. Ken had weekend guests, but Gail M. agreed to make her back yard available. The only trick was giving Kristian directions up the bike paths and onto Pacific Coast Highway to Encinitas. Barbara and I decided it would be easier to ride with him up to Rose Canyon. (I went along to chaperone because Barbara was getting less shy). While on the road to the Rose Canyon bike path, another cyclist pulled along side of us and after noticing his fully loaded bike asked where Kristian was going. After a little talk, I asked the new cyclist where he was headed and he replied "Del Mar". I asked and he agreed to escort Kristian through La Jolla to PCH.

Barbara and I turned around at the entrance to the bike path. After hugs (there was some debate on who got the best hug) we headed home whereupon we ran into you guys.

I checked with Gail M. later and learned that he arrived ok. She offered him a room, but he prefers his tent and mattress that fit is 6'8" frame. He did accept a couple of beers and large dinner as well as big breakfast. Gail even packed him a lunch before he left the next day.

Gail M.: Well, Kristian put up his tent in the backyard, and felt very secure for a good night's rest, a safe haven he called it.

He told me some stories about his camera being stolen in Columbia, he was set up by a woman and then his camera was stolen by her counterpart. Many witnesses saw it happen but were afraid to come forward and tell him. He went to the police and reported it, and got quite a spread in the local newspaper and a few other papers as well. The outpouring was great from many people and he soon had a new camera and a couple of new lenses, better than what he had in the first place.

He also told of going through Honduras in the monsoon season and having many roads washed out and mudslides, one of which he almost fell victim too. He said the locals told him "Here, go this way", and he found himself carrying his bike on his back and himself knee deep in sludge and mud. He could hardly pull his legs out to keep walking, and his thoughts were, "if any more mud comes down now, I am a dead man". He said it was only for a short distance he had to get through like this, but that it was the only time he thought he could die. While we had dinner we washed some of his clothes and his shoes, his shoes still smelled badly from always being wet. Arthur told him "Just face it man, you got stinky feet now".

Another thing he told me was when he was in Uruguay and Paraguay there were Colonies of Menonites. Evidently the locals didn't care much for them, said they were never friendly to the locals and never wanted to mix, and got upset when the sons or daughters talked to the locals. They also hired the locals to work for them on the farms, and treated them very badly. I was surprised to hear there were Menonites there at all. And I guess they are now starting to migrate to Bolivia because the soil is very fertile there, and it's all about the soil and growing crops.

He was not at all happy about the roads or the drivers in Baja Mexico. He had read in a number of books that it was a good place to ride, but he strongly disagreed and was planning to contact the people that write these books and let them know that it is not the case, and to warn people of the dangers of the drunk drivers and the fast speeds the trucks and cars drive, and of course no lanes at all for cyclists safety.

I was sorry I really had no GOOD beer to offer him, being German and all. But, he was gracious, and took whatever I had to offer. I fed him and kept feeding him, and kept feeding him. Three bowls of soup and 5 pieces of bread later, he seemed to be happy. In the morning, coffee, 3 scrambled eggs and 4 more pieces of toast, and a slice of peanut butter bread in mid morning. I had offered him oatmeal, what else, right? But, he said he had been eating soooo much porridge on his journey, the thought of eggs sounded much better. We spent some time looking at the computer and trying to find someone on the warmshowers network for L.A. area. I hope that worked out for him. He was a very nice guy, with a lot of guts. Very unassuming, which worked well for him. I packed up 2 more sandwiches and a banana for him and he was on his way north. As far as keeping track of him, he doesn't have a website. I do have his e-mail address, so I can post him every now and then, but that's it.



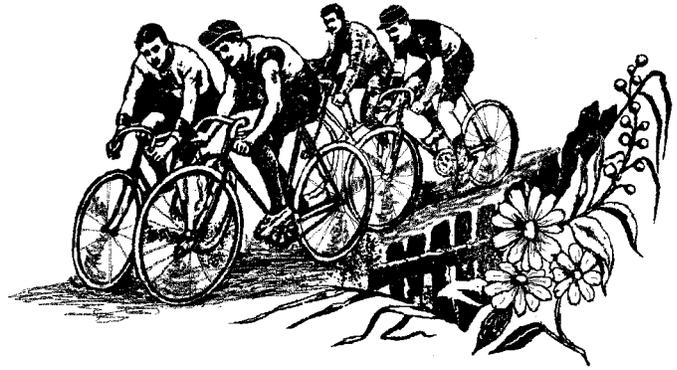
Something I forgot to mention about Kristian's camping, I remembered to turn the sprinklers off in the backyard so he wouldn't have any surprises at 5:30 A.M.

Barbara: A friend of mine is in the warm showers program and has used it on his bike travels. When he heard of our encounter, his response to Gail M. was: "It sounds like you are already an honorary member..."

I think we were all ambassadors. Thanks Gail M. for taking care of him.

Forrest sent this photo from Barbara's cell phone. That's all they had. Forrest thinks some of her tears fell on the lens and blurred his face. It was a very fun day.

Outings:



APRIL							2009
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	
			1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
26	27	28	29	30			

FRI APR 03
THROUGH
SUN APR 05



SAN DIEGO CUSTOM BICYCLE SHOW
TOWN AND COUNTRY RESORT
500 Hotel Circle North (619 291 7131)
Golden Pacific Ballroom

The event will showcase custom bicycles, bicycle components, apparel and bicycle accessories from all across the United States. Bike valet service provided by SDBC.
Details at: <http://www.sandiegocustombicycleshow.com/>

SAT APR 04

8:15 AM 67.9 MILES ***
9:00 AM 58.6 MILES ***

CBAG HAULING MBVC
- CARLSBAD + COYOTE BAR & GRILL
VONS CLAIREMONT TOWNE SQUARE
MISSION BAY VISITORS CENTER

Will Cronyn (619 823 0070). Depending on where you would like to start the ride, Will offers the following directions:

To Vons: I-5 to exit 22, Clairemont Drive, cross Clairemont Mesa Blvd., right at next traffic light into shopping center, another right towards Vons.

To Mission Bay: I-5 to exit 22, Clairemont Drive West. North (right) on East Mission Bay Drive, immediate left into parking lot and left again to get close to MBVC.

This will be a beautiful coastal ride, with at least two memorable restrooms (Del Mar power station park and Swami's) and lunch in the patio at Coyote. Starting at Vons (continental breakfast available) adds 9.3 roundtrip miles and a hill.

KNICKERBIKERS of SAN DIEGO COUNTY

EXCURSION RATING KEY

- **** SIGHTSEERS - Leisurely riding. Destination and scenic oriented. Frequent stops. No extreme grades. 8 - 12 mph
- *** TOURISTS - Moderate to brisk pace. Scenic roads including hills. Stops every hour. No one gets dropped. 12 mph
- ** SPORTS RIDERS - Vigorous, peppy pace. Possible steep grades. Good workout. Stops every hour or two. 15 -17 mph
- * MASTER RIDERS (Animals) - Anything goes. Possible pace lines. Slower riders dropped. Ready for competition. ? mph

PROMPT DEPARTURES

Rides depart 15 minutes past scheduled assembly time. Please be ready and waiting for departure.
Greet your ride leader!

MEDICAL ALERT FOR CYCLISTS, PARTICULARLY TOURING CYCLISTS April 1 2009

Very recent medical research has shown that, in addition to a loss of bone density, cyclists may be at risk for anemophobia (also known as ancarophobia). Because of conflicting medical evidence, the debate rages on bone density. One study states: "Sprint cyclists, and to a lesser extent distance cyclists, had greater tibia and radius bone strength surrogates than the controls, with tibial bone measures being well preserved with age in all groups. This suggests that competition- based cycling and the associated training regime is beneficial in preserving average or above-average bone strength surrogates into old age in men." (Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise, March 2009.) On this other hand, there are studies showing that competitive male cyclists have lower Bone Mineral Density in their spines than moderately-active, aged-matched men. (Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise, Feb. 2009; Osteoporosis International reports, Aug. 2003). They assume that cycling increases risk for bone fractures other than just from falling off the bike.

The effects of anemophobia are less well studied, and there has been virtually no discussion about it, even though recent findings show cyclists are suffering rates of this disease dramatically exceeding the population as a whole. Because any phobia is more difficult to quantify than physiological characteristics such as bone density, much of the data is anecdotal. Still, researchers warn that the danger can't be ignored by cyclists since the evidence, even though anecdotal, is nevertheless overwhelming. Currently, clinical trials are being designed; all cyclists will eventually have the opportunity to be tested in order to determine the severity of their affliction.

"I was pretty sure I suffered from this" one experienced touring cyclist told a researcher. "I just didn't know they had a name for it." Symptoms vary, but there are several indicia or warning signs that cyclists should look for:

- a) Mood changes that are dependent on wind direction;
- b) Compulsive checking on wind speed and direction before starting a ride;
- c) Abandoning a ride because of a change in wind direction or speed; and
- d) Irrational anger at "the wind gods" manifested by fist-shaking, cursing, and shouting.

There is no known cure for this condition, so many cyclists have turned to training on indoor tracks or at home with rollers or stationary trainers. Psychiatrists have expressed the hope that as more is learned about this debilitating disease, cures will be found, allowing cyclists, once again, to lead what passes for "normal" lives in the cycling community.

Knickerbiker Klassified

I have a tandem for sale. It is a Follis, French touring tandem, 21"/20" that I used with my kids for years. It also has sealed hubs and bottom brackets It has Reynolds 531 tubing and is in great condition.. I also have a mini stoker kit to go with it (raises the pedals and lengthens the handlebars for your little tyke). I am asking \$1,900.00 for it. I can be reached at (858 454 2341) or sshapiro@ucsd.edu.



You can sign up to lead a ride for the Knickerbikers in several ways:

- call 619 787 7427
- email pezzie@san.rr.com
- www.knickerbikers.com
Click on tab marked "Outings" and then click on -> Sign up to lead a ride!
Once you are there you can also see the calendar and available dates.

That's all it takes to get *your* ride into an upcoming Knickerbiker Bull-A-Ton!

SUN APR 05 9:00 AM 30 MILES *** CORONADO PICNIC
MISSION BAY VISITOR'S CENTER
North parking lot
E. Mission Bay Dr. & Clairemont Dr, Mission Bay

Joan Slote (619 298 5506). Joan will lead us, up Linda Vista (the only hill) and down to the stadium. We'll have a snack up the block from the stadium and then head back to the beginning and around Fiesta Island to make this ride about 30 miles.

TUE APR 07 6:30 PM 0 MILES **** KNICKERBIKER KNIGHTRIDERS
BUGA - KOREAN BBQ RESTAURANT
5580 Clairemont Mesa Blvd. (858 560 0620)

Bob Cameron (858 456 3862). This restaurant is purported to have the best Coleman natural short ribs in town. These short ribs (seasoned or fresh) come from cattle bred on 100% natural pastures in Denver Colorado. Although the cost is \$25.95, one order should be enough for two Knickerbikers. Some of the other dishes are Pork, Fresh Bacon Style \$17.95, and marinated Chicken BBQ \$15.95. For those that prefer vegetarian dishes, there are Stone Pot With Vegetables Over Rice \$12.95 and Banquet Noodles \$9.95. This restaurant is located on the north side of Clairemont Mesa Blvd, just west of I-805. There is plenty of parking in the rear of the restaurant.

SAT APR 11 9:30 AM 25 MILES *** TO THE RESERVOIR, AND BACK
SANTEE TROLLEY SQUARE
Chili's Parking Lot
Thomas Guide PP 1231, D6

Jeanne Shupala (858 481 8278). To get to Santee Trolley Square, from Highway 52, exit Mission Gorge Road. Go east on Mission Gorge Road, cross Cuyamaca. At the next light enter Santee Trolley Square, You'll see Chili's to your left. That's the meeting spot! Jeanne will lead us up to the dam and back. After a great ride, we'll enjoy lunch at the food court in the shopping center.

SUN APR 12 9:00 AM 55 MILES ** JEFF'S BIRTHDAY RIDE!
GLEN PARK, ENCINITAS

Jeff Gianformaggio (619 255 2890). Meet up with the others wearing screamin' yellow by taking I-5 to Manchester Ave. Go west to junction with San Elijo Avenue for a few blocks, turn right on Orinda Drive (tennis courts will be on your right), and park in Glen Park or on neighboring streets. Jeff will lead us along coastal backroads through Vista and Oceanside. We will enjoy lunch at the Hawaiian BBQ just off College and 76. Let's help Jeff celebrate his birthday in true Knickerbiker style... on our bikes!

TUE APR 14 6:30 PM 0 MILES **** KNICKERBIKER KNIGHTRIDERS
MIMMO'S ITALIAN VILLAGE
1743 India Street, Little Italy (619 239 3710)

Gail Roberts (619 231 9168). Mimmo's Italian Village is the spitting-image of a Venetian street. Every Italian favorite is available, and the fare tastes even better beside the restaurant's cheerfully-painted frescoes.

Do you have an old route slip and some memories to go with it?
Send them on over to Sharon at pezzie@san.rr.com *Thanks!*

WED APR 15
through
MON APR 20

SIDEWAYS

60 - 80 MILES ***

SIDEWAYS II
WINE AND BIKE TOUR
BUELLTON, CA



Rhonwyn Curtis-Nicholson (858 453 3687) or (858 243 4662). In 2006 Rhonwyn led a wine country trip near Solvang, CA based on the movie Sideways. Well, she's been asked to do it again for our club!

The dates are April 15 - 20. We will lodge at the Days Inn in Buellton (the same hotel where Jack and Miles stayed in the movie). Our reservation group number there is P65456. Rhonwyn has reserved 10 ground floor rooms. You can call the Days Inn (805 688 8448) to hold one of those rooms for yourself on your credit card. Rhonwyn can also help coordinate rooms for those seeking a roommate.

During our stay, we will bike out through some of the same bucolic country roads and visit some of the same wineries featured in the movie. Wednesday, April 15 will be for traveling and checking in. Wednesday night, we will have a kickoff dinner at the Hitching Post (made famous by the movie). Rhonwyn will pass out itinerary/bike routes during the kickoff dinner.

Thursday and Friday will be biking days (about 30 - 40 miles per day). Saturday is the annual Vintners' Festival. This does sell out. The price is \$100.00 per person and includes a bus/motorcoach ride to and from the festival and all the food and wine you can handle!

Knickerbikers can drive home Sunday, April 19 or stay for another optional night (our reserved block is good through Sunday night). Sunday morning we will bike along a scenic country road to Nojoqui Falls and back with lunch in Solvang.

If the need arises, Buellton has a bike shop within walking distance of our hotel.

SAT APR 18 9:00 AM 28 MILES *** THE 28 MILE RIDE THAT FEELS LIKE 34
NOBEL DRIVE ATHLETIC AREA

Robert Leone (858 272 4710). To meet your ride leader and fellow riders, take Nobel Drive to Shoreline, turn west (not into the apartments, but toward the athletic fields) on Shoreline, turn right on Toscana, and right again into the Nobel Drive Athletic Area parking lot. From the Nobel Drive Athletic Area (chosen for better bathroom access!) we'll drop down into Del Mar for coffee, then ride past the polo grounds and up Sorrento Valley Blvd. Lunch will be at the Plaza Sorrento food court. It's a hilly course that'll get your legs into touring shape. No one gets dropped.

SAT APR 18 7:00 AM 50 MILES *** ROSARITO-ENSENADA FUN BIKE RIDE
BUS: BALBOA PARK
RIDE: ROSARITO BEACH

Will Cronyn - contact, NOT leader! (619 823 0070). Coastal and rural Mexico, with lots of very enthusiastic spectators. What a fun ride! This is Will's 6th R-E in a row. Cost of ride: \$35.00 Bus: \$90.00 per person. Will is planning to take the Outback Adventures bus: <http://www.outback-adventures.com>
Details at: <http://www.rosaritoensenada.com/>



SUN APR 19 **8:30 AM** ±25 MILES *** VELODROME BICYCLE SPRING SWAP MEET
BALBOA PARK parking lot corner of Upas & Texas
North side of Balboa Park (North Park)

Belle Jour (619 787 7427). Directions to the Velodrome and our meeting spot: I-5, exit Pershing Drive, left Florida Street, right Upas, right Texas into parking area. Come to the biggest bicycle swap meet in San Diego, with hundreds of sellers, and tens of thousands of bargains! Buyers are admitted at 9:00 AM, so we we'll check out the goods first. All proceeds from the swap meet go towards the running of the San Diego Velodrome - a NON-PROFIT organization that promotes the sport and recreation of velodrome cycling, including offering free classes to the youth of San Diego. Those who show up will decide where to ride and enjoy lunch!

SUN APR 19  ***** PEDAL TO EARTHFAR 2009
BALBOA PARK

Ride a Bike To Earth Fair! There will be free, guarded bike parking, coordinated by the San Diego County Bicycle Coalition, available in two locations:

- o On Village Place (off of Park Blvd., south of the Zoo) behind the Natural History Museum
- o In front of the Museum of Man, just over the Laurel St. bridge.

SDCBC will need volunteers. Go to www.pedaltothepark.com or www.sdcbc.org for more details

TUE APR 21 6:30 PM 0 MILES ***** KNICKERBIKER KNIGHTRIDERS
WEST COAST BARBECUE (619 462 3663)
6126 Lake Murray Blvd., La Mesa
Parked at the edge of the Ross Store Center on
Lake Murray Blvd.

Sandra Zinn (619 464 3457). Beginning in 1958, as Roadside Bar B Q on Mission Gorge Road, and continuing from 1978 to 2001, as Bekker's BBQ and Catering, further along Mission Gorge Road, West Coast Barbecue has now reinvented themselves one more time for a new generation. Remember the home of awesome ribs, Wednesday night Rib Fest, Sunday night Chicken Fest? You will find the same delicious baked beans, cole slaw and all the rest of our Famous Texas Style BBQ, at this new location.

SAT APR 25 9:00 AM 27.5 MILES *** NO LEFT TURNS, SECRET TO A LONG LIFE
YE OLDE BICYCLE SHOPPE (619 582 4024)
6792 University Avenue
West of 70th Street, across from Joan Kroc Center

Sylvia Nielsen (619 286 7511). Get on over to Ye Olde Bicycle Shoppe by heading along I-8 to 70th Street, south to University Avenue. Turn right. Ye Olde Bicycle Shoppe will be on the right. Sylvia will lead us to Spring Valley via new bike path under 125, Bonita (there will be a pit stop at coffee shop next to Performance), Chula Vista (a quick lunch stop here), then onward to ice cream at Niederfranks in National City. No route slip is promised so follow the leader.

SAT APR 26 **9:30 AM** 29 MILES *** 56 BIKE PATH
CARMEL VALLEY PARK & RIDE

Rhonwyn Curtis-Nicholson (858 243 4662). To meet up with your fellow riders, take I-5 to the Carmel Valley exit. The Carmel Valley Park & Ride is on the west side of the freeway. Park your car and ride! We will take the bike path east and then venture out on some hilly roads. Lunch will be at a shopping center before we get back on the bike path. The center has options such as Rubio's, Greek, Submarina, Chinese, etc.

TUE APR 28 6:30 PM 0 MILES ***** KNICKERBIKER KNIGHTRIDERS
PHIL'S B.B.Q.
3750 Sports Arena (619 226 6333)

Rhonwyn Curtis-Nicholson (858 243 4662). Last week's BBQ was Texas style and this week, we go for Kansas style! Phil's B.B.Q., has been voted best barbeque in San Diego and the best this side of Kansas City. Although Phil grills his BBQ (rather than slow-smoking it), he's doing something right! He's invented a sweet, rich rib sauce. You'll find pork and beef fall-off-the-bone ribs, BBQ'd chicken, and plenty of BBQ'd sandwiches, huge baskets of fries and onion rings, and sweet baked beans. Don't miss out!

SAT MAY 02 9:00 AM 60 MILES *** OCEANSIDE HARBOR TO DANA POINT & BACK
OCEANSIDE HARBOR PARKING LOT
East of the railroad track through the tunnel
Oceanside

Martha Way (858 581 9292). This is a favorite, pretty, and an "easy" 60 mile ride... although 60 miles IS 60 miles! It has only a few moderate hills. We will ride up to Dana Point (30 miles), have lunch and turn around and come back. First choice for lunch is the newly re-opened Proud Mary's, although if we're a big group we may need to split up and go to different places and re-group for the ride back.

If you rather ride 40 miles instead of 60 miles, you can meet us at the Las Pulgas Gate (about 9:45 AM) and ride up to Dana Point and then back to Las Pulgas.

Want the Bull-A-Ton online? E-mail knickerb@san.rrcom and ask to receive the Bull-A-Ton electronically. You can choose to have either the print or the e-version. If you choose the latter, your subscription renewal is only \$10 instead of the \$20 for a print version.

Wheely Good Recipes

Very Easy Albuquerque Corn Salad

1 T. olive oil
2/3 c. peeled and chopped jicama
1 T. minced jalapeno pepper (be sure to remove the seeds carefully)
3 c. corn kernels (Trader Joe's Frozen Roasted Corn works best)
8 thinly sliced green onions
2/3 c. chopped red pepper
1/2 t. ground cumin
1/4 t. salt

Heat oil in skillet over medium heat
Add jicama and jalapeno
Sauté 2 minutes
Add corn and remaining ingredients
Sauté 2 minutes, stirring frequently

Enjoy warm or cold.

Submitted by Sandra Zinn

Coming Events:



FRI MAY 01
through
SUN MAY 03



VARIABLE MILES

WARNER SPRINGS TRIP
WARNER SPRINGS, CA

David Johnson (DavSamJohn@aol.com). The Knickerbikers have been invited to join the Sierra Club for their 2009 trip to Warner Springs. They are staying Friday and Saturday night at the resort, and will offer scenic rides in the area all three days. Dinner Friday evening is on your own, but gather beforehand near our cabins for a no-host Happy Hour. The club will provide Saturday and Sunday breakfast at our group of cabins, and dinner Saturday evening will be a potluck. For bike section members, the rate per person for both nights is \$125.00 for double occupancy, and the rate is \$250.00 to take the entire room for both nights, with a \$5.00 surcharge for an extra person in the room. For non-members, the rate per person for both nights is \$131.00 for double occupancy, and the rate is \$262.00 for the entire room, with the same surcharge for an additional roommate. To reserve a place on this trip, send your check for the full amount, payable to the Sierra Club Bicycle Section, to David Johnson at 4676 Morrell St, San Diego, CA 92109. Your payment is refundable until April 1 with substitution for your places. To receive trip information, let David know your e-mail address or enclose a legal-size SASE with your payment. Please e-mail David at DavSamJohn@aol.com if you have any questions.

SAT MAY 23
through (noon)
MON MAY 25



MOUNTAIN BIKING/CAMPING TRIP
BIG BEAR, CA

Marge Cooper (619 473 9621). It is time for some great mountain biking, hiking and loafing in the beautiful San Bernardino Mountains. I have made reservations at Grays Peak Group Campground. We will have three days to explore both the North side of Fawnskin, Big Bear Lake, Big Bear Village and Big Bear City. Fee is \$45.00 per person and this includes the campsite for two nights, two dinners, two breakfasts, two lunches and snacks. To sign up, send your checks to Marge Cooper, P. O. Box 145, Pine Valley, CA 91962. Deadline to sign up is May 15. If you have any questions, please call Marge at the above number.

Got some friends you'd like to see on a bike ride? The Knickerbikers will be pleased to send a complimentary Bull-A-Ton if you provide the pertinent info' below:

→	Name _____ Address _____ City _____ Zip _____	→	Name _____ Address _____ City _____ Zip _____
→	Name _____ Address _____ City _____ Zip _____	→	Name _____ Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Please send this form to: Knickerbikers of San Diego County
8590 Cliffridge Avenue
La Jolla, CA 92037

SUN JUN 14
through
SAT JUN 20



310 - 585 MILES

GRAND ILLINOIS TRAIL AND PARKS BICYCLE RIDE

This year's week on the Grand Illinois Trail promises to be cornucopia of great riding through the landscape of northern Illinois, wonderful stopovers amid the woods and stars of scenic state parks, and many enhancements that all lead to a memorable vacation on a bike.

The focus for this year's route is the southern wing of the GIT, including the I & M Canal Trail and the Hennepin Canal Trail (with road routes paralleling soft trail mileage). We will also visit two outstanding parks off the trail – Shabbona and White Pines. The minimum distance this year is 310 miles for the week, but by taking extra loops, it will be possible to do 585 miles. GITAP is a small ride with a **limit of 160 riders. Last year the ride was filled up by mid-April**, so don't put off registration too long. **Registration is first-come, first-served.**

The base price for the ride will be \$395. "early planning rate" \$385 - for registrations mailed by April 1. A late rate of \$420 will go into effect on June 1.

Special group incentive for bike clubs: For every bike club with 5 members on GITAP, 5% of their GITAP registration fees will be added to that club's annual contribution to LIB (League of Illinois Bicyclists with support from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. It's an all volunteer operation, with any profits going to support LIB and its state-wide bicycle programs.) Each additional rider from that club will add 5% more to the club's contribution. Three Knickerbikers have already signed up! <http://www.bikelib.org/gitap/2009/index.htm>

FRI JUN 26
through
FRI JUL 17



VARIABLE MILES

THE GREAT 2009 SD Knickerbiker Ice Worm,
Chena Hot Springs, Moose, Denali Park, Drunken
Forest, Full Moon and Prince William Sound
ALASKA TOUR

Will Cronyn (619 823 0070). Yup, we're doing it again. Rendezvousing in Anchorage Friday, June 26 for up to 1000 miles of fabulous Alaska road biking in 21 days including 2 full days in magnificent Denali National Park. Lots of shorter travel options ranging from riding with us from Anchorage to North Pole (a Fairbanks 'burb), 10 days/450 miles; or Fairbanks-Anchorage with 2 full days in Denali National Park, 9 days/350 mi; or Anchorage-Denali, 681 mi/15 days with return to Anchorage by train, or...or.... Nominal accommodations: 2/3 camping, 1/3 motelling but there's lots of flexibility ranging from all camping to 4 nights camping, rest motelling. With about 21 hours between sunup and sundown each day, no worries about getting from A to B before dark (and even during the 3 hours of sundown, it's not really dark), or having to pack 'em up and move 'em out promptly each morning. Individual expenses will vary wildly depending on each rider's choice of mix of camping, motelling, restauranting, and camp stoving but I will be posting estimates for the 2/3-1/3 mix we did this past summer along with lots of other info and tips including the importance of taking sun block (seriously!). Questions already? Home: 858 581 6530, cell: 619 823 0070, email: kbalaskaride@att.net

Cycling Enters the Electronic Age with a New Gear-Shifting System by IAN AUSTEN

The bicycle, one of the world's most resolutely human-powered machines, will join the long list of devices that have switched from the manual to the electronic when a new gear system made its debut at the Tour of California.

Although the battery-powered derailleur by Shimano promises to bring ease and accuracy to changing gears by enabling riders to shift with a light touch to two electronic switches, traditionalists worry that it may erode the basic tenets of the sport.

"People choose bicycles precisely because a bicycle's motion requires only human effort, and nothing could be more simple, independent and autonomous," Raymond Henry, a cycling historian in St. Etienne, France, wrote in an e-mail message. "Any source of external energy, however weak, runs counter to this philosophy."

Whether the gear system becomes the next iPod and redefines bicycle technology or ends up as the sport's version of the eight-track tape will hinge on a number of factors, the most obvious being performance, reliability and cost.

Two earlier attempts at electronic gear changing by a French company, Mavic, often malfunctioned in rain. Another company, Campagnolo, has delayed bringing its version to market because of the economic downturn.

Shimano's version, known as the Dura-Ace Di2 7970, is being used by three professional teams competing in California: Columbia High Road, Garmin Slipstream and Rabobank. About 10 riders will race with the system even though they have used it on only one or two training rides after receiving them late this week.

Bob Stapleton, the owner and general manager of Columbia, said many of his riders had doubts about using bicycles that could literally run out of power. The Di2 system has no manual override if its battery goes dead. That event can be an irritation or a disaster, depending on the terrain and what gear ratio the bike is stuck in. Shimano estimates the battery will last for about 1,000 miles per charge.

"Their careers can be made on the results from one race," Stapleton said of his riders. "So they prize reliability over everything."

Stapleton, an experienced amateur cyclist, has used the Di2 system extensively and is a convert.

"I think every high-end bike within three years will have this, maybe sooner," he said, adding that the system also eliminates much of the maintenance required by mechanical systems.

A full set of components with electronic gears will cost about \$1,250 more than the newest mechanical version, which sells for about \$2,750.

Upgrading an existing Shimano system is expected to cost about \$2,200.

The system will fit onto nearly all racing bicycles.

Later this year, Giant, the largest bicycle manufacturer in the world, will offer a bike designed to use only electronic parts for about \$14,000, which includes the cost of Di2. If consumers fancy the device, it will likely follow the pattern of other new electronics and drop significantly in price over time.

Electronic gear-shifting technology has spent a long time in development. Prototypes of Mavic's first system, the Zap, made a cameo appearance at the 1992 Tour de France and the company introduced its second attempt, the Mektronic, in 1999.

For much of this decade, both Shimano, which dominates bicycle parts the way Microsoft dominates computer software, and its venerable Italian competitor Campagnolo occasionally tested prototype systems on the bikes of pro riders. More often than not, the prototypes were devoid of trademarks, presumably to limit embarrassment if results proved as unfortunate as the Zap.

The Campagnolo and Shimano systems share the basic design of current mechanical derailleurs. That is, a parallelogram that moves the chain back and forth and, in the rear, two spring-loaded wheels to keep the chain taut.

Two paddle-shaped electronic switches that sit behind the brake lever allow riders to shift gears. Tapping either paddle lightly in Di2 sends an electronic signal through a wire to a small motor inside the derailleur, moving the body and thus the chain by turning a worm gear.

Even Devin Walton, a spokesman for Shimano, acknowledges that when it comes to the rear derailleur, there is little or no difference in shifting between the electronic and comparable mechanical offerings from the company.

The gains are more obvious, however, with the front derailleur, which moves the chain between the two large, toothed rings on the bicycle's crank.

That is partly because the electronic front derailleur is able to make constant readjustments to reflect changes in the chain's position caused by shifting with the more frequently used rear derailleur. That allows the electronic front derailleur to use a more efficient shifting mechanism, one that would drive riders to the point of distraction with fiddly readjustments on a mechanical system.

Campagnolo has faith in its electronic system and is waiting for an upturn in the economy before launching. "We've got extremely positive feedbacks concerning shifting quickness, precision and user friendliness," Lerrj Piazza, a spokesman for Campagnolo, said.

Because cycling teams rely on sponsorship from companies like Shimano for their financial survival, several riders were reluctant to discuss their concerns about the system, which range from the prospect of battery failures to difficulty shifting gears using the small and very sensitive paddles while wearing gloves. But after a couple of training rides, George Hincapie of Columbia said he agreed with his team owner, Stapleton, about its merits.

"The shifting is amazing," he said. "I was very impressed as soon as I tried it."

The action of the electronic system is so effortless that, compared with mechanical levers, it leaves users feeling almost disconnected from the bike.

After trying the system, Jonathan Vaughters, the chief executive of Garmin Slipstream, anticipates that initially it will be most widely used on special bicycles used for time trials, races against the stopwatch, and triathlons. Vaughters, a former professional rider, believes that most of the two-second margin by which Chris Boardman won the opening time trial of the 1997 Tour de France was owed to his electronic Mavic derailleur. The device, which worked for that race's 7.3 kilometers, allowed Boardman to maintain his aerodynamic position even while shifting.

If Di2 does prove to be reliable and is a success in the market, do not expect an automatic transmission next. Walton says that such a system, at least for racing bikes, would need to analyze a rider's physical state and well as read his mind.

"There's no way for the system to know when you're about to sprint," Walton said. "When you're in competition, you have to be in control."



PHILOSOPHY. Our club, the Knickerbikers of San Diego County, was established on Friday, May 31, 1974. Forty-three charter members subscribed to the idea that a regular program of bicycle touring experiences could be offered without involving institutional encumbrances. In effect, our club was purposefully not organized. There are neither rules nor regulations, no club officers—aside from our tongue-in-cheek representative office of Knickercommander (the club servant)—and no business quorum. Everyone is still responsible for himself or herself. It was and still is a simple idea, which is to go ride our bikes! Two founding principles guide our group behavior: it's nice to be noticed, and it's fun to be a kid again.

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