

The Spokin' Word



Newsletter of the Lompoc Valley Bicycle Club

June/July 2007

A Great, Great Western Bicycle Rally

By Chuck Greenley

First of all, the weather was splendid. The temp was in the low 90s Thurs and Fri, and then dropped a bit Sat and Sun. Early morning cloud cover burned off by about 1000, and the winds weren't significant to the point of struggle on the roads. Second, there were fewer riders. Bob Grant says his forces only stuffed 1200 bags. And, speaking of bags, the loot was superior! Lots of chamois crème (again), but a ton of Cytomax, energy bars, bottles, sun screens, organic cereals, Powergel, etc. The new directors (Laurel King and Sharon Doty) really put the squeeze on bike organizations and shops. Best of all, most of the volunteers scored really quality Acura bike lights that were part of the handouts. And, of course, volunteers got the traditional travel coffee mugs. This year's version is aluminum with tops for car use.



Brian, Bruce and Scott enjoying Star Farms

Grant and B.J. Clarke were there Weds and staked out the Lompoc Park. Michels (Alana and Larry) and Steffo and I pulled in early Thurs, which was the first legal day to enter. The rest of the club included (at various times Fri and Sat) Brian Rollins, Scott Shaw (solo), Gene and Barb Pritchett (plus Danielle and friend), Manchester (2), Gracyks, Hummels (Sun), Steve and Sue Pritchett. Rick and Kim Lloyd were supposed to come over from Bakersfield, but there must have been some sort of Spiderman emergency. They didn't make it.



There were several new rides this year. Steffo's new "favorites" are the Hog Canyon (added), and the Women's Velo (new). You'll like these. They're on the east side of 101 and have little to no traffic. There are enough rollers and "ups", though, Jerry, that allow for some off-the-saddle time. Both are "two-bottle" rides. Stores and support are non-existent, except for Star Farms on return.

Bit of bad luck for Larry on Thurs. He, Alana, Steffo and I went out late after volunteer duty to do a short San Miguel. Alana wanted to do 20 miles only, so she and Larry turned back short of San Miguel to return on North River Road. I conned Steffo into a "Whats-UpChuck." Larry went off the road about 6 miles from camp and dislocated his little finger (right hand). He also cut it severely. Stephanie and I went to dinner while he and Alana were eating at camp, and our

plan was to take him to ER on return. (Dawn didn't stay, so he was car-less for the weekend.) B.J. stepped up and hauled him to Templeton, the nearest med facility. It took some time to get the x-rays, splint, etc. They returned to camp after midnight. As he said, Larry owes B.J. "Big time."

As for the competition phases, Brian was first overall in the Hill Climb at 41 seconds. Alana was first in division in both the Time Trial and the Hill Climb, and our granddaughter, Kylie, was 3rd in the Kids Rodeo. Brian probably would have scored high in the Time Trial, as well, but he had a problem. Despite detailed directions (leave the Park, turn right onto Highway 46 for 10 miles, turn left at Estrella Road) he somehow got lost. When he went by Santa Margarita, he figured he was on the wrong roads. Fortunately, he was able to find Paso Robles on return.

Bob, busy as usual, was busy with his camp projects and didn't get much riding. Besides the bag-stuff, he's involved with the mobile showers, directs the Huffy Toss, answers multiple questions from various groups of riders who still consider him the Mayor, and does the barbecue, of course. He didn't use his big tent this year, however. He reverted to the smaller version.

I've probably missed some details, but you all undoubtedly have eye strain by now, anyway. Circle the calendars for '08



Lompoc Triathlon!



Get out your aerobars and start training for the August 11th Lompoc Triathlon! After a several year hiatus, it is great to have a local triathlon again. There are numerous categories for individuals, families and relay teams. (Actually there are more than 26 categories overall). There are even categories for 10 and under and 11-14 year-olds. The event starts with a 500 yard swim, (20 lengths of the pool), 11 mile bike, (out V street to Union Sugar and back Central to V Street), and 3.1 mile run.

Here is the website for the entry form and information about the event.
http://www.ci.lompoc.ca.us/departments/parks_rec/news/2007/2007triathlon.pdf

And yes, I already have my team put together for this year.

My New Mailbox



“How to True a Wheel”

By Sheldon Brown www.sheldonbrown.com

Of all the maintenance and repair jobs that may be needed on a bicycle, the trickiest is truing (straightening) wheels. A good wheelbuilder, in many cases, can do amazing things for a wheel that might appear to be totally destroyed. But a person who tries to "touch up" a slightly out-of true wheel without proper knowledge could turn an imperfection into a disaster. If you have a badly damaged wheel of basically good quality, take it to a good wheelbuilder..

This is not to say that there is nothing a cyclist with reasonable mechanical skills can do in cases of moderate damage. But I would suggest that you not mess with your spokes unless you have mastered most other aspects of bicycle maintenance.

Let's assume that we have an out-of true wheel to deal with. The rim may be hitting one or both of the brake shoes during its rotation, or it may just be coming close.

CHECK SPOKE TENSION

Once the rim is free from blips and serious flat spots, the tension of the spokes should be checked. Put your thumb on one spoke and your fingers on the spoke next to it and squeeze. The spokes should feel tight and firm. They should have just a little give when you squeeze them fairly hard. Repeat this process with the next pair of spokes and so on until you have worked all the way around the wheel and felt every spoke. Squeeze a few spokes on other bikes to get an idea of how they should feel. It is normal for the spokes on the freewheel/cassette side of the rear wheel to be tighter than the others.

If all but a few of your spokes are mostly tight enough, the worst mistake you could make would be to tighten just the loose spokes. It is possible for spoke nipples to loosen up on their own, especially in wheels that were built with insufficient tension to begin with, but this is rare. Usually when just one or a few spokes are loose, it is because the rim has been bent to ease their tension. In this situation, tightening just the loose spokes will cause the wheel to bend even more, in the same direction. Instead, the rim should be bent back into shape first.

A wheel can go out of true (so the rim weaves from side to side as it turns) one of two ways. The rim itself can be deformed, usually by hitting a bump, or the problem may be caused by spokes either being broken or out of adjustment.

CHECK THE RIMS

In most out-of-true wheels, the problem is the result of the rim being bent. Remove the tire, tube and rim tape if you haven't already. If a truing stand is available, use it. If not, your bicycle will do. Hang or otherwise support the bicycle so that the wheels can turn freely, with the brakes at a convenient working height. If you are working on the rear wheel, it will make things easier if you remove it from the frame and reinstall it so that the chain is not touching the freewheel sprockets.

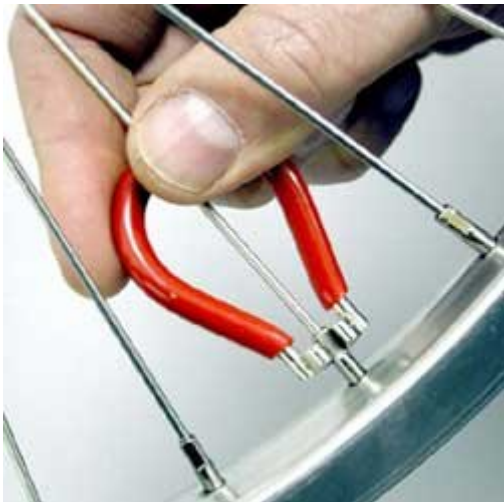
Spin the wheel and look to see where the worst bend is—the place where the rim is farthest from its average position. Which side is it bent toward? Let's assume that it is bent to the right in one area, and that this is the most severe bend on the rim. Move the right-hand brake shoe in toward the spinning rim until it just rubs at one point in the wheel's rotation. Feel the tension on the spokes in the immediate area of the bend.

If the spokes that go to the right flange of the hub are loose and the ones that go to the left are tight, that is the result of the rim being deformed. Since the rim has been pushed over to the right, it eases the tension on the right spokes while increasing the tension on the left spokes. If you just tighten the left spokes in the area of the bend, it will pull the rim back toward the middle, but it also



will create a flat spot. Even if you are able to get the wheel true this way it will be seriously weakened because the spoke tension will be uneven.

The proper repair in this situation is first to bend the rim back to its normal shape, and then fine true it with the spokes. Lightweight wheels can be bent fairly easily by placing your knee or foot right on the peak of the bend, and pulling with your hands on either side of the bend. This or a similar technique should be used whenever a rim is bent more than 1 centimeter to the side and there are no broken spokes. Even wheels that have collapsed into the shape of a potato chip usually can be made rideable again with this technique. This is a very useful on-the-road repair-it even can be done without removing the wheel from the bike. If you are not sure of your skill, you are less likely to do further damage bending wheels over your knee, spectacular as it may look, than with a spoke wrench used carelessly.



If the rim is bent to the right, and the right side spokes are tighter than the left side in the area of the bend, or if the tensions are about equal, the spokes are the cause (and cure) of the trouble. Working only in the immediate area of the bend, tighten the left spokes and loosen the right spokes, keeping the overall tension the same. For instance, if the bend involves four spokes, you might tighten each of the left spokes one-fourth turn and loosen each of the right spokes one-fourth turn. If only three spokes are involved, say two on the left and one on the right, you might tighten each of the left ones one-eighth turn and loosen the one on the right one-fourth turn. By maintaining this balance you can true the wheel from side to side without making it go out of round. Until you have acquired a lot of experience truing

wheels, don't turn any spoke more than one-fourth turn at a time for side-to-side truing.

CHECK IMPROVEMENT

Now that you have made an adjustment to the worst bend to the right, check to see whether you have made it worse or better. If it is worse, you turned the nipples the wrong way, so correct that mistake immediately. If your adjustment has made an improvement, don't worry that it has not completely eliminated the bend. Spin the wheel to see if the bend you worked on is still the worst bend to the right. If it is, adjust it a little more. If it isn't, or you can't be sure, find the worst bend to the left, and work on it. If you keep alternating from one side to the other in this way the wheel will maintain its "dish" or lack of dish. This means that the rim will stay centered between the dropouts.

The spoke is in effect a bolt, and the nipple a nut. They have a standard right-hand thread, but since the spoke wrench fits on the underside of the nipple, it is very easy to become confused as to which way to turn it. It is like looking at the back side of a clock with a transparent dial-the hands would appear to be going counterclockwise, because of the unusual viewpoint.

The top of the nipple usually has a screwdriver slot cut in it. Normally you can't use this for truing, because you can't get the nipple tight enough with just a screwdriver. This does, however, serve as a useful guide for judging which way to turn. Imagine you were going to use a screwdriver to tighten a nipple. You would turn it clockwise. Now use the spoke wrench and make the nipple turn

the same way. If you look at it from the direction of the hub, it will seem that you are turning it counter-clockwise. Anytime you are unsure which way to turn a nipple, don't turn it at all until you are sure, or you will just make matters worse.

When the spokes are tight, and especially if the threads have not been oiled, turning the nipple may just twist the spoke at first instead of moving the nipple along the spoke threads. For instance, you may wish to tighten a particular spoke one-fourth turn. What might very well happen is that for the first one-eighth turn the spoke may twist and then the threads may yield and turn one-eighth turn. You turn the nipple one-fourth turn, but the threads only tighten one-eighth turn and the spoke will have an one-eighth-turn twist. Eventually the twist will work itself out by completing the screwing action in the nipple, and when it does the wheel will go out of true. The easiest way to deal with this problem is to tighten the nipple a three eighths turn and then loosen it one-eighth back, so the net result is one-fourth turn and the spoke will not be twisted. The amount that a spoke will twist will vary from one spoke to another, but with practice and sensitivity you can feel when you are twisting a spoke and when you are untwisting it.



After the wheel has been trued, look on the inside of the rim and check to see if any spoke ends are protruding above the tops of the nipples. If so, you must file them down flush or they will puncture your inner tube if you have clincher tires. If you have used oil on the nipples, make sure to get it off the rim inside and out. Oil on your rims will rot your

tires and make your brakes slip.

Don't be in a hurry for this job. Speed comes only after a great deal of practice. Take your time, and if you find yourself getting frustrated, stop. Go away and relax, do something else for a few hours and come back to, it when you are fresh.

Ride Calendar

- ⇒ **Flower Festival Show and Go - Sunday June 24th. 8:30 Home Depot**
Time to burn off a few of those Funnel Cake calories with a rider's choice ride.
- ⇒ **Wine Country Tour – Sunday July 1st. 8:30 Buellton Albertsons**
Stephaine will be leading the 40 mile ride around the Solvang wine country. Meet in the Albertsons parking lot in Buellton near the coffee shop. Ride leader is Stepahine Greenley

- ⇒ **Three Harbors Tour – Saturday July 7th. – Ventura**
 Ventura Velo is leading this lucky day (07-07-07) tour of the Ventura area with 30, 60 and 100 mile routes. The ride includes breakfast, lunch on thr route and dinner at the finish. Limited to 500 riders. http://venturavelo.org/_wsn/page3.html
- ⇒ **Natural Café – Sunday July 8th 8:30 Starbucks, 8:45 Burton Mesa**
 It's time to add a new ride to our calendar! Natural café is near Mc Coy lane at the new Kohl's Store. I found a way to get there from Orcutt on bike paths and roads with good bike lanes. Should be 45-50 miles. Ride Leader is Gene
- ⇒ **Windmill Century – Saturday July 21st. Los Alamos**
 This is the annual century put on by the Tailwinds bike club with an almost guaranteed tailwind finish. <http://www.tailwindsbc.org/WindMill/Default.htm>
- ⇒ **Lompoc Sprint Triathlon – Saturday August 11th.**
- ⇒ **Cool Breeze Century – Saturday August 18th. – Ventura**
 This looks to be a great ride along the Ventura coast and along the foothills. There are 60, 100, and 25 mile options. <http://www.cibike.org/page5.html>
- ⇒ **Lighthouse Century – Saturday September 29th. – San Luis Obispo**
 This very popular ride filled up within a day, but there are frequently entries available on the website as resell. This year they have a great Pirate Themed jersey which makes the whole thing worthwhile. <http://www.slobc.org/Lighthouse.html>
- ⇒ **Spooktacular Century – Saturday October 20th. – Bakersfield**
 This is one of the hardest rides I've done six times. The route starts out at 400 feet elevation and 34 miles later you are at almost 7000 feet. Total for the ride is 105 miles with a smidge over 10,000 feet of climbing. Time to start climbing training now!
<http://www.kernwheelmen.org/rides/spooktacular/index.asp>

Standing Club Rides

- Wednesday Night Mountain Bike Ride. Meet behind City Hall at the corner of C and Cypress at 6:00pm. Generally an up to 2 hour ride of the hills and dales behind La Purisma Mission and around the village.
- Friday Morning Mother Hubbards Breakfast Ride meets in the Home Depot Parking lot at 8:30. They generally head out Santa Rosa road and return via 246 after breakfast with a mild to moderate pace. About 40 miles.
- Saturday Morning – 8 am Meet at Southside Coffee Company 105 South H street. Easy road ride to Surf as a group and a quicker return to town. Really not much of a turnout for this ride.
- Sunday Morning Show and Go (Unless pre-empted by a scheduled ride above) – 8am
 Meet at Southside Coffee Company 105 South H street
 Road or Mountain Bike Ride
 Easy or Epic – you decide

 The next meeting of the Lompoc Valley Bicycle Club is 7pm Tuesday, July 10th at Baker's Square. Come early if you want to eat dinner. See you there!

Check us out on the web at www.bikelompoc.com

If anyone has ride proposals, stories, articles, comments, jokes, or cartoons they would like to share or bicycle things they would like to sell, please contact me (Gene Pritchett) at 735-7763 or 733-2684 or e-mail at Dr.Gene@gte.net for entry into next month's newsletter.

