

Editor's update

# DOUBLETALK

*Tandem Club of America*

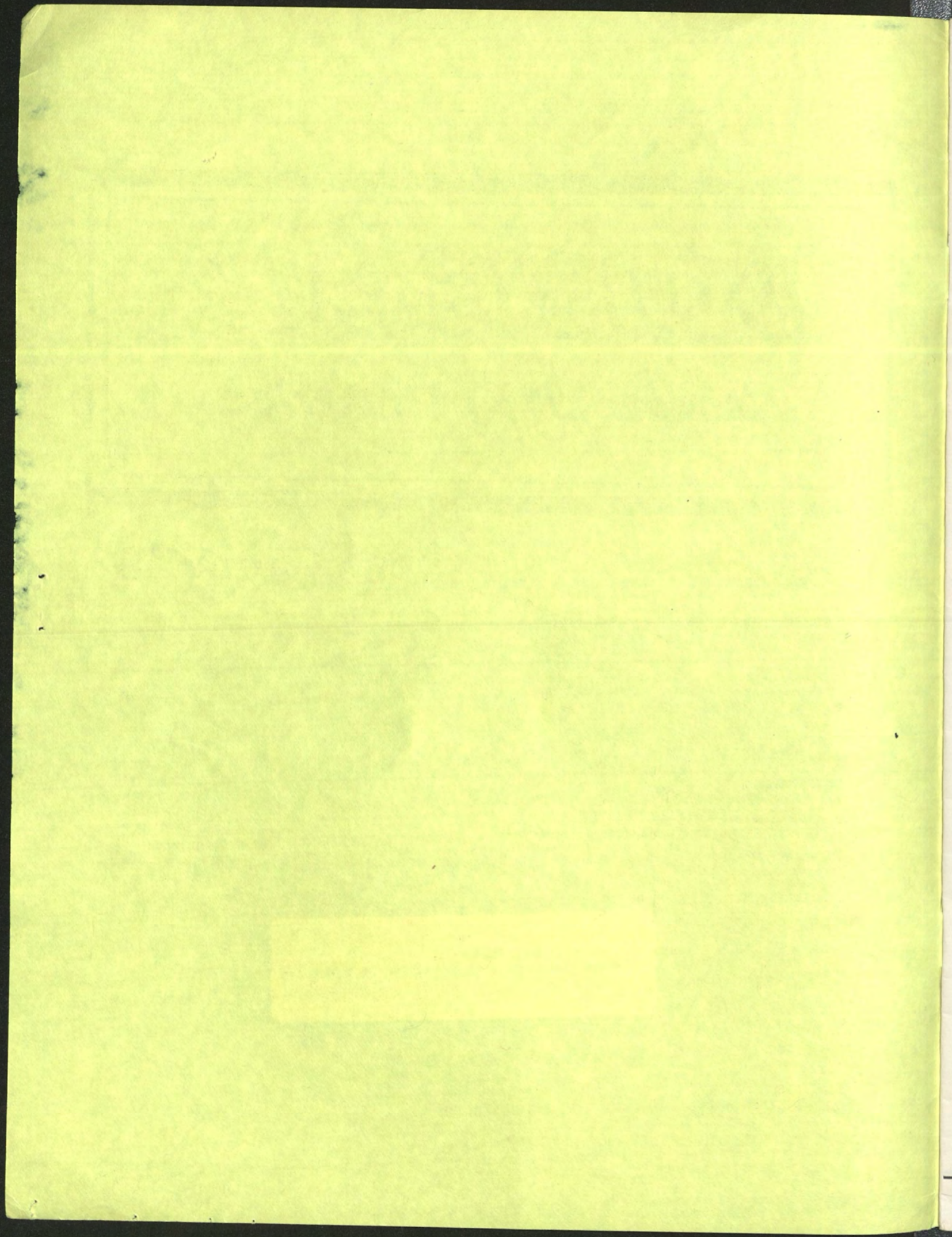
May·June '82

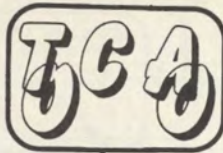
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Peter Hutchinson, Secretary  
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Esperance, NY 12066

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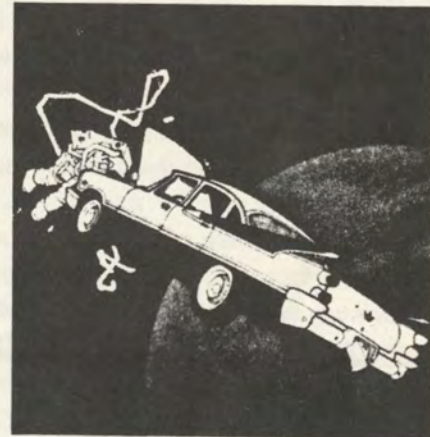
## Editor's update

I'm trying a different approach in soliciting articles for the next issue. In the March editorial I used the dangling carrot approach to cull a number of stories from our members. The carrot was a call to arms, "let's get in there and write for a better newsletter." That method -- as well as the direct-mail request -- met with considerably less success for this most recent edition. The problem stems from good weather. Now that it's here, most folks would rather ride than write. Let's say that the response for this publication was timorous. (In fact downright thin. If it weren't for articles by one of my best friends and my wife -- almost nothing.)

Be ye warned that the heavy stick approach will be used for garnering printable items for the July edition. I have hired a certain out-of-work Republican vice president who shall remain nameless, but who was particularly known for his ability "to dance on the head of punks." I told him, "Spiggy, look for these tandem-bikes along the backroads of America. Their bikes will be parked outside ice cream parlors and sub shops. They will be lounging in meadows and orchards. You'll find them in gas stations borrowing tools to fix flats and broken spokes. When you find them, use gentle persuasion to convince them of the benefits of sending a "nice" article for the next Doubletalk. Don't use violence. If you have to twist arms or break fingers, make sure that it's not on their writing hand."

Remember, friends, I want "nice" articles by July 1st. Or else your name goes on the "other" list.

*Drew Knox*



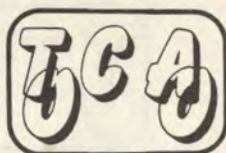
**The Cover** In One Day Americans spend about \$55 million for auto repairs that are unnecessary, faulty, or fraudulent, according to the National Transportation Safety Board. That's enough to buy 500,000 bicycles (at \$110 each)—more than enough bicycles per year for everyone old enough to ride a bike.

The cover artist, and creator of In One Day, is Tom Parker.

**America, Out of Focus**

April 1981, Vol. 3, No. 4

# American Demographics™



## Mother Thought It Was Spring (But the weatherman said otherwise)

Mother and I had been talking about preparing ourselves to that great bicycling holiday and decided to try an overnighiter to gain a little knowledge of things to take and things to leave at home. What you really need and what you can do without and still be comfortable. Figured that a two day trip to New Hope, Pa., would be a good way to test the waters. Weather was a big question mark, though. The forecast on Thursday called for clearing on Saturday and fair on Sunday. Said it would be windy and cold. I thought we could handle whatever wind and cold came up but my inability to recall the agony of pedaling into the wind between Ocean City and Snow Hill, Md., was my downfall.

The cold didn't bother me. Mother would have been alright if she had chosen socks other than a pair she bought at a garage sale in Springdale, Conn., in 1953. We set off at 9:00 a.m. Saturday, and spent the day on the road in temperatures that got into the high 30's. Had strong winds but for the most part was sunny. Had a nice low traffic route through Burnt Mills, North Branch, Reaville, Ringoes, and into Lambertville. Lots of roly poly country, bucolic scenes, pastoral villages. Wind so strong we just couldn't get up speed even going downhill.

Got to Lambertville around 2:30 and decided to stay at the Lambertville House. Built in 1820. Share the bath. All the floors slope, but the hospitality was overwhelming. Usually when you mention putting a bicycle in your room, they react like you asked to have a hog auction in the lobby, but this place said

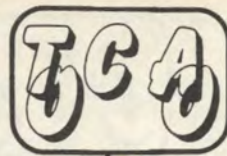
fine and dandy. We were tired when we got there and glad to have a place to stay without having to look around. Walked across the bridge to New Hope and visited that town. It is the epitome of the touristy town. Looked at two country inns there, and took in the local gift shops and arts and crafts places. Had a nice dinner at the L'ville Inn, and then to bed, hoping that our aches would be gone by morning. Our last mile into town was a downhill that was too good to be true, and the thought of reversing that the next day was enough to make a strong man cry. After a nice continental breakfast, we took off and flattened out that hill with no trouble.

Found a better route home with less roly poly in it and, possible, a little more bucolic and pastoral, and with a lot less wind. In spite of cries from the Captain (this is the only tandem where the Captain rides in the stoker's position) to "Press On", we had a couple of stops, a banana break in Neshanic Station, and a nice lunch stop to take on a load of carbos.

Trying to follow the old admonition of drinking before you get thirsty and all that jazz. Got home at 2:15, which was 5 hours total elapsed time for 50 miles (more or less). I won't bore you with statistics, but we enjoyed it. Now that the Mercury stage of our program is over, will try to go through the Gemini and Apollo stages on to Columbia. My comment for everyone is this: any recreation time not spent on a tandem is just so much wasted time.

Please take note of Richmyer's Law: "For every uphill, there is a downhill. For every head wind, there is a head wind."

Name withheld by request  
from Why Dad's Hair Turned Gray



## The View From The Back

When we started tandeming, I was criticized by my feminist friends as taking an inferior position by riding stoker. While it is true that you are no longer "in command", there are some decisive skills, positive attributes and special joys not readily apparent to the new tandemers.

Herewith are some observations for newcomers and those pondering the leap. One discovery is that wind and distance will no longer unintentionally interrupt a conversation. And for that matter, your companion can't draw away on a steep hill when overwhelmed with dialogue. On a tandem you always have someone to talk to because they are just 6 inches away. Thus, you have a captive audience which you can keep attentive by pinching them whenever they try to ignore you.

Another aspect I appreciated for the first time was being able to ride no hands. A stoker will also miss no scenery; you can look at everything while ignoring imminent bumps and potholes. Another plus of being a stoker is that you are never criticized for your poor shifting. For me it was especially exhilarating to know that I didn't have to master a twenty-speed. Moreover, bugs and headwinds will disappear when you have a human screen, so the natural elements are rarely demoralizing.

Before getting carried away with stoking (perhaps literally), let me add that there are some drawbacks. When the bike goes too fast, you have only one alternative -- SCREAM!!

Then grab the pilot's shorts and threaten to rip them off if he doesn't slow down. Also, an adventurous pilot may have the tendency to zoom off onto sandy or gravel roads with no warning. On one such occasion, I found the bike and I had traded places as it tried to ride me. Let's say that it was no fun to be on the bottom with my foot still in the toe clip and pointing in the opposite direction from the rest of me. Another drawback to stoking is that, until you learn to stand up on hills, hills are decidedly something to avoid. For that matter, long hills are always something to avoid.

Even on the best of bikes, a tandem stoker will not find the living as spacious as on a single. In learning to ride a tandem, the stoker will likely feel that the bike is falling off the side of the road and so will urge the pilot towards the center of the road. This intuitive fear generally leaves after two weeks, or else the stoker will.

Being a stoker can bring great joy (especially for those of us who are severely right-handed and just manage to hang onto a single's handlebars). Now you can eat, drink, and smack dogs with the glee of a new freedom.

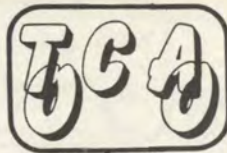
Dawn Willoughby  
705 W. 27th Street  
Wilmington, DE. 19802

[ED. - Thanks for the article and sorry about that spill.]

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## Joining The Mohawks

The Mohawk Hudson Wheelman bicycle club, of which my wife and I are members, scheduled a three-day September tour in



the New York Adirondack Park area using state public campgrounds.

Since receiving our Bill Boston custom tandem we had always wanted to tour carrying our camping equipment. I had previously made a list of the gear we would need and knew we would be carrying about 45-50 pounds.

The day of the tour we were up early and cycled 6 miles to the start, which was Bill Lewis' Adirondack Bike Shop in Scotia. However, the weather was so threatening that we decided to postpone until the following week. Then, the weather was quite pleasant when we set out and everyone was glad to have missed the rainy and cold days, which proved our forecast correct.

Scotia is about 30 miles from the Adirondack park boundary and our first overnight stop would be at the state campground at Wells, 56 miles away. At this time of the year, the campground was officially closed but the ranger left the facilities, water and rest rooms, available for our use. The Wells campground was the first of many in the park system to become available to the public.

Of the seven bicycles on this tour, ours was the only tandem. We traveled to Wells by touring along the shorelines of Great Scandaga Lake and then the Scandaga River. We had lunch near a store in the village of Northville. Since we had only 8 in the group, we decided to pool our funds and buy the food necessary for our evening meal, which we would enjoy family style.

We reached the campsite with plenty of daylight left and chose a site on the peninsula among the huge white pines where the Scandaga branches into the east and west sections of the river.

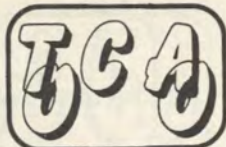
The next day we headed for Speculator, 15 miles away and mostly uphill, which is a popular resort. The area is wooded and follows the river, but is free of stores and buildings. There we bought supplies for our next evening meal since this would be the last place where we would find a grocery store.

Speculator lies along the shoreline of beautiful Lake Pleasant, but I remember it as the place where world champions Max Schmeling and Max Baer trained. As I biked past the cottage where Schmeling trained, it brought back memories of the time I met him while visiting in this area with my parents. I later rooted against him and for Joe Louis, but that's another story.

Our next destination was Caroga Lake, southwest of us towards Piseco Lake. The riding consisted of mild hills and beautiful scenery. That evening we had trouble with raccoons trying to open our packs. We shined our flashlights and rattled pots and pans to scare them away. What we accomplished was staying awake all night. That is except for one biker, who later said that he didn't hear a thing.

A twelve mile downhill was all that separated us next morning from Gloversville (known oddly enough for its glove-making industry). The tandem left the singles so fast, they looked like specks in the rear view mirror. It sort of made up for the times we were passed on the upgrades.

We regrouped in Gloversville for the last leg back to Scotia, which was mostly downhill. In all, we covered about 165 miles with very little traffic. The tandem's 15 speeds with a low gear of 24.5 was adequate to navigate any of the Adirondack hills we encountered. We found that having pan-



niers front and rear distributed the weight evenly enough that handling was stable. We also had a Phil Wood disc brake and found that three brakes were necessary when carrying that much gear.

Until recent years, this vast expanse of park was not a popular biking area. I suspect that bicyclists erroneously considered it too mountainous. This is a misconception. Although the area has many mountains, the paved roads follow stream beds and valleys. The State's Office of Parks and Recreation has prepared a package of booklets and maps to encourage tourists. The \$4 package includes a 182-page guidebook and a 19"x25" water-resistant map that color codes the difficulty of the terrain.

We consider this a great area for bicyclists, which others are beginning to discover. A group schedules tours and you can also combine a tour here with one of the other side of Lake Champlain which would include Vermont.

Hope to see you in the Adirondacks!

Judd & Marjorie Bryce  
871 Hazelwood Ave.  
Schenectady, N. Y. 12306

For the information packet write:  
Biking, State Parks and Recreation  
Albany, New York 12238

## ... On Tandems

by Michael Gambling  
"Cycling " Magazine, England

TANDEMS are back! Every year someone makes this statement and I wanted to be early on the cliché trail. Of course they never lost popularity, for who doesn't wish to be the owner of a tandem? It

is true the long machines are not so numerous as in the past but they still have their devotees and there are a multitude of cyclists with the desire for one, if not the cash.

Recently, a roving band of tandemists from London, led by Graham Adams, came to Norwich hostel and had many stirring tales to tell me, when I went to offer them the freedom of the city of Norwich. Incidentally, with feigned reluctance, they decided against a visit to the cathedral and museum in favour of an academic sampling of the local brewery products.

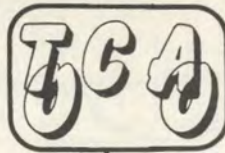
Listening to them reminded me of an incident which attended my first journey as a tandemist and of the unusual result.

The machine I bought came out of a farmer's barn, bereft of wheels or saddle and breaking out all over into rusty cold sores. It was one of the split-level jobs, with a 23-inch front tapering off sharply to 21 inches at the hindquarters.

This was a veteran of some 40 damp winters and dated back to when a bicycle built for two represented a swinging combination of permissiveness and technological knowhow.

After fitting with equipment discarded from my racing bike, I proudly rode it round to my girl-friend's house as a surprise. Certainly it caused some astonishment and while she was recovering from my suggestion of a quick 50-mile jaunt, her mother scorched my sensitive soul by dragging it away from her gate because "the rust will spread to my ironwork."

With great patience I impressed on my girl that this was a turning point in our lives and from now on we had a toe-hold in the world.



There was not a little difficulty in getting under way initially and her mother, peering round the curtains, must have wondered if she would ever see her offspring again.

With enthusiastic wobbles I steered for a romantic trip round the idyllic Norfolk Broads, or at least that was the idea. Unfortunately a freshly-surfaced road had failed to cool in the sun, with the result that tar and chippings jammed up into the back mudguard.

Scrabbling with fingers and poking sticks failed to remove the tenacious stones, rapidly becoming tarmac. Eventually the mudguard had to be broken off and discarded.

We rode on, our clothes splattered with tar and with black sticky hands adhering to the bars. Soon she mentioned a sinister feeling on her rear portions and without protection from the mudguard there was obviously going to be a good deal of road on her back.

However, she stuck it out well, until we could switch off into a lane. Now I am not a man for the narrow roads, preferring more substantial ones with reliable signposts for guidance, and also it was not my habit to be cluttered up with maps and charts.

Soon, therefore, we were lost and experienced that ominous feeling when a few wisps of grass in the middle of the road increase to a thick mat and then opens out before a farmhouse. Retracing from the yard was a strange manoeuvre for us and probably looked peculiar to the family that came into the garden to watch.

We both got off, then I lifted the machine round and pushed it toward a large stone to help my petite young lady remount. She

walked behind, a black strip up to her neck and legs spread wide, for the tar had set hard and her shorts were like a piece of the M1. We rode away tacking through where cows had been.

Eventually, as dusk fell, we got back to her house, and overcome by her uncomplaining fortitude in unpleasant circumstances I asked, "Will you marry me?" She was beaten to her knees by now and wearily replied, "Yes, I suppose so."

Her mother, hearing the news, looked at the tandem and then at me. Turning slowly to her precious but bedraggled daughter the words of congratulation rather tailed off. "You've promised to marry him? Oh, my dear..."

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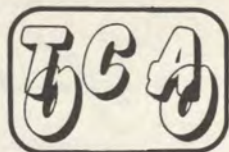
## Early Tandemitis

I write this with some trepidation, addressing an audience of experienced, hard-bitten tandemists by a neophyte (sounds like a larval stage of a short centipede). So treat this record of discovery as, perhaps, reminiscence for you.

My perceptual construct is singles riding: fast, medium distances by myself and with the local bike club (Mohawk-Hudson Wheelman) when rides are scheduled. My single goes where I point it (in brisk fashion), stops quickly when needed, and sprints when I pedal it. It also doesn't sprint when I don't pedal. In a word -- what I do is what I get.

When I was introduced to tandeming I found nearly every rule in the single book changed, and all at once. (I say "nearly" because I still get wet when it rains.) To make things even more complicated, what one does and how it feels depends on where one sits.





Lesson one was as stoker, of course. There is all at once a feeling of helplessness. I'm not steering and I can't even see where I'm going. I can't shift and with the Atom drum I can't brake much either. I've been demoted from captain of my fate to first mate. Once the stoker determines that his/her fate is in good hands (in my case about thirty seconds), all kinds of possibilities open up. I can look around! I can watch birds and cows. I can wave to pedestrians or gesture appropriately to motorists. I can enjoy the incredulity on all those watching faces. And I can look at the captain.

Lesson two was style. Whether we know it or not, each of us has a unique riding style. How close we come to parked cars, how we anticipate and adjust to red and almost-red lights, how much foot/knee joint/muscle loading we accept before we shift gears, how we play that game with motorists we call "chicken" (or "full vehicular status" if you prefer). On a single this style is embedded in the riding process. On a tandem styles can be a source of conflict and one of abject terror for the stoker as car door handles whiz by three inches from white knuckles.

In amazingly short order styles begin to blend and idiosyncrasies blur. Tandem-riding is a very intimate activity. We learn each other's cues. The slight change in pedal pressure means a shift or obstacle is coming. The tick of the Bar-Con ratchet announces a shift. We compromise where we can. A standard saddle height does work, but a man can cope with a women's (Avocet) saddle better than the reverse. And this from someone who sets his saddle angle on a single with a bubble level.

Lesson three was a tandem is more than a single with two saddles. Because of the long wheelbase, all steering motions

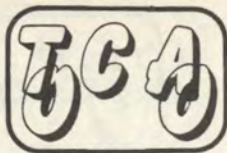
were exaggerated, especially at low speed. The first split second of motion as captain was one of total lack of control. The tandemist is a wonderful organism. Assuming it survives the first few seconds, the necessary motions get burned into the synapses very quickly indeed. Who hasn't tried riding a single afterwards and seen the contrast.

Shifting gears through three miles of cable doesn't help precision, though it's not as bad as I had expected. But those brakes! The cantilevers, which can flip me off my single, affect a leisurely descent from a tandem's lofty speeds. Stopping requires a lot of planning or a lot of shouting or maybe both.

Dealing with dogs from a tandem is a snap. Usually, it is tough to steer, pedal, shift, and simultaneously fire HALT broadside. A tandem tailgunner is great, especially a true sharpshooter.

Lesson four was what a tandem could be after the other three lessons were learned. Its' downhill speed is legendary. On the flats single riders will pay it the supreme compliment of drafting rather than racing. Uphill, though, we have a reputation for losing all the ground we've gained. This is, I think, undeserved. Given matched riders, the right gears, and faith in the inherent superiority of tandems, hill performance can be quite a surprise to the average single rider. It's a good feeling to lead a club ride ALL the way.

Riding in a fast pace line on a single offers a unique thrill, not the least of which is participation in a finely, honed, high speed team. Riding a tandem elevates this experience to a higher level. Two people working in intimate association with the bike serving as intermediary and extension of the team.



Best of all, when the hill is too long and too steep, and all your energy is gone and the sweat is dripping off your nose and you are ready to commit the ultimate surrender in bicycling -- walking -- then the afterburner kicks in, the supercharger turns on, and the bike leaps ahead. Your stoker has found a second wind and you're over the top. It's almost as good as sex.

Richard Andrian  
Bethlehem Terrace  
B-111  
Blessing Road  
Slingerlands, N. Y.  
12159

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## A Second Look at Racks

After the last issue's article appeared on bike racks, we've been waiting for the other shoe to drop. It did! In this conversation with Bill Boston, he offers some strong opinions and concrete suggestions on transporting your favorite means of transportation. By way of introduction, Bill is an elitist builder and designer from Swedesboro, New Jersey, a current resident of Wilmington, Delaware, and has been studying nearly all facets of bicycles and bicycling for over a decade.

BOSTON -- As a frame builder, I would rather not see my tandems carried on their side. Firstly, in that position they are prone to chipping. Even if you pad it well, just about anything can become abrasive, including rubber. Also, you would have to actually wrap or tie around a painted surface. The frame is designed to take the majority of its stresses in a vertical plane and is not meant to take stresses laterally, as it would on its side.

By carrying the tandem mounted on the two sets of handlebars, or just one set of bars and the front seat, you are supporting the weight of the tandem the way the tandem itself supports weight. All of the bearings, if they vibrate at all, are subjected to the load the way they normally carry it. I think that aerodynamically you are not gaining anything by laying it on its side, and I suggest you will find that with a Boston-type of roof rack the bike will mount easily, single-handedly.

### Notes for assembling.

Use 5/4" pine, mahogany, or oak. Make two carriers and reverse one. All joints are glued and screwed, using brass screws only.

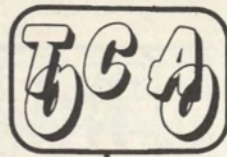
Drill 1 3/4" hole in cradles for handlebar rests. Cut off your two 50" pieces from 8' lengths and you will have everything else you need.

Mount to a car rack using U-bolts or onto Load brackets, such as those offered by L.L. Bean, Inc. (#6494P, \$26.00), Freeport, Me. 04033.

Straps - use one inch wide nylon straps with over and under buckles. Suggest wrapping them three times around the bars before pulling tight.

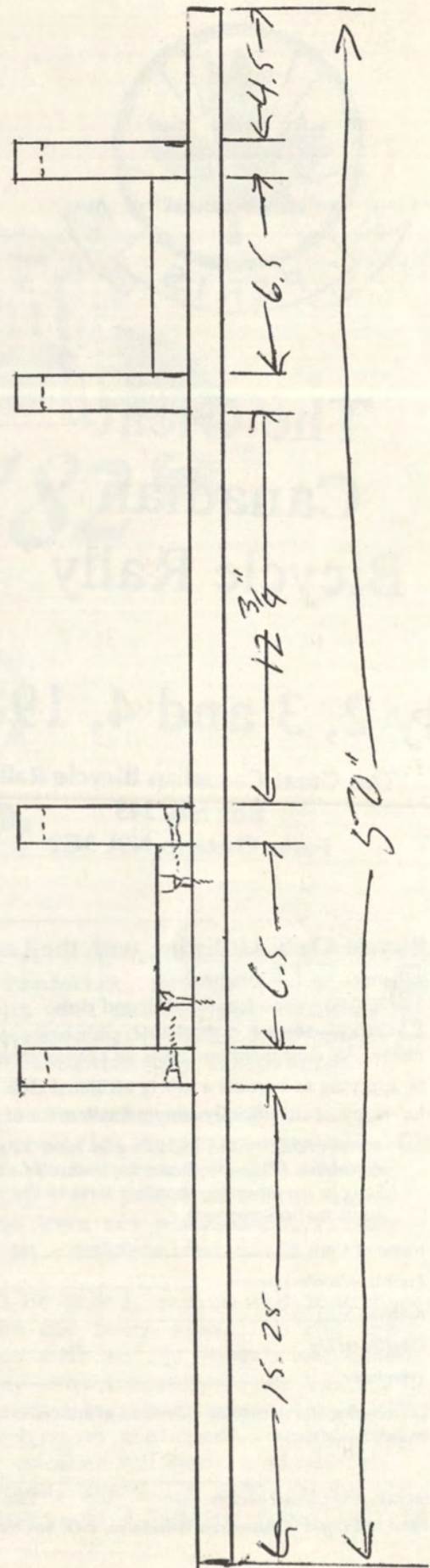
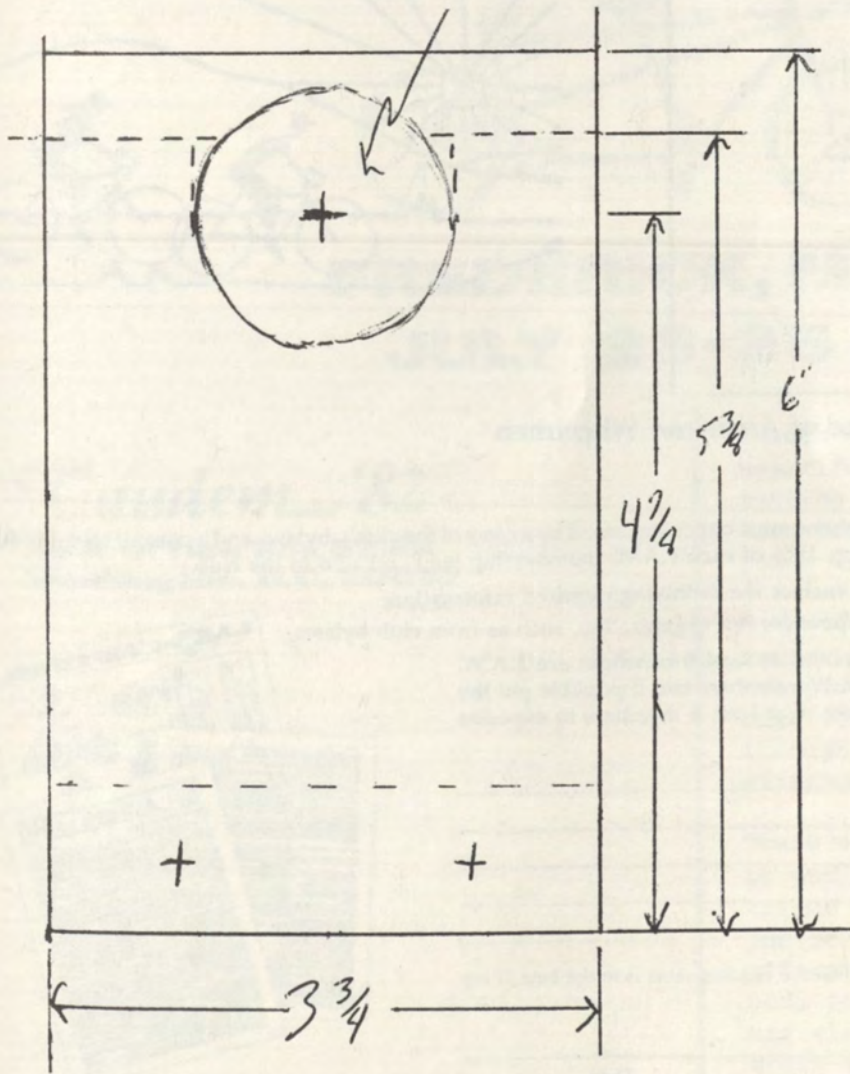
Other notes - most people would be better off having the rear of the bike facing the front of the car. The wind load will be forcing the bike up and the second set of bars down. Also you are more likely to have to open the trunk than the hood, and it probably won't hang out over the hood very far. If you are carrying the tandem most of the time, make a brace tall enough so your saddle isn't resting on the roof and your second set of bars drop right in.

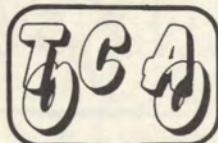
(ED. I have two of these racks. One has been on top of the VW squareback for three years; the other is whisked on and off the subcompact.)



# THE BILL BOSTON BIKE RACK

Cut here after drilling 1 3/4" hole.  
File corners of holes and then drop  
in indoor/outdoor carpet.



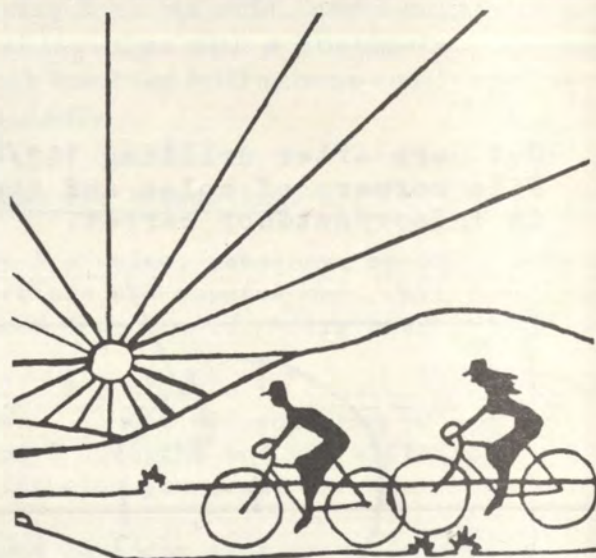


# The Great Canadian Bicycle Rally

## July 2, 3 and 4, 1982

The Great Canadian Bicycle Rally  
Box No. 245  
Paris, Ontario N3L 3G2

### We're back!! and stronger than ever



#### Bicycle Club Affiliation with the League of American Wheelmen

- new     renewal
- \$20.00/year—L.A.W.-affiliated club
- FREE—100% L.A.W. chapter club: new applications must be accompanied by a copy of the club's bylaws and a current membership roster (All club members must be League members. 10% of each L.A.W. membership fee is rebated to the club.)

#### In applying to become a newly affiliated club we enclose the following required information:

- copy of an officially adopted statement of purpose for our organization, such as from club bylaws.
- membership roster including at least 12 members, at least 6 of whom are L.A.W. members. (Please indicate the names of all L.A.W. members and if possible put the League membership number next to the names of at least 6 members to expedite confirmation process).

Name of Club \_\_\_\_\_

President/contact person \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

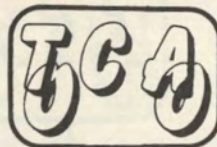
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that all information submitted in fulfillment of affiliation requirements is to the best of my knowledge accurate and complete.

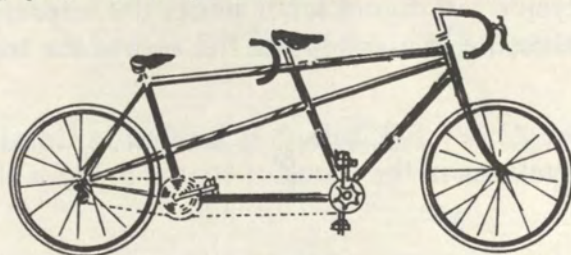
Signature of contact person \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Send to League of American Wheelmen, P.O. Box 988, Baltimore, MD 21203.





# Tandem '82



**FREDERICK, MD.  
JULY 23-25**

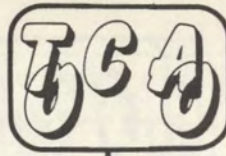
## Tandem '82

**Post Office Box 57164  
Washington, D.C. 20037**

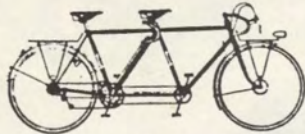
Tandem '82 will be held July 23-25, 1982 in beautiful Frederick, Maryland, a historical setting that will delight you with its down-home atmosphere, well-paved country roads and out-of-the-way discoveries.

Home of Francis Scott Key and Barbara Fritchie, Frederick features something for everybody. To help you get acquainted, both walking tours and short bike rides through the town are planned for Friday afternoon on a self-guided basis.

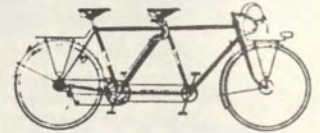
There will be short, medium and long rides to and from the lunch sites, so you can tailor your tour to the length and speed you desire. The Monocacy River Valley offers spectacular scenery for the cyclist and, depending on the route you choose, you may visit covered bridges, a Victorian train station, the C & O Canal along the Potomac River, or a Civil War battlefield site.



# MIDWEST TANDEM RALLY '82'



## M.T.R. '82'



We are pleased you are interested in the M.T.R. to be held Sept. 4, 5, 6th.

The Iowa City area was selected for its nationally known historic areas of the Amana Colonies, the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site and village and the convenience of its camping, eating and motel facilities.

You will enjoy the farm countryside but do not labor under the impression that Iowa is uniformly flat. The Amana Colonies themselves lie in a valley but the rest of the trips will be over rolling hills and vary from 20 to 60 miles.

Rally headquarters will be at the Abbey Inn, which is located in Coralville/Iowa City and just off I-80. Please make your own reservations in the block of rooms held for the rally so you may benefit from reduced rates.

Other motels, including a Motel 6, are very convenient but may require a "cash" early deposit for reservations.

Edgewater Municipal Campground is a pleasant modern campground and within 3/4 mile of the motel.

Rides will be sagged by a tandem trailer and van. A number of the organizers have children and it is expected there will be child care at the motel during rides.

A patch, fanny bumper, maps and refreshments will be supplied to riders on the tours.

### THE ABBEY INN

Iowa City

Sept. 4, 5, 6

**Room Reservations:** The Abbey  
Hwy. 6 & 218, Exit 242  
Iowa City, Iowa 52241  
Phone (319) 351-6324 or (800) 528-1234 (Best Western)  
A 10% discount or more will apply to rooms reserved & registered as part of the MTR. Room rates are to be in the low or mid thirty dollar range.

**Camping:** Edgewater Municipal Campground  
\$2.00 Tent - \$5.00 Full Hook-up

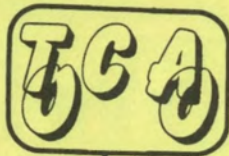
**Child Care:** Please indicate age and number of children. Fees to be determined.

**Registration Fee:** \$15 before July 15th - \$18 after July 15th

**Banquet Fee:** \$9 per person - 3 meats

**Registration Time:** 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Sept. 4 at motel  
M.T.R.  
2652 W. 34th  
Davenport, Iowa 52806 (319) 386-2919

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Editor Drew Knox, 705 W. 27 St., Wilmington, DE. 19802  
Secretary Peter Hutchison, R.D. 1, Box 276, Esperance, NY 12066  
Treasurer Malcolm & Jean Smith, 84 Durand Drive, Rochester, NY 14622  
Publisher Ronald A. Romeis, 506 Midland Circle, St. Davids, PA 19087

Area Representatives

California John & Donna Goodloe, 8084 Donzee CT., San Diego, CA 92123  
Idaho Bill & Jenny Stallings, 3719 16th St, Lewiston, ID 83501  
Illinois John & Marie Kamnikar, 9 S. William Dr., Hinsdale, IL 60521  
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Washington Bob Freeman, 326 31st Ave., Seattle, WA 98122  
Iowa Bruce & Becky Perry, 2652 W 34th ST., Davenport, Iowa 52806  
Virginia Scott & Sharon Richie, 3235 Patterson Ave., Richmond, 23221

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