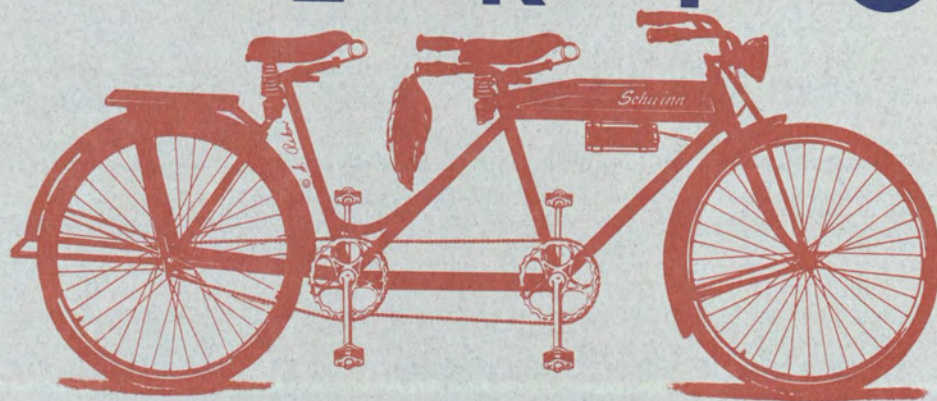


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"AN INTERNATIONAL CLUB FOR TANDEM ENTHUSIASTS"

DOUBLETALK



JANUARY - FEBRUARY
1998

DoubleTalk
the newsletter of the Tandem Club of America
Jack & Susan Goertz, Editors
2220 Vanessa Drive
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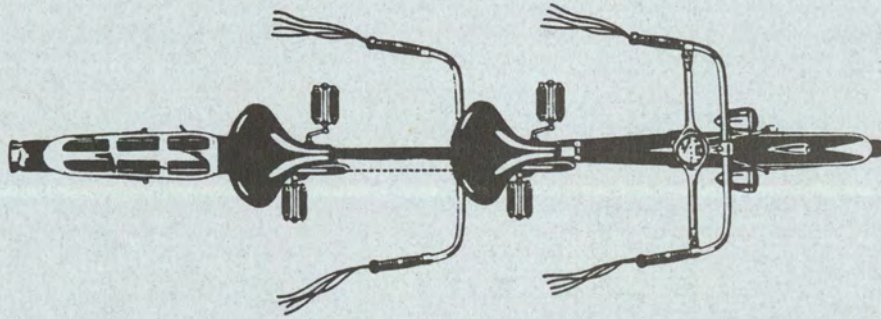
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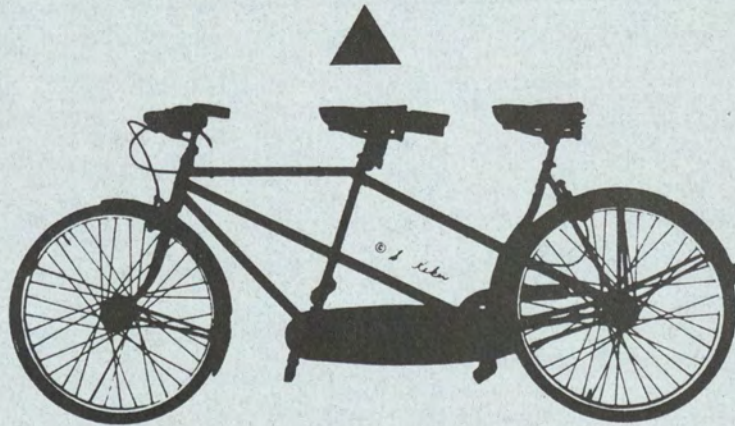
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DOUBLE TALK

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<i>Editors:</i>	Jack & Susan Goertz , 2220 Vanessa Drive, Birmingham, AL 35242-4430	(205)-991-7766
<i>Secretary:</i>	Terri & Bob Gorman , P.O. Box 2176, Los Gatos, CA 95031	(408)-356-7443
<i>Membership:</i>	Bruce & Judi Bachelder , 306 W Union St, Morganton, NC 28655-3729	(704)-437-1068
<i>Treasurers:</i>	Bob & Linda Harvey , 16 Clinton Street, Salem, NH 03079	(603)-898-5285
<i>Merchandise:</i>	Stan & Marilyn Smith , 4100 Del Monte Place, Albany, OR 97321-6209	(541)-926-6415
<i>Graphic Designer:</i>	Steve Reker , 1636 Christy Court, St. Charles, MO 63303	(314)-928-7109

AREA REPRESENTATIVES

California, Hawaii, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Colorado

Bob & Lois Weast, 4324 Paradise Dr, Carmichael, CA 95608 (916)-961-5193

Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming

Chuck & Nancy Meitle, 1505 NW Grant, Corvallis, OR 97330 (503)-753-0304

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DEADLINE FOR THE MARCH - APRIL, 1998 ISSUE OF DOUBLETALK IS FEBRUARY 1, 1998.

It has been a long time since an article touched the emotions as the MTR'97 article did. Some said we shouldn't have published it, others thought we should have only published the good points. However, all the articles we received about MTR'97, prior to publishing the November-December 1997 issue, mentioned the good points and some of the not-so-good points. To present a complete picture of the event, and be fair to the authors, we believed we had to include some of the not-so-good with all the good (and yes, there was much good at MTR'97). We hope that listing some of the not-so-good points may help other rally organizers (not just future MTR organizers) from making similar errors.

In no way was the November-December article intended to minimize the months of hard work done by the GOATS and the MTR'97 volunteers. Remember, the editors DO NOT write the articles that appear in DoubleTalk, TCA members do the writing. DoubleTalk, as the mouth of the Tandem Club of America, has been and will continue to be a strong supporter of tandem rallies, particularly the volunteer-organized tandem rallies, throughout the United States and the world.

As editors we try to encourage members to write articles about the events they attend, places they visit, technical issues they are familiar with, rides with families, and any other aspect of tandeming that interests them. If it interests one member, we feel it will interest others, too. We do edit almost all submissions for grammar, spelling, obvious technical errors, length (if necessary), etcetera. Sometimes, when we receive many articles about the same event, we combine the articles (and so note that we did), rather than rehash the event, or not publish someone's contribution. We know we make mistakes -- this is often pointed out to us -- but we do our very best to edit the articles in such a way that the original author's style shows through. We try to publish all submitted articles in a timely manner, and it is rare when we find we can not publish a submitted article.

We were fortunate to be able to attend several tandem rallies in 1997. We enjoyed each and every one. The Alabama Tandem Weekend started our rally year. It was a smaller gathering close to home that allowed us the opportunity to meet a few northerners looking for early warmth and some good miles and to renew acquaintances with southern friends. The Southwest Tandem Rally (Tulsa, OK) was a great weekend of slightly damp riding that allowed Susan to discover another facet of Jack's home state, Oklahoma. The MATES (Mid-Atlantic Tandem Enthusiasts) Rally was rolled into GEAR, a League of American Bicyclists event. This gave the MATES Rally an entirely different feel, as we tandemists were able to share our fervor for this sport with those who have not yet discovered the joys of riding a bicycle built for two. MTR'97 was the biggest Rally -- ever, and were glad to have had the opportunity to say at least a word or two to the many, many tandem friends that we get to see there. Our year closed with gracious southern hospitality at the Southern Tandem Rally in Lafayette, Louisiana. Yes, each rally was different. Each rally was special to us. And each rally had its own flavor, its own memories that will never be repeated.

If you are receiving this issue in the mail, please check the label carefully. This is the address that will appear in the annual membership listing, which will be mailed in February. The membership list will be mailed to all members who receive the January/February issue. We need any corrections (including telephone numbers if you wish it to be included) IMMEDIATELY. When you receive your membership listing take a minute to look at it and see if your tandem friends are members. If they aren't, we hope you'll take a minute to share your enthusiasm and encourage them to join. Perhaps a gift membership would be appropriated.



LETTERS TO DOUBLETALK

Dear DoubleTalk:

The comments by Ms. Davis about the MTR'97, in the last issue of DoubleTalk, were uncalled for and out of line. The implication in her remarks that the committee was stupid, as well as incompetent, was hurtful and rude.

The MTR committee was made up of some very genuine people who devoted a considerable amount of personal time, energy, and expense to plan and stage a successful ride. Success, in my opinion, would involve the following components, to some degree:

- Sensible routes that are enjoyable.
- Safety in all aspects of the event.
- Financial break-even, at the very least!
- Organization, enough to achieve the above.
- Good weather, which is out of our control.

As a member of the MTR'97 committee, I may be overly sensitive to Ms. Davis' remarks (even though the function that I was responsible for was spared her scrutiny); however I, never once, during the planning year, felt that we were responsible for making this "bike ride" into someone's family vacation; nor do I expect that for myself from the people who are planning the upcoming events. It is her responsibility to create her "family vacation", within the framework of our event.

Yes, the specific things mentioned by Ms. Davis were disappointments for the committee as well; however, Ms. Davis' petty concerns for satisfying her appetite (she counted the slices of cheese on her sandwich! Look out Omaha!), and an occasional wrong turn do not begin to recognize the major issues surrounding an event of this magnitude. The problems encountered during the MTR'97 ride have been noted and passed along to the MTR'98 planning committee so as to improve the event next year.

The MTR'97 committee was faced with a few dilemmas, which were remedied "to some degree", as they occurred. However, just so everyone realizes how "Murphy's Law" applies to MTR life, please note the following:

1. The hotel selected for MTR'97 was the largest facility available in close proximity to all things required for the event. The hotel changed hands on a national level two times during the year. Our chairpeople renegotiated the deal "twice. It was the new faceless owners that decided to start the remodeling, when they did. It was a surprise to us and a huge problem. The fact that the lobby was available to even walk through was the result of the efforts of MTR chairpeople, and not without some red faces and nailbiting.
2. In the weeks before the ride, based on the financial information available, the committee made the decision to dramatically increase the amount of fruit planned for the Saturday morning rest stop. The order was placed promptly and confirmed. Someone, somewhere in a cold fruit cooler, replaced our "entire order" with the "added amount only" and delivered that quantity. We must learn to smile and go on - and go on we did! There was a 911 run by several volunteers to all the local food stores and the situation was improved on Saturday, and resolved by Sunday.
3. Were the road markings hard to read? Yes! I had a problem with them myself, and / was in on the decision to do them. In someone's attempt to be theme appropriate, they became difficult to read. "and so shall the children learn from the mistakes of their parents!"
4. Was the Monday morning breakfast stop notified of the descending hordes of hungry cyclers? Please, give us more credit than that Ms. Davis. Your question is insulting and deserves no reply!





Enough said; I do not believe the MTR 97 committee will pay much attention to Ms. Davis' remarks, because they are proud of the event and enjoyed the riding.

Pete Chronis
Cincinnati, OH

Dear DoubleTalk,

I am writing this letter in response to the article titled "Midwest Tandem Rally 1997" in the November/December issue (our first issue). As a 1997 Midwest Tandem Rally participant, I was disturbed by the negative coverage of the event. I would like to share my perspective of the ride.

My husband and I purchased our first tandems this summer to use with our twin daughters (who were 3 1/2 years old at the time). Although we are avid triathletes, tandeming was new to us. (We had never even pulled our girls in a trailer nor put bike seats on our bikes.) In addition, we have little experience with organized bike rides (only triathlons).

We attended the Midwest Tandem Rally in August as "novice" tandem riders. Our experience seemed to be different than those noted in the article.

1. We found registration to be a pleasant experience. We found the registration room with no trouble, got our packets, and were done in no time.
2. Once I got to the hotel room, I disassembled the route information and organized it for each day's ride. Each day's information was color coded and, therefore, pretty straightforward to sort. Each evening, I put the next day's route map and cue sheets in my husband's panniers and my seat pack. (The route maps were difficult to read but we never used them.)
3. Although neither my husband nor I had seen cue sheets before, we both were able to read them.
4. We followed the arrows painted on the road without any problems. Since we do not like to stop during rides and have no means of

setting up maps nor cue sheets to read during the ride, we relied solely on the rode markings for directions. We rode all four days and only missed one turn. The missed turn was my fault (I read the wrong colored arrow.). We realized the mistake quickly, read the cue sheet, and got back on the route.

5. Since we are used to biking long distances with little food (only energy bars and gel), we felt there was more than enough food throughout the course. Our girls never once complained about being hungry either. In fact, my husband and I joked that we felt like we gained weight during the weekend because of all the food we ate!!!
6. The routes were excellent. We rode a total of 150 miles over 4 days and loved all of it. Our girls did great and had few complaints.
7. We were amazed that the mass starts went so well. It was great starting with so many other tandems.
8. We appreciated the rest stops with playgrounds. Our girls loved meeting other children during the breaks and having fun places to play.
9. We stayed at a nearby hotel and had no problems.
10. We appreciated the child care during the afternoon workshops. My husband and I would not have been able to attend any workshops without the baby-sitting. In addition, we were able to walk through the exhibits without our daughters distracting us.

My husband, daughters, and I are looking forward to riding our tandems in future Midwest Tandem Rallies. We can only hope they are all as well run as the Columbus ride.

Lynn Heinbach
Milford, OH



Dear DoubleTalk,

MTR97 - Praise

We should praise and not criticize all the volunteers that have worked on all the MTR's including MTR97. We have attended 17 of the MTRs and have enjoyed all of them. All the volunteers, including many who lack experience, do the very best they can. We should thank them for spending their time organizing these massive rides. We thank them for spending so many hours to make MTRs so great!

Why should any one criticize the MTR97 group for the hotel renovation? They could not keep the hotel from being sold after they made arrangements. We should thank the Wyndham for not closing the hotel. That happened at one MTR.

We never missed a turn on MTR97 routes. If one will use the cue sheets with the arrows as it should be, no problem. They did have to explain the cue sheets, which they did Saturday morning.

I wonder if the people that are so critical have ever volunteered to work on any big ride that spans days? There will be many at Omaha who enjoy the MTRs.

Bob & Rosemary Beckman
Des Moines, IA

Dear DoubleTalk,

Dream or Nightmare MTR 97?

In November of 1993 when the GOATS were organized, I was the President and newsletter writer. One of my ideas, for the GOATS to succeed, was to have a project to bring people together. I felt being the sponsor of a Midwest Tandem Rally would be a suitable and spiritually rewarding project. It would allow us to pay back the efforts of prior MTR sponsors, and continue the tradition of a tandem rally held in the Midwest every year.

I frequently mentioned the idea in the Goats newsletter, but that was all that happened. While attending the banquet during MTR 94 in Rochester Minnesota, the question of who would do the MTR 97 was asked. 1995, was assigned to Indianapolis, and 1996 to Appleton Wisconsin. Now was my big chance, and with an OK nod from Gary Todd, our

Vice President, and Dick Denning, I raised our stuffed goat over my head and hurried to the stage to announce the GOATS would sponsor MTR 97.

We were on our way to a new challenge, finding a city with good facilities for MTR 97. We wanted a place with access to interstates for easy travel so people would come. We also wanted a place with country roads for good bike riding. Next we needed a place with a huge motel because we expected more than five hundred teams. But the motel also had to have facilities for meeting rooms for seminars about tandem activities, and a really large space for vendor displays, also a space for covered and secure bike overnight storage. Whoops, I forgot we needed a banquet room for more than one thousand riders who might want to attend the Sunday banquet and entertainment. WOW! What an ambitious undertaking.

Well, we could always go to downtown Columbus, it was centrally located in Ohio, and it had big motels and banquet facilities. Then we thought of riding bicycles in the downtown traffic. No, that would not do.



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Tandem bike riding on good roads was a high priority. We would have to compromise. We then looked at Dublin, Ohio. The roads were good, and there were a lot of medium size motels within a two-mile radius. The Stouffers Motel had a large ballroom, but not large enough to hold a banquet for more than one thousand riders. Big enough for a vendor display area but not big enough to provide inside bike storage at the same time. WOW, again! Decisions, decisions. We talked to the motel management about storing bikes in the sleeping rooms. No! But we won, after providing references from prior MTR hotel management, that tandem bicycle riders were really great people. Keeping a tandem in a room would not be easy for everyone, so we needed alternative plans. We decided on outside storage with people watching the bikes all the time, even through the night, using rented Dublin police. We would use the ballroom for vendor space and meeting rooms for seminars.

The next year at Indianapolis, Indiana during the MTR 96 banquet, we were ready to invite all the tandem teams in the world to Dublin Ohio. Everything went well, our offer was accepted, but nobody rose to accept responsibility, for the following years, 1998 and 1999. We wondered, will we be the last MTR? We had considered now was the time to have two MTRs, an East and a West, because more and more people were buying tandems and would want to attend. It would be hard to find facilities to hold the event and groups to sponsor it with such a large group. This idea of two events was quickly forgotten, people came to have a good time and be with friends they met at prior MTR rallies. We had a responsibility to continue the tradition.

I began to realize the enormous project we had undertaken, and decided it was not possible. The project was rescued by Donna Boutilier and Dick Denning agreeing to become co-chair of MTR 97. Quickly more committee chairs were found, and we were on our way again. Meetings were held with some of the people traveling as much as 220 miles to attend, giving up time they could have been bicycle riding.

As for the motel, our original contract was with the Stouffer-Dublin. As the years passed, it became the Renaissance-Dublin after the motel was sold. Prior to Labor Day 1997 the motel was sold again, and we found a new name Wyndham on the motel. I

won't bore you with all the details of dealing with three different motel managements and staff. We did not have any input to the new management plans to remodel the building, but were initially assured it would be done by the end of August, and then we learned that it would not. It was only through the efforts of one of our committee that the construction was as complete and tidied up as it was. We were glad we picked the city of Dublin, they were bicycle friendly. There were ordinances against riding more than two abreast, but this was waived for our rally. We certainly didn't want any teams arrested for violating the law. The city also provided and installed construction fencing and a tent for the bicycle storage, and street barricades for controlling traffic and parking areas. Dublin also allowed us to install signs directing people to the host hotel. Apparently zoning is needed to install signs, this was waived.

Adjacent property owners were contacted to provide additional parking for people from overflow hotels, and a mass start area at another facility. The city of Dublin provided a P.A. system and portable generator for us to make announcements during the mass start. It was great for most of the rally committee to stand on the side of the road and watch as the group of happy riders started their day, many of us were too busy with other things to ride.

A specialty coffee vendor with a double decker bus was contacted to provide morning coffee. We thought this would be unique.

We tried to pick routes which would be safe for riders, have interesting scenery, and would pass some churches, so teams who were interested could stop to meet worship. We tried to mark the roads, so the markings could be seen by bicycles but would not irritate the city or motorists who would use the roads long after we were gone, and would also fit in with the Irish motif of Dublin.

We picked a caterer to provide lunch during the Saturday and Sunday rides. The food they provided as a sample for one of our monthly meetings was excellent. Unfortunately when directions were sent to increase the fruit ordered and add five hundred pieces, it was interpreted as only sent five hundred. Sorry, but, this was corrected before Sunday's lunch.

We chose the Columbus Zoo as our banquet facility. It could handle our crowd, and has



experience feeding bicycle riders. They sponsor a Zoo Ride. They were able to feed more than one thousand attendees at the Rally banquet using ten buffet lines, in one half hour. We felt that they performed excellently, and they were to be congratulated. The zoo offered a package to provide food, admission to the zoo and entertainment that we could not duplicate. We felt the zoo animals and animal entertainment would be of special interest to people with children and would fit with the animal names of many of the tandem groups. We, the committee, hoped the attendees would have as good a time at the rally as we did to prepare for it. We felt we made new friends, and that all the committee members worked hard to provide an MTR 97 we could be proud of. Many of the attendees thanked us for our efforts during the rally and others sent favorable comments thru the E-mail system.

Then came the article in the November/December TCA DoubleTalk.

I was hurt by the Midwest Tandem Rally 1997 article in DoubleTalk. I cannot feel the article published in DoubleTalk was meant as constructive criticism. If it was, it could have been directed to the GOATS through the E-mail or US Mail as were other comments.

I hope the November DoubleTalk article will not deter other groups from sponsoring MTR Rallies in the future. At the end of the MTR 97, we felt we had organized a good rally, but we were glad it was over. At that time committee people were beginning to talk of doing another MTR in the future, but personally I would not have the courage to ask anyone to it again. In answer to the title question, it was a "dream" come true that we did it. I have expressed my own opinions about MTR 97 and hope I have not omitted or slighted the efforts of any MTR 97 committee members. It is difficult to compress the efforts of three years into a couple of pages. There was much more to MTR 97 than printed in these few words.

Norm Bernhardt
President Greater Ohio Area Tandem Society
sponsor of Midwest Tandem Rally 97

Dear DoubleTalk,

Big news: our very own, New Zealand tandem stage race, the "Serious Fun Race" is on again, from the 2nd to the 6th of January 1998. It's held in the Nelson-Blenheim region at the top of the South Island; a beautiful, rolling to mountainous area with white sand beaches, native bush and lots of wineries and breweries. The race consists of seven stages over four days, including two criteriums, which are raced as curtain-raisers to a major single bike stage race held in the same area at the same time. The prologue also is raced with the single racers, so the atmosphere is incredible; the single racers love to watch the tandems.

If any TCA members would like to come to New Zealand to do this event, which is in the middle of our summer (temperatures in the 70s to 80s) I would be happy to help you with advice and bookings; you can be assured of a warm welcome.

Denis and I did this event last year, which was the first time it was held, and had a blast; there were 11 tandems, of which about half would've been Burley Cycle Classic A-grade and the other half B-grade. We hope there will be more this time, but even this number was a lot of fun and a great atmosphere of camaraderie. The races are typically about 50 to 60 km, and are as demanding as you want them to be. Any combination of male-female are allowed.

Please e-mail me if you would like any further information.

Frith Brown
email me on frith@centralpower.co.nz

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FRAME SPURS AND THE FOOL TOOL

Tandems are different from single bikes. The forces imposed upon them are higher resulting in more frequent breakdowns or at least the need of more frequent maintenance often requiring special tools. The mere size of a tandem makes it impossible to mount such common accessories as cyclometers without soldering or splicing wires. Herewith are several spurious suggestions for appliances. Your neighborhood custom frame builder would be happy to braze these on for you the next time you are having your frame repainted or those S&S couplers installed. If you don't want them brazed on, those clever blacksmiths can undoubtedly fabricate clamp-on models that you can move from tandem to tandem. Even more elegantly, they may install strategically placed water bottle bosses for removable, bolt-on configurations.

The Speedometer Spud.

Cyclometers are designed to be mounted on transverse tubing, i.e., handlebars. But that is not practicable for stokers. The captain's overhanging posterior likely blocks the view of the stoker's bars. Even if it did not, the cables provided for rear wheel speedometer and cadence inputs are not long enough to be routed all the way forward to the captain's seat tube, seatpost, and stoker's stem. Soldering Cat-eye cables is more delicate than microsurgery and usually less successful. The solution is the Speedometer Spud. This horizontal, transverse tube approximately 2" long and 1" in diameter is placed on the side of the stoker's top tube where a cyclometer can be readily viewed with the cable routed along the top tube.

Captain's Cadence Chainstay Proxy

This little spur attaches to the bottom tube to provide a mounting place for a cadence sensor for the captain's cyclometer. This will obviate the need of soldering wires to provide a cadence readout for the captain. It or an adaptation is especially useful on those tandems such as the Counterpoint or DaVinci Joint Venture that allow the riders to pedal at different rates.

Drum Brake De-Torquer

You opted for a cassette hub because the Hyperglide lockring is not tightened by pedaling forces. Thus you won't have to carry a bench vise or a 15" crescent wrench to remove your freewheel when you break a drive side spoke. Now you discover a broken spoke behind your drum brake, and you left your 3 pound, 41 mm, deep-well impact socket back home with the vise. No problem—if you have the Drum Brake De-Torquer. This nifty device consists of two studs brazed to the seat and chainstays. Remove the rear wheel, lay the tandem on its side, place the drum so the studs engage the holes in the outside flange of the brake drum and voila! You now have at least a 5' lever arm to twist against.

Freewheel Tool Turner

If you are still using a freewheel, this device is the answer to expeditious roadside freewheel removal. The Freewheel Tool Turner is essentially a box wrench brazed to the frame at an accessible point. You mount your freewheel tool on the axle using the skewer, then insert the tool in the hexagonal opening, and enjoy the same lever arm as with the Drum Brake De-Torquer. The Freewheel Tool Turner is available in several sizes for different freewheel tools or in a "universal" model with several inserts that reduce the opening to fit several tools. The inserts are held in place with a set-screw, and, in an emergency, the set screw may be used to make the tool adjustable.

Fool Tool

The fundamental problem with freewheel, drum brake, or pedal removal is acquiring sufficient leverage to easily loosen the part. Brazing spurs onto the frame to use the frame as a lever arm is one solution, but not a very satisfactory one if you are fastidious about your frame paint. And let's face it, use of spurs like the Brake De-Torquer will chip paint. The answer is the Fool Tool. The Fool Tool is a head that incorporates a combination S&S coupling tool and bottom bracket lockring hook spanner, 15



mm pedal wrench, 1" socket to hold freewheel removal tools, and 41 mm deep socket for drum brake removal. The head is fitted with an S&S coupling so you can attach it to any tube fitted with the same size S&S fitting. The recommended frame modification is to fit two S&S couplers on a segment of the direct lateral. You can then completely remove a 2' section of tubing for the handle of the Fool Tool. The Fool Tool II includes an adjustable jaw that opens to 40 mm for headsets, fixed cups, and Baldwin Pacific locomotives. A second pair of S&S couplings on the other segment of the direct lateral allows you to use two Fool Tools in conjunction, and as an added benefit, lighten your frame for time trials. Just remember to order the optional Aero-plugs to streamline the gaping holes where the tubes were removed.

Phil Shute
Hingham, MA

CLUB NOTES

The League of American Bicyclists has a new executive director and a new address. You may now contact the League at 1616 K Street NW, Suite 401, Washington, DC 20006. (202)-822-1333

E-MAIL

Does your tandem club have an e-mail address or web page? If so please forward it to the DoubleTalk editors and it will be included in the full club listing published in the Membership issue. Please forward club information to:
tca_of_a@mindspring.com

CYCLE MONTANA - 1997

Cycle Montana was sponsored by Adventure Cycling. This great ride comprised seven cycling days and one layover day in Glacier National Park. It was a fully supported tour. That is, hot breakfasts and dinners were provided. We picked up a sack lunch at breakfast and ate it along the way. Our luggage was transported from site to site and we camped mostly in school yards each night along the way. The Trek Wrench Force came along to provide mechanical support as did mechanics from The Bike Doctor of Missoula, Montana and Brian Martindale from Adventure Cycling. Adventure Cycling staff also drove the luggage trucks and provided tour support.

Day 1 Great Falls to Lincoln, Montana

The first day's route began with an option. The introductory material had stated that the first fifty miles of the day's eighty-nine miles were flat and into what was predominately a head wind. For this reason, the Cycle Montana folks offered a shuttle for the first forty-nine miles, where those who rode the shuttle would be dropped off to ride the last thirty-nine miles to Lincoln. We took advantage of the shuttle option, the thought of grinding fifty miles

into a headwind was not our idea of how to start a tour. It turned out that the introductory information was incorrect. The first twenty miles were in fact quite flat into a head wind, then the terrain changed and turned into mile long climbs and half mile descents. So the first fifty miles were quite rigorous. As we rode through this in the shuttle bus, we were glad we had chosen the shuttle option.

At Bowman's corners, forty-nine miles into the route, we started our ride. The first ten miles or so continued the long climbs and short descents. As we made our way to the first mountain pass of the ride, Roger's Pass along the Continental Divide. The elevation of Great Falls was 3,312 feet. From the crest at Roger's Pass we were at 5,610 feet. The climb was basically seven miles of a 6% grade. Preceding the climb though, there were three miles of the strangest optical illusion I have ever encountered. While it appeared we were descending, in fact, we were climbing. I would have bet next week's paycheck that the terrain was going down but, pedaling full bore into the headwind, we were going nine miles an hour. So, apparently, I was wrong. The climb itself took a little over an hour as we are not fast climbers



on the tandem. Six miles an hour, five and one-half miles an hour, five miles an hour were all common readings on the cyclometer. When we crested Roger's Pass, we had lunch, visited with some new friends and prepared for the downhill. What took seven miles to go up, also took seven miles to go down. However, it did not take nearly as long. Without using the drag brake, we sailed down the west side of Roger's Pass at forty-five miles an hour for seven miles. The remainder of the route into Lincoln followed highway 200 along the Blackfoot River and the terrain was gently rolling but basically downhill. We made great time into Lincoln. Population 674. Elevation 4,500 feet. We camped at the Lincoln High School where the school facilities were made available to us. One of the major problems of the tour became evident immediately. These are small mountain towns. The graduating class of Lincoln High School was less than thirty. The entire K-12 school system was housed in one building. When 274 dirty, sweaty cyclists descended on two tiny shower rooms for showers and cleaning up, the systems were swamped - sometimes literally. Cold showers and long lines at the bathrooms were the order of the day. Dinner, provided by Yellowstone Kelly (a mobile caterer), was excellent. YK set up canopy tents, tables, chairs, hot food, salad bar and beverages for dinner, worked through the night packing lunches and preparing breakfast, served us breakfast the following day, then packed up everything and moved ahead to prepare dinner for the next night's meal.

Day 2 Lincoln to Seeley Lake - 56 miles

Although I learned this on earlier tours, it still surprises me that folks on vacation are so anxious to get up at 5:30 in the morning, pack up dew-covered tents and sleeping bags, and eat breakfast at 6:00 in the semi-dark before jumping on their bicycles at 6:30 to start their rides. This tour was no different. Early rise, early breakfast and away we go. Day 2 was the easiest day of the tour. The first twenty miles or so continued along the Blackfoot River, gently rolling roads, lightly trafficked. The water tumbling over rocks every turn. Then the road would turn away from the Blackfoot River and we would continue west another 20 miles until we turned north toward the lakes country and the town of Seeley Lake. The stretch along the Blackfoot gave us repeated views of the river. Sometimes we'd see a fly

fisherman standing in the water trying his skill against the local trout.

Our first water stop was Ovando. Ovando used to be a lively little town but got bypassed when they upgraded Montana Highway 200. There is a half mile jog off the highway down a tiny road where we found a general store, a bed and breakfast and the Ovando Museum. The Ovando Museum was maintained by a local ranching family and was fascinating. It contained memorabilia from the area, and also a great deal of family history.

After our break at Ovando, we went back out to Highway 200 and continued on to Clearwater Junction, thirteen miles down Highway 200. Basically, since leaving Great Falls we've been heading due West, 89 miles on Saturday and another 40 miles today. So, .. basically 130 miles, pretty much due west from Great Falls. At Clearwater Junction, we turned north toward our second night's stop at Seeley Lake. 16 miles of Highway 83 from Clearwater Junction to Seeley Lake paralleled Clearwater River, and the Salmon and Seeley Lakes. It was a narrow twisting Highway filled with vacationers, their boats, their motor homes, and their trailers. While the scenery was lovely, traffic made much of the riding very tense. Basically for the bulk of this stretch, we had mountain cliffs on our right and lakes on our left. At Seeley Lake, we camped at the high school. Seeley Lake was a little resort town that existed as service to fisherman and boaters on Seeley Lake. Espresso, ice cream, gas, oil and boat parts were to be had by all.

Day 3 Seeley Lake to Big Fork

This day was probably the most pleasurable cycling of the entire trip. Seeley Lake had 4,500 feet of elevation and the town of Big Fork had 2,900 feet of elevation. The general tenor of the terrain was downhill. We climbed gently for the first fifteen miles, then until the town of Big Fork, the tandem was mostly in the big ring and traveling in the high 20's and low 30's. This was big fun. There had been a minor mutiny at the meeting the night before when we were told that there was twelve miles of construction along the route that might necessitate being transported over by a pilot car and crossing new construction and gravel. As we had all been stressed by the traffic on this highway, the thoughts of traffic and loose gravel and construction delays, had some people quite upset. When we got to the



construction we learned two things. First, the surface was very firm and the gravel was not loose at all. Second, we got a break. Just as we got to the point where the pavement disappeared completely and we moved entirely to gravel, a large gravel truck had jackknifed itself across the road and appeared to be stuck. We walked our bikes around it and had fifteen miles of unobstructed roadway because no cars could get around the stuck truck. It made the construction no big deal. We had lunch at Swan Lake, road by the Life Refuge and continued into the town of Big Fork. Shortly after Swan Lake we ended up with adequate shoulder and wonderful cycling all the way into Big Fork. Big Fork is a lovely little village. It is a resort town dedicated to tourists. It has fine art galleries and wonderful outdoor beer gardens. We loved Heffendwazzer - an unfiltered wheat beer, served with lemon. It has made its way onto my "drink whenever you can find it" list. After thoroughly examining all of the art galleries, Bobbie and I flagged down a trolley driver and asked if she minded if we sat on the trolley and took a tour of the area. She said no and proceeded to give a history lesson and highlights tour of the entire Big Fork area. We enjoyed it very much, particularly the view of the "Wild Mile," a class five rapids used for kayaking competitions, exciting stuff. After dinner at the Big Fork grade school, storm clouds rolled in, the wind starting blowing, and we were treated to a spectacular lightning display for about an hour before bed.

Day 4 Big Fork to West Glacier - 46 miles

The description in the tour map for day 4's route read as follows, "Our shortest riding day has predominantly flat to gently rolling terrain with a wee bit of climbing in the foot hills along the first fifteen miles of the route, heading north toward Glacier National Park we will leave the traffic and noise behind by following quiet back roads. After winding our way past high country meadows, tiny fishing ponds and mountain cabins, we will return to the valley floor and continue north along the Columbia Falls(?) We will rejoin the traffic on US 2 near Columbia Falls. Caution: between Columbia Falls and Hungry Force, the road is narrow and heavily traveled. Be very careful. Past Hungry Horse, a wide shoulder appears and you will soon arrive at the West Glacier KOA, our campsite for the night." I quote this description because I believe that I will be using it for the rest of my life as a

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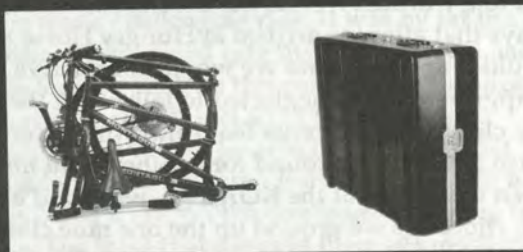


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masterpiece of understatement. Whether it was the high speed or the terrain on this ride, this 46 miles took seven hours to traverse and left everyone I spoke to exhausted. The "predominantly flat to gently rolling terrain with a wee bit of climbing" included twelve miles of loose gravel and construction. This was followed by road pavement that SHOULD have been under construction. When we got to our water stop at twenty miles, something over two and one-half hours after beginning, everyone was already tiring. The next twelve miles from the water stop to Columbia Falls should have been a snap. It was quiet country road, straight as a string with no traffic. But, perhaps because of hidden elevation gain, perhaps because we were all tired, this section, too, seemed more a death march than a ride on a country lane. When we got to Columbia Falls, we had another water stop. We joined US 2 for the five miles from Columbia Falls to Hungry Horse. This was a TREACHEROUS stretch of road. There was no shoulder, the 3-inch edge dropped from the pavement to the ungraded ground. Three highways converge at Columbia Falls, which all join in US 2, the only access to Glacier National Park from the west. So, the traffic was extremely heavy and included commercial traffic, motor homers, RV'ers, locals, homicidal maniacs and - in my private opinion - the largest mobile concentration of bicycle haters on the planet. No body gave an inch, all cars were going, at least, Mach 5, and we did our very best to try to survive. As the description continued, it says that after we arrived at Hungry Horse a wide shoulder appeared and we would soon arrive at our campground. They neglected to talk about the half mile climbs and descents that rolled from Hungry Horse to the campground for another eight miles. When we turned at the KOA sign, we found a one mile climb. As we ground up the one mile climb and turned into our campground expecting KOA pool, laundry and showers, we found - a horse pasture. We were camping in an overflow field where the horses were tethered for those campers that came to Glacier National Park to trail ride with their horses. We also found that were something over three very steep hilly miles from any activities in the Glacier area. Many of us had been looking forward to a lazy layover day on Wednesday in the Glacier Park and we found that anything we are going to have to do, was going to entail serious hill climbing. The KOA owner came to the rescue by organizing a shuttle that ran back and forth mornings and evenings from

the Glacier area. We were able to go into town and enjoy white water rafting on Tuesday night.

Wednesday - Day 6 Layover Day

Many people, including me, were looking forward to using the layover day to climb the Going to the Sun highway. This is approximately a twelve mile, six percent grade. The full route, starting in West Glacier, is twenty-two miles, but the grade does not start until about mile twelve. West Glacier is at 3,100 feet, the top of the Going to the Sun highway at Logan Pass is at 6,646 feet. I had been looking forward to it for months.

When Wednesday morning arrived, I was simply too fried to even think about tackling a twenty mile climb, knowing we had two eighty plus mile days ahead of us. So, Bobbie and I decided we would catch up on laundry and see what else was available. After taking the shuttle into town and doing the laundry, we caught the shuttle back and asked the driver if there were any activities around that wouldn't entail major physical exertion. He said he thought that our group had arranged for a tour bus to pick them up at our campsite and take them on a day long tour up the Going to the Sun road and Logan Pass. This sounded perfect. He took us back to the campsite where we found we were able to get on the "jammer" busses that Glacier National Park is famous for. Apparently, all national parks have these buses, but most of them have discontinued their use. Glacier National Park continues to use these buses built in the late 1930's. They are 18 passenger buses with a canvas top that retracts. They got their name because with original standard truck transmissions, the driver's jammed the gears. We spent the day with our driver working our way up to the top of the pass, took a brief hike, turned around and came back for dinner. Day 7 Browning to Shoteau - 88 miles

This was probably the worst and best day of the ride. We started off from Browning along high plains. Again, long unobstructed vistas were the order of the day. No trees, no brush, just flat grass land until the mountains rose up from them. We were enjoying the flats and cruising along at a good speed on the tandem when we came upon the "truck descending a hill" sign. As I looked out across the plains, I could see no hill. As we passed the sign, the nose of the tandem pointed down and were in a precipitous rivercut. Before I could reach up and set the drag brake we were going over forty miles an



hour and by the time I got the drag brake set, we were running fifty-two miles an hour - with the drag brake. An approximately two mile sharp descent with two switch backs brought us to a bridge across the river. Of course, that sharp, steep down turned into a sharp, steep up for two miles. We ground our way up the hill and - presto - we were back on high prairie with no signs of any elevation. We rode about another five miles and crossed that river again. Again it had a steep downhill followed by a climb. The first water stop was about three miles later at approximately twenty-three miles. As I pulled up to the water stop, I could hear a slight hissing and the front tire was going flat. When I lifted the front end of the tandem to change the tire, the wheel rattled in the dropouts! I had never retightened the quick release from the night before, when I had intended to pull the wheel and swap tires. Never again will I talk about morons too stupid to check their quick releases, since I appear to be one of them.. When I think about the fifty-two mile an hour descent with a drag brake and a loose front wheel, I still shudder. I changed the tube, inspected the tire and found a cut with a stone imbedded inside of it, removed that, re-installed it and, as that was my last tube, started worrying for the rest of the ride. From the water stop and for the next twenty miles, we traversed long rolling climbs along the high plains. They were a mile to two miles in length with an easy downhill on the other side. We climbed and descended these long rollers to the lunch stop. Just before the we got to the lunch stop the Wrench Force Van pulled in. I bought 2 tubes and a spare tire. One blowout and one flat were making me nervous. As we pulled into the little town, I went inside the little general store to look for something to drink with our lunches, the rain clouds rolled in and it poured. We sat inside and waited for the rain to subside. This little general store did not know what to do with one hundred or so cyclists, but they did their very best.

For the next twenty miles or so, the climbs got steeper and twistier and the traffic got worse. Oh yes, and it was raining. Did I mention that the wind picked up to about 30 mph from the side? It did. Again, the descents were in the mid forties-with sudden jumps to the left from the sidewind, the climbs were in the mid fives. Midway up the longest and, it turned out the last of the big climbs, we had our second flat of the day in the rain. While we had the tandem laying on its side and I was trying to put

the new tire and tube (boy was I glad I had the new tire) on, we saw a van full of cyclists followed by a pick up full of cyclists' bicycles rolling by. They didn't even slow down. I have their names and someday they will pay. After repairing the tire, we finished the ride. The ride was easier to the last water stop. After our short break, we changed direction and we found ourselves on a flat road with a thirty mile an hour tailwind. We did 16.2 miles in thirty-seven minutes! Now THAT was fun. Shoteau was a larger town than we had been used to and it had espresso shops, grocery stores and very hot showers. We had a nice night, knowing that tomorrow we were heading in. The wind continued at thirty miles an hour all night long. The temperature dropped into the forties.

Day 8 Shoteau to Great Falls

This fifty-six mile day promised to be an easy day. The ride report indicated that there were two climbs, then it would be basically flat the remainder of the way in. This turned out to be true. The climbs were - after what we had done the preceding week - nothing and coming off the high plains down to the prairie of Great Falls gave us a four to five mile coast. Flat roads, high traffic and tired people ground their way the last twenty miles into Great Falls where we loaded up our bikes, took our showers, said our good-byes and headed out.

Conclusion

This was a challenging ride. It was by far the most difficult sustained ride that Bobbie and I had done. In looking back on this ride report, I realize that I have left out almost all of the important material. The fact that I bought the last tube that Larry had at that water stop (he said he sold 28 tubes that day!) and a tire, on the day from Browning to Shoteau. The folks that brought their 14 month old daughter along, who rode sixty miles everyday. 74 year old Bob who rode steadily every day with a permanent smile on his face. Much more. There are so many more places to cycle that I doubt we'll go back to Montana soon. But if you like challenging riding, spectacular views and don't need a lot of diversions for after each day's ride, Cycle Montana was great.

Greg and Bobbie Simon
West Branch, MI



PACKING A TANDEM

When we decided to join in a self contained tour of Germany last fall (see DoubleTalk March-April 1997, P30), one of our first concerns was how to transport our tandem safely. The first place we looked for guidance was past issues of DoubleTalk where we found some great ideas. We came up with something a little different that worked fabulously. So we wish to share it in hopes that it will help someone in the future have a successful and enjoyable trip.

Problem: How to get the tandem past the size restrictions of the bus service to NYC and Delta Airlines. Careful (anonymous) research with Delta and the bus service proved that they didn't want to deal with a tandem. Delta said it would have to go as freight, at a huge cost and preventing it from accompanying us on the flight. Hmmmm.....

The only answer is to remove both wheels to make it look like a single. I hope they don't x-ray it. So Kathy visits Home Depot for ideas. In the plumbing isle, the light bulb goes on. Here's what she did, and the bike came through with no questions and no scratches.

Get a 1x6 board 8 feet long, a Bike Tight, a threaded rod to act as rear axle, and some PVC pipe described later. Mount the Bike Tight on one end of the board. Remove the front wheel of the tandem, seats, stoker handle bar, and take out the captain's

handlebar (still attached by cables). Now mount the front fork in the Bike Tight (we had to spin the fork backwards). Now make a rear dropout support with the PVC pipe. Use a flange to attach it to the board, a section of pipe just long enough to keep the chain rings off the board, a T coupling, and two end caps. Make it wide enough to fit the dropouts tightly. Drill out the end caps to accept the rod as substitute rear axle. Remove the rear wheel and mount the frame onto the rear support. Crank it all down now and the frame is securely onto the board. We put the seats, with seatposts attached, upside down on the board under the bike and tape them down. The caliper from the Arai drum brake is bolted to the board with an eyebolt and large washer. Small parts are sealed in bags and taped to the board. That way everything is firmly attached to and supported by the board. If the box blows out or whatever, everything stays secure with the board.

Now just package the bike as you would a single. Wrap all the tubing with newspaper, bubble wrap and/or foam pipe insulation to protect it. Saw off the board to length. Get two road bike boxes and cut off the ends. Slide them together to fit the board. Tape the dickens out of it. We also taped over the hand hold holes so the handlers couldn't rip them open. Wide plastic packaging tape sticks best.

OK, you taped over the hand holds so how do you carry this? Kathy has another great idea that worked out fantastic in practice. Get some 1/4" or so nylon rope and two, 6-8 inch long lengths of 1" diameter washing machine hose. Go around the box twice each way (horizontal and vertical) with the rope, carefully knotting the rope at each place it crosses. Slip the hose pieces on the rope where it crosses over the top of the box to use as hand holds. When done right you can pull the box from any part of the rope and it will not come off or get all messed up. I found it carried easily.

We found we couldn't get the wheels in the main box so took another box for them, and chucked in one set of panniers to keep down the number of boxes.

Eric & Kathy Schonenberg
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SOME THOUGHTS ON FALL TANDEM RIDES

The fall colors are gone and the gray days are on us, but in hind sight this was one of the most spectacular falls that any of us can remember. The maples came on slowly at first and then gathered momentum and turned their flamboyant, show off red, against the deep rich green of the pines. The oaks turned brassy and every once in a while there was a vermilion splash that sat there and fluoresced and made even the veteran foliage watchers catch their breath.

That's the kind of fall we had and it turned Marilyn, my stoker, and I into enthusiastic leaf peepers. We were out often, soaking up the warm fall sun, gliding along, breathing deep and coming to life. We have some bad habits, I guess I should say interests, or more accurately, addictions that made our fall rides interesting. These interests are inclined to take over on us so that we spend a considerable amount of time and effort trying to control them. Riding our tandem, or as we prefer to call it, flying the Snow Goose, is not one of them. Our old Peugeot, a white touring tandem, though not beautiful, is reliable and ready to go at a moment's notice. She is a ready and able force to help us control our ever present interest and need to attend all flea markets and garage sales. We really can pass them when we come upon them unexpectedly, but our rigid rule of stopping only if passing on the Snow Goose is a great help. It is not chiseled in granite, but almost. We both know that stopping, while in our transport vehicle, while possible is in extremely poor taste and something we would rather not discuss.

The other situation, that is, finding a flea market, yard sale, garage sale, or craft fair, while astride the Snow Goose, is fair game. Often, while on a flight, we will glide by a yard sale and this is our routine: We do a slow fly by while my stoker gives it a once over. Something will make her decide if it has possibilities or not and I rely on her judgement implicitly. If she says, "Yes, it's a go", We do a roundabout and have at it.

There is something about riding up to a flea market, placing your tandem, dealing with cleats,

helmets and gloves, making sure you have money etc. that put a flea market in perspective. A great buy on a drill press fades in importance as you deal with transporting it.

"Oh I know, ride back to your transport vehicle and come back for it", but don't you see the moment has passed and sanity has had a chance to edge in and reinsert itself. It is not a foolproof plan but perfection is hard to come by and while this is not perfect, it is pretty good. Of course there have been times when our Madden bags have had some peculiar bulges and a time or two when my stoker found it hard to drink and manage our finds at the same time. There have also been many times when I have heard my stoker say, "Oh it's beautiful, if we only had the car." And I never will forget the 65 lb. grind stone I found in its original frame and ... It makes one wonder how we would handle a cross country flight on the Snow Goose.

Chet and Marilyn Gillingham
West Newfield Maine


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TOURING THE BRITISH ISLES

A status report from the road

[Editors Note: Gene & Dina Stucker left Texas in July, intending to tour the British Isles for 6 months or so. As they've pedaled, Genes has been sending updates, making us wish we were with him. Join us as we share more excerpts from their daily logs.]

It was now time to visit Scotland. Many people had told us that we really needed to see Gretna Green, the famous Gretna Green! Famous for what? Well we didn't know and were a little reluctant to ask since everyone seemed to assume that we would know. OK, audience (i.e., anyone who has read this far), do you know what Gretna Green, Scotland, is famous for? I didn't think so.

Well, it is sort of a Las Vegas without the gambling; people go there to get married. Not just anyone, but English people who wanted to get married without their parents permission, back in the days when that mattered. Starting hundreds of years ago English couples would come to Gretna Green, the closest Scottish (where laws were different) town to London, and the local blacksmith would marry them. He had a good thing going. Now, of course, there are souvenir shops, places where couples can renew their vows, etc. . . On Saturday we biked the 17 or so miles from Brampton to Gretna Green and found the ride a delight, with few and small hills for a change. We stayed in a pleasant B&B over the local grocery store.

We walked the modest distance to the next town, Gretna, to eat in the Royal Stewart, the pub that our hostess said was clearly the best in the area. It seemed well worth the walk. My Chicken Madras was very tasty but about blew my head off. Three pints of a local bitter (i.e., beer) called Scotch were sufficiently cooling that I ate it all.

Sunday we decided to visit Dumfries, home of Robert Burns, the bard of Scotland. The road there is along the coast, quite flat and goes by a recommended castle. About twenty miles down the road we stopped at Caerladerock Castle and found it to be a really different sort of a place. Built of the local red limestone in 1290, the successor to another, built in 1220 but that wasn't on stable soil and was

about 500 yards closer to the water. It was occupied by one family for 350 years. While we were there the bike attracted quite a bit of attention including a bike club that came in. We picked up one piece of info that might be useful; there is a bike tour operator, complete with a trailer to haul your bike and such stuff, that operates from near Newcastle into Southern France.

In Dumfries the TI office found us a big B&B room for 24 pounds, the lowest yet. One thing about this room was that the second "B", breakfast, was just milk and cereal. The cereal turned out to be rice crispies and corn flakes, two of my least favorite brands. People have told us that the further North you go the friendlier the people are and the cheaper things get. It seems to be the case. Oh yes, for the day we biked 34.5 miles and only climbed 430 total feet. Great day. Dina's foot seems to be healing well - mostly just has a problem walking a distance at a good pace.

That night we bought real breakfast makings (yogurt, fruit and buns) at the local Safeway and on the way back to the room bought some Italian carryout (here they say "takeaway") and had a "home" meal back in the room as we watched TV.

Monday morning we might have done more looking about in Dumfries but decided to go to Kirkcudbright (kir-cu-bri), a very arty city on the south coast where there was to be a "tattoo" that evening. The local TI office found us a B&B there for the next two nights and we were off. To Kirkcudbright the main road is primarily a green "A" road but we managed to take small lanes almost all the way. The lanes are hillier, of course, but much more pleasant. Actually we are far enough north here the traffic on even these "A" roads isn't too bad. Through Castle Douglas, where we stopped at Threave Garden, a local art show and I bought a pair of socks to replace one that was worn out. Actually I bought three pairs since that is the only way they were available from the bargain truck in the parking lot.

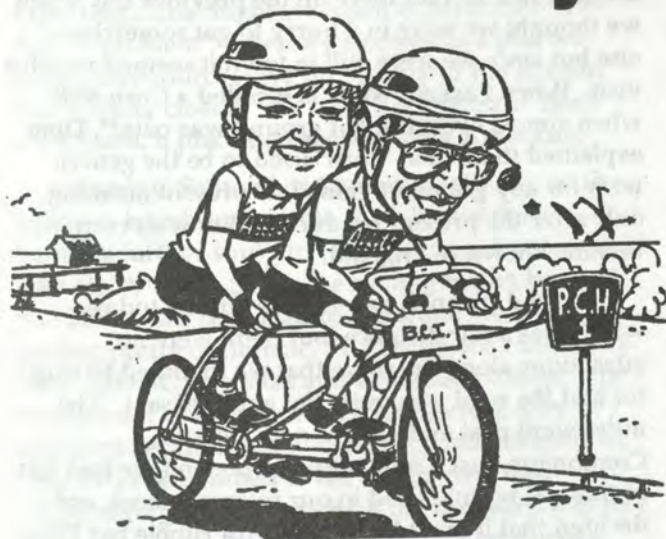


In Kirkcudbright we found our B&B in the center of a block with an entry barely wide enough to push the bike through between two buildings. Once into the interior the home and yard seemed relatively spacious and a shed was available to keep the bike dry. We retired to our room, planned the next day and then went out to a local Italian restaurant for a wonderful meal. After dinner we walked about a block to the center of town to view the tatoon. At this point we really had little idea just what it was except that it included some bagpipes. It was a town festival along a blocked-off main street. There were games for kids, various singing groups, dancers, flaming torch jugglers, and such followed by a massed bagpipe band marching up and down the street paying a variety of melodies (if bagpipes can be said to play melodies). Should you think that you've been in Scotland too long when you can recognize the tune being played on a bagpipe? The finale was a torchlight parade where every person in town who had purchased a ticket was issued a torch, and we fell in behind all the torches with several hundred other spectators and all paraded right past the entrance to our B&B where the two of us dropped out for the night. (Actually, marching behind those stirring pipes we were about ready to

go out and spear some of those nasty Brits but we went to bed instead.)

Tuesday dawned bright and cheerful. Today was wash day but there are no Laundromats in town. This time the solution was to bike outside town three miles to a campsite where there was some laundry facility. The road was right along the water, gently rolling and lovely. At the campsite we found the owner and his wife, asked for and obtained permission to use the facilities, purchased some soap and tokens for the machines and had a long talk with some visiting Brits about biking and life in general. With clean clothes in the bag the next destination was Gatehouse of Fleet. It was about lunch time as we biked along and, stopping at a particularly lovely overlook, we noticed the blackberries. Lunch today was about a pint or more of blackberries each and, as Dina said, "They are so sweet it is like eating jam." We selected Gatehouse as a destination primarily because just outside town is castle Cardoness, the home of the McCullochs, built in the 15th century. It was the most solid castle that we have been in yet. In town we visited an old mill. Time to return to the B&B in Kirkcudbright where the ride back was over a big hill but we had decided to take an "A" road this time so the grades

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were modest. Dinner in the pub across the street and so to bed.

Wednesday we had planned to start back toward England but at 7:30 the room was cold, bed was quite snugly and it was raining and blustery. The TV verified that the forecast was for rain most of the day and it seemed an opportunity to visit things we hadn't yet seen in Kirkcudbright. The bike stayed in the shed all day while we visited the in-town castle, the art galleries, the local museum and such stuff. By late afternoon the sun came out and we hope for a great day tomorrow.

The next morning was lovely, We were well rested and on Thursday we packed up, left a very clean and friendly B&B and got back on the road. (If you ever want to visit Kirkcudbright, ask for the name of our host there.)

Heading south Thursday morning along the very lightly trafficed A711, our first stop was Dundrennan Abbey. Like all the others, it is a lovely ruin, perhaps even prettier as a ruin than it was as a functioning abbey. Especially since it was a Cisterian abbey and they didn't believe in ostentation. The young man working there initially seemed more interested in computers than in the abbey and he gave me his E-mail address and his web site before he even sold us a ticket to get in. Later, when he got to talking about the influence that her prime minister had on Elizabeth to cause her to have Mary executed, it was apparent that these were almost his contemporaries in his mind. History has a reality to the English that it lacks in the US. Dundrennam, by the way is the place where Mary, Queen of Scots, spent her last night on Scottish soil.

One of the very interesting carvings mounted on a crypt depicted a murdered priest. He was shown standing on his murderer who was in turn shown with his belly slit open and his intestines falling out; the punishment that was quickly inflicted upon the murderer we were told. People in those days apparently believed in being quite specific and graphic.

At the abbey a young lad walked in wearing a Houston Rockets tee shirt with Olagowan's name on the back. I assumed that here was a fellow Houstonian. How naive can you be? The lad was English and his father had purchased this shirt as a memento of their vacation to Spain last year. After visiting the Abbey we proceeded to Ocharnton

Tower, a farm home/castle about a mile off the road that is in great shape for its age. A small tower, it is the only round castle in Scotland although they are apparently common in Ireland. From there we rode into Dalbeattie where there is a town sponsored campground right in the heart of town. Time to try camping again, we reasoned; so we did. Several of the locals highly recommended the Italian restaurant and we tried it with great results. It did rain that night but only very lightly and when we arose the sun was out and we could get the tent dry and packed before the next shower. Friday we had intended to ride back to Dumfries but after stopping at the birthplace of John Paul Jones (how many of your knew that he was born in Scotland? and how many knew this was the 250th anniversary of his birth?) and then at Sweetheart Abbey, getting rained on a couple of times, one batch of hail and looking at the heavy overcast sky, we spotted the B&B sign on a pub and stopped for the night.

Sweetheart Abbey, is named for its founder who, when her husband died, had his heart cut out and put into a silver chalice so that she could carry it with her always. Although it does demon-strate a certain dedication, I assured Dina that I didn't want her to consider anything like that when I go.

Saturday morning in New Abbey we simply walked across the street from our pub/B&B to see the Corn Mill, a water wheel driven mill that until quite recently had been in operation. Not in commercial operation but in demonstration. We had decided not to visit there on the previous day when we thought we were in a hurry to get somewhere else but since we were still in town it seemed worth a visit. When I asked, "Why is it called a Corn Mill when almost everything it ground was oats?", Dina explained to me that "corn" used to be the generic term for any grain but gained its present meaning only after the present product we know as corn became known in England.

We had planned to return to Gretna today, which was a fair distance, but there were no attractions along the route that we intended to stop for and the road was quite flat and pleasant. The miles went past and we did note a castle, Comlongon, just a mile off the route and we had lots of time. It wasn't listed in our reference book and I decided that it must be just a pile of rubble but Dina thought we should at least look, so we did. Far from



a pile of rubble it was a first class hotel in a castle that had been well maintained over the years. The staff was friendly, evn though the place was exclusive, and it was fun to walk around.

About eight miles out of Gretna, as we passed through a small town. we noted a cyclist headed our way. As he passed he looked up and yelled, "I gave those keys back for you." and we recognized him as the fellow we had given some B&B keys, that I had carried away, to a week previously. Arriving in Gretna we camped at a caravan park and ate in the same pub we had eaten in a week before. Rather fun since they recognized us and we were well treated, almost as locals.

On Sunday morning it was raining and we ate in the tent to find that it suddenly began to leak at an alarming rate. We packed the wet gear and got on our way but first we heard the news that Princess Di had been killed. It is clearly an event that has had a tremendous emotional impact on the whole nation but ,of course, all of you are aware of that. Down the road we stopped at a caravan supply store and bought a can of silicone treatment to renew the tent fly but we haven't yet found the time and place to apply it since the fabric needs to be very dry and then needs to dry for over 6 hours after application.

We went east to Longtown then turned south on the A7 to Carlisle. In this case the A7 is paralleled by a motorway and therefore gets little traffic so the ride was pleasant, with the smaller grades that major highways have. It was easier than we had been expecting. That night we again experienced "the dinner problem"; when we stopped at a pub we found they didn't serve on Sunday or the kitchen had already closed. We settled for pizza at Deep Dish Pizza, a place that seemed very American.

Monday, September 1 and our 36th day on the tour, we biked further into the lake district by heading further south to Penrith. Again we could take an "A" road. So far the cycling hadn't been as bad as we had been lead to think and we were getting pretty optimistic. In Penrith we visited two 2000-1000 BC ring sites and Brougham Castle. The castle, built at the corner of a roman fort, was different because two towers, each four stories tall, could still be climbed to the top to view the surrounding area. At the B&B the backyard was just large enough for the bike and had to be reached rolling the bike on its rear wheel down narrow



walkways past right angle turns, quite an accomplishment.

Tuesday we biked to Keswick. Here the auto route is short, fairly level on the A66. Unfortunately in this case there is no parallel motorway and the traffic is very heavy. We headed out on the local bike route, NW out along the B road thru Greystoke looping back to cross the A66 to a loop south, then another loop north and another south to town. Our route was very hilly and much longer than the auto route but we are getting stronger and we didn't walk up a single hill. We did stop to see a stone circle somewhat like Stonehenge and we got to town in time to visit the local pencil museum and to view the lake that is very beautiful.

Wednesday morning dawned very rainy and the TV weatherman predicted a very wet day. It seemed another good day to putter around town, write this note and wait for a better day so that is what we decided to do. It has rained heavily all day, alternating with bursts of non rain, and we are snug here in a pleasant B&B in Keswick. We are headed for Haysham to take the ferry to Ireland.

Gene and Dina Stucker
Traveling



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Bicycling Magazine
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CRUISIN' THE COAST (WITH MY DAD, OF COURSE)

"Oh, great," I thought as I got sick on the plane, "This is going to be a long week."

Actually, it turned out to be the high point of my summer. I'm fifteen, and my dad and I decided to bike the coast of Oregon for a week with a CycleAmerica tour. I'd never done an organized tour before; I hadn't even done an overnight ride. It was a brand new experience.

I really wasn't supposed to go. My dad had been planning to do a tour with my mom for months, and had decided to try Glacier National Park. Mom balked at the idea of the mountains, and I, always eager, took her place. Then we found out the dates didn't work, so we picked Oregon. No climbs there, right? Sure.

I loved it anyway.

Day 1 - These cyclists are all completely nuts. I don't know anybody, but they all smile at me anyway. We stay in a school tonight, and hit the road tomorrow. Our route coordinator has a court date because the police caught him painting our arrows on the road. Do I really want to spend a week with these people?

Day 2 - Oof That's about all I've been saying for the past hour. We really pushed to be the first ones back (and to the showers) today, and I'm beginning to realize that I should have trained harder.

This morning was nice. We stopped at a little bakery for breakfast, and ran into another tandem. The owners, Jas and Lins, were perfectly happy to talk to us and we paced them for the rest of the day.

Meals are very important. Bikers eat well, I've decided. For lunch we had a whole table full of fruit, crackers, veggies and dip, cookies, and just about anything else that tastes good but still could be considered healthy.

I'm exhausted, so I'm going to bed, even though it's only 4:45. Good night

Day 3 - Today we had an option of an extra fifteen miles and 1,000 feet to climb, but we opted for



Wendy Lewellen and her Dad, Don Lewellen

the normal route. Even so, we covered 79 miles and 3500 feet of climbing. I think the bike computer is the best thing ever invented for people who like math - it continually gives you a stream of numbers to play with in your head, and which you can change by working harder. It's definitely more fun than actual math class.

Thank God for scenic overlooks! They all show the same thing (the Pacific ocean), but they are strategically placed on winding climbs for weary bikers, especially tandems.

Dad and I rode with Jas and Lins again today. They live on the west coast, so the ocean isn't a big deal, but to a Wisconsin girl like me it's big. Really big. I thought Lake Michigan was big, but this is even bigger. Really.

I got a closer look when Jas and Lins and dad and I went for a whale watching trip. There were about fifteen other people on the boat, and we only saw one whale (his name was Freckles.) The trip was supposed to be an hour, but it really took about an hour and a half; I was mildly green by the time we got back on land. It was only a short pedal to the



high school where we spent the night, but I was pretty exhausted.

Day 4 - Rain, rain, go away, come again another day - hopefully when we've already left. It rained pretty consistently from early morning until dark. I think we took down the tent in record time, but everything got wet anyway. Lunch was hot-dog-stand style out of the van, with us cyclists getting soaked with rain while smiling CycleAmerica people stayed inside dry.

Our close encounter for the day was in a tunnel. There's a button for bikers to press that tells cars to slow down, but they never do. We were about halfway through the tunnel when a little blue truck blew past us doing twice the speed limit. Our tandem was caught in the draft and blown against the wall. Our front tire got caught in a crack in the pavement, and it was only by some fancy steering that dad kept us from falling into the road. After that, we took the middle of the lane, no matter how much the cars behind us honked. When we got back, I took a badly needed two hour nap.

Day 5 - The weather cleared up, and we had scorching sun all day. It was a fairly long ride, so we

started early. We were absolutely baked before we got back.

The route planner must have really loved pain. We got a map for a charming innocent little road called "7 Devils Rd." It was awful. The seven devils must have been seven peaks in a ridge or something, because we had some nasty climbs. Almost nobody could keep up with us though - I love riding a tandem on the downhill!

After that awful stretch of road, we were looking forward to a break. Unfortunately, our CycleAmerica water jugs were stolen. The bag of apples were still there, just no water. It was kind of annoying.

We sleep indoors tonight. The school also has a playground, but nobody wants to play on the swings with me. Sometimes I like being a little kid!

Day 6 - I think we did the fastest sixty I've ever ridden in my life. We had seen advertisements for a jetboat ride in the town we spent the night, and we wanted to catch the afternoon trip. Jas and Lins and dad and I went together. It was great! We saw all sorts of wildlife. It was a good chance to relax after riding so hard. We even ate at a restaurant that, well, it didn't specialize in health food. It tasted great.

Day 7 - The last day. It's sad, really. We got up before sunrise, ate breakfast, and left. We couldn't figure out if Jas and Lins were ahead of us or behind us, but we went anyway. We knew that we climbed faster than they did, so if they were ahead we would catch them on the thousand foot climb leaving town.

Unfortunately, we didn't. The downhill was pretty cool, though. I convinced dad to let us get up to 50 mph before he put the drum brake on and refused to listen to me. Why do the uphill always take more time than going down?

Halfway down the hill, we hit a really big bump. Right after that, I saw three bananas on the side of the road. I didn't catch the significance until I thought, "Who would have bananas in their jersey pockets that could fall out? Jas and Lins must be ahead of us!"

With new hope, we picked up our pace a bit. After almost an hour, we gave up going fast. We were just passing a tiny town bakery and I wanted to stop. Dad said no. Then, he turned around all of a



sudden and we went back. Jas and Lins were sitting at the table in front of the bakery, waving.

After a refreshing stop, we hit the road again. By noon, we were safely into California. I've never been in California before. The first real greeting I got was from a treefrog in the showers at the fairground that startled me. It really seemed to get ten degrees warmer as we crossed the California border, but maybe that was just me.

After only a week, now we had to get on the bus toward Portland and home. It was really hard to say goodbye to everyone, even though I only knew them for a short time. We parted with Jas and Lins at the airport, and headed back to Wisconsin.

Of course, no travel plans would be complete without some kind of airline delay, so we must have had our fair share at the Minneapolis airport where our flight was delayed for three hours. When we got back to Milwaukee, we were exhausted but happy. Our tandem was in reasonably good shape, with only two wheels broken off the box, and we stuffed all our bags full of dirty laundry into the car and drove home.

Wendy Lewellen
Manitowoc, WI

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE

We have a limited number of back issues of Doubletalk available to complete your collection. For each issue desired, send a check for \$3.00, payable to Tandem Club of America, to Jack & Susan Goertz, 2220 Vanessa Drive, Birmingham, AL 35242-4430. The issues you order will be sent to you either via first class postage (1-4 issues ordered) or via UPS (more than 4 issues ordered).

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TANDEM SERENITY IN FRANCE

For nine months I planned this vacation. I bought guide books, wrote letters, studied maps, and talked with friends. I was looking for a clean, quiet, rural place--a place without crowds, traffic, skyscrapers, subways, or fast-food restaurants. I planned a twelve-day tour, and in March I made ten hotel reservations. By the time Kathy and I left Pikeville, Kentucky, in mid-June I had identified museums, selected restaurants, memorized route numbers, bought a Green Gear Tandem Two'sDay, and brushed up on my French.

I had planned, studied, dreamed, and worried. Would my French be good enough? Would we get sore from biking? Would we get some dreaded disease or have a bike-car wreck? Would the hotels be comfortable? Could I follow the maps? Would there be a crush of other tourists? Could I pursue my

dream of eating simple home cooking? Could we ride together and pull a trailer? Would we argue?

On June 19, 1996, we flew to France, but we did not go to Paris, Provence, Lyon, or Marseille. We went to France, and we did not see the Eiffel Tower, the Champs-Elysees, or the Louvre. This was a bicycle trip in a small valley and we went to ride and relax. From the two seats of our bicycle we enjoyed orange poppies, golden wheat fields, and silky green tobacco plants. We had traded fields of tobacco in Kentucky for fields of tobacco in France.

We were in the Dordogne valley, a region in southwest France and an area known for its pre-historic cave paintings, medieval cloisters, and hill-top castles. The Dordogne is popular for strawberry, walnut, and goose farming, but we also saw vineyards, corn, and sunflowers.



Let me tell you some tandem stories and suggest a recipe or two. First, a sad story. On our ninth day we had a small mishap. In a line of traffic, going down a hill, under a light rain, and still half asleep, I ran into a car. The man pulled out in front of me, but I was passing when I should have been waiting. The front wheel of our tandem bicycle banged into his front fender, I was knocked left, pain went through my right knee, and Kathy, my wife and stoker, cried out. I thought we were finished. We pulled to the side of the road. The man in the white Citroen pulled up beside us, and with a kind look on his face, he got out to check his car. Lucky for us there was no damage to car or bicycle. The rain washed blood down my leg, and after Kathy blamed the man and I blamed myself, we got back on the tandem, pulled back to the road, and pedaled away. In a few hours the abrasions dried up. Scabs formed. It was a close call, but nothing more than a scare that put a little caution in my style.

MONTIGNAC: One of my favorite towns on this trip was Montignac-Lascaux. Perhaps it was the bakery that left a vivid memory. Located on the Vezere, a tributary of the Dordogne, the old town has winding narrow streets, a fortress tower, two

bridges, and yellow stone buildings. We went to Montignac to see the Lascaux caves, the site of paintings that are from 15,000 to 17,000 years old. We had a forty-minute tour of the caves, and we walked the streets, crossed the bridges, shopped the market, and sat by the river. Sitting at an outdoor cafe on the river bank and as I poked through a salad of hot duck preserve, I was taken by the idea that we had seen churches dated from 900 AD, 15,000-year-old cave paintings, and 35,000-year-old cliff dwellings. We were bicycling through history. Eight-hundred-year-old churches were "new" and castles built during the Hundred Years War were downright modern.

On a Tuesday we arrived in Montignac at about 4:00 in the afternoon, checked into our hotel, The Roseraie, and checked out the town. With three hours till dinner I decided to put my Pikeville barber on hold and get my hair cut. For a moment, I worried. I had to choose from four or more hair shops, all small and all located in the old city close to our hotel. In the course of my hair cut I learned that my barber was 54 years old and had been cutting hair for 40 years. Consider his story.

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He had apprenticed here in Montignac, and he later cut hair in Paris and Bordeaux. Then he came back to Montignac because, like me, he liked the town. He also liked John F. Kennedy, but not Jimmy Carter. He preferred Bill Clinton to Robert Dole, and he

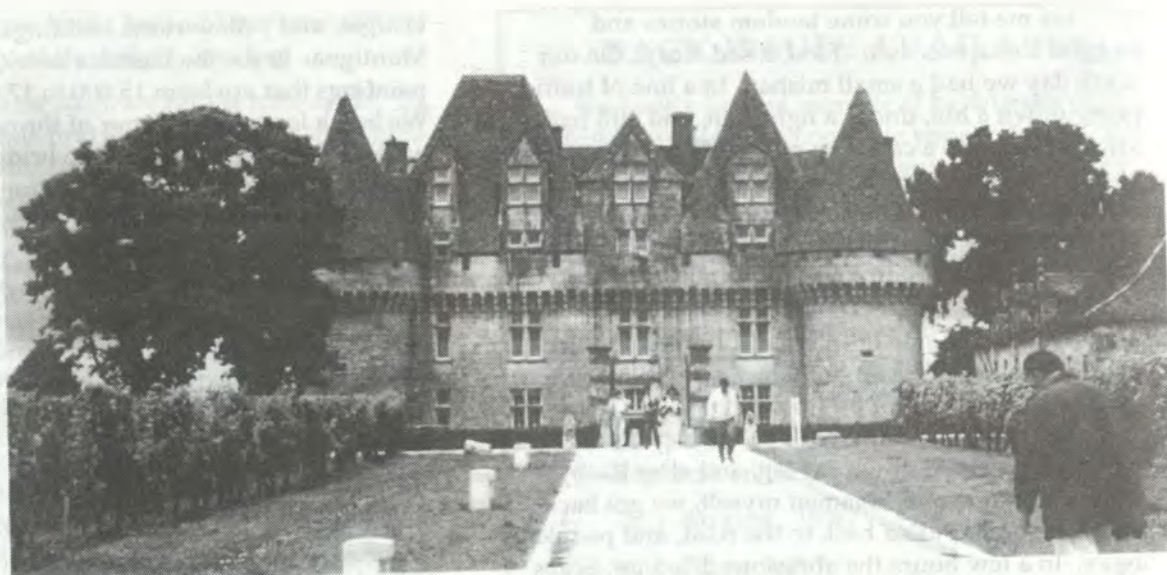
dreamed about seeing the riches of the United States. He would like to see Graceland and walk Yosemite valley.

He trimmed my sides with a scissors that pulled as it cut, and he cleaned my neck with a dull blade. This man was kind and conversational. I got an excellent cut, and I paid him 55 francs, or about \$12.00.

In our twelve days in France we visited ten small towns, and this one stands out: We ate beside the river, we sat in the hotel rose garden, and we walked to the castle. We enjoyed shops, a morning market, and a four-course dinner.

Now allow me one more story from Montignac. At 7:00 in the morning I found my way to the church square and by accident, without any plan, I poked into the bread store, the boulangerie. The smell of baking bread drew me in from the old church. France is known for its bread, and I admired the round country loaves. I talked with the clerk, and learned that this was not just a bread store, it was a bakery, pastry shop, and ice cream parlor. This place, the Boulangerie of J-P Leymarie was a find. I asked to take some pictures and I watched the baker.

On one side of the store, the baker made four kinds of bread: the common French baguette, a puff pastry croissant, both butter and regular, a



French Castle. Our first major attraction on our tandem trip in southwest France was this châteaux, built in 1550 and surrounded by a dry moat. Monbazillac, as it is called, has a wine museum and serves as a wine tasting center for the local wine growers.

substantial, slow-rise country bread, and a brioche-type or rich bread like a Parker house roll. On the other side of the store the pastry chef made some 25 pastries, each an artisanal creation.

I would go back to France for the pastry, and I cherished this moment because, like shooting stars in the sky, I was standing with a chef that created eye-tempting, mouth watering pastries--my ultimate memory of France. Some of the pastry names I have heard before: charlotte, éclair, baba, Paris-Brest, Napoleon, macaroon, tart, dacquoise, and meringue. You find these pastries everywhere in France and in fact one night in the town of Bergerac, we walked three blocks and saw five pastry shops, all loaded with sweets. It was 7:15 in the morning and I was eating a raspberry tart.

RASPBERRY TART: Four to five inches across, bright red, cookie dough crust, cream filling, top glaze, a paper cup, this raspberry tart started the day. I've been making these tarts for 25 years, but to see them again in France through the glass in a refrigerator case, I was overwhelmed. On my sensitive palate this raspberry tart did not let me down. From the gleaming glaze, to the tart berries, to the soft cream filling, and cookie-type crust, each bite created a memory.



Before leaving home, I worried that the France I sought-- clean, old, and quaint--would be replaced by modern, crowded, and commercial. There is an inherent conflict of images: new and old, French and American, rugged and refined. But in the Dordogne, perhaps because the population is small, the area isolated, and the people hardworking, we bathed in the clean, the quaint, the old, and the rugged. Where we saw fields of grain, others will see trash, and where we chatted with friendly people, others will find rudeness. The image one gets is a matter of perception, and the fact is that our experience in the Dordogne does not represent France or even the Dordogne. I remember the experience I hoped to find.

We did not see the Mona Lisa, Paris, or Normandy. For twelve days we rode our two-seated bicycle, and we did not see a four-lane highway or a McDonalds Restaurant. Ours was a vacation on a bike and we had time to eat long dinners, smell flowers, and pick cherries. With maps as my guide, my plan worked. My French was good enough, and our hotels were clean. We pedaled hard and developed some sore muscles, but we returned to Kentucky well satisfied and closer as a couple.

The real France is the France of my dreams, the friendly, historic, sensory France. The real France is the perfect vacation as well as an endless search. This mystic France is a castle or a petunia--an inspiration that can make a non-believer believe. The real France, like any successful voyage, catches the spirit and creates curiosity. It stimulates the appetite for architecture, history, exercise, and food culture. The real France is a journey, a destination with friends, a social event.

BREAKFAST: Travel is a sensory experience, and while we vacationed in France, we started each day with a Continental breakfast--crisp rolls, soft croissants, steaming coffee, served at a cloth-covered table. In the tiny corner of France through which we pedaled, we ate breakfast in our hotels. The choices were not experimental or exotic; the menu was repetitious--orange juice, yogurt, compote, preserves, choices of bread and croissants, real butter, hot tea, coffee, hot chocolate, or coffee and milk. In our simple hotels we did not see meats, eggs, cheese, sweet rolls, or quick breads at breakfast.



At La Cave, still in the Dordogne valley the breakfast was larger and more expensive. The bread basket was loaded. The basket said eat: three different croissants (a Danish-style with raisins, a French chocolate-filled rolled style, and the traditional mood-sapped croissant), hard rolls, and a diamond-shaped, almond-flavored piece of pound cake, a French quatre quart cut from a large sheet.

Besides the bread, our waiter offered butter, rich yogurt, fresh fruit, a plate of three spreads--honey, rhubarb compote, and strawberry preserves--and fresh-squeezed orange juice. All of this was served on a linen table cloth with matching napkins. We sat on heavy steel chairs. No plastic was in sight--our waiter served the yogurt in a milk-bottle-shaped glass container and each sweet spread was in its own porcelain dish. The table was loaded with some twenty pieces of china, and we had enough bread left to make a picnic lunch. The drinks were particularly noteworthy.

For a hot drink I chose café aux lait and Kathy chose an herbal tea, called an infusion. For a standard cup of café aux lait the waiter brings two small pitchers, one filled with hot coffee and the other with hot milk. As I learned when I was young, I mixed the coffee half-and-half with milk, and added sugar. We sipped our drinks and nibbled our breads on the side of the old road with the creek below and a walnut tree above. Belcastle, an eighteenth century manor, was perched on the stone cliff above. Freshly raked beads of gravel formed the floor while a stone wall kept me from falling over the edge and into the creek. Birds sang, and the river rippled. The setting alone was worth the \$15.00. Breakfast in the real France can be peaceful. On a tandem vacation I like to allow an hour or more to wake up, sip coffee, hear the birds, and read the newspaper.

BELVES: On our fifth morning in France, after breakfast, we started the day pedaling out of Belvès. Belvès is a hill town, one we had pedaled to the night before and one that allowed us to see roof lines from various promontories. With a population of 1,663 and buildings that date from the 13th century, Belvès represents the real France, the France of 1996 that makes a sweet holiday. In Place d'Armes I drank a beer while looking across the square at the 15th century covered market (an open shelter used as a walnut market in the fall), a Gothic church bell



tower, small shops, and the opening of the Castrum Museum. As we coasted out of Belvès, we enjoyed a long down hill. It took us to the Nauze valley and then to the Dordogne, which we crossed, bicycling over a stone bridge. With wind in my face, I recalled Belvès: the cherries I had picked, the caves we visited, and the geraniums growing along narrow streets. We rode down the Dordogne, only to turn, after about four miles, onto another tributary, the Vézère.

We would be on the Vézère for two days with stops at Limeuil, Caverne de Bara-Bahau, le Bugue, les Eyzies, la Roque St Christophe, St. Leon, Montignac, and Grotte de Lascaux. Each of these spots--small villages, stone cave carvings, cave paintings, cliff dwellings, fortresses, chateaux, and one town labeled, "One of the Most Beautiful Villages of France"--were stops on our tour. They offered scenes that I remember: flowers, architecture, history, rolling hills, green fields, and reflections in slow water.

Before stopping for lunch we turned up a hill in search of the pre-historic cave drawings in the Caverne de Bara-Bahau. After a long, slow, steep climb, we arrived at the cave opening and paid the \$6 admission fee. For this we got a private tour--we were the only ones there. The hundred-yard-long caves boast flint-carved drawings that are from the

Magdalenian Culture or 10,000 to 15,000 years old. In the dark cave with a guide, model interpretive drawings, and special lighting, I had a hard time seeing pictures. But after our guide's 40-minute explanation and a struggle, I could make out the forms of horses, aurochs, bison, bears, and deer. Ten-thousand-year-old stone carvings made with flint or bear claws are not like pictures in National Geographic. This is the real France--our ancestors, the spirit of our past, and a cradle of our civilization.

Now hungry, we bicycled to the main square in le Bugue, population 2,764. Under an umbrella and sitting at a side-walk café next to the main road and the river, we ordered lunch. I ordered a salad Périgourdine.

SOURCES: To plan a trip like this buy a Michelin Red Guide and the detailed yellow Michelin maps. The Red Guide has everything you need to pick hotels and restaurants. I selected hotels with seven to twelve beds and a restaurant. That way we could have both breakfast and dinner in the same place. Fax in your hotel reservations. Avoid the Dordogne in July and August.

Mark Sohn
Indiana, Pennsylvania.

MEMO

TO: Stokers

FROM: Captain

Re: Union Settlement with TEAM 4CA

In addition to the usual rules for stokers, such as no shifting in the saddle without prior approval of the Captain, no complaining, no underwear, TEAM 4CA is pleased to announce the following settlement with the Stokers Union.

We have agreed to drop Rule 186.34: Back rubs and scratches for the Captain will no longer be mandatory and will be optional, depending upon the Captain's attitude as determined by the Stoker.

However, two additional rules (Rule 1,987,578.085 and Rule 1,987,578.086) have been added.:

Rule 1,987,578.085: Keep the Stoker happy.

Rule 1,987, 578.086: In the event of conflicts, see Rule 1,987,578.085.

Rule No. 1, (The captain is always right) has been discontinued because of widespread disregard of the rule.

Signed:
Richard R. Forcier
Captain,
TEAM 4CA



GERMANY, AUSTRIA AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

SEPTEMBER 1996

After spending the previous four summers bicycling in Alaska and the Canadian Rockies we decided to return to Europe in September 1996. As usual we made no reservations since that takes the adventure out of a trip and we are adventurers. We bicycled in Germany, Austria, and the Czech Republic and stayed at a variety of accommodations, beginning and ending at the home of friends in Munich.

Our friend's home is conveniently located near a wonderful bike path that led us out of the city and into the mountains. We bicycled five mountain passes in the Bavarian, Tyrolean and Zillertall Alps. The weather was cool, sometimes rainy, sometimes sunny, and the high peaks were snow covered. The scenery was glorious, our accommodations were comfortable, the food was good, the people were friendly, and we had a good time.

We had been to Germany and Austria before with a group, but this trip covered only a very small portion of our former route. This we were glad to do because it gave us the opportunity to bike Gerlos Pass, which we had driven in the sag wagon on our previous trip. We descended by a very different route than six years ago - a very narrow, curvy, exciting, spectacular route offering beautiful views of



You never know what you're going to meet coming down the road.



The bike paths are well signed in Germany and Austria - Marion Gorham

the valley below. Krimmel Falls, across the valley, was just a ribbon of water tumbling down the mountain. Six years ago we viewed it at close range. We also bicycled a mountain pass the group had wisely passed up six years ago because of cold rainy weather. To any of the group reading this, it's beautiful. Go back!

Although we enjoyed bicycling with the group, we're really a couple of adventurers who don't like being tied down to being in a certain place every night. On this trip, as on other trips we did not always find a place to stay on our first try, but we always found a place. It was on our third try in Krems that we found one of our best places, a brand new fully equipped apartment for the price of a room. We stayed two nights and cooked our own meals, which was a treat for us especially because we're vegetarians, and took the train into Vienna on our layover day.

Biking along the Traun and the Donau (Danube) Rivers we saw the effects of the heavy rains we had experienced earlier. In places the Traun overflowed the bike path and had been even higher, as indicated by the high water mark and the dead fish on the



path. The bike path along the Donau was impressive but somewhat boring; we liked the mountains better. Although we were very impressed by the bike path system throughout Germany and Austria, we sometimes left it for the hillsides. I remember especially the picturesque mediaeval town of Hall and other hillside villages and the wine country of the Wachau valley.

In Gmunden we met an American woman who noticed my REI pack and correctly assumed we were Americans. She lived and taught German to American college students. She suggested we join her and her daughters and friends for lunch and stay near them so after walking around Gmunden we bicycled back to Altmunster and joined them. That evening we went out with Maggi for Austrian pizza, much different from ours, and Austrian beer.

Speaking of beer, the best beer is in the Czech Republic. Its also inexpensive as is the food and lodging in the area along the German border. We stayed in the historic towns of Cesky Krumlov, Prachatice and Domazlice. Cesky Krumlov is a beautiful city which was declared a world historic site by UNESCO. Undamaged during World War II, it is a treasure. We spent an entire morning walking around the city and visiting its castle, which dominates the town, before leaving.

The Czech language is impossible but, luckily, in the cities most people speak either English or German. However, we had an interesting experience in the train station in Prachatice, where we decided because of the rain to hop the train to Domazlice. The baggage handlers grabbed our folded bicycle, wrote some numbers on a piece of paper in an



attempt to explain something to us and placed our folded Montague tandem on a baggage cart. Meanwhile, Al talked with a conductor who spoke some English and told him when the next train arrived. The train came, the conductor motioned to us, but the bike sat. We were not about to be separated from our bicycle so Al grabbed it off the baggage cart, ran down the platform with the bicycle under one arm, our panniers under the other, boarded the last car and stashed the bicycle at the end of the car. It was a commuter train and the next train was a baggage train. However, the conductor let us get away with it, but the station officials were waiting at Domazlice for us and our baggage check to ascertain that Al was not a bicycle thief.

We had other interesting experiences as one does when one travels alone - the little lady in Zwettler, who wouldn't let us leave her house, which was like a museum, until she took a cake out of the oven and gave us two slices to take with us. She fed us on arrival; she fed us a big breakfast, and then the cake. She didn't speak any English and I couldn't understand her Austrian German but that didn't bother her. She kept up a running line of chatter the entire time we were there and we got along fine. We hugged each other with genuine affection when we parted. She was a dear.

Back in Germany our friends met us in Regensburg and took us to lunch at the Kloster Weltenburger, where the monks serve huge meals and make good beer, then back to Munich and the Oktoberfest (in September) and a train trip to Berlin to visit our friends' daughter, whom we had hosted while she was attending the University of Mass. in Amherst. Evelyn showed us East Germany and we had a wonderful visit before returning to Munich to fly home. It was a very interesting trip, we met many friendly and interesting people, stayed at a variety of interesting places, had many interesting conversations, and if we had it to do over again we'd do it the same way - no reservations, stop where we like when we like, change routes as we like, do as we like. We like adventure. (Incidentally, for those who don't know us, we are not a young couple - but we're young at heart. Al likes to tell people that the average age of the cyclists on this bicycle is 65 without stating our individual ages).

Marion Gorham & Albert Shane
Leverett, MA (near Amherst)



A TOUR OF CENTRAL ENGLAND

We just returned from a great trip to East Anglia! Where is that, you ask? It is the area northwest of London, England. A group of eight couples from the US set forth arriving in Worlington on Friday, August 22nd after a two hour ride from Heathrow. We managed eight people, luggage and five boxed cycles in one minibus thanks to some inventive packing.

Arriving at the hotel, we assembled the bikes, changed clothing, had a snack and left for a 20 mile warm-up ride. It really cleared the cobwebs, helped us get acclimated to English time and to riding on the left side of the road. We stopped at a lovely old English church with a round tower, rode through Newmarket and the surrounding horse country, and stopped at the Packhorse Bridge, built 700 years ago.

After supper, we all collapsed early, trying to recapture some of the lost sleep. English breakfasts offer any or all of: eggs, bacon, sausage, tomatoes, mushrooms, cereal, toast, jams, etc. This was certainly enough to sustain us for a morning ride.

Saturday, we rode as a group across the Fens, the flattest part of England. It is actually below sea level in many places and the water is pumped UP to the rivers. We visited the pump engine museum in Prickwillow and got the complete history of this land reclamation. The land is peat, which is formed when frequent flooding occurs. The dying vegetation does not completely decompose, forming peat. When they started controlling the flooding, the water, stored in the peat like a sponge, was sucked out, resulting in a lowering of the land. In addition, the vegetation continued the decomposition process, resulting in more droppage. Thus, the land is now 10-15 feet below what it was 300 years ago.

We continued on to Ely and its grand cathedral. We had "elevens" (morning tea and crumpets) at a lovely tea garden adjacent to the cathedral. Ina Thompson and Nancy visited the stained glass museum in the cathedral and enjoyed part of an organ recital in the process. Others visited the cathedral (built in 1189!) and a nearby market-place.

Returning east, we stopped at a pub on the river for lunch and met up with Keith and Diana, a couple

some of us had met on a previous trip to England. Continuing on, we were soon at Mildenhall and the cycle rally. The rally has participants from all over England camping for the weekend and participating in all manner of events. We watched some cycle-cross races as well as criterion type races on a grass track. All ages and manner of bikes were there. Tricycle races were particularly exciting and fun. Because most trikes have only one drive wheel in the back, they race clockwise around the track with their riders constantly leaning over the inside wheels to keep them on the track. We were also treated to a parade (in period costume) of a series of old pennyfarthings and other bicycles. Quite a sight.

Dinnertime. We do manage to eat. A typical English ride means breakfast, ride 10-15 miles to tea, ride 10-15 miles for a pub lunch, ride 10-15 more miles to afternoon tea (with Scones and clotted cream), and finally ride 10-15 more miles home for dinner. In essence, they ride to eat. Not a bad philosophy.

Sunday, some of the group rode to Ickworth House and Bury St. Edmonds while others chose to return to the rally for socializing and watching more racing. Ickworth House proved somewhat disappointing but Bury St. Edmonds was great. Downtown was closed to traffic due to cycle races. The cathedral was lovely as were the Abbey Gardens with its ruins and aviary.

Our leaders on this tour were Chris Davison and Ann and Alan Dodson. Ann and Alan ride a trike and Dave caught the bug. I decided to try it out before he ordered one. After riding around the block with Alan, I decided my knees would not allow the leaning required to corner such a vehicle. They really are quite a challenge to ride.

English rain greeted us the next morning as we set out. We were headed for Fakenham, 50 miles away and the rain continued. I guess it inspired us because we got to Oxburgh Hall 30 minutes before it opened. It was worth the wait for those who toured. The rest of us had "11's" and continued on.

We arrived in Swaffham in time to see a parade (it was a bank holiday). After lunch, the skies



lightened and we had clearing weather all the way to Fakenham. We traveled on very quiet roads through delightful villages and finished with a long down hill. Our hotel, the Wensum Lodge, was right on the river with ducks and all. Some of the rooms did not have windows but a nice opening skylight in the high ceiling.

The next morning dawned clear and the group headed out for the village of Little Walsingham, quaint and charming. We joined up with Rich Wolf and Ina and headed for Wells-Next-The-Sea while the others headed for Cley-Next-The-Sea, a little longer loop. We rode along the water front to the beach in Wells. They have some small colorful cabanas along the beach. Ina and I tested the water and found it cool. We lunched at the Ark Royal pub. (interesting names)

After lunch we headed to Holkham Hall, the home of the Earl of Leicester - 25,000 acres and a wonderful house, built in the 1700's. We toured it, and it was beautiful, with 20+ foot ceilings, artwork from the masters, wallcoverings that exude money. Yet, they have to open their home to visitors to pay the tax man.

We learned on our return that one of our group had broken two spokes. We also had been having more than our share of flats. There is an abundance of flint rock in the area which tends to work its way into your tires. Lesson learned: be sure you have good tires not worn ones!

Another 50 mile day, this time to Norwich. It started raining but soon stopped. We were joined by two couples from the Tandem Club of the UK who rode with us for the first half of the trip. They showed most everyone the way to Margaret's, a charming coffee stop in Baconsthorpe. Dave and I took a different route (nice way of saying we got lost) but we did manage to find Margaret's.

As we rode on toward Blick Hall the rain returned, but not as heavily. Blickling is a Jacobean masterpiece, with lots of wood and fine furniture. We felt it too dark and not as grand as Holkham Hall. As we left the saga of flats continued. Rich and Ina had a couple and we had another. Quite frustrating but at least we managed to improve our changing skills!

We entered Norwich via some bike paths and side roads as much as possible, thus avoiding major

traffic. The hotel was conveniently located near City Centre. Our second day in Norwich was a day off the bikes, sightseeing and doing laundry. We had intermittent light and heavy rain during the day. In the evening we all went to a Noel Coward play in a charming old theater. We enjoyed the play but didn't understand it.

We enjoyed a short 35 miles to Halesworth along the lovely English lanes. We stopped in Bungay for tea and browsing in antique stores. We were joined in Halesworth by Steve and Shelly Casagrande, who had toured with Chris several years ago. They are on assignment in Belgium and came to ride with us for the weekend. We enjoyed a delicious Italian meal at the Angel Hotel (our lodgings) that evening.

Our day trip from Halesworth took us to the coast and the lovely resort community of Aldeburgh. Many got "take away" (English version of TakeOut) lunch and enjoyed it by the sea. A highlight of the day's ride was a visit to the "House in the Clouds". This is a real three bedroom house perched atop a water tower. Seems they wanted to disguise the tower so they enclosed it in a wooden tower and built the house on top. People actually live there!

We agreed to start later the next morning so we could all check out the antique fair in town. The street was lined with booths and dealers. Most of us found a small treasure to take away. This was also the morning when the news of Princess Diana's accident shocked us all.

Our ride from Halesworth to Woodbridge took us through some delightful farm land before descending into Woodbridge. We stopped a winery for tea and then visited Framlingham Castle and had lunch. More of those lovely quiet lanes led us into Woodbridge. The Bull Hotel was headquarters in Woodbridge but Dave and I had our B and B stay here. Jane and Neil were our hosts and they were delightful. Jane even offered her machine for laundry.

Woodbridge has a charming town center with flowers and period buildings around a central square. The Bull faced out on this square. As we started our day ride the next morning, we had a tail wind. It was great to cruise effortlessly at over 20 miles an hour. We even out ran a LARGE tractor. We arrived at Snape Malting (where do they get these



names?) for coffee and shopping. Dave got a great CD at a REAL BARGAIN.

Then it was on to Orford and a visit to a small but very interesting castle. We purchased some lunch items and gathered at the quay for lunch. We watched a family crabbing with string and bacon. They managed quite a few while we were there. They said it was just for the fun and they would release them along the beach later.

We hightailed it back to Woodbridge where some got to see the tide mill in operation. During the incoming tide the water is stored in a pond. After the tide has ebbed to some extent, the water is let out through the undershoot wheel which turns the mill stone. The next day we headed out for Lavenham. We stopped in Debenham for coffee and visited a pottery shop where they make novelty teapots. They had all kinds but only a couple of us succumbed to buying. A pub lunch and three hills brought us to Lavenham and yet another Angel Hotel. I might add that the last turn to the hotel was the steepest hill we had encountered thus far. Fortunately it was very short.

The next day most of us took the walking tour of Lavenham and then took the bus to Long Melford

for browsing in antique stores. The antique part proved disappointing but the day was fun. Dave walked the 4 miles between towns. In the afternoon we toured the Guild Hall in the Town Centre. That night, after supper several of the group decided to play charades. A good time was had by all, not to mention some pretty funny actions.

Our last day of riding brought us back to Worlingham. Bikes were packed, stories exchanged and bags packed. We enjoyed our final dinner together, and Chris presented us with awards. I can't remember who all got what, but I know Rich and Lindy won for being first at the hotel each day, and Rich and Ina won for enjoying the most food at tea stops. We were awarded the prize for the best hill climbers. In summary we averaged 35 to 50 flat to gentle rolling miles per day. Staying two nights at each hotel afforded more time for sightseeing in each area. We found the English to be delightful and very bike friendly. Traveling along the lanes is like nothing you've experienced nor are those tea shops and pubs!!

Dave & Nan Scofield
Warren, CT



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SHIFT / BRAKE LEVER UPGRADE

In recent years, one of the most significant improvements in road bike convenience and safety has been the combining of brake levers and gear shifters (Campagnolo's version is called Ergopower, while Shimano's is called STI). During the past two months, I have upgraded three single bikes and one tandem with these dual-control levers. One with Ergopower, and three with STI. I wanted to tell the TCA members who may have somewhat older road tandems that they should definitely consider upgrading their bikes with either STI or Ergopower. It is a wonderful improvement in both safety and convenience to be able to brake and shift without removing your hands from the bars. Our road tandem previously had Shimano bar-end shifters, but the STI levers are a vast improvement even over those. The dual-control levers make it much easier to captain a tandem, especially in heavy traffic with lots of starts and stops. On long rides, the levers greatly reduce the fatigue caused by reaching down hundreds of times to grasp the shift levers. In short, dual-control levers will make your riding safer, far more comfortable, and definitely more fun.

As far as the two systems go, I somewhat prefer the Ergopower over the Shimano. It is easier to get used to, and the front shifter is easier to "trim" as the chain line changes during rear gear shifts. The Shimano STI's are an excellent system, too, though. To keep the costs down for the Shimano conversions, I used the economical Shimano RSX levers for all

three bikes. These levers are not as sleek and smooth as the higher end models, but the RSX levers are very functional and will index with either 7 or 8 speed rear clusters. If your bike is an older one with a 6 speed freewheel, you may be able to convert it to a 7 speed by changing over to a 7 speed freewheel. This may require you to add a 1mm or 2mm flat washer under each rear axle locknut in order to get a bit more frame clearance for the seventh cog. In some cases, it may also require getting a slightly longer axle to ensure adequate axle engagement into the dropout slots, but I did not have to do this on any of the four bikes I upgraded. Sachs Aris makes a full line of 6, 7, and 8 speed freewheels in a wide range of gearing combinations that will index with both Campagnolo or Shimano derailleurs.

You may or may not have to change your derailleurs to get the indexing to work properly. On our tandem the rear Deore XT derailleur shifted just fine with the RSX levers and original freewheel. On the two single bike RSX conversions, I had to replace both rear derailleurs. On one I installed an RSX, and on the other one I used a Shimano 105 derailleur. Both of these derailleurs were the long-cage models, since they were combined with Sachs wide-range freewheels to provide adequate low and high gearing for climbing and descending the steep roads in our local mountains. On the single bike Campy conversion, the Ergo set came with a long-cage rear derailleur, which I mated to a wide-range Sachs freewheel to give that bike a good range of gearing for mountain riding, too (Younger riders may be able to get by with short cage rear derailleurs and closer gear spacing, but for those 40+ year old riders like my wife and I, we usually need those nice low gears to get our bikes up the steep climbs we like to ride!). The shifting mechanism of the Ergopower levers should work just fine with your original front derailleur. The RSX levers will index fine on double chainrings, but if you run a triple crankset, you may have to change out your front derailleur to get proper indexing without chain-rub. The RSX triple front derailleur works best with compact-style cranksets, so the extra-wide chain ring ratios on most



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tandems may be too much for the RSX derailleur to handle. But don't despair. Just install a Shimano 105 SC triple front derailleur and your RSX levers should handle the front shifting just fine. It may take a few test rides to get the derailleur adjustments dialed in just right.

One final consideration is how well the brake levers will work with cantilever and/or drum brakes. On our road tandem we have Shimano Deore XT cantilevers up front. For the rear, I have completely removed the cantilever brakes and use only an Arai drum brake (This combination works great. I am able to control both front and rear brakes, and having the drum on the rear means I can use that brake as a drag brake without overheating the rear rim. As I have detailed in previous letters to DoubleTalk I don't think it is a good idea to have the stoker operate any of the brakes because rapidly-changing road conditions may lead to an accident if the stoker doesn't apply and/or release the brakes quickly enough and/or with the correct amount of braking force for the situation. It's safer to let the captain be in control of all the bike's brakes because he or she is in the best position to appraise and react to the riding conditions and use the brakes as needed). Anyway, though, the RSX brake levers pull enough cable to operate both the cantilever brakes and drum brake just fine. The Ergopower levers were installed on a single bike with sidepull brakes, so I can't say if those levers would work well with cantilevers and/or drum brakes.

To conclude, if any other TCA members out there have been considering upgrading their bikes to dual-control levers, I say by all means do it! You will love the vastly improved ease of shifting, the improved safety and bike control, and you'll come back from those long rides with a smile on your face and much less fatigue and muscle soreness. Once you have dual-control levers on your bike, you may never want to go back to downtube or bar-end shifters again.

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RIDING IN THE JOURNEY OF HOPE

My 88-mile tandem ride Saturday was different in several ways. First, it was the longest I'd ever done on the tandem -- Carolyn's and my personal record is 60 miles from Springdale to Cedar City, Utah, which offered much prettier scenery and much more climbing. Second, it was more than twice the length of any ride I'd done so far this year. I'd gone 40.2 miles on my single bike a week before.

On Saturday, I joined "The Journey of Hope" as a guest rider. Pi Kappa Phi, a national Greek fraternity, began the Journey of Hope about 10 years ago as their philanthropic emphasis. They use it as a fund- and consciousness-raiser to help persons with handicapping conditions. The format is fairly simple. 60 riders leave San Francisco for a 63-day coast-to-coast bike ride. They ride together as far as Fallon, Nevada, and then split into a Northern and a Southern team. The Northern Team has been coming through Ft. Morgan on their way to

Nebraska for at least the last five years. For the last two years they've spent the night in the church where I am pastor. The leader had asked me if I wanted to be a guest rider on the leg from Ft. Morgan to Wray, Colorado, and I said I did. Then I asked him if anyone wanted to try stoking a tandem. He said he'd ask.

When he called two days before they arrived in Ft. Morgan, he said that when he asked about stoking 10 hands went up. I was excited about having people who'd been riding for 20 days and almost 2000 miles ready to stoke my tandem.

However, I did notice that the wind blew like stink the five days before the Journey arrived in our little town on the Eastern Plains of Colorado. Turned out that it had been blowing like stink ever since the riders had crossed the Sierras. They'd had day after day of headwind and, to make it all worse, on the day they arrived in Ft. Morgan, another guest rider (a Pi Kappa Phi alum who had done an earlier version of the ride) had led the whole group into a wrong turn, separating them from their support vehicles and adding 30 miles to what was scheduled to be a 75 mile day. The Journey of Hope riders were shot when they got here.

On Saturday morning, when I arrived at the church to join the group, I asked who the "loser" of the Stoke-a-Tandem contest was, and Michael, a communications major from Western Carolina State, said that he was the WINNER. Even though I offered to change pedals, so that he could use his clip-in pedals and cycling shoes, he insisted on riding in his tennis shoes and using my toe-clip equipped pedals (I may or may not be the last hold-out resisting clip-ins!).

After adjusting the stoker saddle and stem to fit Michael, we rode to the library park for the Journey of Hope puppet show -- a delight! It uses puppets with handicapping conditions (in this show there were puppets with Down's Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, and blindness) to try to communicate with the kids in the audience what it is like to have a handicapping condition and how it's possible for



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people to be friends with differently-abled persons. Judging by the reactions and questions of the audience, the show made the desired impact! In addition, our local bike shop and a civic club provided door prizes for the audience (bike helmets, water bottles, and stickers).

Finally, we started to ride. The first 10 miles, east on US34 to Brush, went quickly. I was fairly impressed as we passed several of the single bikers, picking up quite a train of draftees. By the time we got to Brush, we had the lead trio (according to stoker Michael, these guys were all "speed demons") in sight. A helpful coal train brought down the crossing guards, so we caught up. Then the fun began. East of Brush, 34 is in sand hill country with no trees. The wind began to blow and we had to work to maintain a 15mph pace on the flat. Plus it wasn't all flat, and the next 20 miles of road is very narrow. The white line IS the shoulder! Cattle trucks transporting a goodly number of the 4,000 head a day to be "processed" at the Excel plant in Ft. Morgan, made this portion of the ride exciting and made me appreciate Michael's steadiness and the stability of a tandem.

On one long gradual upgrade, we were averaging about 13mph and I had the unique experience of dropping the five people who had been drafting. I've dropped single bikes riding DOWNhill before, but never uphill! Support vehicles (three Saturn wagons provided by Saturn of America, a Dodge mini-van, and a full-size Dodge van) spotted themselves every five miles, so help and refreshment were as constant as the temptation to stop and get a break from the wind. It was blowing so hard that conversation was strained, even on a tandem! Michael and I resisted the temptation and rode at least ten miles between breaks.

That meant that we were the fourth bike into the lunch stop. Lunch was a longer break -- about an hour with sandwiches (by the way, I'd never thought about building sandwiches with tortillas instead of bread, but it's a delicious idea, and it's hard to squash a tortilla!), and whatever you call that Rice Krispy candy stuff, and a sinful fudge cookie that had been sent to share by parents and a girl-friend. Lunch also gave Michael and I time to decide that he needed the tandem-captain experience, so we adjusted saddles and stems and he led us out of the rest stop at Otis, Colorado. We wobbled from the

west end of Otis to the east end of Otis (only about 3/4 of a mile), before Michael decided that I needed to drive. I don't know how much of his difficulty was having an inexperienced and controlling stoker - - probably a good bit! After re-adjusting saddles and stems, we were the next-to-last bike out of Otis and began the long process of catching, dragging, and dropping single bikes (sounds like something you'd do in Windows with a mouse, doesn't it?).

The afternoon ground on. And on. And on. Past what the route scouts had dubbed "Cows-'O-Plenty" -- about five miles of feedlots on the upwind side of the road. There was one break when the road turned to the south to cross the railroad tracks, thus giving us a fairly good tailwind component for almost a mile. We got up to a maximum speed (for the whole ride) of 31.5 on the downhill off the underpass. But then it was back as a quartering headwind before shifting to a direct headwind for the last 10 miles into Wray. But we made it, with 12 of the singles behind us. The poor Pi Kappa Phi's had to look cheerful and happy as they met their hosts and moved quickly to a sumptuous pot-luck prepared by the citizens of Wray, followed by their puppet-show and then sleep. I got to get in the car with Carolyn and let her drive home. I had a nice nap and enjoyed the pizza before crashing for the night!

Phil Tarman
Ft. Morgan, CO





RACE THE TRACE WITH LANCE

Both Wendy and I were very excited about an upcoming ride, "Race the Trace with Lance Armstrong" a 60 mile ride on the Natchez Trace starting in Franklin, TN. Lance was coming to participate in a ride to benefit his cancer society. We couldn't decide whether to take the tandem or singles, as South of Nashville has quite a bit more climbing than our area North of Nashville. Being toward the end of the season, we decided we would just take the tandem and ride at our own pace.

We became even more excited about the ride than before when we got to the ride. Apparently Lance was going to be on a tandem with one of his doctors. "Maybe he'll slow down Lance on the climbs," I joked...

As 500 or so riders showed up to ride with Lance, we decided the best place for a tandem to start would be up front. Some people showed up just to ride, but most were there to ride next to Lance. Not to be in the middle of Star chasing mayhem, we pulled up in front of the cyclists swarming around the start line. As the announcer tells us to cheer for Lance, I look up to see Lance Armstrong pull a Lightspeed Titanium Tandem right in beside our Santana. Wearing his Cofidis jersey and shorts, his legs hadn't been shaved in several days. I wondered if he had been able to train much.

His doc mounts up. "I think my stoker wants to swap," I said. "I think Lance wants to swap," the doc said. His doctor is definitely not a novice, but I am still hoping he will slow Lance down a bit. We take off, and ride down a short flat section before turning onto the parkway. We climbed onto the parkway at a leisurely pace of 15-20 mph, riding toward the front to avoid all of the movement in the pack. Everyone wanted to be up front with Lance, and they were getting kind of squirrely. As we pulled up beside him, I began to think maybe the doc was slowing him down. Lance is breathing hard. In conversation with some of the other cyclists he states that he has had a hard time, and hasn't been able to train much. It all made sense, really. Since being diagnosed with testicular cancer last year, he had been through quite an ordeal recovering. No training, the unshaven legs, having to haul a

passenger up climbs - Wendy and I should have no trouble keeping up.

We top a small climb, there is a jeep in front of us slowing down to take pictures, and out of nowhere Lance puts the hammer down. Apparently the warm-up is over. He pulls into the oncoming lane on a slight downhill, and all the other cyclists squeeze together to get around the jeep. Cars are coming toward us, the jeep is in our lane, and Lance and the pack slide between the two. As we attempt to keep up, we are spinning out with our top gear of 53x12, and my stoker says the speeds are in the 40's.

Not being able to accelerate fast enough to catch the back of the pack we let go by to avoid hitting the jeep, we chase. Speeds vary from 30-35 as we go forward with a bit of a tailwind, but Lance and those that could hang on slowly ride away. One of the organizers is riding a Ninja motorcycle, and allows us to motorpace behind him at 30+. We do this for 3 or 4 miles, but see we are not gaining any ground. Finally we join up with 2 other tandem teams and get back to our original plan to go our own pace.

When we get back to the start/finish area, we find out Lance and a small pack finished the first 30 miles in 1:06. That is over 27 mph! Even more astonishing, our friends who managed to stay with Lance said that he was real uncomfortable on the tandem, and couldn't even reach down to grab a water bottle. I personally can not imagine riding even 10 miles without water, much less at over 27 mph.

Some observations about the ride: This ride was way fun. I don't know what all Lance has been through in the last year with his cancer, but he sure did look fast to me as he drug his doctor over this ride. Regardless of what anyone says, all tandems aren't slow climbers

Robert & Wendy Wells
Springfield, TN.



ON THE ROAD AGAIN

We could not wait any longer. My wife (Joybelle) and I both enjoy camping and biking. We've both done a little bike camping and wanted to do more. But we now have two little boys age 2 and 3, Joshua and Justin. They both have been camping and in bicycle trailers quite often. But how could we carry two children and all our camping gear (not to mention diapers) on bicycles?

Here's how we did it. We have an older Santana tandem with a child stoker conversion kit on the rear for Justin. Both boys were able to ride on the back, but Joshua had only been doing it for 3 months or so. We had a rack on the front with panniers and a modified trailer in the rear. I used a department store child trailer, stripped it down to the frame and wheels and strapped on a large plastic storage container. It has a snap on lid to keep out water and handles to hang bags from and to strap other stuff to the top. It worked great.

Since we only had one tandem that could accommodate a child stoker conversion kit, Joybelle rode a single bike, pulling another trailer with Joshua in it. We considered a child seat on the rear of the bike but decided on a water resistant trailer in case the boys couldn't tolerate the inevitable rain, or if they both needed a nap at the same time. This bike also had a rack on the front with panniers. We use department store rear racks with the springy clamp-down thing removed. A little heavier, but much cheaper than the big name brands.

We carried sleeping bags, pads, tent, cook stove, cook set, clothes and many other smaller things. We had dish soap, laundry soap and body soap. Our food was purchased, and often eaten, at grocery stores along the way. We purchased one day's worth at a time. When this ran out we had a backup of pasta with garlic-salt and oatmeal with brown sugar that we carried the whole trip. Both are easy to prepare, light weight, and healthy.

I had been commuting to work 20 miles round trip for a few months. The four of us were riding 2-3 times per week, 5-10 miles per outing, usually with the boys in trailer. With all the extra weight and riding almost every day, we needed to keep the rides

relatively short, around 20 miles at a slow pace turned out to be comfortable.

We are fortunate to live near the Finger Lakes Region in Central New York and we mapped out a week long route around Cayuga Lake. We took a day before hand and rode the route on my motorcycle. We took notes on the campgrounds, the road conditions, mileage, stores, points of interest, etc. The longest distance between campgrounds was only 26 miles and the roads were good for the most part. The combination of lake, hills and small towns made for great scenery every where except for Ithaca. The whole city seemed to be under construction all at once. The total trip was around 120 miles.

HERE ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS

Day 1: We started a little shaky. Our first day, it rained and we spent one and a half hours at a McDonald's Playland. At the campground, Justin got stung by a bee. We set up camp, cooked dinner, showered and walked down by the lake. We witnessed a drunk falling off his golf cart.

Day 2: Packed up. Breakfast on the sidewalk of a small grocery store. Cereal with milk and bananas. Around our halfway point we came upon a blind man walking to raise money for a blind and deaf organization with a photographer covering the story. The photographer ended up taking around 20 pictures of us. We later found out that we were in the newspaper twice during the week.

We found a place to stop and the boys went skinny dipping in the lake. Then we met some monster hills into the campground. A friendly couple near the top let us rest on their lawn and gave us water. After we set up camp and showered we decided to ride to a small store for snacks, "just one mile" according to a car driving camper. It was 2+ miles all uphill. We were tired. Two lessons learned. Don't listen to gas guzzling road hog operators and don't ride any more than is necessary.

Day 3: This was our longest day, into Ithaca. We stopped at one of Finger Lakes famous wineries. There was a bird there that talked to us as well as played peak-a-boo on request. If you said "pretty



bird?' he would repeat your words and fluff his feathers to show you just how pretty.

Buttermilk Falls State Park has a short hill so steep that I needed to disconnect my gear trailer and push the tandem and the trailer separately.

Coincidentally, there was a couple in a site next to ours who were also bike camping on a tandem. They had good equipment and were able to fit all of it in panniers and on top of their racks. They had just purchased a Nashbar tandem and two pairs of Nashbar panniers that they were breaking in. They traveled 2-3 times further in a day. We sat around a fire talking for a couple of hours while the kids fell asleep in our arms.

Day 4: We stayed two nights at Buttermilk. We walked into town for lunch at a Chinese Buffet restaurant on our day off. Greasy fat. I loved it.

Day 5: Breakfast on the sidewalk in front of Tops Supermarket. We were entertained by a local woman giving us our own private sermon. She was there to buy 30 cans of Pringles Potato Chips because they were on sale. We stopped at a bike shop to get a tire for one of our trailers (almost worn to the tube), and a Flick Stand. They were out of that size tire and I learned that a Flick Stand won't fit on our Santana.

The hills on the way out of Ithaca weren't as bad as we thought, so we rode on to the next campground on our route. We stopped at the home of an older man who fixes bikes and sells them. He didn't have a tire the size we needed either, but I'm glad we stopped. He suggested an old tube on the inside of the tire and/or tape around the tire and rim. I could have spent days learning from him but we had to move on.

It rained as we arrived at the campground, so we cooked and ate pasta under a gazebo. The campground had the type of shower where you needed to hold the handle down in order to get water to come out. The temperature could not be adjusted either. First it was ice cold then it would bum you. It would have been more satisfying bathing in a mud puddle. The evening improved as the rain stopped and the bats came out to entertain us. No mosquitoes.

Day 6: We ate oatmeal at the camp, packed up the tent wet, and we were off to Cayuga State Park. It was an uneventful ride. After setting up camp, the

four of us did laundry out of the storage container we were using for a trailer. It must have been humid, because nothing would dry. There was a man riding an old single speed tandem around the park by himself. I stopped him to talk. He said he has never had a stoker on the tandem in the year and a half he has been riding it but he prefers it to his single bikes.

We walked along the beach and played in the sand. We dared to eat convenience store pizza surprise..... it was good.

Day 7: Breakfast was cereal at the convenient store on our way out. We then missed a turn but only 4 miles worth. We stayed this night at an R.V. resort. We set up camp in a field next to a playground, child heaven. Some friends of our met us there. That evening there was a country singer at the campground and the next morning was a special breakfast. On our way home. Many steep hills.

REAL BED. VARIETY OF FOOD. DRY SHOES. MOW THE LAWN.

JUSTIN'S QUOTE FROM THE ENTIRE NEXT WEEK "I WANT TO GO BIKIN' - CAMPIN"

Jim Allen
Syracuse, NY

WHO DOES WHAT

MEMBERS: Write articles, draw cartoons, send letters, host rides and rallies.

MEMBERSHIP: Collects dues, processes memberships.

AREA REPS: Local tandem information & local recruiters for TCA.

GRAPHICS DESIGNER: Artwork & graphics for DoubleTalk.

TREASURER: Money management, tax and financial reports. Pays the bills

MERCHANDISE: Sells T-shirts and any other TCA-approved merchandise that may be offered from time to time.

SECRETARY: Contact point between TCA and the outside world.

EDITOR: Edits your articles for DoubleTalk, accepts all advertising, and wants your mid-year address corrections.

When you contact one of these volunteers, seeking information about the TCA and/or tandem activities in the area, please be specific. Many of these individuals are also active in other bicycling organizations, and a SASE with no questions asked may never be returned.



BACKYARD TOUR- OUR INITIATION INTO TANDEMHOOD

We bought a Burley Samba in early June. Previous chief experience: riding 15 years with plenty of 100 mile days; typical trip: 670 miles in a week, riding with our son. Stoker experience: riding six months, maybe 5 to 7 miles in the park near our home; typical trip: none, other than occasional sag duty for his rides.

We found a wonderful place to practice riding the tandem. Almost every night after supper, we would head to the new beltway interstate being built near our home. It was a nice smooth road and the best part was no traffic other than other bikers, walkers, and in-line skaters. The first trip was only four miles with the stoker crying most of them. The chief insisted on longer and longer practices, so we went from four to six to eight to ten until an average night was 15 to 20 miles. By then, the stoker wasn't crying but getting used to longer rides without begging to stop and rest.

To practice riding on rural roads with traffic, we rode on a Tarheel Bike Club trip of 23 miles between two parks (on this ride we packed a gourmet picnic lunch which was served complete with lace tablecloth, silver, candlesticks, etc.) We even showed up at a pool party (26 miles) on the tandem. For that ride we traveled a lot of sidewalks because of high traffic roads.

Our first overnight trip with packs was a 116 mile round trip to Ocean Isle, North Carolina and this was on two 100 degree weather days.

After about 800 miles logged on the tandem, the chief decided we were ready for our first long trip. At the end of September we parked our truck in Bath, North Carolina and road a large circle on the North Carolina Coast, which included the Outer Banks. We rode from Bath to Bayboro to Beaufort to Cedar Island to Buxton to Nags Head to Mann's Harbor to Englehard to Belhaven to Bath in nine days, a total of 421 miles (including four ferry boat rides). Besides the distance, this ride included some

firsts; one day was 63 miles (previous practice was 58 miles in one day); stoker had never ridden in the rain (we rode over 30 miles the first day in the rain. The rest of the trip was in beautiful weather.) Stoker couldn't believe she "did the whole thing."

Everywhere we went cars honked, people waved and did "double takes" looks and everywhere we stopped, people asked where we were going, how far we had been, and asked questions about the tandem. The trip included everything from eating hot dogs while standing up in a convenience store to an expensive dinner in a nice restaurant. We stayed in everything from bed and breakfasts, small "dinky" motels and a couple of real nice motels. Since we were on the coast, the land was basically flat so we got no "coast time" down hills. To rest we had to stand up on the pedals or actually stop. A lot of stops were sitting on the railings of small bridges. We saw rural areas, ocean, lots of turtles in the swamps, nice little towns, side trips to an aquarium, museums, and discovered a lot of interesting places to eat. In all, it was a rewarding trip. We enjoyed each other, the scenery and the satisfaction of completing the trip as planned. From tears to 421 miles in just four months was an accomplishment for this new tandem team.

Oh, yes, we are in our middle fifties

Stella & Frank Burke
Charlotte, NC



TANDEM CALENDAR 1998

April 5, 1998. **Heart of Dixie Tandem Ride.** Birmingham, AL. Two distances, about 30 and about 45, lunch at a local restaurant follows the ride. Jack & Susan Goertz, (205) 991-7766 or goertz@mindspring.com

April 17-19, 1998. **NOTE DATE CORRECTION Alabama Tandem**

Weekend 1998. Fairhope, Alabama. Visit friendly, flower filled Fairhope, on the eastern shore of Mobile Bay. Three days of riding in rural mostly flat Baldwin County, (we will try to schedule 1 or 2 hills for an occasional b--- break). Hotel reservations with Fairhope Holiday Inn Express 1-800-465-4329. Mention Alabama tandem weekend. SASE to John & Mary Hodgkins, 356 South Church Street, Fairhope, AL 36532. (334-990-2551 (before 9pm CST) jrhodgkins@aol.com

May 1 - 3, 1998. **Southwest Tandem Rally '98.** Waco, TX. Waco is the home of Dr. Pepper soft drinks and the oldest suspension bridge west of the Mississippi River as well as Baylor University. HATS are the hosts: www.ghg.com/currie or email mandsburdick@compuserve.com or SWTR, 611 E 18th, Houston, TX 77008. (713) 861-2254

May 22-25, 1998. **Northwest Tandem Rally '98.** Spokane, WA. "Rollin' on the River" Four days of wonderful riding, food and companionship. SASE 1998 Northwest Tandem Rally, 106 W 24th Ave, Spokane, WA 99203 (509) 747-4352 or www.eia.com/~bmurphy/sbc/nwtr.htm

May 23-30, 1998. **International Tandem Rally.** Moyaux, Normandy, France. About 400 participants are expected. There will be a variety of runs each day, from 40km to 100km, so suit everyone. The rally will be held at Camping le Colombier just outside Moyaux and additional accommodation in Gites and Canvas Holiday furnished tents is also available. email Carolyn.McHale@BTInternet.com or http://www.tandem-club.org.uk

May 22-25, 1998. **16th Annual Kent County Spring Fling.** An annual pleaser with dancing and sailing available besides the usual friends and food. SASE to KCSF 98, 123 Goucher Way, Churchville, MD 21028. Dwight & Phyllis (410) 836-2271

May 22-25, 1998. **GEAR South.** Johnson City, TN. An annual LAB event moves to a new location in the Tennessee hills (and valleys). League of American Bicyclists, 1612 K St NW, Suite 401, Washington, DC 20006. (202)-822-1333.

June 12-14, 1998. **Prairie State Tandem Rally.** Rockford, Illinois. "Riding with the Raptors", 20 - 70 mile rides. Host hotel is the Clock Tower Resort in Rockford, IL \$75.00 per team includes banquet, lunch, breakfast, snacks, sag, route markings and entertainment. SASE to Jean & Fred Kennerly, 1619 Arden Ave, Rockford, IL 61107; (815) 398-6861

August 1-2, 1998. **6th Annual Southern Tier Tandem Weekend.** Elmira NY. Ride, eat and have fun in the southern Finger Lakes area of NY. Rides range from 18 miles to metric centuries both days. BBQ and swim party following the rides each day. SASE to STTR c/o Rich Shapiro, 850 W Clinton St, Elmira, NY 14905. (607) 734-2372. email RSHAPIRO@STNY.LRUN.COM

August 7-9, 1998. **Iowa PIGS Rally.** Davenport, IA. More information will follow. SASE to Sharon Harrington, 309 Valley Ridge Rd, Blue Grass, IA 52726. (319) 381-1427 evenings

August 7-9, 1998. **Eastern Tandem Rally 1998.** Fitchburg, MA. Again this year ETR will be hotel based. SASE to ETR '98, Brad & Diane, P.O. Box 853, Ashburnham, MA 01430

August 14-17, 1998. **GEAR Wellsley,** MA. League of American Bicyclists, 1612 K St NW, Suite 401, Washington, DC 20006. (202)-822-1333.

September 4-7, **Midwest Tandem Rally 1998.** Omaha, Nebraska. Omaha Peddlers Bicycle Club invites all tandem enthusiasts to Omaha, Nebraska for the 1998 Tandem Rally.

Host hotel is the Red Lion Hotel (800-547-8010). Mention MTR98 to get the group rate.

October 2-4, 1998. **Fall Allegany Ride for Tandems (FART V).** Off road MTB weekend at Allegany State Park, Salamanca NY. Private rooms. All meals on your own. Riging XC ski trails, horse trails and dirt roads. Technically not difficult, but be prepared to climb. Registration \$50 per team before July 30, \$60 per team after July 30. For more info, Karen & Brian Managan, 1134 Wall Rd, Webster, NY 14580. (716) 872-1751 or hey_managan@mlsonline.com www.netacc.net/~managan/fart

October 23-25, 1998. **20th Southern Tandem Rally.** Selma, Alabama. Great riding Friday, Saturday and Sunday on rural roads and in a beautiful historic town. Enjoy real southern Bar-B-Que Saturday and Sunday brunch in antebellum White Force Cottage. Registration forms available in early 1998. SASE to Jack & Susan Goertz, 2220 Vanessa Dr, Birmingham, AL 35242. (205) 991-7766

The TANDEM CLUB OF AMERICA wants to list your rides in the TANDEM CALENDAR. Rally and Ride Organizers, please send the information about your tandem events to:

DoubleTalk Calendar
Jack & Susan Goertz
2220 Vanessa Drive
Birmingham, AL 35242

e-mail: tca_of_a@mindspring.com

Please limit your TCA Calendar listings to TANDEM-specific events, or tours/races with tandem classes. Thanks. -- the Editors



CLASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE: 1993 Gordon Borthwick Soft Ride Tandem. Beautiful custom green/violet/purple paint. Lots of Phil Wood components / Mathauser hydraulic brakes. 21 speed. Custom built for people 6' 2 to 5'7". 1 owner before us. Paid \$2700. Call (414) 757-6193 (WI) 1/98

FOR SALE: 1991 Santana Arriva 62x56. Shimano Deore cranks, 48 spoke, Shimano bar cons, Deore LX ft/rr derailleur, hydra-post rear seat post, rear rack, Cateye cyclometer. \$1900. Bike is in Akron, OH. Phone (3330) 836-3679, evenings or e-mail jwagnitz@scs.summit.k12.oh.us (OH) 1/98

FOR SALE: 1993 Santana Sovereign, 56x53, Lumina Red, 48-spoke Edco hubs, cantilever and drum brakes, STR rear and ST front derailleurs, Shimano Bar-con index shifters, adjustable stoker stem, shock-absorbing stoker seatpost. \$2200: Jan & Ken Absher, (509) 627-0227 e-mail yangjan@aol.com (WA) 1/98

FOR SALE: 1989 Cannondale 23x21, Blue anodized finish, 21 speed, suntour barcons, 700c 48 spoke Phil Wood hubs, arai drum, scott cantilever brakes, goretex cables, Coda shockpost, \$1600. Jim or Penny Speck (405) 842-3055 e-mail speck@qns.com (OK) 1/98

FOR SALE: Gary Fisher Gemini. 19x17 True Temper Cr-Mo frame with 26" wheels. Converted to enduro style road bike. Recent overhaul with many new parts and upgrades. \$1195. Bernie and Colleen Derry, (802) 878-5785 evenings or e-mail derry@together.net (VT) 1/98

FOR SALE: 1993 Santana Vision, 18"x16" (hard to find), 26" wheels w/road tires, 40hole Edco Hyperglide 7spd hubs, Shimano Deore XT (21spd) w/Barend shifters and road bars. Tahitian Blue, like new <-<500 miles. Can be used on or off road. \$1600+ship rx31035@deere.com or (319) 266-9505 (IA) 1/98

FOR SALE: 1992 Burley Duet, Shock-absorbing seatpost for stoker, handlebar bag, cyclocomputer, toeclips & straps. Ideal bike for a new tandem team. \$1000. Burt & Diane, Cherry Hill, NJ. (609)-667-8757 or e-mail to BIKR2TH@aol.com 3/98

FOR SALE: 21-speed Yokota "Grizzly Peak" tandem. 23"x21". Ridden less than 1000 miles. Sacrifice for \$850. Mark Harris (704)-264-6906 (Boone, NC). 3/98

WANTED: Rans Screamer Recumbent, must be in excellent condition. Also, **FOR SALE:** 2 Bike-E's, blue 21-speed, only 3 months old. Like new. May trade. Give a call (561)-547-6030 or send an e-mail to lar1lisa1@aol.com 3/98

FOR SALE: 26" 48h wheelset. Sansin sealed hubs, rear threaded for drum. Sun CRT 16ll rims with polished finish, DT 14/15/14 spokes. 135 mm for 7 spd freewheel \$200/set: 27" 48h Wolber M59 rims with dark anodized finish \$30/pair: Bernie and Colleen Derry, (802) 878-5785 evenings or e-mail derry@together.net (VT) 1/98

WANTED: Triple in good condition. If it includes two child stoker kits that is a plus. Captain is 6'1" Stoker is 5'7". Call Mitch Quade in Stoughton, WI (608) 873-7274 or e-mail quade@execpc.com (WI) 1/98

HELP OFFERED: Touring England in 1997? Let us make a good trip into a great holiday! We offer help and advice on

routes, accommodations, bikes by rail, and a great welcome! We're the touring directors for the Tandem Club (of the UK). Chris & Jenny Davison, Penny-Farthing, 124 Kings Road West, Swanage, Dorset, BH19 1HS England

HELP OFFERED: Touring Italy? Need news or tips about cycling in Italy? Contact Paolo Sarvito, V. Europa 4, 20057 Vedano Al Lambro, Italy

WANTED: Objective roadtests, with photos, of tandems built by quality frame-builders. Send articles, photos (prints only), etc. to Jack & Susan Goertz, Editors of *DoubleTalk*.

WANTED: Volunteer artist(s) to prepare sketches, cartoons, and illustrations to Jack & Susan Goertz, 2220 Vanessa Drive Birmingham, AL 35242-4430.

Classified advertising rates available upon request. Send a SASE to the Editors. Non-commercial Classifieds are free to TCA Members. Please include your member # with your ad.

TANDEM RACES



January 2-5, 1998. New Zealand Tandem Stage Race. Nelson-Blenheim region at the top of the South Island. Seven races over four days. Frith Brown e-mail frith@centralpower.co.nz or contact race co-ordinator: Mike Gane, Stoke Cycle Centre, ++64 3 5476361

Send your race listings to the DoubleTalk Editors Now!

DoubleTalk Race Calendar

Jack & Susan Goertz

2220 Vanessa Drive

Birmingham, AL 35242



TCA Tandem Hospitality Homes

Are you willing to become a TCA Hospitality Home? If so please fill out the form to the right. If you would like to discuss what's involved, give Bill or Billie a call and talk about it.

A Hospitality Home provides touring cyclists a place to stay for a night. It need not be fancy,, a spare bedroom or even a tent site will do. The cyclist will need shower facilities and an opportunity to launder their clothes and a meal. The touring cyclist will call you well in advance and make arrangements; no surprises.

Bill or Billie Routh

e-mail routh@mypobox.com

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2510 Lake Shore Dr
Greensboro, NC 27407

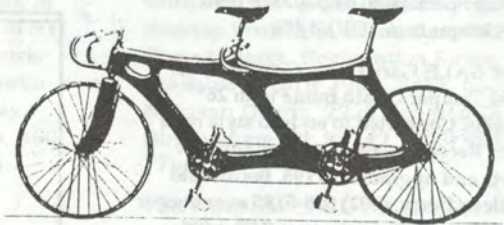
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TANDEMS, LIMITED. Free Catalog. Stocking America's finest tandems/parts. Call to discuss wheels, kidbacks, upgrades or tour support. Test rides by appointment. 2220 Vanessa Drive, Birmingham, AL 35242-4430. (205)-991-5519 e-mail: tandems@mindspring.com 01/98 (431)

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TOTALLY TANDEMS! Your one-call source for the best tandem parts, precision-built wheels, hard-to-find parts, expert advice. FREE CATALOG! 1-800-255-0576 or tandems@netins.net. TOTALLY TANDEMS, INC., P.O. Box 1661, Marshalltown, IA 50158-7661. 05/98 (11324)

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ULTRALIGHT bicycle mirrors for glasses or helmet. Stable, artistic. \$14postpaid. Handcrafted movable, accurate, sterling & 14k tandem jewelry by Chuck Harris. Tandem Embroidered sweatshirts, \$29 pp. Box 363, Gambier, OH 43022. (614)-427-3404 9/98 (53747)

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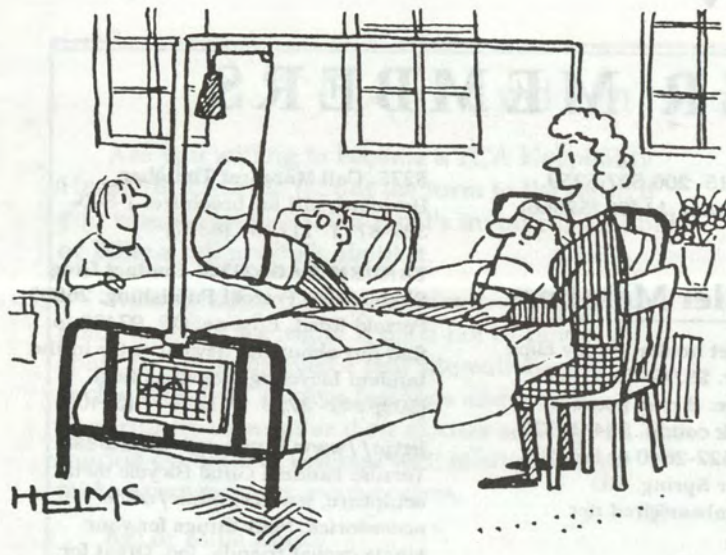
\$275. Call Margaret Thatcher, Brainerd, MN for brochure. 1-800-337-8771 11/98 (8397)

TANDEM MAGAZINE. Contact Greg Shepherd @ Petzold Publishing, 26895 Petzold Road, Eugene, OR 97402 to find out about the newest entry in the tandem bicycling magazine field. (503)-342-3723. 11/98 (51405)

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Tandem Club of America

Bruce & Judi Bachelder

306 W Union St

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Membership No. (from your mailing label) : _____

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Is this a renewal? _____ Have you made any necessary corrections? _____

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