



# The Long Road

Newsletter for members of Randonneurs Ontario

The Long Road

Volume 23 Issue 8

July/August 2006

## The Dempster Highway, a ride of a lifetime

Finally, after 3 years of planning and false starts, a tour that would take me north of the Arctic Circle and to the "Top of the World", as Inuvik bills itself, came into being. The trip was much harder than I expected but having Bob Waddell along as touring companion, friend, medic and photographer (not to mention his job as a rolling grocery cart), made the tour so much more enjoyable.

Bob arrived in Ottawa on July 4th with a car load of touring gear which he proudly littered across the floor of my once spacious living room. We got down to the business of packing and to Bob's dismay, left a large pile of items that were to stay out of his panniers. We agreed that he would carry the groceries, and I, the tent. This left Bob 5-7 lbs heavier than myself, but reasoning that he, being the man and I, being the delicate flower, more than made up for the weight difference.

We arrived in Whitehorse on July 7th and on the morning of the the 9th, began our tour up the Klondike Hwy through Carmacks and Steward Crossing. The majority of our nights were spend in Territorial campgrounds along the way and our first stop was almost 200 kms north at Tachun Lake. We had been hit by a torrential rain for the last 5 kms while screaming downhill to the campground, and arrived cold and wet. We rode the bikes directly into the shelter where a group of 6 German tourists had the stove roaring until it glowed red. Bob couldn't keep his eyes off the grilling filet mignons on the stove and I think I saw tears in them when I pulled out the "Chickpea Curry-In-A-Hurry". Bob's first experience with the kindness of strangers was when they offered us a cold beer and he had the weakness of mind to turn them down. That was the last time on tour he ever turned down anything that even remotely looked different than water or beans.

The second night was a blessing. We discovered a private campsite that offered showers

and laundry; the only two priorities in our lives other than food. The mosquitoes found us here at Steward Crossing and when we slipped into the tent at night (at 10:30 pm the sun was still hot and high in the sky), they covered the mesh in a blanket of black. DEET was used more frequently than soap on some nights. We found that if we climbed slower than 12 km/hr, the mosquitoes would terrorize us without the DEET. Eagle Plains and a low supply of DEET arrived at the same time. \$13 for a can of DeepWoods Off was more than reasonable at that time.

Day 3 found us at the Dempster Hwy Jct and civilization. Civilization being a gas station/ restaurant/ camping. It happened to be my birthday and we celebrated with a cold beer, Arctic Char and a caribou burger. Real food had never tasted so good! We gladly left the oatmeal and raisons packed on the following morning and had a breakfast of real eggs (the kind that don't come powdered in a pouch), toast and potatoes (the kind that don't need to be presoaked for 1/2 the day before cooking). From there on up, time no longer mattered and we lost track of what day it was.

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## Message from the President

It is hard to believe that the riding season is already winding down, with dark coming earlier, and a coolness in the air. Though after riding a series in the height of the heat of summer, the cool air is definitely welcome.

The club has had a yet another great season, with good participation on most of the rides. So far, only two brevets have been cancelled (much to ACPs dismay), but plenty of rides have had a great turnout. On average we have had almost 7 riders per brevet, with a maximum of 18 participants on a single ride. We have a new 600K brevet that by all accounts is not to be taken lightly, we had the only 2000K brevet held in the world for this year, and brevets from the past have been resurrected. This has provided a huge amount of diversity in rides to the schedule. All this in itself displays the continued enthusiasm for the club, but further indication comes from the anticipation of many members of PBP next year. I have spoken to many of you, and a large number seem to be planning to go to France; it looks to be shaping up to be our clubs biggest attendance ever. Even the 25 hotel rooms Isabelle has booked are all spoken for at this point, so if you are thinking of going, and haven't arranged anything yet, now is the time to start.

On a different level, the response to the Jersey competition was somewhat lacking, we only received one submission. We will be investigating getting this design made, and will hopefully have an artistic rendering and prices available at the AGM.

Speaking of the AGM, it is being held much earlier this year than usual, because we need to have our schedule for 2007 submitted to ACP by the end of September. So I hope to see a great turnout on Sept. 16th at 1PM at the Party room at 1101 Steeles Avenue West (the same location as last years AGM and Toronto area banquet). It is a great time to share your ideas for the schedule, express your opinions on how the club is running, and vote in (or vote out!) the Board of Directors. To that end, Peter has sent out the nomination form, and I have sent out the meeting notice and Proxy form. I hope lots

of people get nominated for Board positions. And remember, if you cannot attend in person, please fill out a proxy and give it to someone who is coming.

Coming back to my first point, the season may be on the downswing, but there are many more rides yet to come. But many of them still do not have organizers. If you have plans to attend an upcoming ride that currently doesn't have an organizer, please step up and fill the spot. The task is not onerous, and it is that kind of support that will keep the club running in the future. If you have any questions regarding organizing a ride, please do not hesitate to contact me. I hope to see a continued good turnout on the remaining rides of the season.

Sharp eyed people will have spotted that the last Presidents note came from Peter Leiss, not myself. I want to thank Peter for taking over the helm of the club while I was dealing with personal issues out east, and thank the entire board for keeping the club running smoothly. In fact I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have participated on the Board of Directors, both past and present. It is not always a fun role to have, but without a Board of Directors there would be no club.

Thanks for reading, thanks for riding, thanks for being part of the great sport of randonneuring.

Michael Thomson



The first 6 kms of the Dempster Hwy are paved with chip and seal. It was rough riding, but we knew that the next 760 would be gravel, so we savoured every minute of it. Gravel came, but surprisingly enough, the road was smooth and hard packed. "Ha! This is going to be easy" we thought as we rolled along at a healthy 26 km/hr. And it was, until the beginning of our 3rd day on the Dempster. From the beginning of the Ogilvie mountain pass until Inuvik, the road was difficult on the best of days. We encountered crushed shale, embedded stones that gave the road a cobblestone effect, loose silt that the wheels would sink into unexpectedly, and thick, loose gravel.

Yukoners are friendly folk. Everyone waves as they pass by. Everyone. People we met in campgrounds would greet us further up the road and come and chat with us when they saw us next. We were offered food, drinks, and hash. (I'd like to clarify that the only hash that would have appealed to us, was hash brown potatoes.) We had cars stop to ask if we needed anything or if everything was ok, when we were changing one of Bob's many flats (cheap tires!) We rode helter-skelter on the road and chose the best line for our bikes. When traffic came, we switched to whichever side of the road the dust didn't blow to. Truckers like it this way, and in fact, advised us to do so. We liked it this way too.

We met a few other cyclists going in or coming out. The



ones coming out were beaten men, warning us of bad roads ("very bad roads.....big stones, sharp stones, very loose gravel, very muddy, steep climbs....10-15%.....very bad roads"). We met the Belgian cyclist who on his way up, encountered high winds at the Arctic Circle, chained his bike to the sign post there and climbed into a bear proof garbage can to escape the winds. He was discovered 7 hours later, because the thing with those bear proof cans, is that once you get in, you can't get out. The 2 girls from Inuvik told us how it took them 11 hours to ride 45 kms with mountain

bikes on Wright Pass, the border that divides Yukon Territories and NWT. Wright pass is also known as "Hurricane Alley" to the truckers who've had their semi's flipped by the wind. The pass is now dubbed "Wrong Pass" by any cyclist who's had the misfortune to ride it. For almost 80 kms, the gravel was deep, loose and freshly laid. It was thick enough for bike tires to sink into and still not get a grip. We were climbing the pass at 6 km/hr and still slipping and sliding. It was frustrating and time consuming. Going down the other side was no easier. We were crawling down at the same speed that we climbed, when a gust of wind took the bike and I, and tossed us down. With me bleeding and hurt, Bob made his way back up and using anti-bacterial wipes, sopped up enough blood to apply a bandage, held in place by my arm warmer. We had never left any litter, no matter how small on the side of the road. We always carried it to the first garbage can we came across, even if it was 100 kms down the road. But here we stood with blood-soaked wipes in our hands. Bob looked at me and stated firmly, "I'm NOT carrying this bear bait". Those wipes may still be found under a large rock if you're so inclined to look. Bob flagged down a passing medic truck for the road crews shortly afterwards, and they took us to the camp. We showered and the medic dug the gravel out of the cuts, cleaned it with alcohol, set me up with 2 spare ice packs and a handful of bandages, then drove us to the nearest campground.....60 kms away. Thankyou Mike and Ben.

We averaged out the number of cars that passed us. On our first day on the Dempster, there were 8 per hour, on the second day, there were 7 per hour. It seemed that the further north we travelled, the fewer cars we saw. I remember 2 days in a row where we only saw one car per hour during the entire time that we were on the road.

We cooked in the shelters provided in all the Territorial Parks, and kept our supply of food safe from bears by lifting the back lid of those bear-proof cans and hiding it in there. (I guess that makes us Dempster-Dumpster-Divers.) We were eating twice as much food as planned. We couldn't get enough and were always hungry. Black beans and rice, lentils, chickpeas, oatmeal, cous-cous and TVP were all taking their toll. Human bodies should never be subjected to such rigorous amounts of fibre! By the end of the tour, Bob had lost 16 lbs and both of us had "issues" with gas at night in the close confines of the tent.

Our water we gathered directly from the many streams and rivers that crossed our path. On the first day, Bob (who had insisted on bringing along a water filtration pump), exhaustedly pumped enough water to fill our camelbaks and water bottles and pots for cooking our supper. He then added purification drops to kill off any bacteria. Finding that to take way too much energy, he began to use only the drops. That soon used up too much time



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## Up Coming Rides

### 2006 Toronto Chapter

#### Sunday September 3, 2006

Distance: 200K Start Time: 8:00 AM  
Start Point: Toronto  
Route: Mean Streets (Brevet)  
Organizer: TBD

#### Saturday September 9, 2006

Distance: 200K Start Time: 8:00 AM  
Start Point: Picton  
Route: Loyalist 200 - Club Ride (Brevet)  
Organizer: Steve Rheault

#### Sunday September 17, 2006

Distance: 110K Start Time: 10:00 AM  
Start Point: Kleinburg  
Route: Kleinburg-Belfountain (Populaire)  
Organizer: TBD

#### Sunday September 24, 2006

Distance: 100K Start Time: 10:00 AM  
Start Point: Maple  
Route: Champagne Scramble (Club Rally)  
Organizer: TBD

### Sunday October 1, 2006

Distance: 200K  
Start Time: 8:00 AM  
Start Point: Haliburton  
Route: Markham-Haliburton Offroad (Populaire)  
Organizer: TBD

### Sunday October 15, 2006

Distance: 80K  
Start Time: 10:00 AM  
Start Point: TBD  
Route: Brunch Ride (Populaire)  
Organizer: TBD

### 2006 Simcoe /Muskoka Chapter

#### Saturday September 23, 2006

Distance: 200K Start Time: 8:00 AM  
Start Point: Barrie  
Route: Big Chute (Brevet)  
Organizer: Isabelle Sheardown or 705-434-1637

#### Saturday September 30, 2006

Distance: 200K Start Time: 8:00 AM  
Start Point: Muskoka  
Route: Falling Leaves (Brevet)  
Organizer: Isabelle Sheardown or 705-434-1637

## 2006 Ottawa Chapter

### Saturday September 16, 2006

Distance: TBD  
 Start Time: 9:00 AM  
 Start Point: TBD  
 Route: TBD (Populaire)  
 Organizer: Real Prefontaine

### Saturday September 23, 2006

Distance: TBD  
 Start Time: 9:00 AM  
 Start Point: TBD  
 Route: TBD (Populaire)  
 Organizer: Doug Reid

### Saturday September 30, 2006

Distance: TBD  
 Start Time: 9:00 AM  
 Start Point: TBD  
 Route: TBD (Populaire)  
 Organizer: TBD

## 2006 Huron Chapter

### Saturday September 23, 2006

Distance: 200K  
 Start Time: 8:00 AM  
 Start Point: Port Elgin  
 Route: Big Bay 200 (Brevet)  
 Organizer: Carey Chappelle or 519-832-6657



and energy as well, and for the remainder of the tour, we just filled our bottles directly from the creeks. Water is clean and clear up north, and everyone uses it for drinking.

The mountains were pink with the profuse display of fireweed everywhere. We were constantly awestruck and stopping for photos. The north is so beautiful and the landscape changes dramatically with every bend in the road it would seem. We travelled through mountains that reminded me of RM 1200 but with steeper climbs, valleys that looked like ranches in Alberta, past ponds that were still showing off the ice of the past winter months and permafrost that was being pulled up in massive chunks of ice from only inches below the tundra. We rode by stunning mountains that displayed themselves as only grey stone, void of any foliage or colour, through forests of stunted trees and burnt out areas from the fire of '58, where the only evidence of renewal was fireweed. The scenery itself was worthy of the trip north on this deserted highway.

### Highlights of the tour?

-The elderly couple that gave us two huge slabs of dried fish when we stopped to chat to them at their fishing camp. We saw the freshly caught fish on the table, drying slabs on a wooden ladder-like structure, and a bear skin in the background.

-

The stories we heard along the way and the people we talked to. The northern community is so small that everyone knows everyone else, and stories of bikes travelling on the road travel faster than we do. The truckers and road crews refer to cycletourist as "Meals on Wheels".

-The unforgettable scene of a Dall sheep barrelling down a rubblely cliff with a wolf close behind and then having the wolf cross the road 20 feet in front of us, pause to glance at two dumbstruck cyclists standing there, and then carried on with his chase. Then to have them splash down the creek back towards us, at full speed. It was a scene I'll never forget.

-Cooking and eating lunch at the Arctic Circle in the outhouse, trying to escape the winds, and having a small girl run up only to stop dead in her tracks and run back to the van in shock.

-Riding into Whitehorse and seeing up close, an Eagle on her nest with chicks. The top of the tree where the nest had been built, had broken off from the weight of the nest and had fallen to the ground, dumping the chicks out. Hydro Yukon had used their equipment to wire the top of the tree back into place and re-settle the chicks back into the nest.

-The 24 hours of daylight. It was so easy to lose track of time and find ourselves riding at 10:30 pm, thinking it was only 5:00.

-The good company and support of my Bob trailer (even though I did have to wait on him at the top of most every hill).

Patti



## Coureur des Bois 1000

By Robert Kassel

I will not put this in chronological order, because something quite unusual (?) occurred on the Coureur des Bois 1000, and I will tell that part first, and some other highlights following. Hopefully I am not going to make too many errors in my sleep deprived state.

Bill Pye, ET and myself completed the 1000 at 03:30 this am, having departed Ottawa at 05:00 Saturday. A very beautiful course, but certain drawbacks - mostly some of the road conditions in Quebec, but also in Ontario.

Many people believe it's better to cycle in Quebec, because it's so much more popular, that the drivers are more courteous/careful. Well, here is what happened to Et and myself. On our return portion of the trip, about 40 km west of Quebec City, we are riding on a very busy road, with several long sections with no shoulder, and poor road quality so some parts of missing road to the right of the white line encroach on the roadway. ET and I are riding, for the most part, on the white line, along a straight section of road, about 4 pm. ET is in front of me (so I could push him instead of pull!), when without any warning a car, from behind, hits us. I am concentrating on following ET and staying to the right as far as possible when the next thing I know is this car hits my left had, and just grazes my thigh. He then hits ET in the leg, which was protected by his pannier, which just happened to be on the left side of his bike (mine was on the right side). How we weren't even knocked off the bikes, let alone seriously injured is not possible to be explained. I pulled over immediately, and ET a couple of seconds later, since my hand really hurt. The car never even slowed down. A young firefighter was driving a pick up pulling a boat, was right behind this guy and stopped right away. His friend was following him and he stopped also, and the firefighter instructed his friend to get the license number of the guilty car, so he left to do so. ET and I were just stunned. I took off my glove and there was a lot of swelling, but I was pretty confident nothing was broken, and ET barely had a bruise. The firefighter called the police, so we waited patiently and filled out a report with the officer. Since the car had some sort of temporary certificate and not license plate, they were not

sure if the would be able to find him, or find out who was actually driving. Most of the time that we were waiting and talking with the firefighter and police, all ET and I could think about was 2 things - one that we weren't killed, and mostly that we needed to get back on the bikes to make the next control!

Ok, here is some other stuff - Who would have thought that going east for 500 km would mean you would have to return 500 km westbound into a head wind? That was discouraging. But we didn't get rained on, and as I said initially, the ride itself was probably the most beautiful brevet I have been on. As you also know, the roads are a problem. Staying at Trois Riviere and Nicolet motels was also a positive experience, as they treated us very well. The route is mostly flat, but the distance and wind add up to make this a challenging trip.

Thanks to Bill Pye for keeping ET and I company. If you get a chance to ride with Bill, who often does the midweek Ottawa brevets, take it. I could tell you more (70 hours worth) but need to have a nap!

Bob

### *And another opinion of the ride* By Bill Pie

After reading Bob Kassel's report, you might be wondering where I was. At around 4:00 PM, I had stopped for a coke, gatorade and chocolate milk at a depanneur (that's what all variety stores are called in Quebec and a lot of Eastern Ontario). We played hare and hounds alot of the time. I had aerobars and was packed lighter than Bob and ET, so I would go on ahead and wait for them. I hardly used a cue sheet the whole trip, depending mostly on their GPS systems.

Well I waited, I used the bathroom. (Only one depanneur the whole trip did not have a bathroom available to the public.) Still no sign of Bob and ET,

**16<sup>th</sup> PARIS BREST PARIS Randonneur**

Organized by the AUDAX CLUB

**August 20th to 24th, 2007**<http://pbp.star-warz.net/EN/>

In August 2007, more than 4 000 randonneurs will gather in Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines to enter into the legend of the PARIS-BREST-PARIS (P.B.P.) Randonneur. Since 1931, thousands of randonneurs have tried their hand at the most famous brevet at “allure libre” (self paced rides), the 1200 km PBP, which must be completed in 90 hours, the present maximum time limit.

By entering this mythical ride, you will test your cycling agility and your human endurance. They will strive to obtain their Personal Best or they will try simply to rally the arrival... but they will always do their best to live this adventure while supporting each other and building friendships with those who participate in this endurance monument, which is much more than a simple hike. No place of honour, nor any podium, only the pleasure of the challenge alone will help them to overcome the suffering... and the magic moment of the arrival will obliterate the doubtful moments on the roads of Brittany or of Normandy. They will not be alone : they will be in the company of entrants from all over the world. They will appreciate the charms of France and they will be united by the same goal: to rally BREST and return to PARIS. They will not be alone : many spectators - or rather admirers – will encourage them throughout their journey, indeed will support them in attaining the fixed goal. They will appreciate also the hundreds of volunteers who will help them throughout the journey.

As always, the future of this event will be a function of everyone behavior on the road. Authorizations are difficult to obtain, so we ask for respecting the rules of the road and to always have safety in mind.

A big thanks to the city of **GUYANCOURT** and to the “Communaute d’agglomeration” of **SAINT-QUENTIN-en-YVELINES** who will welcome you for the departure and the arrival of this **16<sup>th</sup>PARIS-BREST-PARIS Randonneur** and who have put at our disposal their site and their competence to offer this event.

**Ride Results****Toronto:****August 6, 2006: Carden Plain 300K**

Paul Regan - 15:55

Michael Thomson - 12:10

**July 29, 2006: Tour of Southwest Ontario 600K**

Scott Chisholm - 38:35

Ken Dobb - 39:42

Marti du Plessis - 38:35

David Fallon - 39:00

Tristan Goguen - DNF

Ken Jobba - 38:07

Paul Kramer - 39:00

Glen Steen - 29:04

Erez Tamari - 38:07

Michael Thomson - 26:55

Thien Tran - 28:30

Shinya Yamada - 28:30

**July 15, 2006: Georgian Triangle 400K**

Brian Armstrong - 18:27

Tracy Barill - 20:11

David Buzzee - DNF

Scott Chisholm - 18:50

Ken Dobb - 24:06

Martie DuPlessis - 21:53

Dick Felton - 24:06

Ken Jobba - 18:50

Paul Jurbala - 21:42

Phil Piltch - 24:06

Steve Rheault - 21:33

Glenn Steen - 21:53

Michael Thomson - 18:50

Thien Tran - 20:11

Shinya Yamada - 18:50

**Saturday August 19, 2006**

Distance: 600K  
 Start Time: 6:00 AM  
 Start Point: Alliston  
 Route: March to the Nuke (Brevet)  
 Organizer: Isabelle Sheardown or 705-434-1637

**Saturday August 26, 2006**

Distance: 200K  
 Start Time: 8:00 AM  
 Start Point: Barrie  
 Route: Big Chute (Brevet)  
 Organizer: Isabelle Sheardown or 705-434-1637

**2006 Niagara Chapter****Sunday July 16, 2006**

Distance: 300  
 Start Time: TBD  
 Start Point: TBD  
 Route: Niagara 300  
 Organiser: vp-niagara

**Sunday August 6, 2006**

Distance: 200  
 Start Time: TBD  
 Start Point: TBD  
 Route: Niagara 200  
 Organiser: vp-niagara

**Lakes and Vines 300**

Just a quick report about this ride which took place this past Saturday. A rather large group of 15 left on this ride including five members from the Huron chapter. It was great to meet these people and especially to renew acquaintances with Carey and Rolph, two members who did a lot of Toronto area rides just a few years ago before going on to develop their own chapter.

The day was beautiful, on the hot side but after the rainy and cold conditions on some of the Spring brevets, there were no complaints.

Several people commented on how beautiful a route this was and how they wanted to be sure to do it again. A shady canopy on many stretches at the beginning and lots of water, Lakes Erie and Ontario, and the Welland canal. It was a great day to appreciate the scenery. I really liked that section between Lowbanks and Port Colborne, all along the shoreline. I forget the name of those large, wild orange flowers at the sides of the road and in the fields but they seemed to be in perfect bloom on Saturday. The other interesting thing I witnessed was Steve Rheault fashioning a spoke using three zip-ties. Ingenious! And it worked!

**Ride Results Continued****July 9, 2006: Maple-Orilia 200K**

Brian Armstrong - 8:45  
 Steve Beach - 9:47  
 Jerzy Dziadon - 9:40  
 Bruce Hogg - 9:47  
 Phil Piltch - 9:40  
 Steve Rheault - 10:40  
 John Saunders - 9:40

**July 8, 2006: Lakes & Vines 300K**

Brian Armstrong - 13:20  
 Carey Chappelle - 16:35  
 Dick Felton - 19:29  
 Mary Germaine - 19:29  
 Ralph Germaine - 19:29  
 Tristan Goguen - 18:14  
 Rolf Hauckwitz - 16:35  
 Joe Hill - 16:35  
 Ken Jobba - 15:30  
 Fred Krawiecki - 14:20  
 John Maccio - 16:35  
 Paul Regan - 16:35  
 Steve Rheault - 16:35  
 Thien Tran - 13:50  
 Shinya Yamada - 13:50

**Ottawa:****July 8, 2006: Coureur des Bois 1000**

Kassel Bob - 70:30  
 Pye Bill - 70:30  
 Tamari Erez - 70:30

**Simcoe-Muskoka:****July 1, 2006 - March to the Nuke 600K**

Belair Christian - 36:10  
 Dionne Louis - 37:00  
 Steen Glen - 36:24  
 Jobba Ken - DNF  
 Sherman Mike - DNF



I thought for a minute they had not seen my bike and had pushed on ahead. I debated on going back but I was still about a 120 to 130 km from the next control and bed. The wind was not letting up. I decided to push on and grab our room and pick up some food for the others.

Hours later my wife called me on my cell to tell me to call Bob. He told my wife wisely that they had been slowed up by the wind and mechanical problems. It was wise because before I had started my nine year old told me he thought a drunk driver would hit me during the ride. Anyway, I at least knew where Bob and ET were. Using the cue sheet I had almost thrown away I found the Motel. I had even managed to pick up some egg sandwiches for the others and cheese curds for me at a depanneur before it closed.

Next day, I discovered a personal nutritional fact. I fly on fat. After a huge breakfast in Pierreville, of 2 eggs, toast, 4 coffee, homefries, ham, 2 sausages and 2 bacon and feves au lard (pork and beans) and something white that looked a little like cabbage. I had lots of energy until I flatted just before we got to the ferry in Sorel. (we lost alot of time with the two ferries.).

After the ferry and another 40 km, I directed the guys to La Belle Province for some traditional Quebecois junk food. I tried to talk them into steamies all dressed (steamed hot dogs with mustard, relish, ketchup onions smothered in chopped cabbage) and fries but they went for healthier choices of a Texas burger and a club sandwich with fries. We did not get just an order of fries it was more like a shovel full. I flew after that meal.

My only regret is that I did not find a greasy spoon in Hawksburry. I ate healthy at Tim's with soup and donut. I will know better next time. The grease would have pushed me through better.

Anyway, for general information for next year's edition of this 1000 my wife and son have tentatively agreed to ride support. Checking into the motel's early and making sure there will be something to eat when you get in.

## ***Good, Bad and Lucky or Not***

***By Bill Pye***

I had my doubts about doing the Kingston 600, August 5th. My wife and son had bad feelings about this trip. They always meet me in Kingston after the first 400. I should have paid attention. My son had had a feeling I would get hit by a car during the Coureur du Bois 1000. I did not only because I pulled away from Bob Kassel and ET in the wind. When they were hit I would have been for sure.

It turned out everyone was right.

Initially, I checked to see if I could use the 1000 km Coureur du Bois as a 600. No such luck. At first, it seemed I would be riding alone. That had me thinking. Since I decided not to do BMB this year because it interfered with meetings and practises for my son; Andrew's first attempt at competitive hockey, I had not been training that hard. I did alot of kilometres on my fixed gear but did not do any hills.

I felt the difference last week during the Foymount 400, when I just could not get anything going through the hilly section. I am not the fastest climber but I get through and recover quickly, USUALLY. But not this time. I finished.

I decided two days before the ride to take my Bianchi. It would be it's last trip as a double with a 50-39 and a big 12-32 on the back. It started out as a 12 speed 70's, with campagnola components. I had upgraded the brakes and derailleurs. Still campy though and had recently installed a set of Veloce 8-speed shifters. They were designed for a triple so that was to be the next upgrade but I was still waiting for the right size bottom bracket. The mechanic who put it together for me had said 7 speed shimano wheels would work fine with them. I had ridden it for two weeks without a problem.

Saturday morning, at 0500 I started out with Mark Draper. I was quicker than Mark and pulled away. I had asked him if he had gotten a room Kingston. He said no and was going to ride through. I wanted to get to sleep in Kingston as soon as possible.

Everything went well until I missed a left hand turn on 22 coming into Hyndford. I had pedalled up the hills out of Hyndford when I realized what

I had done. Rather than backtracking I pushed on I think it was highway 60 to Eganville. It was all gradual uphill ,through construction but I made it gaining a 5 extra kilometres before the checkpoint.

I got over Foymount Hill even though I had to use just a 39x26 for most of it. My gears kept skipping when I put them any lower. At the top, of the hill I flipped the bike over and adjusted the gears so they would go to the 28 without a problem and the 32 with a little skipping.

About 10 kilometres later while standing and powering over a hill my chain broke for the first time. A link snapped. Fortunately, I had a chain breaker with me. I had to drop a couple of links but still could go on. Mark caught me. I passed him again.

After Schutt hill, the chain broke again. Fixed it dropped a couple of links. With each shortening of the chain my gearing was reduced. I had maybe three gears that rode well. There was alot of skipping otherwise. My old system of using bar end shifters on friction mode would have enabled me to adjust, but with indexing no such luck.

I tried my cell phone. No service. After several attempts, high atop a hill, I got through to my wife. The reception was bad. I said I was packing it in. I did not feel good about the chain. I asked her to pick me up in Denbigh. I told her I would try to make it to Denbigh. Big Mistake. After that hill, I entered the no cell service area stretching all the way to Maberly, over a 100 km by the cue sheet.

I got to Denbigh about 5:20. I should have stayed in one place. Instead, I went down to the chip stand on 41. Mark was there eating. I ate an order of fries and the last of my peanut butter tortillas. And attempted to use a landline to contact my wife. No service. She had to have entered the no cell land.

I circled Denbigh going up Bridge Street off the 41 and onto the 28 to the juncture of the two by the Swiss Inn/ Restaurant ( I should have told my wife to meet me there or at least have stayed there.) By 7:45 I had decided to go around one more time. No luck so I decided to continue towards Kingston expecting to see my wife along the way.

My wife had gotten to Denbigh at around 6:00 PM. She went to the General Store on Bridge Street. She went back up 28 to 514 looking for me.

Between 8:00 and 8:30, parked at the Swiss Inn/Restaurant at the juncture of 28 and 41, my wife said to my son "don't lock the door". He did and the car keys were locked in the car. They were forced to wait until 10:40 for CAA. During that time, the Inn closed. So they were left in the dark and cold with the mosqui-

toes.

Two different vans, a blue one and then a white one slowed to check them out while they were waiting. Streetwise, they pretended to go towards the rooms at the Inn like they had a place to stay and each time the van drove off.

Meanwhile, I had gotten to Vennacher and was on my way on the 509 to Plevna. It had just gotten dark and my chain broke again. I fixed it in the dark. Tired, unsure of my repair I tried to set myself up to sleep by the side of the road. Unfortunately, an overly curious fox kept checking me out.I remounted and rode part of the time and then dismounted and walked when I did not like the sound of the chain or when I thought I was so tired the I might fall off the bike. I finally made it to Plevna around 11:00 PM.

My wife had contacted the OPP to look for me at about 8:20. Unfortunately, she had forgotten the cue sheet I had given her back in the motel room in Kingston. She phoned the Days' Inn who gave her part of the information from the cue sheet over the phone. She didn't have a pen so she could only remember some of it. The hotel promised to fax the route to the OPP but didn't. When Teena spoke to the OPP at 11 they called the hotel & had the sheet faxed to them. They then told my wife that she shouldn't ride the route looking for me because they were doing it. She drove straight back to the hotel as instructed. But the police didn't actually drive the route until about 3 am. At that time they had 2 officers in the car & they drove the route slowly while looking for me. Another patrol car searched 28, 514 & 515 & the rest of the route. Still later the police tried to find me through GPS via my cell phone & would have if I hadn't turned it off to save the battery.

Meanwhile in Plevna about 11:00 PM, I had pulled into the lumberyard of the Home Hardware. I knew I needed to sleep off the ground away from bugs and animals. I selected a pallet of plywood sheets covered in plastic about 5 feet off the ground. The plastic was wet and cold. I found some cast off plastic wrappings in a scrap box,& made sure there were no bugs.

I put one sheet on top of the damp plastic covering. I opened my space blanket. I took my rear bag off my carrier to use as a pillow. I had earlier put on a sleeveless undershirt under my jersey, and put on arm and leg warmers. I put my rain jacket over that. I lay down with the space blanket over me and second sheet of plastic I had found over that. I ate, drank, used my puffer and settled down for a fitful sleep. I woke frequently from occasional cramps and from the cold when I discovered I had uncovered myself while shifting around.



Any police looking for me would have never seen me. I had camouflaged myself as part of the pallet of plywood and my bike was hidden out of sight amongst even higher pallets.

I got up about 7:00 AM. I had a gel, some fig newtons and lemonade and started pedalling. I knew from previous years that I would have cell service near Maberly.

I was seriously worried that something had happened to Teena and Andrew. At Palmerston Lake, I stopped used a phone booth and got through to Teena on her cell. They were surprised to hear from me. They thought I was dead. I yelled why had they not stayed put but then again I did not.

What a relief. We arranged to meet in Maberly where I knew there was cell service. I said meet at the juncture of 36 and Highway 7. I was still at least an hour from Maberly. Teena and Andrew had to contact the police and checkout.

I got to Maberly before they did and called them. They were at Sharbot Lake. I told them to look for the Ice Cream Parlour on the corner.

"Watch for the sign. NEW TAKEOUT MENU. "  
I went in and had a coffee and an ice cream.

When they picked me up, they told me the Days' Inn had not charged them for any of the long distance calls made to try and find me. They also told me an odd story that sometime during the night Mark had arrived at the Days' Inn and asked to stay in our room because Teena had picked me up and taken me back to Ottawa. Only problem was Andrew and Teena had not picked me up and I was sleeping on a pallet in Plevna.

Afterwards I realized I had ridden the worst of the trip. I might have been able to ride all the way to Kingston if I had not waited for Teena so long. I probably would have got in around two or three in the morning. I got in around two the previous year and rode the last 200 after a short sleep. It would have been quite a story riding most of the route almost single speed. But then again I think this was quite a story anyway.

I learned alot: pick a definite meeting place. eg. at the corner of 28 & 41  
stay put carry 2 space blankets  
leave my cell phone on  
may be get a GPS  
never neglect hill climbing

As for Super Randonneur, there is always next year better still Randonneur 5000.

Bill Pye

## *A Chance to Reflect*

Given the fact that I struggled mentally with just about every ride I participated on last year I thought it would do me some good to take a year off from Randonneuring in 06. I have struggled mentally with various rides in the past but, upon completion of said ride there was a sense of accomplishment. This was not the case in 05 it was more a, been there done that so the struggle continued.

Back in June, interest for LOL 1000 started to circulate on the List and it soon became evident that there was going to be a great group of riders participating. I thought that that might be of interest to me to accompany that group as I really enjoy the comraderie that appears to always accompany quadruple digit Brevets.

Up until the Geogian Triangle 400 (July 15) I had not ridden any ride beyond 155 kms. and only did that once - I thought that I better get out and see how the body would react to such a ramp-up in distance. I started the G T 400 with the idea if I finished OK but if not, no big deal - if nothing else it would be a good training ride and to add a little different dimension to the ride I opted to ride the off-road bike. For the most part the ride went very well with absolutely no apparent effects from a lack of training and kilometers on the legs. Ken, Michael, Shinya and myself actually "time trialed" down the best part of Jane Street to the finish in Concord which not only provided for a huge rush but, perhaps lulled me into a false sense of security. I followed the G T 400 up with three consecutive days of metric centuries to spin the legs out - the subsequent Friday I went out and did some speed training for 125 kms. - I took the following week off completely from the bike. I thought that the TSO 600 on the July 29th weekend would be a great final ride leading up to the LOL 1000 and since the G T 400 went so well with the off-road bike I figured "if it ain't broke don't fix it" - nothing could be farther from the truth - this proved to be the ride from hell for me - from the git-go I was perspiring profusely and although I did not appear to be working harder than normal my heart rate was in the stratosphere. I thought that I would crank things down a notch or two and see if things corrected themselves. They did not, in fact, things went from bad to worse. About 30 kms. shy of our first control (Tillsonburg) my legs started to cramp quite badly, Marti gave me some "cramp away" gel caps in Til. that she claimed she got from Africa and she assured me that these would work. I continued to battle cramps all the way to the next control (Port Stanley) and at one point on an ascent my legs just seized and it was all I could do to get off the bike. I battled leg cramps for over 100 kms. and they just would not go away.

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I thought I was hydrating enough but, learned upon my return home Sunday I was down at least 10 lbs. from where I should be. One of the difficulties which likely contributed to the cramps was that I was perspiring beyond what could evaporate - with the lack of evaporation your body does not get the required cooling and your core temperature begins to rise and the excess heat exacerbates the cramping problems you are already experiencing as the muscles are not getting the cooling they require.

About thirty kms. from the Strathroy control I started to experience saddle discomfort - got too bad to sit - I soon adopted the "hey Marti I need a 30 second break" - which was the time required to apply some salve - this type of stop started to repeat itself too often and I mastered the art of applying while riding.

At Strathroy we decided it to be futile to continue to Stratford for our scheduled sleep-stop and we opted for London as our stop - got in around 12:30 a.m. got a room with Ken and Marti - with a 94 km. jaunt to Stratford and a closing time in Stratford of 9:16 a.m. we opted for a 4:45 a.m. wake-up call - whilst lolli-gaggin around after the wake-up call we did not actually get rolling until 5:30 a.m. The three of us pedaled along with one rider unable to keep pace - after an hour I decided we had to go or risk missing the closing time of the Stratford control. Cramping was a non-issue for me this day but, the pain in my ass was ever-present and the applications of salve did nothing.

Marti and I rolled into Stratford at 9:05 a.m. - somehow or another we were able to maintain a sufficient enough pace to make the control with 10 minutes to spare - the resident nurse on the front desk at the "Nurse's Residence" (scheduled sleep-stop/bag drop) was more than accommodating to us, free showers, free breakfast and pretty much anything that we wanted - way above and beyond anything I have experienced for some time.

Battling the saddle sores the rest of the ride was all about survival and finishing.

Many thanks to Marti who without I would likely not have finished - somehow or another all of my riding experiences with Marti have been and always will be memorable.

Over the course of the last few days or so I have had a chance to reflect back on several mistakes I made leading up to the ride and during the ride - the most important lesson brought back to the fore is that I will not too soon take these Randonneuring rides so lightly - these distances need to be respected and one must not lose sight of that focus, as I did.

The saddle sores were the worst I've ever experienced, I have had abraisons before, not that big a deal - this was much worse, in fact I could not sit without discomfort in a lounge chair until late Thursday and these sores ultimately contributed to me having to bail on LOL this year - I apologize to my fellow riders who were counting on my company for the ride.

As some of you are aware the TSO 600 is a relatively flat route which contributes to more saddle time (at least for me) that one may normally experience - I prefer the routes that allow you an opportunity to get up and outta the saddle more often to allow for an increase in blood flow to the nether regions which you might not normally get whilst in the saddle.

Live and learn - as recently stated rarely make the same mistakes twice.

Scott Chisholm

## Notice of Annual General Meeting - Ontario Randonneurs

September 16th, 2006 at 13:00 hours

Meeting Room at 1101 Steeles Avenue West (corner of Bathurst)

