

The Wheel

October 2011
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The Newsletter of Reston Bicycle Club

Chairman's Message

By Dan Scafford

When members think of Reston Bike Club, they often do not realize how long the Club has existed. Next year is the 30th Anniversary of the Club and of the Reston Century. The Board is already planning special events to help celebrate this Anniversary. Next year will be special and I am hopeful we will continue to see the kind of participation we have been experiencing in recent years because the club needs your support to continue to serve its membership.

On Sunday -**Nov 13, 6-8 PM** we have our **ANNUAL MEETING** at **Artspace** in **Herndon**. At that meeting elections for board officers will be held for next year. Members interested in running for office should contact Craig Clark at cbike@verizon.net and let him know what office they would like to run for. Nominations can be made at the annual meeting as well. If you have any questions regarding the duties of the board, please do not hesitate to contact me at scrafford@aol.com.

Next year we are looking for ways to improve the rides. A committee has been formed, led by Chris Burgess, to look especially closely at the Tuesday/Thursday rides for ways to improve both safety and rider experience. We want to hear from members willing to share their ideas on how to improve these rides, which are such an integral part of our club.

Starting in January and running through May (weather permitting) there will be Sunday rides that focus on hill climbing. These rides will be used to train for popular Spring Centuries such as New York Gran Fondo, Assault on Mt. Mitchell, and Mountains of Misery. The Sunday rides will be advertised on our Web Site, but the time of the ride will be flexible due to weather concerns in the winter and early spring.

Finally, I regret that on October 2, 2011 there was a bike accident on the trail involving two of our members. I want to wish Alisdair and Steve speedy recoveries. We all look forward to riding with you again soon!

Ride Safely,

Dan



Police Complaints Board Proposes Steps to Improve the Safety of Bicyclists in the District

(Measures are also expected to lead to better relations with police officers)

Released by the DC Government on September 29th, 2011 and brought to our attention by RBC member Craig Clark

The Police Complaints Board (PCB), the governing body of the Office of the Police Complaints (OPC), today issued a report and set of recommendations to Mayor Vincent C. Gray, the Council of the District of Columbia (District Council), and Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) Chief Cathy L. Lanier urging MPD to implement changes that will improve the safety of bicyclists as well as relations between officers and those who ride bikes in the District.

In February 2011, the District Council's Committee on Public Safety and the Judiciary held a public hearing on police enforcement of pedestrian and bicycle safety laws. A number of public witnesses at the hearing expressed views that many MPD officers are not interviewing bicyclists injured in bicycle-motor vehicle crashes, are inadequately trained on the District's bike-related regulations, and do not vigorously enforce the laws prohibiting drivers from stopping, standing, or parking in bike lanes. Some of these concerns were also included in complaints lodged with OPC.

After conducting a review of MPD policies and practices, PCB recommends that the police department revise its written policy regarding traffic crashes to allow officers to leave crash investigations open until all necessary statements from witnesses and parties have been obtained. Officers should also be required to document the reasons for any missing statements.

The Board further proposes improved training for MPD officers on bicycle safety to eliminate any improper enforcement of the bicycle regulations. PCB urges MPD to solicit input from bicycle advocacy groups when revising the Department's training. (Cont. P. 3)

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Who's Who In Reston Bike Club

Chairman:

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Ride Level Descriptions

A - Aggressive riders. Grueling pace with sprints, 40 - 100 mi, 18 - 20+ mph avg.

B—Strong riders. Demanding pace, 25 - 75 mi, 14 - 18 mph avg.

C—Average riders. Moderate pace, 15 - 50 miles, 10 - 14 mph avg.

S—Social riders. Relaxed, casual tempo per group consensus

Welcome New And Returning Members

New

David Bush, Greg Chesterton, Laura Cross, Kevin Gollogly, Sally Gollogly, Robert Harford, Todd Hughes, Carlos Marino, Charles Marquez, Douglas McVicar, Carl Nasr, Matt Newman, David Saunders, John Steckel, Joan Tannen, Mary Tisch, Samuel White

Returning

David Alison, Craig Bryan, Brent DeRobertis, Michael Gibson, Kathleen Gibson, Allen Hobson, Mercia Hobson, Joe Knill, Christina McGarvey, Nick Orlans, Eduardo Ponce, Alan Rickard, Pedro Silva, Albert Sun, Rebekah Wagner, Aaron Ye

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RIDE SCHEDULE—OCTOBER

NOTE: Due to club insurance policies all participants on RBC rides must be current club members. Non-members may try a ride one time before joining.

Call Ride Leader to confirm information accuracy. Check the club website at RestonBikeClub for new rides and additional information. **If there is greater than a 50% chance of rain or if the forecast starting temperature is less than 40 degrees, the ride may be cancelled.**

Saturday Rides begin at **9:30**. These rides are impromptu and start in the parking lot across from the Caboose in downtown Herndon. Rides include A & B level riders and typically cover distances of 50+ miles. They are “no-drop” rides. First time riders please call: A/B - John Hamilton, 703-593-9384 or Randy Karn, 703-402-0227; C - Gaston Prudencio 703 906-7524.

(Cont. from P. 1 “Police Complaints Board...”)

Finally, to address concerns about tension and misunderstanding between bicyclists and police officers, PCB recommends that MPD increase its involvement in the District’s Bicycle Advisory Council (BAC), a task force that provides guidance to the city on bicycling issues. The Board also suggests that BAC take more steps to engage the public and actively advise MPD on bicycling matters.

“It’s important for those in the bicycling community to know that their concerns are being proactively addressed,” said Philip K. Eure, OPC’s executive director. “Better training, revised policies, and more effective communication can lead to improved cyclist-officer relations and fewer complaints against MPD members.”

To view a full copy of PCB’s full report and recommendations, visit our website at www.policecomplaints.dc.gov

Lost Art of the Group Ride

by [Peter Wilborn](#) on September 1, 2011 [Carolina Cycling News](#). Contributed by RBC member Rick Rowe

Every so often, I’ll ride a recreational [group ride](#). I love the camaraderie of cyclists, the talk, the last minute pumps of air, the clicking in, and the easy drifting out as a peloton. “I miss riding in a group,” I’ll think to myself.

The magic ends by mile 10. The group will surge, gap, and separate, only to regroup at every stop sign. I’ll hear fifteen repeated screams of “HOLE!” for every minor road imperfection. And then no mention of the actual hole. Some guy in front will set a PR for his 30 second pull. Wheels overlap, brakes are tapped, and some guy in the back will go across the yellow line and speed past the peloton for no apparent reason. A breakaway?!

(Cont. next page)



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(Cont. from previous page “...Group Ride”)

I curse under my breath, remembering why I always ride with only a few friends. Doesn't anyone else realize how dangerous this ride is? How bad it is for our reputation on the road? There are clear rules of ride etiquette, safety, and common sense. Does anyone here know the rules? Who is in charge?

But no one is in charge, and the chaotic group has no idea of how to ride together. As a [bike lawyer](#), I get the complaints from irritated drivers, concerned police, controversy-seeking journalists, and injured cyclists. It needs to get better, but the obstacles are real:

First, everyone is an expert these days. The internet and a power meter do not replace 50,000 miles of experience, but try telling that to a fit forty year-old, new to cycling, on a \$5000 bike. Or, god forbid, a triathlete. No one wants to be told what to do.

Second, the more experienced riders just want to drop the others and not be bothered. It is all about the workout, the ego boost, or riding with a subset of friends. But a group ride is neither a race nor cycling Darwinism. As riders get better, they seek to distinguish themselves by riding faster on more trendy bikes; but as riders get better they need to realize two things: 1) there is always someone faster, and 2) they have obligations as leaders. Cycling is not a never ending ladder, each step aspiring upwards, casting aspersions down. It is a club, and we should want to expand and improve our membership.

Third, different rides are advertised by average speed, but speed is only one part of the equation.

This approach makes speed the sole metric for judging a cyclist, and creates the false impression that a fit rider is a good one. Almost anyone can be somewhat fast on a bike, but few learn to be elegant, graceful cyclists.

Fourth, riding a bike well requires technique training. Good swimmers, for example, constantly work on form and drills; so should cyclists. Anyone remember the C.O.N.I. Manual or Eddie Borysewich's book? They are out-of-print, but their traditional approach to bike technique should not be lost. More emphasis was given on fluid pedaling and bike handling.

Before the internet, before custom bikes, and before Lance, it was done better. Learning to ride was an apprenticeship. The goal was to become a member of the peloton, not merely a guy who is sort of fast on a bike. Membership was the point, not to be the local Cat. 5 champ. You were invited to go on group ride if you showed a interest and a willingness to learn. You were uninvited if you did not. You learned the skills from directly from the leader, who took an interest in riding next to you on your first rides (and not next to his friends, like better riders do today). Here is some of what you learned:

- To ride for months each year in the small ring.
- To take your cycling shorts off immediately after a ride.
- To start with a humble bike, probably used.
- To pull without surging.
- To run rotating pace line drills and flick others through.
- To form an echelon.
- To ride through the top of a climb.
- To hold your line in a corner.

(Cont. next page)

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(Cont. from previous page "...Group ride")

To stand up smoothly and not throw your bike back.
 To give the person ahead of you on a climb a little more room to stand up.
 To respect the yellow line rule.
 To point out significant road problems.
 To brake less, especially in a pace line.
 To follow the wheel in front and not overlap.

The ride leader and his lieutenants were serious about their roles, because the safety of the group depended on you, the weakest link. If you did not follow the rules, you were chastised. Harshly. If you did, you became a member of something spectacular. The Peloton.

Peter Wilborn is a bike lawyer in Charleston, SC. He has represented cyclists and cycling groups since 1998 and is the founder of BikeLaw.com. He has been awarded Pro Bono Lawyer of the Year from the South Carolina Bar in 2006 and from the American Bar Association in 2007. He rides every day.

Pedals and Cleats

By Doug Baumgarten, M.S.

The foot-pedal interface is one of three critical contact points on the bicycle, the other two being the handlebars and the saddle. With all the shoe and pedal options on the market, how do you choose the best one for your riding style? How does the foot-pedal interface affect your power (i.e. speed) on the bike? More importantly, how do you relieve foot problems that you may get during, or after, long rides?

This month I'll examine the various pedal and cleat systems available. Choosing the right pedal is -- like most bike-component decisions -- somewhat a matter of preference. However, there are some characteristics to each type of pedal, that can help you choose wisely. First, there are three general categories of pedal types:

Flat pedal - yes, some riders are intimidated by clipless pedals, or even toe cages. These riders may prefer completely flat pedals, which don't hold the foot at all. Although easily used with any flat-soled shoe, this system is recommended only for limited, and slow-speed, leisure riding. If you're riding around the neighborhood with your children, or down the local store, this system may work well -- it allows for

quick stops and your feet can never get stuck on the pedal. A flat pedal may even work for low-power aerobic fitness work -- as on a stationary bicycle. However, this is not recommended for riding at any significant speed, for any significant distance, or at moderate-to-high intensity.

Toe cage - once the standard for competitive cyclists, the toe cage (or "toe clip") -- consisting of a toe "basket" and strap,

It is bulky, requires one-sided entry, can be difficult to secure, can be difficult to escape, and often doesn't fit the size/shape of your foot. The one advantage is the ability to wear any flat-soled shoes. This system is perhaps best-suited nowadays to stationary bike riding, when bike shoes and clipless pedal are not available.



Clipless pedals - now the standard for most serious cyclists, the "clipless" system seems misnamed -- it consists of cleats that "clip" into the pedals for a secure interface. The cleats attach securely to the bottoms of dedicated cycling shoes, which come with holes in the soles for the cleat screws. This system is certainly more powerful than the other two, as it allows firm contact between shoe and pedal throughout the pedal stroke. However, you must twist your foot to release the cleat from the pedal; for beginners, using this system takes practice to avoid being "stuck" to your pedals and falling when the bike comes to a stop. Fortunately, most clipless systems can be adjusted to be looser or tighter -- much like ski bindings -- so you can control the "escapability" of your cleats.

Finally, there are some pedals designed as "hybrids" between clipless and flat designs: one side of the pedal is flat and the other works with clipless cleats. This may be an option for those who use the same bike for casual recreation and longer workouts.

Clipless Pedals

For many years, the Shimano SPD pedal (see previous picture with clipless pedals) was the standard for clipless systems, used by virtually all serious road cyclists. Now, there are quite a number of popular clipless pedal systems. Unfortunately, each pedal requires a cleat to match. So, if you want to change from one system (or brand) to another, you'll need to change both pedals AND cleats. Let's look at three of the most popular systems now on the market:

SPD - pioneered by Shimano, the SPD system has the advantages of low cost, dual-sided entry [except in the hybrid pedals shown above], and little or no maintenance. It is also quite adjustable: the cleat can be moved around the shoe for optimal positioning; and can be tightened to the desired level for easy escape from the pedal. In recent years, this system has become more popular with mountain bikers -- it is quite durable and rugged -- and less popular with roadies, many of whom have shifted to more powerful pedaling systems. However, this system is still a great choice for any beginner who is unfamiliar with clipless pedals. However, some road cycling shoes no longer come with the proper (two) holes to mount these cleats: if you want these pedals for road cycling, make sure your shoes can accommodate them.



"Look" - Look is a French bike company that invented this new pedal system. Both pedals and cleats are roughly triangular in shape, and provide a more secure (i.e. more powerful) interface between shoe and pedal.

(Cont. next page)

("Pedals and Cleats" cont.)



Currently, Look is the most popular style of pedal for competitive road cyclists. It provides a very secure and stable fit with its cleat, so it allows very powerful pedaling with almost no energy lost. However, this system has several disadvantages compared to others: (a) it is secure but does not allow much "float," i.e. lateral rotation of the cleat, so some cyclists find it too restrictive and even injurious to their knees; (b) it requires one-sided entry: if the pedal is "face down," you can't clip in; (c) even when adjusted loose, it can be more difficult to escape than other systems; and (d) it is more expensive than the SPD system.

This system is a good choice for competitive cyclists who have experience with clipless pedals, want a secure interface, and have a smooth up-and-down pedaling motion. Once installed and adjusted properly, these pedals/cleats require little maintenance. However, this system would be less appropriate if you're inexperienced with clipless pedals; and have an unusual cycling motion which does not see your knees moving straight up and down throughout your stroke. Also, make sure that -- while pedaling -- your feet are able to rotate laterally ("float") a bit in both directions; the cleat should NOT be forcing your heel to come in or out from its natural pedaling position [see a professional fitter for help here].

In recent years, Shimano and Time are companies which have developed similar pedal systems, though the "Look" name is often still used for ANY pedals of this type. We have found Shimano's (SPD-SL) pedals to be a little more durable than Look's, though Look produces more (and lighter) varieties, including very light carbon models. Time has developed a system (iClick) which uses a flexible carbon blade instead of the springs found in most Look-style systems, but we haven't seen any great advantage to this system -- and the cleats have not been especially durable.

RBC Monthly Meetings

On the first Wednesday of every month the RBC conducts its monthly meeting, typically held at the Reston Public Library. Although these meetings are attended by club leaders, all club members are invited. If you would like to have greater input into how the club is run, if you want to find out what being a board member is all about, or if you just want to contribute your ideas and tell us what we could do better, please join us. Just call any board member (listed on page 2) for directions to the meeting.

We hope you'll join us!

Finally, bear in mind that you'll need 3-hole bike shoes designed to accept these cleats. Most road shoes now come standard with the 3 holes, but most mountain bike shoes do not.

Speedplay - Speedplay is an American company which has developed an entirely new style of pedal. The Speedplay pedals appear small and round, compared to other styles. The origin design of Speedplay was intended largely to provide more "float," i.e. to allow your foot to rotate laterally throughout the pedal stroke, providing less restricted freedom of motion. However, Speedplay now offers several models, including ones which limit the float -- similar to Look pedals. Like Look-style pedals, Speedplay offer a very secure interface between shoe and pedal, making for powerful pedaling. Very light models are available for those seeking every gram of weight savings. Speedplay cleats will fit on the same shoes (with 3 holes) as Look style cleats.



Unlike Look pedals, all Speedplay pedals can be entered from either side, providing added ease of entry. Speedplay also offers a "Light Action" model, which is designed for extremely easy entry and escape -- a great pedal for clipless beginners. Another nice feature of Speedplay is the ability to change pedal stance width -- they come in different lengths. So, if you're bigger than the average pro cyclist, you can accommodate a wider foot placement which will spare your feet and knees from excessive strain.

(Cont. page 8)



The PedalShop has left its Ashburn Location to go virtual. The services and merchandise will still be available through their website (below) In the meantime, they are looking for new tenants for their Ashburn location. Go to www.pedalshop.com for more information.

Dash to Delaplane

By

Paul “Paolo” Baker

On Sunday, September 25th, despite a foggy and misty morning, sixteen riders showed up for a ride, which, for this occasional ride leader, has become a yearly tradition. The A/B group was represented by eleven riders and the C group had five. I checked the Doppler Radar before leaving and it showed rain out around Winchester so, I held my breath that it wouldn't drift over towards Middleburg. As the riders began arriving and discussing what the weather held in store for us, we all found out pretty quickly as we headed out and the cool mist turned into a light rain. Luckily we had just enough of a warm-up in us that the rain felt warm and almost soothing and about forty minutes into the ride, as quickly as it came on, it stopped. Within an hour, the roads had all but dried. Welcome to weather in the Mid-Atlantic. The rest of the ride was quite pleasant and, as I am reminded year after year, the Blue Ridge has many beautiful looks it can display. On this day, it looked utterly picturesque, draped in low hanging clouds with the sun occasionally breaking thru the fog. It just added to the unique beauty of the Virginia country side that we are so fortunate to be able to take in on almost any given weekend.

We had three riders from the Leesburg area and they all seemed to really enjoy the ride. For the most part everyone stayed together, which allowed me to speak with the new riders about their abilities. And since I am a bit of a history buff, those who participate in the rides I lead, are often treated to a bit of the history surrounding a given area. For instance, did you know that Delaplane was originally known as Piedmont Station? It was renamed in honor of W.E. Delaplane, a prominent Ohio businessman, who had restored operations at the local general store, which had failed in the aftermath of the Civil War. Previously in 1861, General Stonewall Jackson had marched his troops from Winchester to the Delaplane train depot where they loaded onto rail cars and were transported to the first Battle of Manassas. That marked the first time in “modern” warfare that reinforcement troops were brought to a battle by train.

I hope you'll join us for next year's pleasant ride through some of Virginia's natural beauty while enjoying some conversation and maybe even a little history.

Paolo



("Pedals and Cleats" from page 6.)

Perhaps the only disadvantages of Speedplay pedals -- aside from cost -- are installation and maintenance. These pedals can be tricky to install properly: follow the directions carefully or seek professional assistance. Speedplay cleats can also be fickle to maintain: screws must be checked frequently for proper tightness; and dirt (or abrasion from walking on concrete) can severely hamper their performance and lifespan.

On the Horizon



It appears that Garmin and Look will be collaborating on a pedal that will have a power-meter built in. For those cyclists looking for power data from their bike, this promises to be welcome technological advance. Previous power meters have required extremely expensive cranksets or wheel hubs [e.g. SRM or Powertap]; or less accurate (if less expensive) indirect measurement tools [e.g. iBike or

Polar]. The new Garmin pedal will be expensive (\$1500), but easy to install and moveable from bike to bike. If you've been considering a power meter, you might want to wait for this product's expected launch in 2012.

When in doubt about pedal/cleat choices, you can get help from a good bike professional or fitter, who will be able to recommend the right pedal/cleat combination for your riding style. In a future article, we'll review bike shoes, insoles, and wedges -- all of which can affect your foot-pedal interface and determine your pedaling efficiency and comfort.

About the Author

Doug Baumgarten, M.S. is Director of Sportfit Lab in Herndon, Virginia (www.sportfit-lab.com). The lab provides performance testing, training, professional bike fitting, and custom bike design for cyclists, triathletes, and other recreational and competitive athletes.

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Attention Parents: Parents must sign a parental consent form for riders under the age of 18. Please request a copy of this form so young riders can present it when signing up for each ride. An adult family member must accompany children under 15.

What is your preferred day/time to ride? Saturday—Sunday—Weekday (AM—PM)

Are you interested in mountain biking? Yes No

Indicate areas you might be willing to help with: Lead Rides; Tours & Weekends;
 Annual RBC Century; Newsletter; Club Social Events; Data Entry; Triathlon;
 Education/Safety; Legislative Action; Membership; Phone Calls;
 Other _____

Club Rider Levels

RBC tries to cater to every level of cyclist. Please use this guide when completing your application and planning your rides.

- S Social riders.** Relaxed, casual pace; Distance & speed per group consensus
- C Average riders.** Moderate pace; 20 - 50 miles; 10 - 15 mph average
- B Strong riders.** Demanding pace; 25 - 75 miles; 15 - 18 mph average
- A Aggressive riders.** Grueling pace with sprints; 40 - 85 miles; 18 - 20+ mph average



Helmets are required on all RBC rides.



RESTON BICYCLE CLUB

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