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**2024 EVENT
CALENDARS
INSIDE!**



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NUTRITION

The Athlete's Kitchen: Coffee, Caffeine & Athletes—What to Know



Peak State Fit's Pat Casey prepares an espresso drink at their new bike and coffee shop in Salt Lake City, Utah. Photo by Dave Ittis

By Nancy Clark MSRD CSSD

Thankfully for millions of athletes around the globe, coffee can be enjoyed guilt-free as part of a

healthy sports diet. Coffee contains nutrient-dense plant compounds called phytochemicals that promote health and offer strong anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Studies suggest coffee can actually improve heart-health. That said, high coffee/caffeine intakes can trigger pre-existing cardiovascular conditions such as atrial fibrillation. And, needless to say, coffee brimming with sugar, flavorings, cream, and coffee whitener is not a part of this conversation!

Scientifically speaking, coffee and caffeine are two different substances. Caffeine is pure and comes in standardized doses (such as NoDoz, caffeinated chewing gum, caffeinated sports gels.). The average American consumes 165 to 230 mg.

caffeine per day—that's more-or-less the amount in two small (8-oz) cups coffee or a 16-oz Starbucks Grande. The caffeine content of coffee varies according to the type of bean, how it is roasted, ground, and brewed. Analysis of 20 commercial espressos reported the caffeine content was inconsistent and ranged between 50 to 320 mg per 8-ounce serving. FDA's recommended daily limit is 400 mg caffeine per day.

Although coffee is the most popular form of caffeine, other sources include:

- Tea: 30-50 mg caffeine/8 oz
- Cola: 30-40 gm/12-oz can
- Energy drinks: 100 mg/12-oz can Red Bull
- Energy bars: 80 mg/Verb Energy Bar

- Electrolyte tablets: 40 mg/tablet Nuun Sport + Caffeine
- Caffeinated chewing gum: 100mg/piece Rev Energy Gem

Caffeine appears quickly in the blood (within 5 to 45 minutes after ingestion). Its impact generally peaks within 15 to 120 minutes and the boost can last for ~4 to 6 hours. By that time, half of the caffeine has been metabolized by the liver. By 10 hours, caffeine generally will have been completely cleared from the bloodstream. Caffeine's impact varies widely person to person, depending on genes that influence the breakdown of caffeine. Athletes who are fast metabolizers of caffeine get an immediate boost. Others are slow metabolizers. Learn your body's response!

For athletes who already feel anxious before a competitive event, pre-exercise caffeine can put them over the edge by increasing jitters and anxiety levels. A better time to consume caffeine to enhance performance can be when the athlete starts to feel tired (as opposed to taking it an hour pre-exercise). Delaying caffeine use until the onset of fatigue gives a welcomed boost. Caffeinated gels, sports drinks or sports chewing gums are popular energizers during endurance exercise!

Given most athletes know that coffee/caffeine can make a workout seem easier, this article addresses other questions asked about this beloved morning wake-me-up-er and idolized afternoon energizer.

Do habitual coffee drinkers get the same performance benefits as non-users?

Yes. If you habitually drink coffee every day, you may need a higher dose of performance-enhancing caffeine than a coffee-abstainer. A proposed dose is about:

- 1-2 mg/lb (2-5/kg) for non-users
- 1.5-3 mg/lb (3-6 mg/kg) for average coffee drinkers
- 3-4.5 mg/lb (7-10 mg/kg). for heavy coffee drinkers.

For a 150-lb athlete, this ranges widely between 150-450 mg. per dose.

The days before your event,



Coffee contains nutrient-dense plant compounds called phytochemicals that promote health and offer strong anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Caffeine can boost physical and mental performance. Photo by Dave Ittis

there's no need to stop drinking coffee. You'll simply suffer through withdrawal symptoms like headaches. You won't get an added boost from abstinence followed by an event-day jolt of caffeine.

How much is too much coffee/caffeine?

The FDA's suggested 400-milligrams of caffeine per day is a safe dose for most adults. That's the amount in about four 8-oz cups (32 oz.) of coffee, 10 cans of cola, or four 12-ounce cans of Red Bull. If you are pregnant, abstaining from coffee will minimize the risk of miscarriage or other negative outcomes. A toxic amount is 1,200 mg caffeine taken in one dose. Unlikely to happen, but not impossible...

Does coffee/caffeine "work" for every type of athlete?

Yes, caffeine can effectively—and equally—help males and females, sprinters and endurance athletes, power athletes and teams. Athletes have sought-out caffeine for more than 100 years. It improves both physical and mental perfor-

Continued on page 5

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Summer/July 2024 Issue;
Volume 32 Number 5; Issue 251

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Distribution: Reliable Distribution, Denver Boulder Couriers, and others

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Printing: Transcript Bulletin Publishing

Cycling West and Cycling Utah is published eight times a year beginning in March through December.

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Cover Photo: Action at the 2024 Superior Morgul Circuit Race on May 19, 2024 in Boulder County, Colorado.

Photo by Ryan Muncy, ryanmuncy-photography.smugmug.com

MOUNTAIN BIKING

My South-Central Oregon Mountain Biking Vacation

By Tom Jow

This June my friends and I revisited two riding areas from our vacation last year. The first was the Spence Mountain trail network of Klamath Falls, Oregon. We planned to camp near the Shoalwater Bay trailhead, adjacent to Eagle Ridge County Park, about forty-five minutes north of downtown. Spence Mountain has a good mix of trails for all levels, built and maintained by the Klamath Falls Trails Alliance. Our second destination is the mountain bike paradise of Oakridge.



Before entering the mist of the Hardesty Trail in Oregon's Oakridge Trail System. Photo by Tom Jow

Spence Mountain

Day 1
We departed late from Salt Lake Friday and camped just outside Winnemucca, Nevada. The next morning, after a delicious breakfast

at The Griddle in Winnemucca, we head north up to the Oregon border. The landscape is vast, with rolling

Continued on page 12

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GUEST EDITORIAL

America's Biggest Death Cult



Anti-Hopkins Street bike lane sign in Berkeley, California. Photo by Dave Ittis

By Darrell Owens

Hint: It's cars

I was split on whether gun deaths or traffic deaths are the biggest death cults in the United States, but I've decided it goes to cars. However neutered gun control is, it's not a popular mandate in polling but rather a quirk in effective lobbying. Car deaths and automobile manufacturer deregulation are a completely different level of insanity. Unfortunately, car centrism is the popular mandate in that most Americans really don't care about people being killed by cars, even if the victims are their own family members, and are seemingly resistant to taking the necessary systemic steps to save lives.

Controlling the mayhem that vehicles cause is suffering defeats all over the country. Most prominently, the delay of congestion pricing in New York City, the one city in this country where living without a car is common. No American city has made notable strides in reducing car dependency with the best of the worst being Jersey City, which has impressively developed a better bike network but little else. Why can't the anti-car movement get up and over this issue?

Firstly, I've realized that popular and widely held beliefs often trickle down from intelligentsia and academia first before becoming popular among the masses. I don't think that major institutions like news sites take traffic violence seriously. They lust after shootings but if someone's hit by a car it makes a bulletin in the round-up, only if the person died. Not much care in the world for the lifelong injuries, only fatality statistics. Even the New York Times published someone trying to blame teenage cyclists for their deaths by drivers recently.

The latest version of the climate movement also screwed up by pretending that individual transportation changes wasn't necessary to reduce carbon emissions. This in part feels like it was because a lot of the climate movement was led by young people rather than climate scientists. Their most famous slogan: "70% of emissions are caused by 100

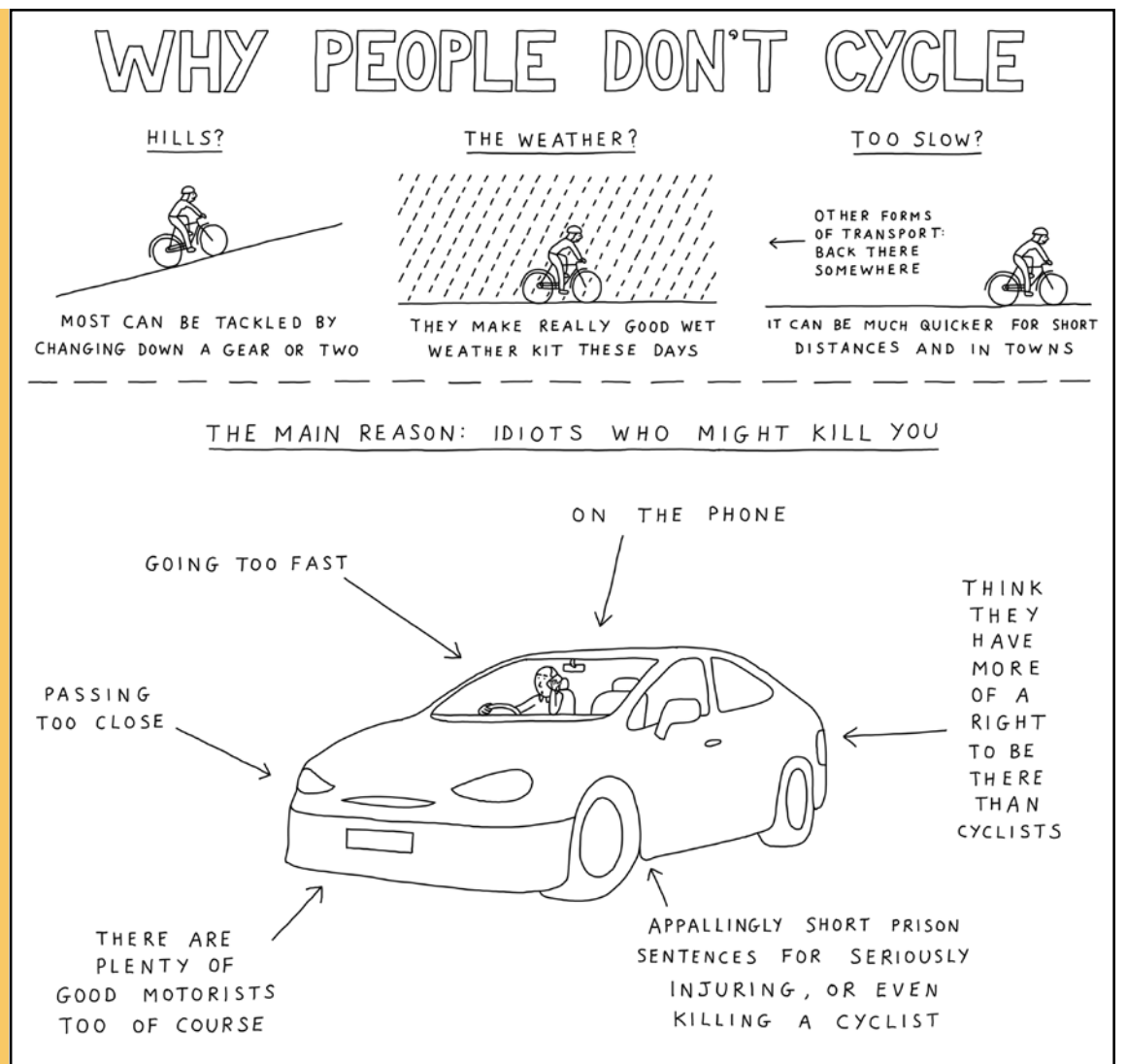


Pro-Hopkins Street bike lane sign in Berkeley, California. Photo by Dave Ittis

companies" purposely obscures that those 100 companies are oil companies. Oil company's emissions are primarily evident in mass transportation; particularly cars. When the climate movement did discuss traffic violence, they mostly spoke in the context of popularizing EVs, which is good, but uncomfortably ignored particle and manufacturing emissions EVs also contribute to. It would've been a better message to do what a lot of European cities did and push cities to decarbonize by transitioning the population towards mass transportation, bikes, walking and EVs. It was a prime opportunity to inform liberal urbanites both of the climate harm of cars but also the health toll in traffic deaths.

Instead, the 2010s climate movement pushed the idea that transportation consumption was less important than going after fossil fuel suppliers. Now they're busy spray-painting Stonehenge or doing weird stunts. Thus, most liberal cities that considered themselves pro-climate made these meaningless climate declarations and have proven cowardly to implement any of them if they impede parking or driving. The intensity that urbanite Americans will go through to defend the right to drive a car on every inch of public space is unbelievable, and unlike other issues, isn't polarized between liberal and conservative.

My hometown of Berkeley, California is an interesting display of this. Berkeley has a high concentration of climate scientists due to the University of California. Even the former U.S. Science Envoy has opined on our city's zoning policy. The town is notoriously liberal, and the vast majority of the population has a four-year degree or greater. Berkeley is fairly non-car dependent compared to most California



Cycling Cartoon by Dave Walker, davewalker.com

cities, second only to San Francisco of all cities west of the Mississippi. Despite the city being highly educated, the populace is just as prone to reactionary defenses of "the right to drive and park wherever and however" as any climate denier town in Republican America.

Our town suffers from a regular issue of drivers crashing into each other, pedestrians and cyclists. Like most cities in the United States, the lockdown unleashed a wave of anti-social activity that has caused severe reckless driving and a major spike in traffic deaths. If there's any time to focus on people dying from automobile crashes, it's now, as car-based death remain at 21st century highs.

Yet in the numerous local meetings I've attended to propose minor street improvements—typically involving the addition of bike lanes and the removal of a few parking spaces—people don't appear to be concerned about traffic fatalities. They say they care of course, but they're unwilling to make any changes to save lives in the name of parking and driving more easily. These are ordinary liberals who with any other issue would be critical of corporations, capitalism and carbon-intensity, but not with their cars.

When a simple bike lane (on Hopkins Street) was proposed in my neighborhood next to an old commercial district covered with ample parking lots, I didn't even bother to comment. Yet this issue has blown up to become the single most divisive issue in Berkeley. It's beyond Israel-Palestine, beyond taxes or anything else. Simply scrapping some on-street parking spaces so bicyclists could safely travel east and west resulted in:

- Conspiracy theories sourced

from Alex Jones about Agenda 21 being plastered on respectable small businesses.

- The complete and total gutting of our transportation department because no staff could sustain the torrent of abuse.

- Every other lawn in the city — and out of the city — espousing support or opposition for a small bike lane.

- Two dueling ballot measures, one which proposes road paving only so that drivers can speed easier. And one that proposes street paving with safety improvements for bus riders, pedestrians and cyclists as well as drivers.

I was talking to national news reporters who told me how these projects wouldn't even make the back page in Asia or Europe. Yet this liberal town is ready to go to war over it. Many of the opponents of bike lanes, wider sidewalks and bus lanes are the same people with vague climate signs on their front lawns and windows.

Of course, people are allowed to disagree without it being some cult issue, but the counterarguments in defense of automobile domination are rather selfish. It's a weird switch that flicks on with otherwise empathetic people. Spending an extra 30 seconds to search for parking or 5 extra minutes driving makes drivers go nuts in ways extra time for everyone else doesn't. If we can't do bike improvements in an educated city like Berkeley, where can we do it? If we can't get congestion pricing in New York City where a handful of commuters drive, where can it be implemented in this country?

40,000 people are killed by cars annually; 100,000 are injured and millions die from exhaust pollution.

Yet it just isn't a problem for people and that's depressing. People's minds have been so warped by generations of fossil fuel and automotive lobbies. An entire generation on a family tree — a mother, father, and their kids — were obliterated by a reckless driver in San Francisco at a major transit hub. The local businesses didn't respond by making it easier for most of their customers to patronize without parking or driving. They defended the right for a small minority of their customers to take their vehicles at high speeds full of areas where children walk, people ride bikes, and transit riders congregate.

I don't know how else to describe that other than cultish.

And critics respond by saying: well, it's America, people have to drive. But they don't! They have to because these people make it so. When valuable public space is given exclusively to cars, of course, alternatives are not competitive! It's very straightforward issue yet otherwise sophisticated people suddenly get overridden by the cult and clutch to their parking spot and highway lane, no matter how many people die to maintain it.

Rest In Peace to Yuan Cong, a man on a bicycle who was killed by a driver at an intersection in Berkeley, California that had 32 collisions and injuries before him. It took another person being killed after Yuan was hit for the city to bother activating the inactive safety signal after building it. The family is rightly suing the city, and I think victims of traffic violence must sue cities until people's lives, not the ability to speed, are prioritized in traffic engineering.

**Coffee -
Continued from page 2**

mance. Caffeine increases arousal, alertness, vigilance, and mood. It reduces perception of pain and can make a tough workout seem a lot easier! That said, caffeine's effectiveness is variable. The response is weaker for some athletes and stronger for others, depending on their genetic predisposition.

The suggested performance-enhancing dose is between 1.5-3 mg/lb (3 - 6 mg/ kg). That equates to roughly 200 to 400 mg for a 150-lb (68 kg) athlete. That said, each athlete needs to experiment during training to learn the right dose, timing, and source of caffeine for their body. Perhaps a sip of morning coffee does the job? Or maybe you benefit from an hourly caffeinated gel during the marathon? Whatever you do, don't over-do it! More is not better, and you want to be able to sleep that night...

Is coffee dehydrating when taken during exercise? When consumed throughout the day?

No. Caffeine is not a diuretic.

Drinking coffee does not lead to dehydration. A study with 50 habitual male coffee drinkers who consumed coffee with ~300 mg. caffeine four times a day indicated no difference in urine output compared to when they drank the same amount of plain water. That means you can count coffee as water, even when exercising in the heat. It replaces sweat losses and contributes to the daily recommended 8 glasses water a day. Many athletes believe coffee has a diuretic effect because, after having consumed a mugful of coffee, they need to visit the bath-

room. While they might need to pee quicker than if they had consumed plain water, in 24-hours, they won't pee more than they consumed. (That is, unless they consume very high doses of caffeine (>6 mg/kg or >500 mg/dose). By that point, they would likely feel yucky and jittery.

The bottom line

If you are a coffee drinker, please enjoy your morning brew guilt-free (as long as it is not loaded with cream, sugar, and excess calories). As an athlete, you may want to learn

how to best use coffee/caffeine as a potential performance enhancer. That said, no amount of caffeine will compensate for inadequate sleep and an irresponsible sport diet. Fuel wisely, sleep well, train appropriately, and then add some caffeine, if desired.

For More Information

Antonio J. et al. (2023) Common questions and misconceptions about caffeine supplementation: what does the scientific evidence really show? J Int'l Soc Sports Nutr 21:1, 2323919

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Nancy Clark MS RD CSSD counsels both fitness exercisers and competitive athletes in the Boston-area (617-795-1875). Her best-selling Sports Nutrition Guidebook is a popular resource, as is her online workshop. Visit NancyClarkRD.com for more information.

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CYCLING TRIVIA

Tour de France Trivia



Tadej Pogacar on his way to 2nd place in Stage 7 of the 2024 Tour de France. He would hold on to the yellow jersey over Remco Evenepoel. - Nuits-Saint-Georges / Gevrey-Chambertin (CLM 25,3 km) - POGACAR Tadej (UAE TEAM EMIRATES). Photo by Billy Ceusters/ASO

By Dave Campbell

It's July, so it has to be the Tour de France!!!

The Tour looks a little different this year! In addition to starting a week earlier than normal, and starting in Florence, Italy for the first time, the race finishes in a different location and with a time trial! Since 1975, the Tour has finished on the Champs Elysees in Paris but due to the Paris Olympics, this year's race will finish on the Cote d'Azur in Nice, like the Paris-Nice stage race. For the first time since 1989, the race also finishes with a time trial. The 33.7 km test goes over two climbs: La Turbie and the Col d'Eze with a technical descent down to the waterfront. Defending champion Jonas Vingegaard will be back to defend his title after a horrible spring crash, as will Giro champion Tadej Pogacar and Time Trial World Champion Remco Evenepoel!

The Women's Tour, perhaps with a nod to the most dominant nation in Women's cycling, begins August 12th in Rotterdam, Holland! After three full days in the Netherlands, Stage four goes from Valkenburg into Liege, Belgium before Stage five leaves Bastogne, Belgium to finally cross into France. The race heads for a dramatic finish August 18th on Stage 8 atop Alpe d'Huez, "cycling's cathedral" high in the French Alps. All the best women in the World are expected to compete with defending champion Demi Vollering the big favorite!

Q1. Slovenian Tadej Pogacar, fresh off a dominant win in the Giro d'Italia is aiming to win his third Tour de France title this July. Of course, those two previous two wins came in 2020/21 with Dane Jonas Vingegaard winning the two most recent editions. Who was the last multiple Men's Tour winner to come back from a runner-up position and reclaim their throne?

Q2. This is to be the third edition of the Tour de France Femmes, after eight years of a one-day event called "La Course by Le Tour de France". Although other French women's stage races were held (Tour Cycliste Féminin and Grande Boucle Féminine Internationale). Prior to these events was the first true Women's Tour de France (organized by ASO) and called simply the Women's Tour de France. Considering only the two TRUE Women's Tours de France, who was the last American woman to win a stage?

Q3. Who is the last American man to win a stage of the Tour de France?

Q4. In the most recent incarnation of the Women's Tour, which rider has logged the most days in the yellow jersey?

Q5. Who has logged the most days in the yellow jersey in the Men's Tour de France without ever winning the race? Hint: Not only has this rider never won the race, but

he has never finished on the final podium or won the points, young rider, or mountains competition!!!

For answers, see page 21.

Dave Campbell was born and raised in Lander, Wyoming and now resides in Bend, Oregon. He started writing Trivia in 1992 for Oregon Cycling News and continued the column with the

Northwest Bicycle Paper. Dave also writes cycling history at "Clips_and_Straps" on Instagram and announces at cycling events throughout Oregon

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BIKE FIT

Bike Fit – Practical Considerations for the Engine Room



Dave Harward fitting DNA Pro Cycling Team rider Sarah Van Dam. Photo by Cathy Fegan-Kim

By Dave Harward

“Bike fits are not one size fits all. They are a snapshot in time. Fit the cyclist first, then adapt the bike.”
 — Renowned bike fitter Happy Freedman

A bike fitter should take their training and experience and use it in tandem with the individual rider experience. That requires interpreting what the rider communicates of their sensations and thoughts about their historical position and then what they sense and feel about the changes and the updated position.

Bike fit is about finding the individual rider’s ideal position in space and then either custom building a bike around that or finding the best option of bike size for the rider and adapting the components around it. The bike should be a reflection on the rider.

Greg Lemond’s competitive

success in cycling was amazing in a career that spanned more than a decade and featured 3 Tour de France wins. Since he was so successful, the idea was that if his position on the bike was replicated, we would all rally like Greg Lemond. Well, his anatomy was not that of the normal person as he had unusually long femurs. His fit was for him.

The story goes that Lemond’s French coach Cyrille Guimard determined the optimal saddle height as being .883 of measured inseam from the center of bottom bracket to top of saddle measurement. That was likely unique to Lemond since it doesn’t account for seat tube angle or crank length. Essentially it assumes that each rider would have the same proportions relative to their height, which is far from individual.

There are a variety of considerations for individuality for saddle height and ultimately leg extension.

Here are just a few:

- Pedal system and shoe sole height
- Fore/aft cleat placement
- Saddle set back
- Crank length

Adjusting each of these impacts the levers of the legs and feet in relation to the crank line-up to maximize and optimize the force from leg extension.

Pedal System and Shoe Sole Height

First, consider the height of the pedal-shoe combination. Shoes and pedals from various manufacturers vary in height from the center of the spindle. When the foot is at bottom-dead-center (BDC) of the pedal stroke, the height of the interface of



Pedal system stack height. Photo by Dave Harward



Pedal system stack height. Photo by Dave Harward

the shoe/cleat combination is different with a Specialized shoe/Look pedal setup than a Shimano shoe/Shimano pedal setup. While the difference in interface height might be minimal it will have an impact on overall leg extension.

Fore-Aft Cleat Placement

Traditional cleat placement looked at centering the inside ball of the foot directly over the pedal spindle when the crank is pointed forward, horizontal to the ground. A



Fore-aft cleat positioning. Photo by Dave Harward

newer approach is to place the cleat where the inside ball of the foot is slightly forward of the pedal spindle when the crank is pointed forward, horizontal to the ground. This newer approach was in response to the complaints of toe numbness and overall foot discomfort.

The impact of fore-aft cleat placement can affect leg extension and thereby impact saddle height. Moving the cleat forward on the shoe effectively lowers saddle height while moving it back on the shoe increases saddle height. Fore-aft cleat placement is important in individualizing bike fit since it impacts foot comfort and is part of the process of setting up even pressure across the forefoot.

Saddle Setback

Saddle setback is also unique in the individualization of bike fit. It accounts for positioning the knee in relation to the end of the crank. In most simple terms, moving a saddle forward results in decreasing overall leg extension while aft will increase leg extension for a given saddle height. Note that saddle setback is not a positioning method to improve reach to the handlebars. Saddle setback adjustments are used to set up the best position for “engine room”



Saddle height fore-aft 1. Photo by Dave Harward



Saddle height fore-aft 2. Photo by Dave Harward



Saddle height fore-aft 3. Photo by Dave Harward

of the cyclist, finding the ideal leg extension and relationship of the knee to the crank to optimize muscular efficiency and protect the joints.

Protecting the joints is obviously an important aspect in optimal bike fit. The KOPS (knee over pedal spindle) method suggests that positioning the saddle height and fore-aft would place the knee vertically over

Continued on page 15



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North of Beverly Beach. Photo by Kelly McPherson

By Kelly McPherson

I grew up in Oregon. We moved around a lot, but most of my time was spent in the Portland area. One of our family's favorite things to do was to go to the beach and so I spent many hours in a car driving from wherever we lived to Seaside, Lincoln City, Barview, Depot Bay or Florence. I never minded the trip. It was always beautiful, even if it was raining. There were many stops to local candy shops for copious amounts of saltwater taffy and sometimes a giant jawbreaker. I think my dad just wanted peace from his 4 rambunctious children and so he would give us the jawbreaker and tell us that we couldn't speak until it was gone. My sister's hard-as-rock jaw would smash it in pieces in a matter of minutes. Ironically, that sister is a dentist now.

As an adult, before my dad passed away, I discovered riding my bike to Lincoln City, Oregon from his house in West Salem, Oregon. It was about 70 miles of mostly country highway and gentle climbs summiting at about 780 feet above sea level. After a couple of years of doing this, I learned to carry a small string bag with me to pick up things I saw along the road. It was always interesting, and I picked up anything from small tools to gigantic pinecones or I would stop and pick

up fresh peaches from a fruit stand in the middle of nowhere. Then my dad passed away during COVID and those trips stopped.

In November 2022, I caught Influenza, got better and then two weeks later caught COVID. The infections put my heart into a PVC (premature ventricular contraction) rhythm called bigeminy. I was on a heart monitor for the next month or so. I was having over 21,000 PVCs a day and my heart was resetting itself every other heartbeat. I had a catheter ablation in February 2023 to fix the arrhythmia, which was a huge success. I felt better than I had in years! Because I felt so much better, I decided that I wanted to ride the Oregon coast and so I started planning a trip from my mom's house in Vancouver, WA to Astoria, OR down to Coos Bay, OR and then over to Crater Lake. It would be a beautiful 450 or so miles. I was going to love it!

Then in April 2023, as a result of the ablation, I got a pulmonary embolism and was put on blood thinners. Doctors wanted me to stop racing my bike. If I crashed, they said, I would likely die before the ambulance could get to me.

I had to decide whether or not to cancel my Oregon coast trip. The route was planned. The campsites were booked. Now what? I go, of course! So, in August 2023, I started from my mom's house in Vancouver



Coast Range Summit. Photo by Kelly McPherson

and made my way towards Seaside, Oregon.

Day 1: Vancouver, WA to Seaside, OR <https://www.strava.com/activities/9559234365>

In Oregon, it is best to plan for the unexpected. The spring weather had brought even more rain than usual and several roads that I had planned on riding from Vancouver to Astoria were washed out with giant mudslides. Fortunately, I found out about it before I left Vancouver and so I was able to come up with an alternate plan. My mom and I spent quite a bit of time looking at Google Maps and RideWithGPS trying to find a good route. When you head west from Vancouver, there is a road called Germantown Road. It is steep, narrow, and windy, but is the Google Maps recommended route. My mom did NOT want me riding that road, so we found an alternative. Unfortunately, when I got to that section of my route, I couldn't find the alternative, so I headed up Germantown Road. I would definitely recommend Germantown Road, provided it is not during peak traffic times when it is bumper to bumper with traffic. I started up it at about 10AM, and while there was some traffic, it wasn't heavy, and I felt perfectly safe even though there really aren't any shoulders. It was beauti-

ful! It was a great challenge that is only about 3 miles long. When I got to the top, Google Maps got confused about where I was supposed to be going and so I had to turn around and find the correct route. Streets in the backwoods of Oregon are not always labeled.

At the bottom of the hill, I ended up on a bike trail that took me almost to Hillsboro. I am not usually fond of bike trails as it is hard to know where you will end up. I did finally make it onto Highway 26 headed towards Seaside, OR. Yes, it's a highway, but it has a great shoulder, and I was just fine riding it. It was gorgeous! The road from my dad's to the beach tops out at 780 feet, but this highway had significantly more climbing with 4 peaks at 1600 feet. By the time I was done, I would have over 5200 feet of climbing in a little over 81 miles. Due to my health situation that year, my lungs had not fully recovered, and I had lost a lot of training. This was a tough ride for me. My husband had been working via Starlink at my mom's house for the day. At 5PM, Utah time, he headed through the Portland rush hour traffic to catch up with me. I was really struggling and so let him pick me up just a few miles from my destination in Seaside, OR. I didn't feel very good, and I started to worry that my decision to ride this, in my current condition, was a poor one. We camped in Seaside OR that night. It was beautiful! We had brought some e-bikes and so my husband and I rode to the beach to watch the sunset and to explore the town a little.

After some discussion with my husband, and some soul searching, we decided to limit my miles on this ride. I would plan to do no more than 50 miles a day. In the morning, I would leave at the right time, to get where I wanted to be by the time my husband could catch up with me after work. When he got to me, I would get into the truck and not make him wait for me at our next camping spot. This is his vacation

too, not just mine! If I was feeling good, I would get moving a little earlier and get more miles in.

Day 2: Seaside to Tillamook <https://www.strava.com/activities/9565354016>

The original plan was to ride all the way from Seaside to Lincoln City, but I was limiting myself to 50 miles and so ended in Tillamook at the Tillamook cheese factory. This was an amazing ride. The views were fantastic, and I loved every bit of it. I had a significant tailwind and so I made really good time. I even stopped at one of my childhood family haunts in Barview. There is a little convenience store there that we used to buy bait at and then go fishing on the jetty. There is also a big "G" on the hillside in Garibaldi that my dad would ask us kids to make up stories about. So many memories! Every year, my husband and I have taken my kids to the Oregon coast in the summer to visit my family and every year we go to the Tillamook Cheese factory for squeaky cheese samples and yummy ice cream. I couldn't go past this spot without waiting for my husband and having ice cream together. After we ate, I got into the truck and my husband drove us to our camping spot in Lincoln City.

Note: If you are using a Starlink for internet, do not stay at Devil's Lake State Park. There are too many trees to get a satellite connection.

Day 3: Lincoln City to Waldport <https://www.strava.com/activities/9571402606>

Due to the satellite connection issues, we got up early in the morning to move our trailer to the D River Park so my husband could get internet to work. I got ready for my ride that day while my husband started his meetings. I could really get used to having my breakfast at a picnic table next to the ocean. Amazing!

This day's ride was so wonderful and full of so many memories as these were the areas that my fam-

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Sunset Bay Beach. Photo by Kelly McPherson

ily frequented the most. I stopped at Boiler Bay to take pictures as it has always been one of my favorite spots. My cousin owns a museum and a fishing tour boat in Depot Bay. I stopped at her museum to see her, but she was out on the boat. I rode out to the lighthouse in Newport and ate a peanut butter sandwich while watching the tourists and the waves.

My mom did not want me riding south of Waldport due to the lack of a shoulder and steep cliffs into the ocean. I was confident that I could do it. My mom was not wrong, however. The road for quite a few miles south of Waldport is windy, narrow, and with some really sheer drop offs. I think I could have ridden it, but if there was much traffic, it would have really frustrated drivers making the situation fairly dangerous.

My brother met me on the other side of the Waldport bridge and so I hopped in his car, and I spent the rest of the day with him. That was one of my favorite days of the whole ride. It had been many years since I had spent much time with him. We drove to Florence, which is where our campground was for the night. My grandmother used to live in Florence, so we had burgers at the old A&W drive-in, took pictures of

us in front of her little old red house, found Grandpa's shop, went to the north jetty where we used to have sandy cheddar cheese sandwiches and set up camp at Honeyman State Park. My grandma and grandpa took us to Honeyman State Park every year to slide down the dunes, play in the lake and hike the trail around the lake. This was a day of wonderful memories.

Day 4: Florence to North Bend <https://www.strava.com/activities/9578328726>

Honeyman State Park had too many trees for my husband to get a connection to work, so we moved the trailer to an Albertson's parking lot in town. I spent the morning honoring my shopaholic grandmother, by cruising her favorite shopping area in Florence, Bay Street. There are tons of fun shops, restaurants and even sidewalk artists. It was great and I got souvenirs for all my kids and grandkids for when we got back.

Then I headed out towards North Bend. Highway 101 veers away from the ocean in this section and has quite a bit of climbing. My family rarely went this direction, so it was an area unfamiliar to me. I was so far from the beach that I did stop a



Newport Oregon Lighthouse. Photo by Kelly McPherson

couple of times to check my map to make sure that I was still on the right road. There were some long climbs on this route. There is a lighthouse near the top of one of them. Having looked at the maps afterwards, I wish I had taken the side trip to go see it. Though, I was tired, and the miles of the week were really starting to wear on me, and I wasn't sure that a side trip that I didn't know how long or steep it would be was wise.

Day 5: North Bend to Sunset Bay Beach <https://www.strava.com/activities/9583250884>

This was a short day. I was tired. My lungs were really feeling it. Also, there was a forest fire somewhere between where we were and the camp spot inland on the way to Crater Lake. Forest fires in Oregon can be really scary and they change direction quickly and suddenly. I didn't want to be caught near one on a bike, miles from my husband and the support of our truck and trailer. I decided that today would be a chill day. My husband had gone ahead and was parked at Sunset Bay Beach. When I got to him, I changed and then spent the rest of the day with my feet in the sand and my hand in a big bag of saltwater taffy.

Heaven!

We did end up going to Crater

Lake. I didn't ride around it as I had planned. The road around it was closed for construction. The parts that were open were bumper to bumper traffic with no shoulders and sheer drop offs on either side. Yeah ... I like to live.

If you go:

- August usually has the best weather and the least likelihood for rain.
- Plan for rain. The Oregon coast can get up to 200 inches of rain a year, so be prepared for some of it to be on you.
- Make sure to have lights on your bike even while riding in the daytime. Fog can make visibility tough.
- Avoid riding on the weekends or holidays. The traffic is horrendous.
- I would recommend riding from north to south as you are more likely to have a tailwind. It is also really fun to be on the ocean side of the road. It is so pretty!
- There are lots of camping and hotels on this route, but you will want to reserve early. The Oregon coast is a tourist hotspot, and the best accommodations fill quickly.
- Don't rush this trip. There is so much to do and see to focus on mileage goals. Just slow down and enjoy it!

Make sure not to miss the following:

- Mo's in Seaside and south of Lincoln City as well as Newport. The one in Newport on Bay Blvd is the original one and well worth the trip, but I like the view from the one south of Lincoln City the best.
- Ride the old train in Rockaway Beach.
- Get ice cream and squeaky cheese at Tillamook Cheese Factory in Tillamook.
- Pacific City has a beach you can drive on and a fabulous dune to climb. My sister likes the Meridian

Restaurant and Bar.

- Put your feet in the D river in Lincoln City and get lunch at Kyllos.
- Browse the shops in Depot Bay. Ainslees's Taffy in Depot Bay is the best. My cousin owns Tradewind Charters if you want to go fish or whale watch.
- Look for agates on Fogarty Beach.
- Take pictures at Yaquina Head lighthouse in Newport. Definitely make the trek down the long stairs to see the critters in the tidepools near the lighthouse.
- Hatfield Marine Science Center in Newport is free and fun. The Oregon Coast Aquarium is nearby but is expensive.
- Sea Lion Caves are fun, but expensive. My family only went once.
- Shopping on Bay Street in Florence.
- Slide down the dunes on a saucer, play in the lake and walk the trail at Jesse M Honeyman state park south of Florence.

Update on my health:

I am happy to be alive. So many people, who have gone through what I did, aren't. I credit that to my consistent healthy exercise over so many years. I am not back to where I was, physically, before my ablation and embolism, but I am back on my bike with a new outlook on cycling. Cycling should be fun. If it isn't, you aren't doing it right. Sometimes that means slowing down and changing goals a bit. It may be time to seriously start planning my trip from Salem, Massachusetts to Lincoln City, Oregon.

Kelly McPherson is a cyclist who lives in South Jordan, Utah with her husband of many, many years and 5 kids. She has a BS in Health Education from the University of Utah and loves to stay healthy and fit and take as many people with her as she can.

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BIKEPACKING

The Art of the Midweek Overnighter

By Lukas Brinkerhoff

5:30 PM is approaching fast. I'm still at work and as these things tend to go, the boss pops in last minute and wants to talk. 4:30 turns to 4:37 and slowly churns to 4:48. He can tell I'm fidgety, but I'm not sure he fully recognizes why. I typically don't leave until 6 except on Wednesdays when I'm sneaking off to sleep in the desert. As the clock approaches 5, I begin to gather my things. I close everything on my screen and shut the laptop. This cue is obvious, and he wraps up.

I pack up my bag, grab some water, shoving the reservoir into the frame bag on my AWOL and jump in the truck. I've now got 30 minutes to get to our starting point.

Several years ago, motivated by



The Planner and The Art of the Overnighter. Photo by Lukas Brinkerhoff



The Planner cooking dinner. The Art of the Overnighter. Photo by Lukas Brinkerhoff

social media posts of people bragging about how many nights they had slept outside, I decided that skipping out of society a couple of times a month was not enough. I wondered if it would be possible to sneak in a quick, short bikepacking trip midweek. I pitched the idea to a

few Mooseknuckler Alliance members and the following Wednesday, we went bikepacking. Leaving after work, we pedaled 15ish miles to a predetermined campsite, slept in the desert and then were back in time for work Thursday morning. It was amazing and when the weather permits, we try to keep the tradition going.

Rolling up a few minutes late, I park in front of the Planner's house. He's ready, outside with his bike packed. There's some conversation that ends with me jamming more water into my frame pack and finding ways to stash things that I probably don't need. It's easy to justify some luxuries when you are only gone for 15 hours. The one cup French press I had brought is suddenly a burden, but I rearrange, ending with bags bulging and we head south into NoZona.

The sun is settling into the evening casting long shadows and light-

ing the desert the way that only sunsets can. We pedal out of the neighborhood catching a dirt road, but soon we are rallying single-track. It's fast, moto-built single-track. The woops catch me off guard a few times bouncing my rigid bike through the air. The Planner is on an MTB with a suspension fork and pulls away as we continue to head south into Arizona.

The dust, the lighting, the creosote, and the singletrack all are perfect. I feel sneaky like I'm getting away with something. I can imagine "responsible" adults lecturing me on how I should not be engaging in such frivolous activities like riding my bike out into the desert to sleep on the ground under the stars for one night when one could just stay home, watch some TV and sleep in a luxurious bed. You know, do "responsible" things. Things 40-year-olds do.

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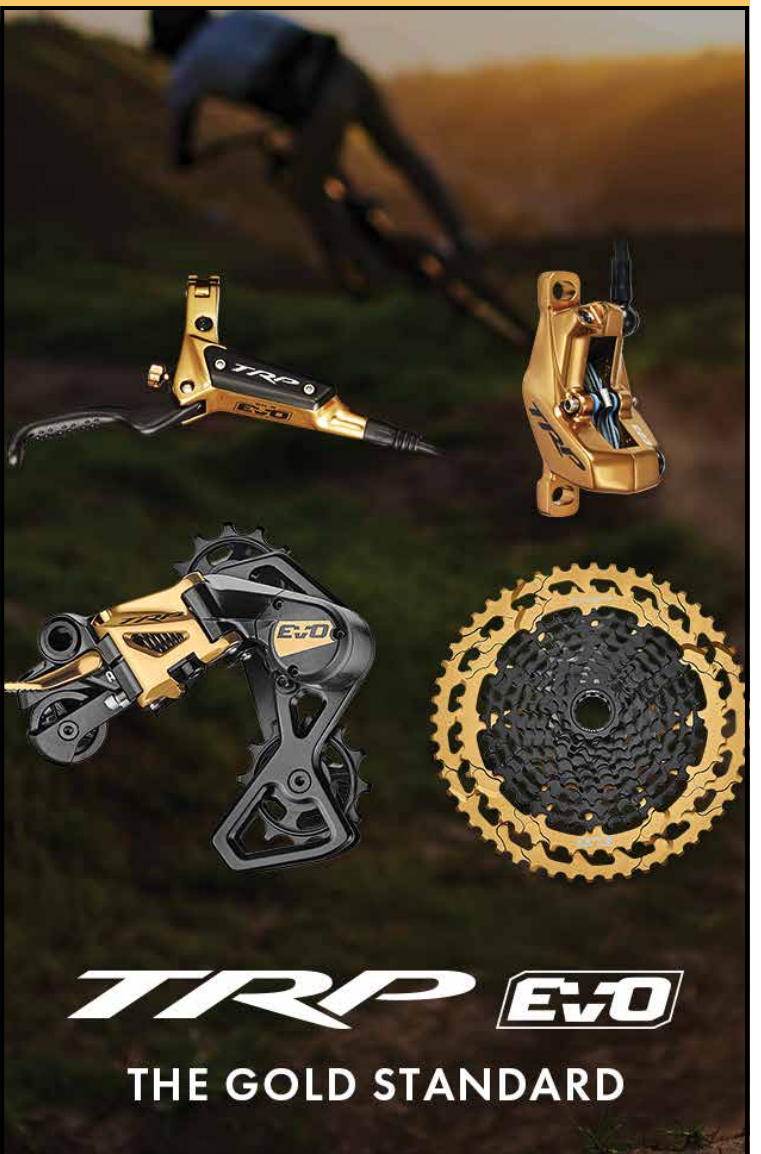
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TRP EVO

THE GOLD STANDARD

the Planner's tires. The singletrack winds its way through the creosote. The dust creates a snake through the gloaming. I want to stop and take a picture, but there's no point. The Planner is already dropping me and if I stop, he'll be gone, the moment lost, and I'll just be that much farther behind. Instead, I smile enjoying the moment of guilty pleasure that my contemporaries may not understand and continue pedaling.

We take the long way to our campsite pedaling about ten miles. The last rays of sun are fading in the distance as we roll up on our spot. The Planner had planned and dropped some water and firewood that morning. Our ten-mile loop had landed us about 3 miles from where we started. With that luxurious bed not too far away, we do the sensible thing and start a fire, pop a couple of beers and ready our beds for a night sleeping under the stars.

With our bed rolls set, food in our bellies and beers in hand, we begin the dance that is sitting/standing around a campfire. There is a light breeze that keeps us guessing which way chaos is going to push the smoke. The conversation is what you would expect. Light at times, followed by deep thoughts, grunts of approval, all sprinkled with spaces of silence that let us enjoy the flames bouncing in front of us and the quiet that is nature.

The silence lingers longer and longer as 9 o'clock approaches. We are after all a group of aging men and as soon as the time clicks past, we are all in bed in a matter of minutes each tucked away in their chosen corner wrapped in down with nothing but clouds and light pollution to obscure the beauty of the desert's night sky.

I for one fight back at the heavy eyelids trying to put me to sleep as I attempt to enjoy the stars, but within minutes I'm sawing logs.

Somewhere after 5, the Planner and I are both morning larks, he gets up and gets the fire going. I roll over and spark up the camp stove, boiling water before pouring it into my French press for my coffee. With my coffee prepped, I roll out of bed and join him by the fire.

The conversation is slow to start, but as the coffee awakens the synapses of our brains and the sun's rays glow brighter on the horizon, it quickens. Soon we are laughing and philosophizing as we had the night before, revisiting some topics and

introducing more. One cup turns to two, some breakfast is consumed before the third cup is brewed as we begin to reverse the process.

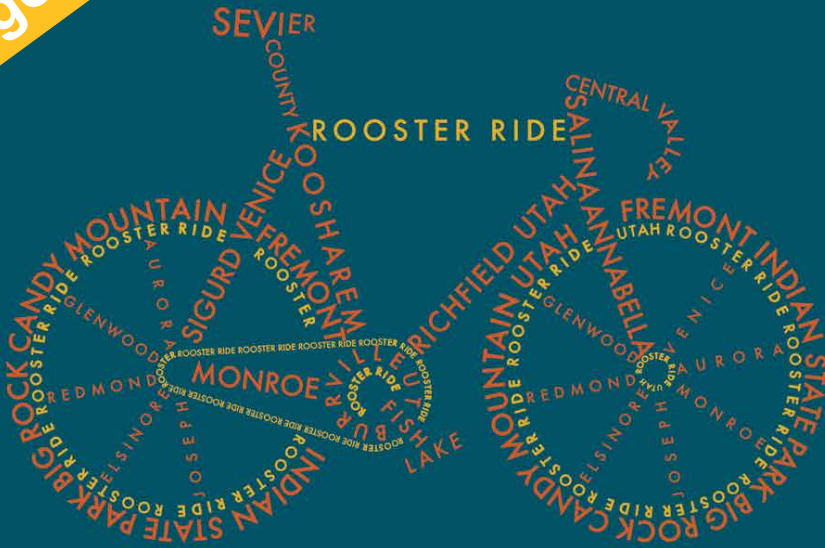
With our bikes packed back up, we pedal back into the desert taking the long way back to our starting

point. It's a few minutes before 8 am when I roll up in front of my house. My wife is just getting ready to leave for work and it's time for me to begin to do the same. I pull my gear off the bike, quickly cleaning and stashing it for the next ride. I shower

before hopping on my bike to pedal the short distance back to work. Reentry complete.

Lukas Brinkerhoff blogs about mountain biking and life at mooseknuckleralliance.org.

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Oregon Mountain Biking - Continued from page 3



Appetizers - This is camping? Photo by Tom Jow

hills of sage green for as far as the eye can see. It is both desolate and beautiful at the same time. Heading west across southern Oregon is a mix of high plains, a river canyon, ranch land, and finally forest. It is early afternoon when we arrive at Spence Mountain. Just beyond the Shoalwater Bay trailhead our friends have set up camp at Eagle Ridge County Park. After a snack, it was time to hit the trails. Across the road from camp, we started up the Shoalwater trail. This trail is an easy climb to its highest point where it joins three other trails. Because it was late in the day, we chose to ride up the two-way trail, Captain Jack (it is shown as downhill primary on Trailforks.com so use caution). Slightly steeper than Shoalwater, it was much nicer to ride up winding singletrack than a dusty old road. There are a couple of steep pitches and short rock gardens to keep it interesting for traveling both the up or downhill. Two and a half miles later we reached another high point



Smiles for miles on the Alpine Trail in Oregon's Oakridge Trail System. Photo by Tom Jow

intersecting two downhill trails, the intermediate level Chinguapin, and the advanced level Nighthawk. Some of the group chose Chinguapin, with its fast, flowy turns, some intricate rock work, and small jumps. Two of us chose Nighthawk, what I would call a "tech" flow trail. It is steep and fast with jumps and berms like any flow trail. But it also has rock gardens and small rock drops built into the mix. In addition, the rough stuff starts out right away, as if to say,

"if you don't like this, you might not like the rest."

Day 2

In the summer, morning comes early in Oregon. Not only because it is farther north than Utah, but being camped next to a wetland bay, the amount of birdsong was crazy. It was like the soundtrack of a nature show. After a hearty breakfast, we headed out for our first ride of the day. Heading up to



Epic view from the Alpine Trail. Photo by Tom Jow

the top of Shoalwater again, this time we cut left on the Modoc trail, traversing south through a forest of Douglas Fir and Ponderosa Pine. At the next junction, we head down the flowy Winema trail to the south shore of Spence Mountain. With a wide grassy beach and a bench looking out over the lake, this is a beautiful place for a snack. From there we ride the Queen of the Lake trail along the shore and then head up and inland on the brand-new Badger trail. For three miles and a little over four hundred vertical feet, Badger goes up and across this eastern part of the mountain to the Northstar trail where we rejoin the Shoalwater trail. With part of our group departing for home, we descend back to camp. After a leisurely, scenic three-hour tour of the east side we are all ready for a little lunch.

One of the best things about camping on a bike vacation is the lack of things to do besides eating, sleeping, and riding. So, after lunch and a nap, we head to the Shoalwater Bay trailhead. Just around the corner, we start up the Spence Peak trail. With a moderate climbing grade, the four miles to the North Ridge trail goes by quickly. The second of two advanced level downhill trails on the Shoalwater side, the North Ridge descends exactly that, the ridge. Similarly to the Nighthawk trail, North Ridge also has a tricky feature at the start. Beginning with a steep ten-foot rocky roll into a left turn, the trail just continues to get rougher from there. Winding back and forth across the ridge, and often straight down, the trail is littered with embedded wheel stopping rocks, rock gardens, jumps and small drops. One of the closing features of the trail is a field of large rocks with no apparent way through. There is one though, and as with much of this trail, being able to pick a line quickly is imperative to prevent oneself from being launched over the handlebars.

Day 3

This morning the birds are a little quiet. The wind was howling overnight and now it is trying to rain. We welcome the cooler temperatures, and some rain would tamp the dust down a bit. For better or worse the Klamath Falls area is more high desert than Oregon Cascades rainforest.

Today we rode straight to the top of Spence Peak. The upper section of the Spence Peak trail is a little steep, with short traverses and tight switchbacks. Once at the top there is a viewpoint from which we can see nearly all of Klamath Lake and the Klamath Valley. After a quick snack we head down the Upper Hooligan trail. Wrapping around the upper peak, Hooligan is a fast trail with small, loose rocks and dust intermixed with some small jumps on



Taking in the view from Queen of the Lake. Photo by Tom Jow

the side. At the next junction we cut right, and down a dusty looking Mazama trail. I commented to one of my friends about how I thought we would be on a climb. Wouldn't you know it just then, we meet the Peak Tie trail, taking us up and into the woods. In just a couple minutes we rejoin the Spence Peak trail and climb back up for another lap on Nighthawk. This time, however, someone gets hung up on a rock and takes a tumble down a steep hillside. Fortunately, it's just bumps and scratches and we have a long afternoon of eating, napping and reading for them to recover.

Day 4

With our next destination, Oakridge, Oregon, just a couple of hours away, we have time for one more ride at Spence. Conveniently on route is the Spence Mountain trailhead, the access to the South Ridge and Speed King trails. The South Ridge trail rises approximately 1,400 feet in four and a half miles from start to Spence Peak*. After climbing about three miles, we cut off onto the Speed King trail. The descent starts off steep onto a wide, fast flow trail with high berms and big jumps. The jumps are an interesting mix of table tops, rollable gaps, and not so rollable gaps.

There were some open sections I could really let it fly, and there were more than a couple jumps that caught me off guard and almost threw me for a loop, quite literally. A good reminder that it is always a good idea to ride with caution the first time on a trail. The second sector of Speed King continues the fast flow with slightly smaller, more predictable jumps. Sector three was even more tame, with features built just right for beginners. It was after entering this last section that I recognized the genius of this trail; a high entry for experts, a middle entry for intermediates, and an early entry for beginners. Brilliant!

It's a two-and-a-half-hour drive to Oakridge from Klamath Falls. Before departing we stop at Rodeos Pizza and Saladeria to refuel. Oh! Pizza is so good!

Oakridge

Day 5

Our second destination for the week lies just inside the eastern edge of the Cascade Range, the little town of Oakridge. Designated an IMBA Gold level ride center in 2015, Oakridge has trails covering nearly four hundred miles.* What Oakridge is really known for are some really epic downhill rides serviced by local shuttle companies. Today we have reservations with Cog Wild Mountain Bike Tours to shuttle us for the Hardesty-Lawlor

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Entry feature. Photo by Tom Jow

double (they conveniently pickup in the same place).

This being my second time here, I wait with anticipation for the trail ahead. During the approximately forty-minute drive up to Hardesty, our shuttle driver fills us in on the trail conditions. While we were in Klamath Falls, Oakridge received a pretty good dunking over the weekend. As a result, it will be “real Pacific Northwest” conditions with a mix of wet, grippy loam, slick rocks and roots, and some greasy mud thrown in for good measure.

Despite clear blue skies at the pickup, we get dropped off in the clouds. As we continue up the dirt road, and then onto singletrack, we begin to leave the clouds behind. The trail flattens out and around the next corner we are treated to a clear view of the western Cascades. We begin descending and just as quickly we are back in the clouds, a dark, damp foggy mist. For the next five miles we descend into dense forest. Traversing back and forth down a ridgeline the trail is fast, with some long sightlines. Technically the trail is not too difficult with no cliff exposure (steep hillsides though) and only a few sections of loose rock. What I found a little unnerving though are the large trees on the downhill side of a narrow trail while traveling at a fast pace.

After another forty-minute shuttle up, our second run of the day was the Lawlor trail. After the drop off, we pedal up for about a mile. The descent starts off fun and fast. Keep an eye out for the junction for the Patterson Mountain Lookout trail. Stop here. It’s easy to fly past the turn for Lawlor, and then lose your friends behind you.

As we get further into the trail, it’s different from our earlier ride. While the Hardesty trail feels like it’s all about speed, Lawlor has more variety. The trail twists and turns more, today, the muddy puddles slick and slippery. More than one time somebody gets loose and goes off

into the trees. About halfway down there is a short, steep climb with one impossible switchback. Behind it are three more very difficult ones. Just beyond this lung buster we are rewarded by a lookout to Patterson Mountain.

As we continue down, the trees seem to get thicker, the trail a little twistier. Soon we come to a series of tight, nearly impossible downhill switchbacks. They are so tight! Between these turns are traverses with steep hillsides below. Not a place to fall off the side. As we get to the bottom, the trail finishes off with some new school berms and jumps. Just ten more minutes pedaling on a dirt road, and we are back at the car for some well-deserved cold beverages.

Day 6

For our last day in Oakridge, we chose the Alpine trail. If there was only time for one trail, this might be the one. With over four-thousand feet of descending and one-thousand feet of pedaling across thirteen miles* this trail has it all. There is up, there is down, there are amazing views... and then there is the trail. Tacky soil, fast straights and fast turns; a downhill mountain bikers dream.

After a forty-five-minute shuttle, we enter the trail at Kate’s Cut In. The trail gently ascends through tall trees. Shortly, after crossing a mountain meadow, the downhill begins. Lively, twisting and turning trail that requires us to be always looking ahead. Being one more day after the rain, the trail surface is perfect with lots of traction and only a little mud. We travel down, a little up, and then more down; crossing a road here, crossing a road there. Down again, up again, down again.

About halfway down the Lower Alpine section we cross over to the west side of the ridge. Here, the trail surface is rough with long stretches of small rocks. The sight lines are long. I dare myself to see how far I can ride without the brakes. It’s not



Dirty Fun! Need I say more? Photo by Tom Jow

far because the trail is so fast. Also, the trail cut is a wall on one side and a steep drop on the other. Best not to fall here. Luckily soon, it’s back to the relative safety of fast, twisting, turning, loamy trail around large trees. And then just like that, we are back to the parking lot. Now to find a cold drink and a swimming hole.

The next day, we begin the elev-



Pelicans: Good neighbors at Spence Mountain. Photo by Tom Jow

en-hour drive back to Salt Lake. It is a long way, but it was worth it. The trails at Spence Mountain were spectacular. It was particularly nice that there are trails for riders of every level. The trails are also well organized with loops that make sense. I really liked the fork of Nighthawk and Chinquapin, where some riders can use the fast, flow trail and others can use the steeper, rockier one. Being camped at the lakeshore of Eagle Ridge County Park (albeit a little buggy) was beautiful. The

bird watching and bird song was otherworldly. Riding from and back to camp is so luxurious.

Our experience in Oakridge was also incredible. Three epic downhill trail rides. The Blue Pool campground, with its large, ice-cold swimming hole was luxurious in its own way. Dunking in ice-cold water after a long day on the bike is so refreshing. If traveling, camping, and riding mountain bikes is your idea of a good time, I highly recommend these two areas.

(* Sources: Klamath Falls Trail Alliance; Trailforks.com; IMBA.com; Greater Oakridge Trail Stewards)

For more information:

Trails:

- klamathtrails.org
- oakridgetrailsalliance.org
- trailforks.com

Shuttles:

- cogwild.com
- transcascadiaexcursions.com

Camping:

- recreation.gov

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CYCLING IN AFRICA

Bicycles can change lives, especially in rural Africa

Recipients of bicycles in Ghana from the Village Bicycle Project. Photo Jason Finch, Village Bicycle Project

By Daniel Frey, Professor of Mechanical Engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

New Report Looks at Their Use in Ghana and Malawi

To many people around the world bicycles are a crucial means of transport, especially for carrying loads in rural areas. While their benefits are huge and many organisations are working on making access to bicycles a reality, a range of barriers still prevent them from being more widely available in low-income communities – not least of these being their cost. A team of researchers has produced a new report called Access to Affordable Bicycles in Africa. We asked team leader Daniel Frey about their study and its findings.

What did you set out to study?

Low-income households in low-income countries face transportation service gaps, especially in rural areas. Public transport does not always exist and motorised transport is often unaffordable, forcing people to walk long distances to reach schools, markets, healthcare and other basic services. Bicycles have the potential to fill that gap as a more affordable means of transport.

Studies have shown that bicycle use can result in health, economic and social benefits such as improved gender dynamics. For example, women in a household can be more independent if they can afford their own conveyance, so the low cost of bike ownership can be critical to women's education and employment. But challenges related to bicycle access and adoption persist, calling for continued research and development.

Our study, funded by USAID,

sought to understand the background, current state and opportunities for bicycles to benefit underserved communities in sub-Saharan Africa.

How did you go about the research?

The choice of Ghana and Malawi for our study was based on a set of criteria including, but not limited to, bicycle ownership rates, geography, and capacity of local research partners. It is fair to say that the decision was at least partly determined by the fact that the Village Bicycle Project was already active in Ghana. We relied strongly on the efforts of partners at the University of Malawi and the University of Cape Coast in Ghana. Ghana and Malawi provide some insight into differences in a number of dimensions – between west and east Africa, between nations with a coastline and landlocked nations, between relatively flat terrain and hilly areas.

Two overarching research questions guided the study:

1. What factors enable or inhibit adoption of bicycles among low-income and other disadvantaged or underserved populations?

2. To what extent do existing bicycle solutions perform as expected and meet users' needs?

The study consisted of three phases over a two-year period from 2020 to 2022. An initial scoping phase included a literature review and key informant interviews. Phase one consisted of 182 interviews with bicycle users, non-users and other stakeholders – 95 in Ghana and 87 in Malawi.

Phase two included data collection through surveys, observa-

tion and in-depth interviews with bicycle-owning households. Data were also collected through sensors attached to bicycles. A sensor set and data loggers were developed by an MIT team. As described in his PhD thesis, MIT scholar Amit Gandhi helped to develop a compact, battery-powered suite of sensors that electronically measured distance and time travelled. Wheel rotations and trip durations were measured with a precision real-time clock.

What did you find?

These are the key findings:

- Household dynamics, especially gender dynamics, influence who gets to own and use the bicycle – which is, in most cases, male heads of households.

- Over the course of a day, a single bicycle is often used by different members of the family for different purposes.

- Sensor data revealed that frequency, duration and distance of bicycle trips varied widely across the sample groups. Longer and more frequent trips were taken by rural and older riders with load-carrying bicycles.

- The transport needs of a household can't always be met by one bicycle. This leaves other members of the family, especially women, with no option but to walk long distances.

- Prohibitive cost, frequent parts failure, and a desire to own a motorised vehicle were often cited as the top barriers to bicycle use. The aspiration to own a motorcycle was an unexpected challenge. It was surprising to us how often a hope for something more expensive could inhibit a person from investing in a more practical, affordable solution.

- Load carrying was reported to be the most desired bicycle feature. For example, many workers need to bring their own tools to work sites.

- A majority of non-users were women who did not know how to ride a bicycle.

- The study did not reveal gender-specific bicycle design preferences. This trend might not persist when a community becomes more familiar with bicycle design options. In locations where bicycle use is common, manufacturers often find that configurations that better accommodate skirts are preferred by female bicycle customers with an intent to commute to work or school.

in a longer-term effort to improve mobility and equity. Bicycles have, for over a century, provided remarkable advantages over walking – increasing the range and efficiency of travel.

But there is an extremely wide range in level of bicycle adoption by different countries. There must be some barriers particular to specific regions and/or cultures that at least partly account for observed differences.

This study adds to our emerging understanding of the ways that appropriate technologies are developed and adopted, or else how they may fail to be widely used.

If we discover that some places have terrain that causes certain mechanical failures, we can redesign bicycle components to be more resilient. If learning to ride is a barrier, then training programmes may help.

This study revealed that a desire to own a motorised vehicle is a barrier to wider use of bicycles. That might deserve some focused attention. Electric power assisted conveyances (such as e-bikes and scooters) have improved a great deal recently. Nevertheless, electric bikes are currently much more expensive than traditional, human-powered bikes, so this continues to present a challenge.

This study has provided several avenues that appear to me as highly promising for work on engineering paired with social science in the interest of environmentally responsible economic development.

The report is available here: <https://d-lab.mit.edu/resources/publications/access-affordable-bicycles-africa-final-report>

The full team of researchers who produced the report is Dan Frey, Megha Hegde, Maggie Hsu, Gwyn Jones, Kendra Leith, Robyn Richmond, Jonars Spielberg and Dan Sweeney

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For more on the Village Bicycle Project, see villagebicycleproject.org

Why does this study matter?

I see this research as a first step

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**Bike Fit -
Continued from page 7**

the center of the pedal spindle with the crank at 3 o'clock. Which part of the knee? This method measures from the tibial tuberosity, the bump on the front of the tibia just below the knee cap. A related method would be to position the front of the kneecap vertically over the end of the crank at 3 o'clock.

Saddle setback is mostly influenced by the length of the rider's femur. Not everyone who is 5'10" has the same femur length so the ideal position in space is unique to their body proportions. When combined with an optimized saddle height, this method of positioning the knee relative to the pedal spindle/end of the crank at 3 o'clock is done to help reduce forces compressing the patella.

Crank Length

Crank length is a frequently debated consideration in the bike fit world. There are many questions about crank length; most of which revolve around shorter cranks. The crank is the lever we use to transfer power to the drivetrain. A longer crank provides more leverage per pedal stroke. Crank length impacts leg extension and is a factor in determining saddle height and setback. Long cranks will increase overall leg extension and change the positioning of the knee in relationship to the cleat/pedal interface throughout the pedal stroke. Alternatively, a short crank will decrease leg extension.

Crank length selection can be a challenge. When you buy a new bike, manufacturers generally don't provide options of crank length per size. For example, a small (50-52cm)

sized road bike will almost always come standard with 170mm cranks while a large (56-58) might deliver with 172.5 or 175mm cranks. Many shops will work with you and trade out the crank for a specified length. Alternatively, one might decide to build their bike from a frameset and thus crank length is an important consideration.

Optimal crank length allows the quadriceps and gluteus muscles to extend the leg with efficiency. This goes hand in hand with saddle setback when the optimal saddle height is determined. There are a few reasons to go with a shorter crank length:

- Improved aerodynamics – time trial and triathlon set up can be positively impacted when a rider has a very aggressive seat to bar position. If the rider's torso gets in the way of the knee at the top of the pedal stroke it may be time to consider a shorter crank.
- Improved turnover and reducing overall torque – when a rider is

struggling with turnover in pedaling or needs a reduction in overall torque to initially start pedaling or maintain consistent cadence, a shorter crank can make it easier. Improving turnover is important since torque for a given power increases as cadence drops. When the crank is shorter you lose leverage.

As mentioned, these are just a few of the many considerations in optimizing bike fit. They address the "engine room" of the cyclist's position. Adjustment of one factor will impact the others since we are working in the triangle of saddle height and saddle fore-aft in relationship to the crank-pedal position. A trained and experienced bike fitter will account for the impact of each adjustment.

Bike fitting is an individualized process. Formulas can provide good starting points to ensure the rider is looking at the proper size of bike or potentially determining a start point of saddle height, crank length, or reach to the handlebars. An opti-

mized position relies on individualizing the rider's position in space and then adjusting the bike to make it a reflection of the rider. Future installments will include detailed discussion on each consideration.

Find a bike fitter with training and background to ensure they interpret your experiences and sensations on the bike into a comfortable and high-performing fit.

Dave Harward started PLAN7 Endurance Coaching in 2006 to focus on individualized training plans and professional bike fitting. He is a USA Cycling Certified Level 1/Elite Coach (2010) and has bike fit training certifications from Bike Fit Systems and Specialized BG Fit Masters. Focusing on individual needs are a top priority in the PLAN7 coaching and bike fitting philosophy and methodology. Contact Dave or set up a bike fit appointment at plan7coaching.com.

Researchers Call for More Focus on Connectivity in Urban Bikeability Studies

Studies on urban bikeability often emphasize safety and comfort, but researchers should place greater emphasis on connectivity. This is the conclusion of a meta-analysis of 1,649 studies, which found that only 15 developed "urban bikeability indices" to measure bike friendliness across a city or part of it.

"The review findings suggest a lack of consideration of all five bicycle infrastructure design principles, as only three studies considered them all, while others only included a subset," concludes the study "Bicycle Infrastructure Design Principles in Urban Bikeability Indices: A Systematic Review" from Hasselt University in Belgium.

Most reports prioritized "safety" and "comfort," while paying relatively little attention to "coherence." The studies also focused on "attractiveness" and "directness" to varying degrees.

Attempts to gauge bikeability varied in their focus and weighting of factors. Some studies emphasized the presence of bike lanes, while others prioritized intersections. The most commonly considered indicators included bicycle infrastructure, greenery along bike paths, slopes, vehicular traffic flow/volume, street lights, bicycle path connectivity, and traffic speed.

However, the authors criticize past research for not adequately considering factors such as pavement conditions, road markings, traffic control devices, and crosswalks.

Read more at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/379112913_Bicycle_Infrastructure_Design_Principles_in_Urban_Bikeability_Indices_A_Systematic_Review

-Charles Pekow

Safe Routes Partnership Issues Advocacy Guide to Repealing Traffic Laws

The Safe Routes Partnership has released a guide on repealing local "harmful traffic laws" that discriminate against cyclists and pedestrians at state and local levels. While not very detailed, it recommends opposing ordinances that disproportionately affect minorities and advocating for bills that fund cycling infrastructure.

The guide suggests shifting traffic responsibilities from police to transportation departments. It also emphasizes the importance of forming partnerships, as those affected by discriminatory traffic laws often face additional challenges such as inadequate housing, food, and healthcare. Collect data, and if you need assistance, contact a local institute of higher education, which may have the data or know how to obtain it.

Find the guide at Safe Routes Partnership Advocacy Guide: https://saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/resource_files/An%20Advocacy%20Guide%20to%20Repealing%20Traffic%20Laws%20v4_0.pdf

-Charles Pekow

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BICYCLE ART

Bicycling in Nature — The Bicycle Art of Savannah Cottam



Name of artist: Savannah Cottam

About the artist: I'm a student studying film, art, and journalism at the University of Utah. I am very

passionate about the environment and people's well being. My goal is to do something that can make a difference in people's lives and help promote positive change.

Title of piece: Bicycling in

Nature

About the piece: The ability to get outside and fully immerse yourself in your surroundings can feel hard to accomplish in this modern world. Biking is beautiful because

it enables us to deepen our relationships with ourselves, community, and nature.

Medium: Digital art

Artist's statement: My art is

meant to show people the beauty of biking and the nature that it can immerse you in.

Where can people find your art? People can find and buy my art on my Instagram @a.rc._



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