
OUTSPOKEN

The official newsletter of the Owen Sound Cycling Club

www.owensoundcycling.ca

May 2005

Editor's Ramblings

Spring

Ah – the sounds of Spring: birds twittering in the trees, frogs croaking in the ponds and marshes, time trialists coughing up dust, insects and other small objects they inhaled last autumn. For some reason the first 5 Km Time trial of the season triggered a rash of coughing. It must have been the cool air, and the fact that some of us hadn't breathed that deeply since the Epping hill climb. Amazingly, there were 39 riders for the first race and, despite a temperature of 4° C and strong north winds, 25 for the second.

Upcoming events

- Sunday, May 1st – Training Ride. Meet at 1856 Third Avenue West, 10:00
- Monday, May 2nd – Trevor and Emese's first group ride. Meet at the Fifth Season parkette, Owen Sound, 18:00.
- Thursday, May 5th – Tobermory trip.
- Saturday, May 14th – Aussie Pursuit, Lincoln Park, 10:00

Points - Correction

Emil pointed out (ouch) that ride and event organizers, as well as volunteers, earn five points, not one as I stated in the April Newsletter.

Last Newsletter for Non-members

If you didn't renew your membership for 2005, this will be your last newsletter. I've included the contact information for all of this year's members. If you are not there (and you didn't check "Don't Publish" on the application form) and you think you should be, please let me know.

Trevor Stokes.

In this Issue	
Editor's Ramblings	1
Spring.....	1
Points - Correction.....	1
Last Newsletter for Non-members.....	1
President's Message.....	1
Bike to Work – I.....	2
Bike to Work – II.....	2
2005 Cycling Tour (Peterborough).....	2
Contributors	4

President's Message

The season is up and running but not without a few curve balls from Mother Nature. The numbers out to the time trials this year has been outstanding. If this is sign of what is coming I think Pam is going to need a spare pen to keep up with the number of riders.

Our club's road riding program has really grown in the last couple of years. This is fantastic but it has come at the expense of what was a solid mountain bike program. I think that there are a couple of reasons for this change. One reason is that road riding is coming back right across the province and if you are buying only one bike or have time to ride only one bike then it would probably be a road bike. The second reason is the very good program being conducting by Arrow racing. It seems that if anyone who is serious about mountain biking is working with Arrow racing. Lastly, BMX and trial riding is growing in the 10-25 age group.

Get out and enjoy the rides put on by our members and have a great time. Emil, Trevor and Emese are leading many rides that are coming up on the schedule. So check out the schedule in the newsletter or the website @ www.owensoundcycling.ca. Take care,

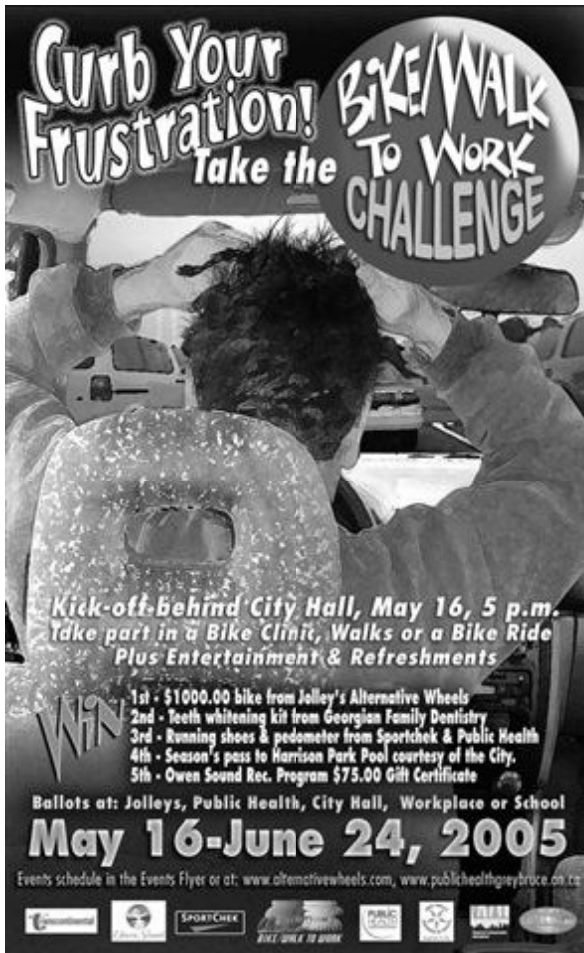
Greg

Bike to Work – I

Related to the Bike to Work campaign, Shane is doing Bike Maintenance courses for Beginner June 2, Intermediate June 9, Advanced June 16 at Jolleys, 7PM. Cost is \$20. Cycling club members that want to improve their repair skills may want to participate.

John Brown

Bike to Work – II



Have you called that #@&## in the Hyundai in front of you an #@&## recently? Did think that something was wrong with your steering then discovered that it was your belly catching the bottom of your steering wheel? Are your times getting longer and longer at time trials? If you have experienced any of these frustrations you need to “TAKE THE CHALLENGE”!... The Owen Sound (and area) Bike/Walk to Work Challenge, that is! Starting with a big kick-off on May 16th at City Hall and running until June 24th,

if you ride your bike to work you are eligible for a bevy of great prizes. Stuff like a \$1000 bike from JAW, a kit to whiten your teeth (okay so some of them are a little odd) and running shoes from SportChek.

So, how do I get this great stuff, you may ask? Well it is really quite simple. Just pick up a ballot at Jolleys Alternative Wheels, Public Health, Owen Sound City Hall, your workplace or your school. Then you have to ride or walk to work or school and have your boss or teacher sign the ballot and stuff it in the Bike/Walk Challenge designated ballot box at: JAW, Public Health, City Hall, workplace or school. Then wait for all those prizes to start rolling in... not to mention the great body you will have, the gas you will save and the feeling of well being you will have because you rode to work. There will be smaller prizes awarded every week while the biggies will be drawn at the end of the Challenge.

Tom Hakala

2005 Cycling Tour (Peterborough)

This is the Peterborough Tour that we did last year and was good value for the \$\$\$. Includes one night's stay and breakfast and barbeque dinner.

“Hope everyone is having a wonderful 2005 thus far, and we would like to let everyone know that we are preparing for our 2nd annual "Tour of the Kawarthas". Thank-you to everyone who came out for last year's tour and (we) would like to extend an invitation for you to attend this year's tour. It will be happening on June 25th and 26th and all of the information is on our website www.pcsonline.ca. Please visit the website and click on the "Cycling Tour" link for more information about the tour. As the event approaches there will be more additions to the website so please feel free to check for updates. Also please feel free to pass on this email address to anyone who didn't have the opportunity to participate last year, or to email us if you have any questions.

“Thanks for your time and we hope to see you again in June :)

“Fundraising Committee (Jill, Des, Laura and Sarah) Peterborough Communication Support Systems.”

John Brown

The pothole, the cyclists and the lawyer

(from the Toronto Star)

The Kolapore Uplands, 5,000 hectares of the Niagara Escarpment a little south and west of the bottom end of Georgian Bay, is the largest and roughest patch of semi-wilderness left in southern Ontario. Steep and rugged, what isn't cliff face or exposed rock is hardwood forest regrown since being clear-cut a century ago.

It is a dreamscape for the craziest risk-takers, and since the 1970s, the University of Toronto Outing Club and the Kolapore Uplands Wilderness Ski Trails Committee have cut 60 kilometres of trails through it that are earnestly posted "Challenging Ski Trails — Not For Novice Skiers." They are volunteer organizations; the trails are maintained by volunteers; anybody can use them for free. Costs are covered by donations, which totalled \$2,600 this year, and the sale of a trail map without which it is easy to blunder into even greater peril.

Since the volunteers' interest is solely skiing, in seasons when there is no snow the trails are left to fend for themselves. But in the 1990s the mountain bike appeared, and with it the mountain bikers who discovered in Kolapore the hellishly beautiful terrain that makes their testosterone-charged adrenalin bubble and boil. The best (that is, the worst) of the trails earn the highest mountain-biking accolade: radical.

Presumably "totally radical" would be prying open elevator doors at the CN Tower and biking down the empty shaft. It's unlikely that the lack of maintenance for cycling is considered a drawback.

Then along came James Leone, 31, a Torontonians who, last Aug. 1, was on a trail that bikers grade as "easiest" when, according to documents filed in court, "suddenly and without warning his bicycle came to an abrupt stop" and he was thrown forward, "striking the ground with sudden and violent force."

Plunging into a "hole in the ground, the depth, size and location of which constituted an unusual danger" might sound like something that's all in a day's (or five minutes') adventure for a mountain biker, except for one thing: Leone is a lawyer. As one of the country's foremost legal experts explained to me, the first thing first-year law students learn the first day of civil procedure is, when you sue, "sue everything in sight."

Leone is suing the outing club, the ski trails committee, the regional trails network, the local municipality and the province (which owns the land where he encountered the alleged hole) — everything but the sky above and the Earth itself. He wants \$1,150,000 in damages for expenses and lost income as a result of a fractured vertebra he says he suffered, while his co-plaintiff — his wife, Ashley, who

wasn't biking — "sustained a loss of guidance, care and companionship" she might reasonably have expected if he hadn't run into said hole.

Leone's stated position is that, whether they like it or not, the volunteer organizations and the province, by permitting the trails to exist on its land, are responsible for creating "a situation of danger from which the plaintiff, despite all reasonable efforts and precautions was unable to extricate himself," and that they "failed to take reasonable care to protect the plaintiff from the unusual danger, of which they knew or ought to have known."

Leone and his lawyer declined several requests for an interview, so we don't know the answers to three questions I left on his voice mail. Was he alone? Given the seriousness of his injuries, how did he make his way from the site of the wreck? And how much mountain-biking experience did he have, or was this his first time?

These lead to other questions. If a hole in the ground was such a surprise, would he have been better off mountain biking on a sidewalk in Toronto (although holes abound in them)? If the hole was big enough to crack up in, how did he fail to see it if he was "exercising reasonable care for his own safety" as his statement of claim attests?

And how come nobody else crashed into such a big hole, or did they and just figured that's the way it goes?

Certainly skiers have gotten hurt on the trails, some of them local experts, some severely — but nobody has ever sued before. Mountain biking ain't kiddie car.

By suing, James Leone might make it so that nobody can do either. Even if he loses, chances are that the limited insurance the volunteer organizations carry will become so expensive they can't afford it, or it won't be available at all. This would force them to stop the work they've done for years. The trails would disappear.

It is a curious thing, and it seems to be verging on epidemic — people refusing to accept responsibility for their own actions. If something bad happens to you, even if it happened because you did something beyond your abilities or plain foolish, blame somebody else. Nothing is your fault.

For Sale

2005 ZIPP 404 Wheelset 700c BRAND NEW

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Biker Needed

Mountain biker required. Kate Manwell wants to compete as a runner in the Dirt Duathlon next weekend but needs a rider for the team event. If you are interested email Kate at kateruns@hotmail.com

The Airtime Bike Park needs volunteers!

The city plans to have the park open by the end of May so we need **volunteers** to help build every day between **May 7 - 29** . (Weekdays 4-8pm and weekends 9am-5pm.) Work will include shoveling, raking, erecting fence, etc.

For every 4 hours you put in you will get a **free day pass**, for every 40 hours you will get a **free month pass** and if you put in 120 hours or more you will get a **free season pass** .

Students take note that your hours can be used for **community service hours for credit**.

If you would like to help please contact Shane Jolley with the **dates and hours** you would be available at admin@alternativewheels.com

Contributors

Thanks to John Brown, Tom Hakala, Greg Nicol for contributing to this edition of the newsletter.

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This space could be yours?

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