

OWEN SPOKEN

End of season wrap-up

We have seen another season slip through our sweaty palms. It seemed like yesterday that I was contemplating a ride after a great day of spring skiing and now I'm thinking skiing again. We really had a wonderful spring, summer and fall to ride. I hope you enjoyed what the club had to offer. If you would like to see something different let me know. Some of us were talking about what to do next season and one suggestion was to add more group rides and BBQs. This event seemed to bring our club together and let members mix with others that they may not have met before. Again, let me know by email what you think about this idea or maybe something that you have been thinking about yourself. You can contact me at: president@owensoundcycling.ca.

I would like to thank all those who helped make this season happen. Scott and Mary Thomson put on another great time trial schedule. With the help of Jim Cummings, Reg McDonald and others we always had a timer when the Thomsons were out of town. Trevor and Emise Stokes continue to hold their Monday evening recreational rides and Doug Miller added his off road, dirt rides to fill out that need. Patty Marr did a great service for the female members with her women's road rides and mountain bike rides. Trevor is also our long suffering webmaster and does a wonderful job at keeping the club website up-to-date. After many years, John Brown continues to keep our expenses in check and makes sure the books balance.

Throughout the winter and of course during the bike season the best way to stay informed about the club is to check our website: www.owensoundcycling.ca.

We have a Bulletin Board where you can chat with other members, buy and sell, coordinate car pooling and share technical tips. Even if you don't register and post to the bulletin board, it's a good idea to view it once in a while to see what's happening.

We are always open to new ideas for events and rides. In order for any ride or race to happen we need volunteers to step forward and take the time and initiative to organize them. This is your club so by holding and attending events the club will grow and become better. If you are interested in holding an event or ride please contact the president at: president@owensoundcycling.ca.

News from the Owen Sound Cycling Club

SHARE THE ROAD in Grey/Bruce ...change has begun!

By Doug Miller, Bikeface Cycling

Well fellow cyclists, we have done it. We've managed to make ourselves heard above the din of auto exhaust and complaints from motor heads who have resisted the idea of sharing the roads.

The powers that be at both provincial and local levels of government have begun to seriously respond to our demand for cycling infrastructure and safety by constructing bike lanes, bike paths, and share the road signs at various spots throughout the area.

In early September, Patty and I attended the 2nd annual Bike Summit held in Burlington, Ontario. Two days of workshops, discussions and featured guests who are noted for their achievements in providing for and acknowledging bicycles and cyclists. Our own minister of transportation, Kathleen Wynne, spoke of the importance of cycling in transportation and as a recreation.

She has not pulled any punches in declaring her position regards cycling.

"We are shifting the culture around cycling and driving in the Province of Ontario" she declared.

Overall, there appeared to be real momentum at this summit for finding ways to accommodate cycling in our culture... ways that include education as well as infrastructure. It was certainly uplifting to hear so many ideas and successes both locally and from places like Portland, Oregon... considered to be the best cycling city in USA and Canada

Returning to Grey/Bruce/Owen Sound from this summit has fueled my and Patty's perseverance in seeing this area become 'cycle friendly' in every possible way... whether it be for sport, recreation or transportation. And fortunately we are not alone in our fervor. Many individuals including those from our own cycling club have spoken up and as a result Grey County has made significant commitments to this end... with paved shoulders, signs and more coming in the future. Grey tourism is now conducting meetings with the cycling community to find ways to facilitate cycling as part of a tourism draw to the area.

Likewise Bruce County has rallied to the cry with a cycling route

of paths and paved shoulders from Southampton to Ferndale and eventually south on county road 9 to Wiarton. We are awaiting an outline of their work to date and future plans.

As for Owen Sound... nothing significant to date but with the recent changes in city council we should expect to see some more attention paid to cycling in this city.

Overall, as cyclists we must be vigilant in pursuing a cycle friendly culture.

And in no lesser terms, we must educate ourselves and each other to the habits and skills of safe and responsible cycling.

To keep abreast of what's happening in Ontario, etc... see www.sharetheroad.ca.

Further updates and ideas concerning 'share the road' will be posted at www.owensoundcycling.ca

Tour de Sound

Though the idea of a grand tour for our area is not dead, we need a dedicated base of volunteers to step forward and run with this project. If you are interested in keeping this idea alive, please talk to Doug Miller or Tom Hakala.

Whemmys Enduro

The turnout was not as large as some of us had hoped (it was a real crappy day) the Whemmys did prove to be a big hit with those that did show up. The rest of you missed out. Thanks to Fred Zottl and his family for putting this together. We plan on doing it again next year.

Club Jerseys are Here!

The club jerseys are here. They are at Bikeface Cycling for members to try on and purchase. Purchase price will be a great buy at \$65.00 each. *Tom Hakala*

Paved Shoulders Si!

Back in October I received an email from the MTO stating that they were really going to add bike lanes to the new re-surfacing project on Highway #6 from Mar to Tobermory after all. Around the same time a fellow stopped in to Bikeface Cycling and said that he was the personal assistant for Kathleen Wynne (Ontario Minister of Transportation). He wanted to talk to Doug and Patty about the Minister's support for bike lanes and the "Share the road campaign". Then I received another email announcing a grand opening and media presentation for the new highway with bike lanes.

So Doug, Patty, John Huelshof and I headed up to Mar on a frigid Tuesday morning. After riding along the new road until our hands became numb we headed back to the presentation.

Kathleen Wynne was there as was Bill Murdoch and a number of MTO staffers, local politicians and dignitaries. After a few photo ops and speeches by the local politicians, Ms. Wynne got up and said her piece. She explained that the bike lanes or 'safety lanes' were to be a test project for the MTO to see if they do indeed work. She also stated that though she would really like to see bike lanes added to all Ontario Highways the reality is that will not happen. The costs are too high and there are places where bike lanes would not be suitable. On the other hand she did support the idea of examining each new road project to see if bike lanes were needed.



Patty Marr chatting with Kathleen Wynne in front of the 'Share the Road' sign samples.

She said that she was a cyclist herself and had lived in the Netherlands for a number of years, so she appreciated and understood the reasons for pushing these projects.

When I talked to the MTO representative she said that there will be a solid white line added on each side of the road to mark the bike lanes. The bike lanes will be one metre wide (which isn't huge but it is enough). There will also be 'Share the Road' signs placed along the route. The 'Share the Road' signs will be bilingual with both English and the local dialect Nor'chekrbordian on every other sign. *Tom Hakala*

Who is Minding the Store?

In case you wondered who is doing what in the club... President - Tom Hakala, Vice-president - if interested step forward, Treasurer - John Brown, Registration - Fred Zottl, Time Trials - Scott Thomson, Webmaster - Trevor Stokes, Doug Miller - executive at large. If you are interested in having input in the club, let me know and I will add you to our executive list. Email me at president@owensoundcycling.ca. *Tom Hakala*