



QUICK RELEASE

newsletter of the
LEHIGH WHEELMEN ASSOCIATION Inc.

April 2010

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Potholes of Spring

Phil Eempio, President

It happens every year here in the Northeast, especially after a winter such as the one we just had here. A few freeze/ thaw cycles, combined with a couple of good snowstorms which bring the obligatory snowplows, and you have the bane of cyclists everywhere: potholes. Even the most familiar local roads become a veritable minefield of rim-swallowing seams and craters. In addition, some rural municipalities and townships mix cinders or sand with the salt they spread to provide additional traction on icy roads, and once the snow and ice have melted, these can show up as piles of gravel that can take the most experienced cyclist down without warning.

Eager to get our first spring rides in after a long, cold winter, these road hazards, when combined with bike-handling skills gone rusty in the off-season, result in many injuries to riders. However, there are a number of things you can do to reduce the risks to yourself and your fellow riders until the road crews get things patched up.

Group rides this time of year can be quite squirrely as riders find their legs and fitness while adjusting to the rhythm of a paceline again. The rider at the front of the paceline is responsible for pointing out obstacles in the road, because the riders behind can't see the obstacle until the rider in front of them has passed it – far too late to react safely. If you're in front, scan the road ahead of you as make pace, and maneuver around obstacles in a smooth fashion while pointing them out with one hand. Don't swerve; if you do, the rider behind may make contact with your rear wheel, especially in a tight, fast paceline. Keep your speed constant as you avoid road hazards, and if you encounter a pothole you simply can't avoid safely before avoiding it, call out "HOLE!" while unweighting the bike by standing right before your front wheel makes contact. Doing this

will alert the riders behind you, by both sight and sound, that they are about to hit something, giving them time to react as well.

Gravel on the roads is a bit different. Generally, if you're not turning or applying power, you can ride straight through a pile of gravel without issue; soft-pedal or coast as you make contact, keep your upper body relaxed, and let the bike glide through it. If you're leading a paceline, call out "GRAVEL!" so riders behind know it's coming. When encountering gravel in a corner, try to find a clean line to ride through; if one isn't available, take the corner wide and slow, keeping your body (and the bike) as close to upright as possible. The lower the angle you have with the road, the less likely you are to lose traction on loose stone or gravel. Be smooth and relaxed, and in most cases, you can plow right through with a minimum of issues.

Lastly, if your frame will accept it, running a wider tire in the spring months (25c or 28c) can be a huge benefit when it comes to torn-up roads. With a wider tire, you can run lower pressures, allowing the tire surface to conform to imperfections in the road better, giving better traction on rough roads. Additionally, a wider, higher volume tire, provides better protection from pinch-flats and damaged rims, so that when you do hit that crater you didn't see because you were too busy enjoying the singing birds and blooming flowers, you don't end up walking home on the nicest day of spring!

Phil Eempio

Visit the Lehigh Wheelmen home page at www.lehighvalleywheelmen.com

Due date for *Quick Release* articles is the 20th of every month.

Jr. Racing Report

Gwen Hoover, Jr Coordinator

LWA Future champions junior cyclist fund raiser.

May 8 - 8am - 2pm
Valley Preferred Cycling Center (velodrome) Flea Market.

How you can help!!

- do your spring cleaning and donate bicycle parts, accessories, clothing
- bring higher price items for consignment sale (20 percent commission)
- donate baked good, soda, water for sale
- contact Gwen Hoover for details ghoover@ptd.net

Save the date. Nicole Reinhart Memorial Tour de FCCC junior stage race. July 17 and 18. Volunteers needed. Open to all junior cyclists ages 10 - 18.

Smoothie rides starting April 10. LWA president Phil Esemplio leading the first one

Gwen Hoover

The Speed Racer's Report

Pete Siegfried, VP Racing

Thursday Night Criterium Training Races will run every Thursday night from April 1st until October at the Rodale Fitness park.

In June, we will run the Bethlehem Fitness Park Races on the 19th in Bethlehem and 27th at the Fitness Park.

I'll keep you all informed on upcoming races in the next Speed Racer Report, and I'll try to find some more interesting reading for you.

Well, until next month . Keep it right side up!

Pete Siegfried.

LWA Meetings

Held the 3rd Monday of every month.

Next meeting is:

Monday, April 19, 2009

Business Mtg - 7-8 PM

Speaker – 8pm – Susie Molnar –First Aid for the Ride Leader

MEETING LOCATION:

The Education Center at the Integrated Health Care Facility located at 250 Cetronia Road, behind The Tilghman Square Mall.

Enter the lobby, then take the elevator to the third floor and turn left. The entrance to the Education Center is the first door to the left.

CHANGES COMING IN MAY

The monthly board meeting will be moved to The Valley Preferred Cycling Center's velo deck. Hopefully, those participating in the Monday Night Ride will stay after their ride and join us to hear speakers and to help us guide the club by attending the business meeting.

Timeline:

730-745 pm - After ride stretch with Sallie Urffer
745-830 pm – Speakers/presentations
830-915 pm – Business Meeting

This is a trial, so your participation and feedback are essential.

If you have any questions, please email Phil (pesempio@pmc-group.com).

Save the Dates

April 1 through October – Thursday night Crit – Bob Rodale Fitness Park
April, 18 – Ride Leader Dinner – Asia Restaurant
May 15 – Saturday – Masters & Rookies racing begins - VPCC
May 18 – Super Tuesday Pro Am races begin-VPCC
May 24 – Grill & Chill - Velo parking lot following the MNR
June 18 – World Series of Cycling – Friday night racing begins - VPCC
June 19 – Bethlehem Criterium – Liberty HS
June 27 – Fitness Park Criterium – Bob Rodale Fitness Park
July 7 – JBN Criterium – Bethlehem Industrial Park
July 8-11 – Junior National Championships - VPCC
July 17 & 18 - FCCC – Junior Stage Race
August 1 – Club Picnic & Metric Century – Covered Bridge Park
October 3 - Gap Gallop
December 12 – End of Year Party – Beak Creek Ski Lodge

Webmaster Report

Terry Terfinko

For years the LWA membership dues were payable annually between January and March. Last year the board approved a by-law change that allowed dues to be paid on a 12 month cycle. This means your membership dues need to be renewed 12 months or less from the last time you paid. If you paid your dues in March of 2009, you renew now.

To pay your dues, log onto the website and select the **JOIN** button. Choose either single or family membership and then follow the instructions. When completed, 12 months will be added to your membership expiration date.

You can determine your annual renewal date by selecting the **User Profile** button after logging in. You will see a "Member Since: xx Months Ago" field. This will be the number of months from the date you joined/paid dues. If this number is 11 or 12, it is time to pay your annual dues.

If you prefer to pay your dues at the beginning of the calendar year, you can do that. 12 months will be added to your expiration date. When you let your dues expire you will be notified at login and you will need to pay your dues before full access to the website is allowed.

Terry Terfinko

Editor's Corner

Sallie Urffer

Hopefully you renewed your membership and welcome to new members.

Since there are new members and novice riders in the club I gathered some words of wisdom from experienced riders. Here are the top 10!

1. Group riding – if it's your first ride with a group tell the leader, arrive 15 minutes early, talk to the people on the ride if you're having trouble, know how to change a tube, and the posted speed is the average speed, you may go faster and slower than that speed. Always tell the ride leader or at least someone when leaving the group. If you're in a pace line, keep it smooth, don't brake, don't speed up when taking your turn at the front, point out obstacles, don't stare at the person's wheel in front of you, and please don't hit it. Don't try a ride longer than 50% more miles than you have previously ridden. We've see people start a ride that is 50, 70, or more miles, but they have never ridden more than 15 miles at a time before. They suffer badly and may possibly "hang up the bike". If a new rider wants to ride a century, they should build up to it by doing successively longer rides each weekend in the six weeks leading up to the big event.
2. Cotton – don't wear it unless absolutely necessary, that includes underwear – all kinds of underwear too! Bike shorts are designed to be in direct contact with your skin and the wicking fabric pulls the moisture away. Cotton just soaks up moisture causing the potential for chafing and other ugly things.
3. Tire Pressure – check it before every ride – Riders often overlook pressurizing tires and ride on under inflated tires. This can increase the chances of pinch-flats. Inflating to the maximum pressure on the tire sidewall is almost always too much. Too hard tires handle poorly, are more susceptible to punctures, wear faster, and don't significantly lower rolling resistance, as many are lead to believe.
4. Chains & breaks – clean and lube the chain often – check for proper functioning of the breaks - the both are critical parts of the bike's performance and safety.
5. Seat Height – Correct seat position allows for a slight bend in the knee at the bottom of the pedal stroke. You're not supposed to reach the ground while sitting on the seat. A low saddle stresses the tendon that connects your kneecap to your tibia or shinbone. A high position forces you to reach for the pedals, which can strain the tendons in the back of the knee, so if your knee hurts in the back, lower your seat. If it hurts in the front, raise your seat – but only move it in small increments until you reach the best height for you. BUT all this assumes your bike is the correct size for you. A professional bike fitting is well worth the money.
6. Helmets – wear them so when you crash you don't become permanently brain injured – in my terms, so you don't become a drooler! Helmet straps are supposed to be tight not dangling. But remember helmets are only a safety device; you need to ride safely to ensure you don't crash. Also, if someone chooses not to wear a helmet it's their choice, don't harass them.
7. Drink before you're thirsty and eat before you're hungry. Someone once told me drink every 15 minutes and eat every 15 miles. Hunger and thirst signals mean that your body is already lacking something. You don't want to bonk it can be ugly. Handy fast snacks include; gels, fig newtons, food bars like powerbars, honey, trail mix, PB&J, etc. This is really important when riding more than 50 miles. You really need to pay attention to eating nutritious foods and stay well hydrated in the days prior. In addition, make sure you bring more water and food than you think you'll need on the ride.
8. Pedals – ditch the flat pedals and toe clips, you will become more efficient when pedaling with clipless pedals. Learn to pedal circles – imagine tracing a circle with your heel: concentrate on pulling up, pushing the pedal across the top, and pulling backward at the bottom as if you're trying to scrape mud off the sole of your shoe.
9. Gears – Shift them. When you slowly push hard gears your leg muscles do most of the work. Spinning smaller gears and pedaling faster transfers the workload to your aerobic system. You'll find a sweet spot where no part of your body feels like it's working too hard. So if you're tired in the legs, shift to an easier gear, if you're tired in the lungs, shift to a harder gear.
10. Road Rules – Hold your line, don't cross the center line, ride no more than 2 abreast, don't ride on the shoulder, obey the traffic signs and signals and visit <http://www.dot.state.pa.us/BIKE/WEB/INDEX.htm> for more info on cycling safety or take a class at the Coalition for Appropriate Transportation (CAT).

Sallie Urffer

Classified Ads

ARTICLES FOR SALE

54 Colonago Track Bike - \$2000 –Rarely used – Contact Steve - 610-212-6535 steven@ptd.net

FOR RENT

2 HARD-SIDED BICYCLE TRAVEL CASES, Club owned, for rent to members for up to 4 weeks. \$25 for 1 or 2 weeks, \$50 for 3 or 4 weeks. Plus \$25 security deposit required for any rental. Contact Dick McCreight @dick.mccreight@juno.com

WANTED

FREE ADS FOR MEMBERS

Ads must be private (non-commercial) buy/sell/wanted/etc. having to do with bicycling and/or other sports. **Ads must be submitted by the 20th of the month to appear in the following month's newsletter.** Send ads to Sallie @ sjurffer@rcn.com



LWA Discount Sponsors

Receive a 10% discount with your LWA membership card! (unless otherwise noted)

Action Wheels*

531 W. Broad St.
Bethlehem, PA 18018
610 866 1113

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Bike Line Bethlehem *

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Whitehall, PA 18052
610-774-0426

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