



Perspectives

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From the Desk of the VP

by JOHN WILLIAMS

Is it raining? Oh, it must be a Wednesday or a Saturday of early summer 2023! Plans for rides were several times washed away, however, overall, we had many great Saturday VP rides and, save one, excellent Wednesday night rides.

VP Rides

For the Saturday VP rides we visited many of our favorite routes and tried to introduce some new variations of routes. For some of our rides, at the suggestion of GMBC Member Mike Coleman, we road the first ten or so miles at somewhat of a neutralized pace. This allowed your VP to, once again, experience the joy of riding in a larger group for a while. Just plain fun! Not wanting to hold anyone back on any of our rides, I emphasize: “Don’t wait for me!” (Usually someone does – and thanks!). I have aerobars mounted on my Trek Madone for a reason. If I get dropped and find myself solo or working at catching up, I find it very comfortable to hook into the aerobar saddles and cruise along at whatever pace. I don’t use them when in a group.

Wednesday Night Rides (WNR)

Participation in Wednesday Night Rides was like prior years with the numbers increasing as summer nights warmed. We stuck to our usual format of sending



PHOTO CREDIT: LEE KROHN

out groups of twelve or fewer in order of anticipated riding speed. Parking at the Wheeler Lot has become more of a problem, especially during early summer when ball games and the new dog park resulted in limited space. At these times, we found parking in the lots between the athletic fields provided the space we needed. Thanks to those who commute by bike to the WNR! We ended the WNR season with the “Tour de Pint” whereby we do a shortened route including an informal KOM/QOM competition on Irish Hill. The winners this year were Tor Dworshak and our mountain goat, Sandy Dupuis. Since Tor did not show up for the pizza/brew part of the Tour de Pint, BJ Hargrave took home the KOM Title by default, as second place finisher.

The “save one” mentioned above regarding WNR was a night when a life-threatening

crash occurred within the group. We are thankful that Brian Stark has healed quickly from a crash that resulted in clavicle breaks and skull fracture (saved by his helmet!). I was away on a field trip on the night that this occurred. Chris Johnson volunteered to organize the groups. Both Chris and Rick Blount and others deserve thanks for what they did to support Brian immediately following the crash and through his initial hospital care and healing. Brian came to our Tour de Pint (the pint part) and looked excellent, albeit with his arm still in a sling. Brian is looking forward to rejoining our WNRs next season!

We (as a WNR group) have been introspective about how this happened and how, perhaps, this could have been avoided. We talked this over at the next WNR and through email communications. Thoughts, opinions, and ideas were expressed and shared. The crash was a “Stark” (sorry Brian!) reminder of how quickly, within fractions of seconds, things can change from dynamic, safe, and fun group riding to something at the other end of the pleasure/pain spectrum.

Let’s hope that the 2024 riding season brings with it SAFE and FUN RIDING for all of us! In the meantime – “see you” on Strava, Zwift, Rouvy, or perhaps sliding through the winter snows. 🚴



News from the Richard Tom Foundation

by JOHN WILLIAMS

RTF had a busy spring, summer, and fall. It seems that as soon as one event is seen successfully in hindsight we start planning for the next event. Our current seasonal events include Richard's Ride, Kids' Crit, Gravel Ride, and Fat Bike Rally. Of them all, Richard's Ride requires the most planning time, attention, and volunteer support. Richard's Ride is our primary source of funding each year. The many generous individual contributions and support from our Sponsors, including our Title Sponsor, Vermont Bicycle Tours (VBT), allow RTF to benefit others within the cycling community and support our efforts to get kids on bikes.

The RTF Board is currently initiating a strategic planning process to better define our mission, goals, aspirations, and directions. The baseline for our decisions centers on one question: What would Richard think? Richard's spirit has guided RTF through the many years since we lost him in 2015. We have welcomed Eric Deziel, Vice President of Marketing at VBT, to our Board. Eric offers marketing expertise and long-term thinking which will help us define, plan and shape future growth.

Recent and Upcoming Events: Green Mountain Stage Race Kids' Crit

On Labor Day, the sun beat down on the streets of Burlington – a hot day in the city. RTF, as Title Sponsor for the Burlington Criterium, has hosted the Kids' Crit on Labor Day for eight years. Kids exude excitement at the prospect of racing through the downtown streets. The number of participants this year was lower (about 20) than for some previous years (near 50). Perhaps it was the heat and a better day for the beach? Perhaps the logistics of parking? Perhaps RTF needs to do a better job at getting the word out.



On the plus side (for those participating), the post-crit raffle had a plethora of great prizes from area bike shops – kids and families received multiple selections of cool bike gear. We have established a conversation with the new Criterium Race Director, Tor Dworshak, to seek ways to increase participation for next year. Thanks to outgoing Race

Director Tom Moody for his support of the RTF Kids' Crit in all prior years.

Gravel Ride

We had about 50 riders participate in our annual Fall Gravel Ride staged from Cochran's Ski Area. At near peak foliage and a warmish fall day, everything was perfectly aligned for a great day on a bike along quiet, beautiful unpaved roads. For those who may not have a gravel bike or just prefer to ride on paved roads, we included a road route. I think only one or two riders selected road riding; everyone else chose gravel.

Back at the Base Lodge, Chris Morrissey ("CMO") of Cool Motion Outdoor Sports grilled burgers and brats for everyone as riders returned tired, hungry, and happy. Thanks to everyone for being there!

Fat Bike Rally

We will be partnering with the Catamount Outdoor Family Center to once again offer a day of riding on groomed trails through the Catamount Forest. Bring your fat bike and XC skis and enjoy the day compliments of Catamount and RTF. A limited number of fat bikes will be available. Date to be determined (snow needed!).

That's all for now folks! See you along trails, highways, or byways of our beautiful Vermont. My mom placed a sign on her mountain home in New Hampshire stating: "If you are lucky enough to live in the mountains, you are lucky enough." So true! 🚲



GMBC Annual Meeting – Nov. 11, 2023

Members present: John Bertelsen, Kevin Bessett, Tor Dworshak, Brian Hammon, BJ Hargrave, Brian Howard, Phyl Newbeck, Bill Regan, and John Williams

Kevin Bessett opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Committee Reports

President Kevin Bessett provided membership numbers. We have 155 memberships which is down 20 from 2022. Of those, 109 are individuals, 44 are family memberships, two are juniors, and three are lifetime memberships. The average age of our membership is 52.

Bessett also provided statistics for the time trial series. The average participation at each event this year was eight, down one from last year. Twenty-seven individuals rode in one or more TT; last year that number was 37. Bessett believes the weather played a role but said the local cycling scene has changed greatly since 2012 when the series averaged 29 cyclists per event.

Vice President John Williams noted that the weather was also a challenge for the Wednesday night rides and Saturday VP rides. He said that this year, the first ten miles of the VP rides were at a somewhat neutralized pace which he appreciated. The group visited their usual routes and added a few new variations.

Williams said the numbers for the Wednesday night rides increased as the weather warmed. Parking was sometimes problematic because of the new dog park. The year ended with the Tour de Pint and the awarding of KOM and QOM titles. There was a bad accident on one of the Wednesday night rides, but the rider is recovering and looking forward to joining the group again

next year.

Prior to the meeting, Andre Strum submitted a report about the Practice Crits. There were a number of first-time racers in the C field but sometimes the B and A groups had to be combined because of their small numbers. Only one of the six races had to be cancelled due to weather issues.

Brian Howard reported on the touring group. He noted that numbers there were also down, possibly because of the weather. He added more gravel rides on Saturdays and hopes to put even more on the schedule next year. He said attendance at the Intro rides was also down. On the plus side, there were several new ride leaders.

Tor Dworshak reported on the Burlington Criterium and thanked the people who volunteered. This was his first year at the helm and he looks forward to next year.

Treasurer John Bertelsen gave the financial numbers. Bertelsen noted that GMBC gives money to several area non-profit organizations and believes we should have a better system for doing that. Phyl Newbeck volunteered to be part of a subcommittee that would look into how to do that.

We have \$13,078 in our bank account, \$3,353 in clothing inventory for a total of \$16,431 and \$3,198 in liabilities. We took in \$5,015 in income and spent \$3,753 with the greatest expense being insurance (\$1,709) followed by contributions (\$495), the annual meeting (\$376), association dues (\$300), membership registration fees (\$265), member benefits (\$250), and bank fees (\$178).

Discussion

Nonprofit status: There was discussion about pursuing nonprofit status. GMBC has a set of by-laws, but they haven't been reviewed in

several years and should probably be revised to better reflect how we operate and then be posted on our website.

Traffic on touring routes: There was talk about reviewing some of our routes to see if there are ways to avoid heavier traffic roads like Route 2 on the Islands and Route 22 in Addison County.

Increasing membership: There was discussion about extending our social media presence to Instagram which would reach younger people. There was also talk about moving from our listserv to either Slack or Discord. The average age of our members is up from last year and we need to find a way to get a younger demographic to join.

Newsletter: There was continued discussion about printing the newsletter to reach more people. John Williams polled the Wednesday night riders and found that most had not seen the summer issue. Printing and mailing are expensive, but one thought was to print out a few and distribute them at bike shops.

Election of officers

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the officers voted in the full slate of candidates: Kevin Bessett as President, John Williams as Vice President, John Bertelsen as Treasurer, Brian Howard as Touring Chair, Andre Sturm as Practice Crit Chair, Tor Dworshak as Burlington Criterium Chair, Dorothy Pumo as Webmaster, Chris Johnson as Membership Chair, Phyl Newbeck as Newsletter Editor, Sue Storey as Newsletter Designer, and John Witmer as Clothing Coordinator.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm. 🚲

Respectfully submitted, Phyl Newbeck, GMBC Interim Secretary



Tour Group Season 2023

by BRIAN HOWARD

Biking Review for my Inaugural Club Touring Chairperson Seat

As a tour leader for many years with GMBC, this season I began to appreciate the time and input that goes into the whole Tour riding season that previous Touring Chair, Phyl Newbeck had performed for many years. Most of the heavy lifting to get the Tour season/schedule up and running would turn out to be in the early months of the new year when most folks are still outdoors enjoying winter sports, and still on the slopes carving hills and climbing the trails of various cross country ski venues or perhaps in the woods venturing onto a backcountry trail system.

Luckily for me I was familiar with most of our club routes from being a tour leader on many of these during the normal riding season. Getting and rounding up folks to be tour group leaders, and co-leaders was another story. I also decided to take on creating gravel rides on Saturdays as well to try to encourage more folks to come out and ride, expand their riding options, and to encourage new folks too to join the GMBC.

Luckily for me, I started to think about all of this right after the 2022 winter holidays, and get a good head start on my new role, as I also volunteered as a Tax Aide for AARP. That season starts pretty much in February, the official TY-Tax Year start. Looking around for a place for the Touring Group to meet was a bit challenging. I decided it would be best for us to meet in person for the 2023 season. Most folks agreed as they were weary of Zoom Meetings, and Covid had dissipated dramatically by end of 2022. I first needed to pick a weekend date that most folks could attend. I also enticed folks by telling them I would have some free swag to hand out to them if they attended the meeting in person.

Once that was established, I scuttled to find a central meeting area and came upon the wonderful meeting rooms at the new South Burlington Library on Market Street. We could also get two hours free

as a non-profit, which would work as our meetings in the past never came close to exceeding the two-hour mark. The rooms were well equipped with state-of-the-art audio-visual hardware. All I needed was my laptop, and a spreadsheet with all the proposed rides to display on the large screen in the room. Then, as a group, we could fill in the weekends for the roster of established rides.

I had a large enough group that we hashed out the rides to almost mid to late riding season, and that worked out well. There were a few spots that

still needed leaders and co-leaders at that point, but I had a working schedule. I then hammered out the details of a decent schedule for 2023 that I could send to Phyl to get it published for the upcoming riding season in the spring newsletter, and get to Dorothy Pumo, Club Webmaster as well to get in the Events Page of the club web site page. I had a bit of a breather from that point as I was now engrossed in my Tax Aide responsibilities and also as the TC- Technical



Social riders in Venise en Quebec.

Contact for District 1, all of Chittenden County. Most of the rest of the upcoming season was somewhat easier, as I just needed to stay on top of the events as they unfolded and sometimes switch gears to improvise on routes and keep an eye on weather conditions.

This past 2023 season was a bit more immersed than usual in more rainy weather conditions, partially washed-out roads, and a new phenomenon – bad air quality as a result of the wildfires this summer in Canada bringing smoky skies that on several occasions affected us in Vermont with air quality issues, particularly on weekends when the rides were happening.

The first leaderless ride of the season on April 9 was memorable because I got two flats on a chilly, but sunny day in the Islands. There were only three riders but for the next ride in South Burlington on April 16 we were up to nine. The next ride was rained out and rained threatened our last leaderless ride from Jasper Mines enough that only two of the six riders did the full route to St. Albans Bay.

We started the 2023 season on a bang with 30 riders for the first official spring ride on May 27. We did Kingsland Bay which was a change of venue from previous seasons with the conventional Covered Bridges Ride of Chittenden County route. Another popular ride was the St. Albans Explorer which brought out 28 riders including seven Social Riders.

In June, the weather turned sharply colder for a bit with a late frost at least once. On the Champlain Bridge Ride, we faced some fierce headwinds and cross winds which limited us to only five riders and two decided to turn back partway into the ride after getting blown around by strong crosswinds. Past club President Ben Haydock and I decided we would turn around at Crown Point and face the fierce head and cross winds across the Bridge and open farm fields in Panton and Vergennes. One rider completed the full ride to Port Henry and back after he forgot his bike shoes and returned to the start in Vergennes to start and do the ride on his own. We passed him on our way back from the bridge. I found out later he also forgot his wallet with little to no money for nutrition for the bulk of the ride. It was a challenging day in more ways than one for him, a memorable ride in any case.

Later in June we started getting the rains that seemed to always affect the weekends. Two rides in June were cancelled because of the weather. Even the annual Ride for the Lake sponsored by the Friends of Northern Lake Champlain had a very low turnout due to cold and rainy weather. July was another rainy month and there were three rides cancelled - both road and gravel - with one gravel ride cancelled due to road closures along the route. On another gravel ride in late July, we played chicken with the weather and got sprinkled on, but the ride was completed. Vermont in July received record rainfall amounts which caused severe flooding, mostly in the central part of the state and the Northeast Kingdom.

One ride in August, Grand Isle Flats, had a larger turnout with 25 riders. Another ride in September, Venise En Quebec had a whopping 26 riders for a gorgeous fall ride. Our Century Day, as in the last several years, was plagued by questionable weather and had only ten riders. Only one person did a true century of 100 miles that day. I was away in October, so I have no numbers for the



Waitsfield and Waterfalls.

leaderless rides.

Our ridership overall was down which I surmise can be partially attributed to the challenging weather this summer with rain, threats of rain, and air quality problems with Canadian wildfires. I did see some new faces this year on both the road and gravel rides, but I would like to see more interested riders join us on these rides.

Four intro rides were also inserted into the schedule again in 2023, but the signups had low turnouts. I was pleased to have a few new ride leaders join in 2023, and I hope more will step up next season to help lead the GMBC Tour Rides. I want to thank all the Tour Leaders this past 2023 season, as it was

challenging at times to decide to have the ride or call it because of dubious weather, road closures, and changing road conditions. Thanks to all who rode with us, as well, on both the road and gravel rides and who supported the GMBC membership. I did commit to returning as Tour Chair and will see you all in 2024. Thanks for making this a success for me as well as the club too!



Taking a break at Hero's Welcome.

Meet the Veep: John Williams

by PHYL NEWBECK



John at Bolton Valley.

John Williams is a late bloomer when it comes to cycling. Growing up in Massachusetts, he was a runner on his high school's track and cross-country teams. He didn't make the cut for the track team at UMass, but he continued running for fitness while competing on their alpine ski team.

Although Williams didn't consider himself a strong skier, he loved the sport and was an alpine race coach for junior racers at two New Hampshire ski areas. He also developed a love of the ocean and in addition to being a certified NAUI SCUBA diving instructor, he enjoyed time surfing, windsurfing, clamming, and spending time on his wooden sailboats. Eventually, Williams rekindled his love for running and worked his way up to marathons,

competing in at least 20 including three trips to the Boston Marathon. His best marathon time was on that prestigious course, finishing in just over three hours.

After moving to Vermont, Williams continued to define himself as a runner, but he began teaching skiing at Smugglers' Notch on weekends and many of the other instructors were cyclists. "I realized that I could cover a lot more ground with three hours of cycling than I could with running," he said. Initially, Williams had been resistant to teaching since his skiing had always been of the racing variety. "Instructing didn't appeal to me until I decided to do it," he said. Twenty-seven years later and having achieved PSIA Level 3 certification which allows him to teach any level of skier, he's still on staff at the mountain, helping first-timers learn the ropes and guiding higher level skiers through some of Smuggs' gnarlier glades.

After cycling with his fellow Smuggs instructors, Williams went to Earl's Cyclery and Fitness where Richard Tom fitted him for a new bike – a carbon frame Orbea which he still has. He started doing Earl's Tuesday and Thursday night rides and, upon learning about GMBC, did some of those rides as well. Soon, the Smuggs people he had been riding with seemed slow and although he met up with them at the start of the Mad River Century one year, he ditched them to ride with his new GMBC friends.

Larry Coletti was the club vice president and Williams appreciated the way he organized rides. "I was just one of the many people who rode with Larry," he said, "and I wasn't particularly fast." When Coletti decided to move to Florida, he asked Williams if he'd take over the VP role. "My first thought was 'why me'," he recalls, "and I still ask that question." Worrying that he lacked a racing background, Williams talked to Kevin Bessett who thought he'd make a good VP. Williams took over that role in 2013.

Technology made the job a little easier as Williams began to use Ride with GPS to map routes and took over the Wednesday night and the Saturday VP rides. "Wednesday is easier but much bigger," he said. "We can get 30 to 40 people



...at Catamount Family Center.

on a warm summer night.” Williams sends them out in groups and emphasizes the need for safe riding. He credits Dorothy Pumo’s sign-up form with making his job easier because he can tell ahead of time if new people are joining the ride and spend more time explaining the importance of safe cycling.

On Saturdays, Williams leads a group which he describes as filled with riders who are stronger than him. “I often end up on my own,” he said, “but that’s okay.” Saturday routes are generally 60 miles or longer and incorporate climbs like App Gap. In addition to his VP role, Williams devotes a lot of time to the Richard Tom Foundation which he helped found in 2015 and where he serves as Executive Director.

In 1990, Williams started working at Aquatec, a company that does environmental studies with live organisms. In 2016, company owner Philip Downey came into his office. “I knew there was something wrong because he sat down across from me and usually, he just stood there,” Williams said. “I was 71 and I wondered whether he was going to ask me about retirement.” Instead, Downey broke the news that he was going to leave the business and offered to sell it to Williams.

He initially declined but after three weeks of not working Williams discovered he was depressed so in October 2016 he made the purchase. Aquatec tests the toxicity of effluents that discharge into waterways by using early life-stage organisms. They grow some of the live organisms in-house and source the others from Maine and the West Coast. Williams is proud that his work offers protection to our aquatic environments.

Williams loves the camaraderie and dynamics of group road rides but lately he has begun to gravitate towards gravel where there is less traffic. He has also come to love both mountain biking and fat biking because he gets to be out in the woods. “I’m new to it,” he said. “It’s exciting and you have to be alert to quick changes in the terrain.”

A full-time day job and his Smugglers’ Notch, GMBC, and Richard Tom Foundation duties means a busy schedule. “Being VP requires me to be at the Wednesday and Saturday rides,” Williams said “but I also try to do my own riding. That means things like laundry and mowing the lawn take a back seat but especially at my age, it’s important to get out and exercise.”



...at North Jay Summit.

Williams loves the feeling he gets at the end of a Wednesday night ride when everyone has come back safely and is chatting with one another. The dynamics of Saturday rides are a little different since the faster riders are gone by the time Williams gets back but he praises Bessett and a few others who sometimes head back onto the route to pace

him in. At 78, he’s happy to be able to spend as much time on the bike as he can. “I hope to keep doing this for years and years,” he said. 🚲



...in the Notch.



2023 National Senior Games in Pittsburgh, PA.

by ANDRE STURM

The National Senior Games are a biannual event for athletes 50 years and above. Age groups are in five- year increments. The 19th edition took place this last July in Pittsburgh, PA, when over 11,000 participants competed over two weeks in 21 sports. The cycling events consisted of 5k and 10k individual time trials, as well as 20k and 40k mass start road races.

The 5k time trial was in a beautiful park around North Park Lake without a turnaround. The road was fully closed to allow the racers to ride on the side circumventing the frequent speed bumps across most of the road.

The 10k time trial started right next to the Steelers football stadium, and after some twisty roads it went two miles uphill on the HOV lanes of the 279 Highway. It made for interesting riding with four-lane highways on both sides of the racecourse (separated by concrete walls), but absolute fun to spin your 54x11 for two miles downhill after the turnaround.

The road races happened about 60 miles north of Pittsburgh in the small town of Plain Grove on a rolling, fun course with many turns.

Overall, these were probably the best organized cycling events of the five times I went to the National Senior Games. They had top notch timing equipment, with large displays announcing the departure order and times at the start as well as results at the finish immediately after crossing the line. Even the occasional correction was quickly implemented. The pre-games communication could have been a bit better, since the road courses were not announced until about a month before the games when many people had already booked their hotels. That made for some very early wake-up times and long drives for some of us for the road races.

Vermont had a pretty good contingent across different age groups, with three women and seven men. Despite its name, GMBC is very Chittenden County centric, so it is very nice to meet other Vermont cyclists from Shaftsbury, Reading, and Thetford and hang out with them for a few days and get to know them.

And of course, it is nice to celebrate as a team the success of individuals, with Mark Hammond's 8th place in the 10k time trial, and on the last day with Brian Conchieri's bronze medal in the 40k road race.

Besides participating in the cycling events, there are many opportunities to watch the other sports or discover some of the local sights and restaurants of the host city. There is also the Celebration of Athletes ceremony, and since this is usually towards the end of the games, the cyclists are typically well represented. This year it was a parade into the PNC field of the Pitts-



The Vermont delegation at the Celebration of Athletes at PNC field.



Podium of the 65-69 men's age group in the 40k road race. GMBC's and Jackalope's Brian Conchieri won a bronze medal.

burgh Pirates, immediately followed by the opportunity to watch a baseball game against the San Francisco Giants.

The next National Senior Games will be 2025 in Des Moines, IA. The qualifier for these games will probably be in September 2024 in Castleton, VT, or some of the open State Games in Connecticut or Maine. I hope to see some of you there! 🚲

2023 Time Trial Series Summary

by KEVIN BESSETT

The Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde weather made for a challenging season. Of the 17 TTs on the schedule, four were cancelled and four were wet. The last few seasons have been similar in nature and this pattern sure makes it difficult for anyone who is putting on outdoor events. The new norm has arrived and it's unwelcomed.

Aside from the weather, it was a good season. I am delighted to report that there were no incidents other than a few close passing cars – surprise, surprise. A new gravel course was introduced this season, Nashville Road in Jericho, and it was well-received. People thought it was a great course to ride. And keeping with the gravel topic, the visit to the Duxbury gravel course in July drew a few more people than usual, which was a nice surprise. The positives of gravel courses are less traffic and drawing new people. The negative is losing people who, for example, are using TTs to train for triathlons (99% of which take places on pavement). On both surfaces the workout is the same but the typical bikes used differ. It's a fine line trying to get more people and not losing existing one. Don't worry, pavement TTs are not giving way to gravel, but there maybe be a few more gravel TTs next season.

Now, on to statistics. The average participation at each event this year was eight. Last year it was nine. And this season, 27 individuals rode in one or more TT; last year that number was 37. The weather played a role for sure, but the local cycling scene has changed greatly since 2012 (when the series was rocking and averaged 29 per event). Nowadays, I'd be ecstatic if the average was 15.

With mainly the regulars showing up each week (who I call the *legacy folks*), the average age of participants keeps creeping upward. This year I estimate it between 57 and 62. A decade ago it was in the high 30s/low 40s. And two *legacy folks* get a call-out on riding the most events this year. Marc Hammond and Sandra (Sandy) Dupuis frequented the series the most, at 12 and six events respectively. The all-time attendance awards go to John Witmer at 439(!) and Sandy Dupuis at 139. Both have a buffer of 100+ TTs over second place. Very impressive, and I'd bet my house and one cat that they neither will be unseated, ever.

That's the wraps. I've enjoyed seeing everyone at the TTs this year and look forward to next season. Have a great winter and see you on the first Thursday in May 2024. 🚴

2023 GMBC Practice Criterium Series Recap

by ANDRE STURM

2023 was a successful year in terms of practice crits. We had five events, and only one was cancelled due to inclement weather, a bit lucky looking back at this summer.

A special thank you again to our regular volunteers, Dorothy Pumo (referee) and Sharon Sturm (registration), but also all the other folks who marshalled at one time or another. It was special to have Eva Davant as a prospective referee attend most of the races.

A big shout out and thank you also to Josh Saxe and his Jackalope business for donating a lot of very nice prizes to the criterium series.

For each race day we had between 13 and 21 racers total across the C, B and A fields. That is a far cry from the same number in each of the B and A fields some 10 years ago, but encouraging, nevertheless.

Especially noteworthy is that we had between two and six starters at the beginners C field, many of them first time racers. While the B field was somewhat consistent with about nine starters, the A field saw low numbers especially mid-season due to UVM's semester break. As a result, for four of the race days we combined the B and A racers for the first 30 minutes, but it became quickly apparent that there is a significant difference between B and A level, attenuated by the relatively small number of racers.

One of the big success stories of this season was Jane Vigneau, who started out in the C races, graduated to the B races, and eventually won the sprint competition (as well as Queen of the Mountain) in the Women's Cat 3/4/5 field at GMSR 2023.

We will be back in 2024, possibly with some changes to the race format. One idea is to have just two races C/B and B/A, but we will send out a survey for some community input. 🚴

Date	C-B-A starters
5/09/23	3-9-9
5/23/23	6-(8-4)
7/11/23	4-(7-2)
7/25/23	2-(9-4)
8/08/23	cancelled
8/22/23	3-(9-9)



Bon Ton Roulet

by SANDY DUPUIS

My husband Mark and I have done the Bon Ton Roulet several times. It is a seven-day bike tour around the Finger Lakes of New York. This bike tour is well supported. Your gear is sagged by truck from one point to the next each day. There is a bike mechanic and sag support for the riders. Depending on the length of the bike route there are one to three supported food and drink stops. The routes are marked on the road as well as Ride with GPS files for the routes and paper cue sheets. Many of the evenings feature entertainment including small bands, solo musicians, or speakers. I found the talk about the differences between Amish and Mennonites to be interesting. Each day a full breakfast and dinner is provided. The food is quite excellent. When you complete the ride, if you are hungry there is a food truck that provides hot dogs, hamburgers, and drinks. Oh, and there is "Beer Truck Bob"! Bob, who is in charge of the trucks that transport your belongings from one point to another is also in charge of the beer! For just \$2 you can get a cold beer and Bob always has a huge stock with many kinds of beer. He also has cold bottled water, soda, and Gatorade.

You can camp every night if you want, but staying



in college dorms on the nights where you are on a campus is also an option. If you don't have a tent, you can rent a tent that is put up and taken down for you by Comfy Campers. This year, we camped Saturday, Sunday, and Monday nights and stayed in dorms from Tuesday night through Friday night.



This was our home for a few nights.



Emerson Park in Auburn.

For the first six days, you can choose between a regular route of 40 to 45 miles or a longer route of about 60 to 70 miles. There is an optional Century day where you can ride 100 miles, do the regular route, or take a rest day. The last day everyone rides the same route back to Cortland which is around 40 miles.

We started in Cortland, New York which is the location where the bike tour starts almost every year. Sunday morning, we rode from Cortland to Auburn and stayed at Emerson Park in Auburn. We did the long route which was 61 miles. We had a beautiful campsite along the lake.

Monday, we rode from Auburn to Ithaca and stayed at the Robert Treman

State Park. That ride was 62 miles.

Tuesday, we rode from Ithaca to Penn Yan and stayed at Keuka College, our first dorm night. There are many Amish and Mennonite farms in this area. The journey to Penn Yan was 58 miles with over 3200



Robert Treman State Park.

feet of climbing most of which was in the first 20 miles.

Wednesday was the optional Century, which we both rode. It was a big loop around Keuka Lake with some added roads across hills including the Mitchessville Hill climb. I was fortunate to have found a 30-something year old triathlete to ride the Century with. Tina and I had a great time riding together, taking turns at the front, chatting, enjoying the scenery, and getting lost a couple of times!

Thursday, we rode from Penn Yan to Geneva. This ride was 58 miles, with over 3,400 vertical feet of climbing. In Geneva we stayed at Hobart and William Smith College. Mark and I were in the dorms and these dorms were small townhouses – very nice!

Friday was our last opportunity for a rather long ride on this bike tour. We rode from Geneva to Aurora. The route was 64 miles, and we concluded the ride at Wells College. Again, we chose to stay in the dorms. Friday evening there was a party with free beer and other nonalcoholic beverages and music.

Saturday, we rode from Aurora back to Cortland. This last ride of the tour was 40 miles.

If you want to do a well-supported bike tour, I recommend you look into the Bon Ton Roulet. We have met some great people, made friends with other riders and look forward to seeing them each year. 🚴



Sandy and Mark.



Mark, at a rest stop with friends.



Katy Trail, the Longest Rail Trail in the US

by BRIAN HOWARD

Lewis and Clark Expedition Territory on the Missouri River

The Katy Trail in Missouri is one of the longest, if not the longest, multi-use rail trail in the US. It consists of 240 miles of continuous trail that traverses east to west or the other direction depending on your starting point. The eastern edge of the trail was the starting point for Lewis and Clark's expedition. For this trip in early October 2023, we started on the eastern part of the state in Clinton, Missouri and headed west to St. Charles.

I first signed up back in late 2019 to do the ride in June of 2020. Of course, that was the first year of Covid, and the ride was cancelled for obvious reasons. I was refunded the amount for the trip, but still received the official bike jersey. The ride was part of the Katy Trail State Park's scheduled trip for either five or six days of riding with camping in the various state park campgrounds as part of the journey. Needless to say, there were no major group rides that year as everyone

was hunkered down at home, staying indoors at least until they could figure out how bad this pandemic was and what folks should do to keep safe.

When the vaccines became available in 2021, the outlook for a group ride slowly became a reality again, although when I tried to sign up for the Katy Trail it was again cancelled for safety concerns. In 2021, I did another group ride down in the Pinelands of New Jersey called the Tour De Pines, and then in 2022, I did the Ohio to Lake Erie (OTET) ride. It was a good trip on a mostly paved trail starting in Cleveland and ending in Cincinnati for 326 miles.

Finally, I looked again for the Katy Trail ride in early 2023, and found a private outfitter called Big Bam which was running the ride in June and October. I began to canvas folks interested in doing a group ride again as the Big Bam organization offered both camping outside and hotel/BnB stays for those not wanting to sleep outside on the ground.

I managed to convince six folks to join the ride. Two of us were from Vermont, one from Minnesota, and three from Buffalo, NY. Big Bam also offered weeklong parking and a coach bus from St. Charles,



our meeting point, to load up our bags and bikes to Clinton for the official start. There also was an option to rent bikes if you were thinking of flying to St. Louis and then getting a pickup of your bike in Clinton.

The two of us from Vermont agreed to bring our own gravel bikes and take two days to share the driving to Missouri. Most folks brought their own bikes, and they were carefully handled and packed in two 24-foot U-Haul trucks with furniture packing pads to keep them from getting damaged in transit. We met on Sunday, Oct 8, arriving in Clinton at the Lewis and Clark Boathouse Museum right at the edge of the Missouri River. We met our ride director who was pleasant and upbeat about our ride and filled us in on how our first day would go when we arrived in Clinton, where to set up our tents, and how to retrieve our bikes from the U-Haul trucks.

It was a warm sunny day in Clinton and setting up after sitting for several hours in the coach bus, even though it was comfortable, it felt great to get out and at least get some exercise in setting up the tents and then walking a bit to get our swag bags with the ride information, T-shirt, what appeared to be a poker game, and some tokens for free drinks each day, post ride as well.

Some folks already knew what the poker cards were for. It turns out that at each morning's rest stop, the ride leader or one of the crew of Big Bam would hold out a deck of cards, and you could pick two cards

per day to see what poker hand you could complete. That was something new for me and it seemed entertaining and fun. The biggest problem was the poker card was too large to fit in a riding jersey, so I decided to put it in a Ziplock bag that was part of the swag bag and carry it on my top of my rear bike pack under the top strapping area. Then I could have it at the ready to play the poker game every day and keep the cards relatively dry as well. After several days, I managed to acquire a pair of kings and looked good for a few days into the trip.

The rides were between 40 and 45 miles each day with one day at 51 miles. Each of the days we rode the trail, the first hour or so was chilly in the morning and one of my mistakes was not bringing warmer riding gear. I had to borrow a pair of leg warmers from my riding buddy Matt so I could at least stay relatively warm starting out. Once we moved into the afternoon, riding was much more pleasant and suitable for shorts and a light biking jacket for the rest of the day. The temperatures were in the mid 70's by noon and quite enjoyable during the bulk of the ride.

The week before we left, the temperature had been in the mid 80's during the day and so I took the chance of not bringing any warmer riding gear with me. I did bring some wool socks and arm warmers which was a plus. I also brought along a pair of

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waterproof socks and rain pants which came in handy for the tail end of the ride on Friday which we all knew was going to be rainy. In fact, at least 45 riders decided to bow out on Thursday evening and made arrangements with the ride director to cancel out of the ride. The rest of us intrepid folks remained and woke up on Friday morning early to hear the thunderstorms approaching us. We packed up quickly to get our camping gear on the trucks and to get out any rain gear we had and put that on to try and stay at least somewhat dry/warm for the long day in the saddle.

We started out that Friday morning at the Wurst Haus in Hermann for breakfast. One of the riders from the night before asked if we would be going to what sounded like the worst house in the morning and our response was why would I go to the worst house? Then in the morning, we figured out what he meant. The Wurst Haus had a great gas heater device which was pumping gas heat with a great flame through a transparent glass tube which looked like a giant Bunsen burner of sorts. This was a welcome sight early in the morning and was also inviting to go inside and see what was for breakfast there.

Wurst Haus was a serious place for all sorts of German wurst, dry sausage, cheeses, and other specialty food items that you would want to purchase. It's well set up for a thriving business and we were

greeted by the owner and his wife and invited to come in for breakfast and either select an all you can eat breakfast for \$15.99 or order a la carte for items like eggs, award winning wurst, in-shop smoked bacon, biscuits and gravy, fruit, coffee, tea. It was all there. We were just glad to get a warm meal before heading out on a wet and cool morning. They also have an online shopping web site for their goods and services.

In any case, breakfast was very yummy and when it came time to leave, it was still a steady rain outside, and I decided at that point to pull out my new rain pants from Shower's Pass and don those for the duration of the ride or at least until the rain stopped. We started out and had to follow the road out of town to get back to the trail. Once up this fairly steep hill out of town, one of the riders discovered he had a flat and needed to attend to it. I had not heard his call to stop, but then saw he was not moving and went back on a bridge area with traffic passing us at 55 mph and gave him my pump to see if the tubeless tire would hold after putting sealant in the area where he might have had a leak.

He pumped up the tire and we rode on until meeting my riding buddy Matt's brother from Minnesota, who was standing under a little shelter area on the trail, which was an old, restored train depot with information about the Katy Trail area. He discovered a broken spoke on his bike, and we decided he could not ride on a hampered wheel and contacted Todd, the Big Bam ride director to have him



SAG the rest of the ride. It was going to take a while for him to be picked up as many other riders called that same morning to get SAG'd as well. We left him with the bike assistant from the ride before we headed on to do the rest of the ride.

Needless to say, it was not a fun ride. We kept our heads down and carried on until we could stop at the lunch stop area and get reorganized and a bit dried out. Our bikes were pretty messy at that point and everything else, including bike shoes were soaked too. My feet were somewhat still okay as I wore waterproof socks and rain pants which were partially insulated, keeping my lower body warm and dry from the soaking rains. My upper body was mostly dry, but my rain jacket was starting to feel wet. The rear fender I had installed on my gravel bike helped keep the jacket from getting a dark stripe up the back.

Our lunch stop was a welcome sight, and we could warm up a bit and dry out. I enjoyed a hot cup of tea and great chicken salad with romaine lettuce leaves instead of sandwich bread which made my day. We thought the rain had stopped, but then it started again as we were inside having lunch and leaving our jackets out on the deck to dry a bit, which didn't happen. When we left the lunch place, it was just drizzling, and the rain was supposed to stop by afternoon or at least when we arrived at the end of day area where we would set up for our last night of camping before heading back to St. Charles where we started or were parked to board the coach bus to the eastern terminus of the trail.

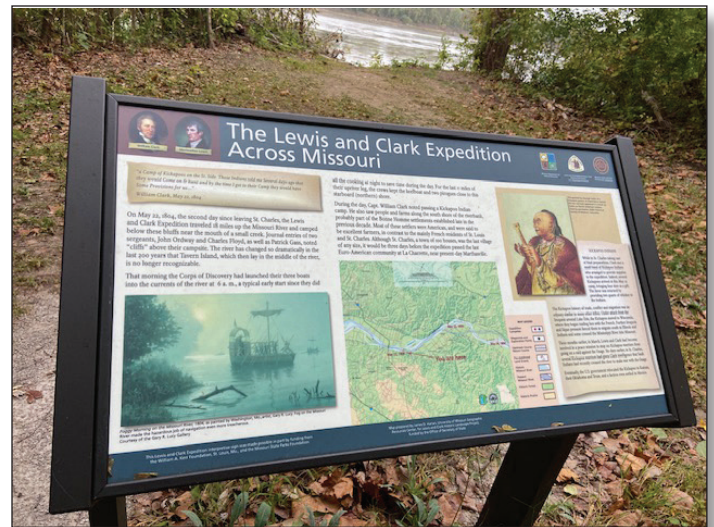
When we pulled into the camp area in Augusta, we immediately headed to the shower truck area and behind the truck was a hose to clean our bikes off from the combination of road and grit from the trail that collected everywhere. After that we collected our bags, and it was miraculously dry in the baseball field area where we set up. We were able to gather ourselves for the last night's stay and the after-party celebration and enjoy the festivities and music provided in a festive, outdoor pub-type place on a terraced area.

Also, the announcement of the week's poker game

would be part of the activities. Turns out I was the winner with three kings that I had gotten throughout the week. I would have had a full house if I had not gotten the same deuce card twice. I received a Big Bam baseball cap for my win which was nice. The last night's activities ended by 10 pm and we arose early the next morning, packed up quickly and hit the road to get back to St. Charles, which was the shortest day, just 27 miles. It was a cloudy day and it started to sprinkle a bit along the trail, but we remained dry and were happy to get back without any major issues with weather or anything else. We wanted to visit the Lewis and Clark Boathouse, but they didn't open until noon that day, so we just got our bags and loaded up our gear to hit the road to get back home. I think we were lucky in that the weather was great except for one wet day which was luckily not that cold, so it was a good trip all in all.

I would recommend the trail to anyone wanting to traverse the longest developed rail trail in the country. The trail offers opportunities for all kinds of recreation. It's a place to enjoy nature and an avenue to discover the past. The park, built on the former corridor of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas – MKT or Katy - is 240 miles long and runs between Clinton and Machens with 26 trailheads and four fully restored railroad depots along the way. You wind through some of the most scenic areas of the state with the majority of the trail closely following the Missouri River.

The park takes users through a slice of rural history as it meanders through small towns that once thrived along the railroad corridor and reflects the rich heritage of Missouri. Most of the trail is flat, but scenic and rich in history and more. You can also find several spur trails if you want more mileage. The longest spur, the Rock Island Spur trail of the Katy Trail Park is a 47.5- mile trail that stretches through the heart of west central Missouri. There was some talk of extending the Rock Island Spur trail beyond the 47.5 miles to perhaps another 150 miles which is under development but not open to the public yet. If you enjoy rail trails, I highly recommend this one to visit. 🚲



Tour de France – Unchained

by PHIL LITTLER

This is an eight-episode Netflix series that came out in June of 2023 about the 2022 Tour de France, from the Grand Départ to the Road to Paris. This is both good news and bad. The good news is the group responsible is expected to make this a yearly series covering each year of the Tour de France. The bad news is that you are not the intended audience. The first few episodes include lots of crashes and almost no mention of bicycles or bicycle parts - not even a derailleur. Perhaps this was not surprising since I found out later that the series is produced by the same team from the Netflix series [Formula 1: Drive to Survive](#) and follows a similar structure - lots of crashes in either series.

As a cyclist I feel almost an obligation to watch this, as would a football fan to watch the Super Bowl or a tennis fan to watch Wimbledon. I think overall they did a good job and told interesting stories. It managed to change my perspective on the race. Before I saw this, I always considered it a race of elite cyclists on very expensive bikes eating huge amounts of food and taking place in July in France. After I saw this series, I considered this a group of teams competing for glory, with each team composed of domestiques, sprinters, time trialists, and climbers, and managed by a Directeur Sportif.

Later in the series they actually go inside the teams and talk to some of the leaders and discuss issues facing the teams. One of the major issues is the desire to win each stage of the race versus keeping team members high on the general classification. The flat races are won by sprinters and hilly races are won by climbers. One example the cinematographers go into is the Jumbo Visma team where Wout Van Aert might win a Time Trial stage and Jonas Vingegaard might win the hilly stages and take the lead in the General Classification.

One of the criticisms that Wout made is the

cinematographs implied a rivalry between Jonas and him when in real life there is none - each knows their role on the team. The cinematographers only have access to some of the teams and seem to ignore some of the stars, such as Tadej Pogačar who came in second in the GC, despite being on a relatively weak team. The series did seem to focus on those that could speak English or French and ignored the rest. Not surprisingly, those that spoke English as a second language were not as effusive as one would hope.

The British rider Thomas Pidcock is a cyclocross champion and was both willing and able to go downhill on the Alpe d'Huez faster than anyone else and won the stage because of that fearlessness. One also saw the usefulness of having a strong team, as Jumbo Visma guarded the General Classification standing of their rider, Vingegaard, by constantly attacking Pogačar on a climb, draining him in the process.

One of the things that surprised me was that the series took some of the luster off the race winner. Jonas Vingegaard, the GC winner, was definitely a good bicyclist and an extraordinary climber, but I thought Wout Van Aert was the better cyclist. Wout won, by far, the points race (points are given for high finishes in a stage and for winning intermediate sprints). Wout admits at one point, as a larger rider (6'3" 172 pounds, BMI of 21.5), he is not a competitor in the GC. For comparison, his teammate Jonas is 5'9" and 132 pounds and has a BMI of 19.5. Carrying the extra 40 pounds up some of the steepest climbs in the Alps and the Pyrenees could be a disadvantage to a cyclist, no matter how strong you are.

As a cyclist I am glad that anyone would film the biggest race of the year and that Netflix would decide to present it. Enjoy the spectacle, ignore the crashes, and hope they do better with the 2023 race. Not surprisingly Vingegaard and Pogačar finished first and second in the 2023 race just as they did in 2022. 🚲



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**For information on GMBC clothing, visit
<https://thegmbc.com/club-clothing/>**



GMBC website - thegmbc.com



facebook.com/GreenMountainBikeClub

GMBC Clothing Inventory

by JOHN WITMER

GMBC's clothing started a new design in 2021 and remains unchanged through 2023. The provider is BioRacer. There are some images on the GMBC website. BioRacer clothing fits snugly. Be sure to consult their sizing chart and expect a super snug fit. Many GMBC members sized up and still had snug fits.

GMBC placed 2 orders in 2023: March and June. The first order arrived in mid-June, and the second order arrived in late August.

To order inventory clothing, use the inventory order form on the GMBC website. The web order form reflects the current inventory. Alternatively, you may use the order form below. Mail it to the address below along with a check made out to GMBC. Inventory clothing prior to 2021 is made by [Voler](#).

Add payment for shipping if you want your items mailed to you. This is generally recommended for those who don't regularly see me during the week.

Note on Voler sizing: jackets and arm warmers are in men's sizes only. Women's sizes run about one size smaller than men's. For example, if you want women's size medium, order men's size small. Please consult Voler's sizing chart for more details. Most folks think their chart is accurate. The short sleeve jerseys are sized to fit snugly.

BioRacer's sizing chart:

www.bioracer.com/en/team-clothing/size-chart-bioracer

Voler's sizing chart:

www.voler.com/fitguide



Inventory Clothing Order Total

Clothing Total: \$ _____

Shipping: 1 item - \$6

2 items - \$9

3 or more - \$10

Shipping: \$ _____

Grand Total: \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Write checks to: GMBC

**Mail to: John Witmer
147 Lamplite Lane
Williston, VT 05495**

**Questions: 802-734-2616 or
witmerjohn@yahoo.com**

GMBC Inventory Clothing Order Form

Price	Item	Size	Quantity
\$60	2022 Short Sleeve Jersey BioRacer Icon (GMBC) (M,L)		
\$82	2022 Shorts BioRacer Icon (GMBC) (S-XL)		
\$26	2022 Team Speedsock Epic Low BioRacer Socks (GMBC) (L (42-44), XL (45-47))		
\$53	2021 Short Sleeve Jersey BioRacer Prof (GMBC) (S,L,XL)		
\$71	2021 Bib Shorts BioRacer Prof (GMBC) (S,L,XL)		
\$50	2018 Short Sleeve Jersey w/full length hidden zipper (GMBC/Synergy) (M)		
\$57	2018 Shorts (GMBC/Synergy) (M)		
\$50	2017 Short Sleeve Jersey w/full length hidden zipper (GMBC/Synergy) (M)		
\$55	2017 Shorts (GMBC/Synergy) (M)		
\$15	2017 Arm Warmers (GMBC/Synergy) (M)		
\$45	2016 Short Sleeve Jersey with ¾ length hidden zipper (GMBC/Synergy) (M)		
\$47	2016 Shorts (GMBC/Synergy) (M)		
\$50	2016 Bib Shorts (GMBC/Synergy) (L)		
\$45	2015 Short Sleeve Jersey with ¾ length hidden zipper (GMBC/Synergy) (M)		
\$47	2015 Short Sleeve Jersey w/full length hidden zipper (GMBC/Synergy) (M)		
\$50	2015 Bib Shorts (GMBC/Synergy) (S,L,XL)		
\$17	2015 Aero Shoe Covers (GMBC/Synergy) (L)		
\$45	2014 Short Sleeve Jersey with ¾ length hidden zipper (GMBC/Synergy) (M)		
\$50	2014 Long Sleeve Jersey w/full length zipper (GMBC/Synergy) (M)		
\$47	2014 Shorts (GMBC/Synergy) (M)		
\$50	2013 Long Sleeve Jersey w/full length zipper (GMBC/Synergy) (L)		
\$50	2013 Bib Shorts (GMBC/Synergy) (XL)		
\$17	2013 Arm Warmers (GMBC/Synergy) (L)		
\$35	2012 Short Sleeve Jersey w/full-length zipper (GMBC/Synergy) (S,M,XL)		
\$32	2012 Shorts (GMBC/Synergy) (S)		
\$ 5	2012 Arm Warmers (GMBC/Synergy) (M,L)		
\$ 5	2011 Arm Warmers (GMBC/Synergy) (M)		
\$32	2011 Wind Shell Jacket (GMBC/Synergy) (L)		
\$ 5	2011 Gloves (GMBC) (S)		
\$32	2010 Short Sleeve Jersey w/hidden zipper (GMBC/Synergy) (S)		
\$35	2010 Short Sleeve Jersey w/full-length zipper (GMBC/Synergy) (S)		
\$35	2010 Bib Shorts (GMBC/Synergy) (S)		
\$ 5	2010 Arm Warmers (GMBC/Synergy) (M,L)		
\$32	2010 Wind Shell Jacket (GMBC/Synergy) (XS)		
\$37	2009 Long Sleeve Jersey w/full-length zipper (GMBC/Flatbread) (M)		
\$ 5	2009 Gloves (GMBC) (S-L)		
\$10	2002 Short Sleeve Jersey (Invensys) (WM,WL)		





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