

Rivendell

R E A D E R

Volume 8

Issue 8

Dear Friends,

When Bridgestone closed down I had to face the reality that I'm pretty much unemployable in the mainstream job market, and pretty disinterested in what's happening in the mainstream bicycle market.

I'm not at odds with the mainstream bicycle market, and I don't want to expend energy fighting anything or being a squeaking green mouse at the base of a waterfall; I just can't relate to it personally, and that's why I started Rivendell.

In the simplest terms, I think of bicycles as rideable art that can just about save the world, or at least make you happy & get you healthy and around to where you are going, and do it all in a pretty exhaust-free manner. Yet so many modern bicycles are promoted as tools for self-aggrandizement, status, and hammering the competition to a pulp, and the bikes themselves look like hoodlums, thugs, and ne'er-do-wells. Bicycling to me is more gentle and friendly, and the bikes I like to ride reflect that.

BOB proved there is hope, maybe even commercial hope, for a less electronicalistic, high-tech obsessive approach to bikes. Beeswax and friction shifters, Brooks saddles and steel frames, Goatherd shorts and Pino T-shirts, Moustache Handlebars and Data Books—all things that aren't electronic enough for mainstream—and your support—are what I'm going to sink or swim with at Rivendell. At Rivendell these things won't be fringe elements to spice up an otherwise bland bread-and-butter menu; or

charming and good for a laugh and a dose of perspective—they'll be the nonapologetic norm.

I want you to know what my goals are. I am 40, married to Mary, with two girls, Kate who is 6, and Anna who is 0.19 (born October 11). We have a big mortgage on and almost no equity in a tiny house in an expensive part of the country (S.F. Bay area), and 25 years to go before I retire, and nothing on the inheritance front. My first goal is to provide for the family and keep the house—a hefty challenge even when I was at Bstone and could count on twice-a-month paychecks. My second goal is to find, make, cause to be made, and make available pure, simple, classical, and high quality gear for cyclists. My third goal, just as important, is to conduct business in a manner that is gentle on the environment, and to become more gentle as the years go by. Sometimes this approach dictates the path of most resistance, sometimes it involves compromises, sometimes restraint. The direction, though, is evergreenward, and if you stick around you'll see that proved.

Many of you have asked about the BOB Gazette, and BOB in general. Well, I don't have the rights to use BOB—the-acronym, and that means no BOB Gazette. But if you liked the Gazette, you will at least like the Rivendell Rider Reader—enough so to pay \$20 for six issues per year of 16 to 20 pages each, which only covers printing and mailing. I have managed to get some wonderful contributors, bless them, and you won't be disappointed.

If you cannot afford the \$20, send what you can and I'll send you at least 4 issues, I promise. —Grant Petersen, December 1994

Grant

a preview of the newsletters

1. Rivendell update. How sales and finances are going. New projects, plans. No secrets kept. I'll even publish our ending bank balance and P/L.

2. A Letters column

3. The Rivendell Interview. Famous, infamous, and un-famous people.

4. Technical issue article. Why fatter tires at low pressure sometimes are faster on the street than hard skinnies, for instance. Why long chainstays are good. The TRUTH About Frame Flex.

5. Historical article. All about the first rear derailleur, for instance, with photos, generally.

6. Former Bicycle Guide editor Ted Costantino will be a regular contributor. This is such an honor...

7. Bicycle design issues. Why short road bikes should have 26-inch wheels. The dream tire that doesn't exist. Lugs demystified (who mystified them in the first place?). The Trouble With Modern Seat Posts. Things like that.

8. What's happening in the mainstream market. A peak through the window. Respectable gossip.

9. Member's story. A 500 to 1,000 word story by one of you, maybe two of you—every month. It pays nothing, but

may look fine on a resume someday.

10. How it's made. A lot like the stories in the old Bstone cats. The 1995 Bstone catalogue was 75 percent complete, and over the next year I can finish and print most of it here at Rivendell.

11. A bike company profile. Want to know Shimano's history, or what's up with Sachs? Or small USA companies?

12. Maybe something like Bob Jr./Bob Sr. I find it very relaxing, even cathartic, to spout off like that once every 60 days. But maybe in this environment the need will fade.

The Rivendell Menu

This list will grow, but I've no intention to compete with Nashbar, Performance, Colorado Cyclist, or your local dealer. I'll concentrate on the other things.

Frames

Road, Mtn, All-Rounder. Everything I know and believe and feel about bike frames is going into Rivendell frames. They are hand-made in the U.S., lugged (with Rivendell-designed lugs), silver-brazed, and built with Reynolds 753 heat-treated manganese-molybdenum tubing custom drawn to Rivendell's specifications. The first frames to be built will be the road frames, and if you order one between now and mid-January, I expect you'll have it by the end of February. I'll need a \$300 deposit to reserve a frame for you, and the balance before shipping. I don't have final prices yet, but I expect the frames will cost between \$800 and \$950, depending on options (with headset and bottom bracket? painted or powder coated?) The All-Rounder and Mountain frames will follow about a month later. Q: What happens if you put money down and bail out before delivery? A: You get your money back.

Headsets, Bottom Brackets, Seat Post.

Available separately or installed on your frame. The headset and BB will be existing parts; the seat post (still in the works) will be a copy of the unheralded, 40-years ahead of its time 1959 Simplex.

Rivendell Stems.

Have you noticed that all old stems look pretty and most new stems look pretty ugly? The Rivendell is the antithesis of today's militaristic punk in-yo'-face rad is bad ugly upjutters. They'll be light enough, but safety and style were the design criteria.

Moustache Handlebars.

The same shape and maker (Nitto) as the XO-1 bar, but made of

an even stronger alloy, and oven-tempered for flexible strength. Now, available in 26mm and 25.4mm sleeve diameters.

Brooks saddles

A Rivendell version of the B.17, and perhaps a few other models, as well.

Other.

Wheels, wool, beeswax, friction shifters, freewheels, chains. New designs and special buys of fine old parts that deserve good homes on nice bikes. Nothing boring. Death before that! So that's it. A stressful and exciting time made so much better by so many of your letters, and I can't thank you enough. Every encouraging word has been counted and noted and reread many times, and I owe you a great debt that I hope to repay in good goods. I promise to treat you all as I'd like to be treated.

I've included a transitional inventory, most of which I bought from Bstone and hope to sell between now and early January. This will get the business off to a decent start, and give me some training with a new computer system (be patient). At first, I'll be shipping Mondays, and I sure hope to be busy boxing and weighing all weekend. If you are not satisfied with anything for any reason and at any time, return it for an exchange, refund, credit—whatever you wish. I will treat you as I'd want you to treat me.

Reminder: If you're interested in ordering a frame soon, let me know and I'll flood you with information. If you have just normal curiosity, wait until the first newsletter. Lots of work to do between now and then, and Ernie (who worked with me at Bstone) and Ariadne (who many of you know from Bstone) will be around now and then to help.

what you get when you subscribe to the Rivendell Reader

1. Purchase credits towards gift certificates. This can easily save you the price of your subscription/membership. And there won't be any retroactive credits, so subscribe now.
2. First crack at special, limited-edition or closeout items if and when I find them throughout the year.
3. Stories, commentary, interviews, and reviews that the mainstream cycling press may not cover. (Remember, The BOB Gazette broke the POG story way before the dailies picked it up.) It won't be all my ranting and raving, either. One of the first issues will tell you how the Schwinn Varsity frame joints were made...
4. A chance to contribute and see your name in print. Member-subscribers will have a column or two of their own.
5. A voice, a chance to be heard, a vote that counts. What do you want to see revived or made for the first time? If it's not wacky, and if enough of you want it, we can make it happen.

Join before January 10, and your BOB number becomes your RivRat number. (I'm not sold on the name RivRat. Any suggestions?)

Note: Banks don't generally like to process Plasticards for new businesses, so as this goes to print it is still a question as to whether or not I'll be able to accept Plasticard payments. Please send a check. I hope to be on plastic soon, and I beg your patience in the meantime.

Send your membership and order to:
Rivendell Bicycle Works
1547 Palos Verdes #402
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
fax 510.933.7305 phone 510.933.7304

No e-mail yet. Soon?



Rivendell CATALOGUE

Hallo! You'll recognize many of the items below from the BOBcat. Some of the prices have been adjusted to meet the financial requirements of the new regime, but I won't gouge.

1. Beeswax. Nature's DuAll™. For all threaded surfaces, particularly headsets, pedal dustcaps, brake and friction shifter bolts. Lubricates and protects metals from each other, yet serves as a natural Loctite, too. A small Dixie cup, nearly full, about 2.2 oz. \$3. A dollar per sale goes to an as-yet undetermined charity.

2. Basic Musette. White canvas with waist strap and top tie-downs. Wads up to nothing, carries way more than you can imagine, built to last 10 years, why go anywhere without it? \$6

3. Fancy Musette. Grey-Green water-repellent canvas. Big enough to hold a laptop computer (apologies to cavemen Rivs) Two internal pockets keep your wallet, keys, and beeswax from mixing with the deitris in the main pouch. \$10

4. Ritchey Road Stems. Made by Nitto. 90° bend, 8cm and 10cm only. Good for Moustache Handlebars, short people, lots of women. The welds withstand 8 tons of pull-apart force and 320° of twisting. \$32

5. SunTour triple front derailleur. Shifts great and is compatible with all non-micro mountain or touring cranks \$17.

Simplex, one of the first derailleur makes and certainly the longest-surviving French one, recently went out of business, and the tooling and machinery used to make its derailleurs is gone as well. I believe these are the last remaining Simplexes to be found in this country, and I'm thrilled to be able to offer them. These are top quality, beautiful French classics that shift fast, last long, and improve the looks of any bike you put them on. Priced for riders', not collectors'.

All rear derailleurs come with Bullseye pulleys!

6. Simplex SLJ Mtn/triple front derailleur. A fast-shifting gem-jewels from the past, with the classic straight sides that shift so well and look so fine. The perfect front derailleur for, you know, a Rivendell. 127g \$30

7. Simplex SLJ road/double front derailleur. As above, but for two chainrings. 116g. \$30

8. Simplex SLJ Drop Parallelogram racing rear derailleur. Simplex's version of a Campy Nuovo Record. Classical drop-parallelogram design flaunts its non-indexability and shifts wonderfully anyway. My current favorite available derailleur. I wish I could buy all the remaining stock, because once they're gone, forget it. I've been riding one for months and love it. Capacity to 26t. 180g (an ounce or so less than the lightest modern lightweight) \$80

9. Simplex SLJ Slant Parallelogram rear derailleur. Here's an interesting design. It's a slant parallelogram, so it pretty much casts the same shadow as any modern front derailleur, but it's

non-indexable. At least it doesn't have the barrel adjuster that all indexable derailleurs have. No need—ride it on friction. The slant parallelogram design is theoretically superior to the drop parallelogram design. In a drop parallelogram, the cage moves straight in and out, and so the pulleys have to start relatively low (and far from the small cogs) in order to clear the big cog. Since shift speed is partly determined by cog-closeness, this theoretically makes for slower shifts in taller gears. (In real life I've never noticed.) The slant parallelogram allows the pulleys to be close to the small cogs and still clear the big cogs, because as the derailleur moves inward, it also move downward—so, in the parlance of a bicycle magazine article, you get "clean, crisp shifts in every gear." Personally, I like both styles, but for different reasons. The drop parallelogram is my sentimental favorite. I like the slant parallelogram Simplex because it's such an oddball (a combination slant parallelogram design with no barrel adjuster). I can just imagine an engineer at Simplex reluctantly agreeing to make this slant design, but drawing the line at the barrel adjuster.

199g \$80

10. Simplex SLJ Touring/Mtn Slant parallelogram rear derailleur. As above but for weak roadies, tourists, or off-road riders. Put something interesting on that bike of yours!

210g. \$80

11. Campagnolo 5mm allen key. The cheapest way to own anything Campy. It's rather crude as allen keys go, but it is old Campy, so you know it works. A dollar more than Colorado Cyclist sells it for, but then, Colorado Cyclist doesn't stock Simplex derailleurs.

\$3

12. Campagnolo Nuovo Record downtube shifters. Friction only. The most classical of the classical shifters. Put beeswax in your downtube bosses to prevent slipping, or do like Eddy Merckx did, and just tighten the wingnut every so often.

\$18

13. Campagnolo C-Record retrofriction downtubers.

I found some more! They come with a clamp, easily removed for use with braze-ons. A relatively rare Campy part made in Campy's brief transition from friction to indexing. Fantastic shifters—as good as any, ever. Rather shiny, though. \$40

14. BOB Gloves. Goatskin and cotton mesh, made by Habib's small company in Pakistan, glove capital of the world, and supplier to just about everybody in the bike industry. Two sizes only, M and L. My hand is 9-inches around at the fat part, and the larges I have are rather loose. I don't mind them that way—it makes them easier to take off; but most people with a 9-inch palm would prefer a M. \$7

15. Campagnolo TOE CLIPS. For how much longer will you be able to buy real metal toe clips? Here's a great chance to buy Campagnolo's finest. I have 51 assorted:

Steel: S only. Aluminum: S, M, L. Limit 2 per customer, please. \$15



16. Priest Bars. Bstone used these on the BUB and the 1993 XO-3. A nice, traditional, and very pretty bend still popular everywhere but the U.S. Aluminum, fits 25.4mm stems (standard non-road). The perfect bar for casual rides.
\$10

CARRADICE BAGS!

If Danish Goatherd shorts have an equivalent in bicycle luggage, Carradice is it. Carradice is an English company that is so unspoiled by high society and bad technology that you just want to protect it from all of modern manufacturing's ways and ills.

Heavy, waxed cotton bicycle bags of simple, strong, boxy designs void of patentable features of questionable worth. Zipperless and absolutely waterproof. Carradice bags are tactile and sensory delights, with their stiff leather straps and leather buckles, they break in and improve with age in much the same way as a pair of new blue jeans or Goatherd Shorts. These bags are made for hard, daily use, and should last 20 years. I'm getting 30 each of the saddlebags, 20 each of the panniers. I expect these to go fast, and will invest the profits in another order. Sorry, no pictures, but the descriptions are accurate. Pictures next January. I'm carrying four styles. Two are saddlebags, which have two upper straps that attach to your saddle's loops (that's the hitch—they require a saddle such as the venerable Brooks B.17, with loops), and a lower strap which snugs around your seat post (apologies to Allsop-riders). The other styles are front and rear panniers. The standard Carradice bags have nylon trim and aluminum buckles; for Rivendell they have cotton and jute trim and brass buckles. If you commute on a bike and carry stuff in a fanny pack, daypack, or messenger bag, you can probably do as well with a Carradice saddlebag. I've even detached mine and carried it on my belt as a hip pack; awkward, and people stop and stare, (I don't see their faces, only the shadows of their eyes). A friend, Darryl, has used Carradice saddlebags for more than 10 years. He told me about them, I bought some 6 years ago, and I'm a convert. It is a pleasure and a thrill to offer them to you.

17. Nelson Longflap. The basic carry-all Carradice saddlebag. I've often fit 2 gallons of milk (in containers) and a few

cans of frozen juice in mine. If you go for rides with your family, and have to carry extra clothing and toys for your children, you can do it all with this. The "longflap" moniker comes from a clever extendable flap that unfolds to accommodate bulky loads. I recommend the Nelson Longflap for 26-inch wheel bikes 19-inches (about 49cm) and larger, or 700c-wheeled bikes 58cm and up. The saddle should be about 13 inches above the rear tire.

Capacity: 1,098 cubic inches. Two outside pockets.
\$60

18. Lowsaddle Longflap. Perfect for road bikes 57.9cm and smaller, and of course all mountain bikes as well. A cute little Carradice that carries hobbit-sized loads. Rumors are the Lowsaddle Longflap would have been the favorite of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Capacity: 915 cubic inches. Two outside pockets.
\$60

CARRADICE FRONT AND REAR PANNIERS

Carradice makes a few different panniers, and the "Super C" style is my own favorite. The standard Super C range comes with poly straps and delrin buckles, though, and we can't have that, so I asked for leather straps and brass buckles. So the only nods to Vegas are the plastic rack hooks and the nylon sleeve and toggle used to close the bag under the flap. The fronts and the rears both come in pairs, of course, and fit all racks.

19. Super C Front. Medium capacity front bags. I haven't used these particular bags yet, but the design is simple enough, and my experience with panniers in the past is extensive enough, and Carradice has carried this bag unchanged for long enough that we of sound mind should all agree to be comfortable with this model. I'm buying the first pair. Capacity: 1,465 cubic inches. One outside pocket.

\$80

20. Super C Rear. Large capacity rear panniers, tapered for heel clearance. One outer pocket. I have used these, and I love them. Divide your gear with stuff sacs. Want big rear panniers you can use

forever? These are them.

Capacity: 2,560 cubic inches.

\$110.

21. Bridgestone Posters and catalogues. I have a few hundred posters and a thousand or so 1992 and 1994 catalogues. A poster is timeless, and these are fine ones. Catalogues generally are dated, but there are stories in these that shouldn't ever go out of style.

Posters: \$5 each, specify year;
Catalogues: \$3. All proceeds go to tooling costs.

22. Quick-Release training device/front hub display stand. A typical Bstone idea that flopped in the mainstream market. These are small (about 5"x5"x8") nickel-plated stands that hold an unlaced front hub. The idea was for dealers to buy these and teach customers how to use a quick-release. Some bought, most didn't, and I have about 400 left. Most were brazed by a top-notch frame-builder whose frames have been ridden in the Tour de France under another name. About 20 were brazed by me, and I can't tell you which. Bstone's cost was \$25 each. Your cost (and again, all proceeds go to tooling) is just \$5. If you have no use for it, donate it to a local bike shop and tell them what it's for.

GIFT CERTIFICATES!

I need to raise money to pay for tooling for several projects (bar-end shifters, a head badge, brakes, others), and so I'm selling gift certificates for less than the dollar value. Send me a check or money order for amounts starting at \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, \$300, \$500 or \$1,000 and I will send you a gift certificate worth an additional 10 percent (\$11, \$22, \$55...up to \$1,100). Rivendell is a sprout, you can help it grow, I will not let you down. Thanks.



(PHOTOCOPIED BEFORE FILING IT OUT)

Rivendell ORDER FORM



Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Day Phone number: _____ Fax No. _____ email # _____

Ship To: (if different from above address) _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Phone number _____ T-shirt size, if known: _____

Please subscribe to the Rivendell Reader. The \$20 covers printing and mailing. You get back 5% of your purchase in the form of a gift certificate. Details will follow in the first issue, but you start earning credits with this order—but only if you're a member. Gift certificate points plus 6 issues of a 16-20p newsletter: It's probably worth \$20.

Line #	QTY	Item	Price	TOTAL
1		Beeswax	\$3	
2		Basic Musette	\$6	
3		Fancy Musette	\$10	
4		Ritchey 90° Road Stem 80	\$32	
5		Ritchey 90° Road Stem 100	\$32	
6		Suntour Triple F.Der	\$17	
7		Simplex Triple F.Der	\$30	
8		Simplex Drop Para R.Der	\$80	
9		Simplex Slant Para Racing R.Der	\$80	
10		Simplex Slant Para Mtn R.Der	\$80	
11		Campagnolo 5mm Allen	\$3	
12		Campag N. Record DT Shifters	\$18	
13		Campag C-Rec DT Shifters	\$40	
14		BOB Gloves	\$7	
15		Campag Toe Clips Steel SM	\$15	
16		Campag Toe Clips Alum S M L	\$15	
17		Priest Bars	\$10	
18		Nelson Longflap	\$60	
19		Lowsaddle Longflap	\$60	
20		Super C Front Panniers, PR.	\$80	
21		Super C Rear Panniers, PR.	\$110	
22		Gift Certificate (valued at 10%+)		
23		Bridgestone Poster 1993 (road)	\$5	
24		Bridgestone Poster 1993 (MTN)	\$5	
25		Bridgestone Catalogue 1992 (Blue)	\$3	
26		Bridgestone Catalogue 1994 (Orange)	\$3	
27		Quick Release Hub Stand/Trainer	\$5	
28		Rivendell Reader Subscription	\$20	
29		Tooling Contribution (Paid Back w/gift certificate)		
*You don't have to be a member to order from the catalogue				
SUBTOTAL				
SALES TAX (CA residents)				
SHIPPING AND HANDLING			\$5	\$5
TOTAL				