

The



Gazette

- Old vs. new cantilevers
- The finest wool jerseys
- Advice from Pineapple Bob
- Opinionated guest columnists

A CLUB JUST FOR BRIDGESTONE OWNERS

For all you do, this BOB's for you.

We've started BOB because we want to communicate directly with Bridgestone riders, and our goal is to make the \$20 BOB membership the best \$20 you spend on cycling all year.

Are the membership fees in line? Well, the water bottle would sell for \$3.95 in stores, a four-color T-shirt is worth at least \$10, a genuine Kwikoin® purse is worth at least \$1.

That's \$14.95, so if the six issues of this eight-page *Gazette*, a membership card, and the direct-purchase discounts are worth an additional \$5.05, then the price is right.

But the best thing about BOB is that it gives you a direct line to us, and us to you. You don't have to answer all our questions, of course, but if there's something

you want to ask about bikes—whether it pertains to Bridgestone or not—we would like to hear from you. If we don't know the answer, we'll find out.

The Gazette is an open dialogue. We hope you won't grow tired of our terse voice and direct, know-it-all style—a by-product of having to write ad copy to fit space. We expect that *The Gazette* will open things up a bit. And, to make sure, we've invited outside contributors.

We've gone out of our way to find opinionated writers, and with that comes the probability that some of you will strongly disagree with some of them. All we ask is that you not judge us or any of our writers by one column or one issue.

Anything you have to say on the topic of bicycles can be aired in *The Gazette*.

A NEW WORLD RECORD — AND AN UNUSUAL RIDE

By John Stamstad

Editor's note: John Stamstad is an ultra-marathon cyclist who set the world 24-hour off-road record last July by riding 274.4 miles at Mammoth, California. Stamstad rode a McMahon bike with Moustache Handlebars.



Stamstad overcame numerous obstacles on his record ride, including the failure of all his lights.

You never want to do a record attempt unless you're pretty certain that you can break the existing record. I decided to do the 24-hour off-road ride because I knew I could beat the record [242 miles]. My goal was 300 miles. Unfortunately, 1992 did not bless me with much luck in my races, and the 24-hour record was no exception.

We decided to do it at Mammoth in conjunction with the World Cup race there. But the only course we found that fit the [ultra-marathon record] requirements was incredibly slow. It had a little more climbing than we needed; it had a cold stream crossing every lap, and it was sandy, twisty, rutted and rocky. In every way it was not the ideal course. But by the time I rolled off the starting line at 9:15 a.m., there was nothing I could do

(continued on page 5)

Promises to keep— and miles to go before BOB sleeps

Last year, in ads for our 1992 catalogue, we promised the first 999 purchasers four issues of a "soon-to-be-conceived" newsletter. That newsletter never happened, but it wasn't for lack of good intention. Although it would be an exaggeration to say we've been besieged with letters from people wondering where that newsletter is, there have been more than a few inquiries, and we feel horrible about it. So now that we have a genuine newsletter, four issues of *The BOB Gazette* will go out to the people who should have received a newsletter last year, plus a thousand or so other early catalogue buyers. That should get us off the hook from last year.

Now that we're on the subject of keeping promises: You may have noticed that on the BOB application form you filled out, we mentioned a "Bobcat," a catalogue of BOB merchandise that would be included in future issues of *The Gazette*. We're still working on the Bobcat because we're still working on what to include in it. In addition to the BOB T-shirt, change purse and water bottle that go out to every new member, we plan on offering everything from hats to stickers. Also, the Bobcat will have special members-only pricing on Bridgestone merchandise like our exclusive wool jerseys (see page 5).

Look for the first Bobcat in the second issue of *The Gazette*, due out in the spring. And if you still haven't joined BOB, there is an entry form on the back page of this issue.

WHAT'S NEW

MODERN LOW-PROFILE CANTILEVERS

Better clearance, better quality — why would anyone go back?

by BOB Jr.

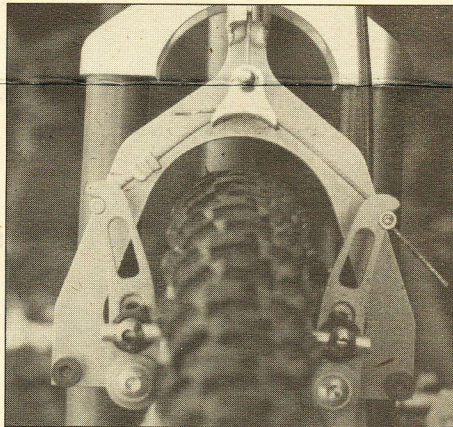
Modern cantilevers are worlds better than the old, stick-out kind, and it's not just because they're low-profile. They're made better, they use better materials, they're a heck of a lot easier to work on, and they look ten times better.

Better, better, better.

Obviously, heel clearance is better with "super-low profile" (SLP) brakes, but heel clearance isn't the only issue. Cyclocross racers—those old-fashioned, hardcore fans who strut their Mafacs and Weinmanns like some badge of honor—would be better off using SLP brakes on the rear, at least. That way, they wouldn't gouge themselves as often during mounts and dismounts.

So what if SLP brakes have reduced mechanical advantage because the straddle wire isn't at 90 degrees? Even if 90 degrees is optimal, whatever mechanical

advantage you lose by going to 100 or 110 degrees is more than made up for by the



The low-profile shape means you'll never hit your heels—one of many benefits of modern cantilevers.

increased leverage in the longer arms and far better modern brake-shoe compounds. If you're still concerned about mechanical

advantage, you can gain some back by using a different brake lever (Ritchey, for instance) or a power-assisting straddle wire holder, such as the ones SunTour and WTB (I think) make.

Even the cheapest modern cantilevers work and look far better than the old ones, and the new low-end Shimano and Dia-Compe models are the best bargain in bikedom. They're good enough to put on a \$3000 bike. Nobody would do it, but the looks and function are right there.

I like the internal springs on modern cantilevers too. They are cleaner-looking, and what's the problem with using tools rather than hands to adjust your brakes? It's not like wrenches and Allen keys are tricky or anything.

Only a hopeless bicycle romantic would want the old cantilevers back. And the funny thing is—if you were to go back in time and offer the riders using the old-style cantilevers a trade for the new style, they'd probably take you up on it in a second. And if they wouldn't, well—some people refuse to acknowledge that bikes and bike parts can be improved. It's a good thing these people weren't around at the turn of the century.

THE BOB WIRE: NAMES AND PLACES

Castelli of Italy has 10,000 pairs of hand-crocheted cotton gloves in stock, and we want them. These were knit 40 years ago by prisoners in Naples. Each back took four hours to knit, and they are gorgeous. Our dilemma: Finding someone in the U.S. to finish them with nice leather (we will not send them to Pakistan!), and finding 10,000 people who want to buy them from us. . . **Bill Horner**, Bianchi's product manager for the past 12 years and the smartest product manager in the bike industry, is now sans-a-job. Unless he finds another bike job, the industry will be weaker, less exciting, less fun. Good luck, Bill. We'd hire you in a second if we had the budget. . . **FLASH!** Bill just took a bike-related job in Chile (the country) for a company named Sabisa. More later. . .

Tom Franges, ex-president of SunTour USA and now an industry exile/consultant, has written a 2500-word booklet on almost everything that's messed up with the bicycle industry. We've known Tom since 1987 and have long considered him a spiritual inspiration. The booklet he wrote is called "Restructure or Die." If your interests in bicycles go beyond suspension forks and derailleurs and other hardware, send \$2.50 (postage included) for a copy to Interskill, P.O. Box 5066, Novato, CA 94948. This is not a plug, it's a tip.

The Bike is a magazine that didn't quite happen. Some former *Bicycle Guide* people quit and tried to start their own magazine,

only to have it collapse when the major investor got cold feet just before printing the premier issue last September. If you have between \$500,000 and 1 million to spend, and you've always wanted to own your own bike magazine, we'll put you in touch with the right people. . . *Bicycle Guide*, a terrific magazine long plagued by internal problems ranging from—well, whatever—recently lost **Keith Mills**, the last of its remaining veteran editors, as well as **Marc Infield** and **Rob Catalano**, the entire art department. The three of them loaded up a van, moved to S.F., and started their own "creative services" agency, appropriately named **Geronimo**. Geronimo is helping us produce a lot of BOB materials, including *The Gazette*. . .

WHAT'S OLD

OLD-STYLE CANTILEVERS

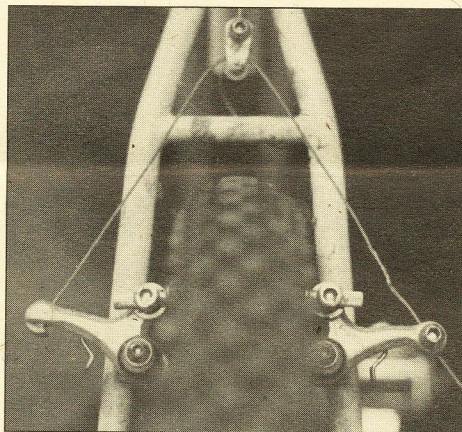
They were good in their heyday, and they still are, for good reasons.

by BOB Sr.

"Old-style" cantilevers—with their stick-out arms and external springs—used to be the only kind you could get. Then a few people started complaining about scraping their heels on rear cantilevers. That unleashed the era of the low-profile cantilever.

The original and still main selling point of "super-low-profile" (SLP) cantilevers is heel clearance. But the thing about heel clearance is that once you've got a little, you don't need more. The SLP's near-vertical arms give way more clearance than necessary, and that comes at the expense of more important things.

The angle between the brake arm and the straddle wire should be 90 degrees when the brake shoes meet the rim (for more power, or "mechanical advantage"). Vertical calipers require more horizontal straddle wires that, if properly set up,



A classic look, lots of tire clearance, and a 90-degree angle that's ideal for maximum braking power.

almost skim the top of the tire! If you look at new bikes in a shop, they usually "cheat," putting the cable at about 110 to 120 degrees just to get decent clearance.

Another thing I don't like about the new brakes is their internal springs. No

good mechanic or experienced rider that I know likes these, but they're an easy sell to inexperienced riders. The value of adjustability is over-exaggerated, but in any case, external springs are easy to adjust with bare hands and bending.

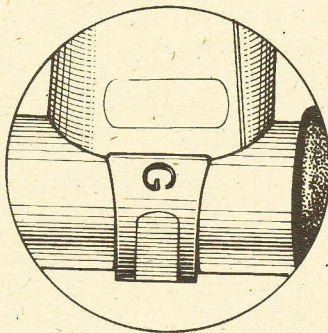
External springs make initial set-up easy, too, because you can unhook the springs completely in a second. Then you aren't fighting spring tension as you're trying to set the right toe-in, or whatever. It's hard to sell this benefit to non-mechanics. It's easier to sell the lie that external springs get fouled with mud.

The old-style cantilevers are better during wheel removals, too. When you unhook the straddle wire, the brakes flop open nice and wide. The new "low-pro" cantilevers open up a little, but often not enough to clear a fat tire, particularly if it's on a skinny rim.

The best place for "super-low-profile" cantilevers is on a small frame ridden by a big-footed rider. Any other time, give me a standard cantilever in a second. The best brakes, if you can still find them, are Mafac, Weinmann, and any of the early external-spring Dia-Compes (especially the #982).

The best thing to put on the chamois of cycling shorts is Noxzema®. Yes, some makers who use synthetic chamois say to ride them dry, but try Noxzema once, and you'll be back. Fifteen years ago, we heard that the Stetina brothers did this, so we tried it and have done it ever since. It's clean, smooth, and water-soluble. By the way, did you know that Noxzema was originally developed as an anti-eczema ointment? Hence the name. . .

Speaking of Shimano: As of this writing, we still aren't sure whether Shimano will continue to make top-mount shifters,



four days we go to Japan to spec the '94s. We'll do a good job.

Shimano recently announced a recall of about 500,000 CT-10 brake-lever clamps (like on our MB-6). About ten percent are bad—overly heat-treated and brittle—and they can be identified easily (see the defective clamp at right). Thanks to Shimano's instant, commendable action, your dealer knew about this in October, and we don't think any are still out there. . .

which we dearly want for our '94 bikes. If we can't get them, then what? SunTour? SunTour works fine, but it is a tough sell, sorry to say. Most bike mechanics and shop people like SunTour, but—oh, forget it. There needs to be a better balance. In

We are working on, of all things, a BOB fanny pack. After 11 months and six prototypes, we've finally found a sewing shop that can make it to spec. The problem is that it costs so much to make, and is so unconventional (by modern fanny-pack standards) that 1) it'll be too expensive to sell through dealers, and 2) No dealer in his right mind would stock up on such an unusual pack. That's good news for BOB, though, because we can still have it made, then sell it direct. We haven't nailed all the details or the price yet, but we can promise that it will be the antithesis of the usual teal & coral number festooned with zippers & pockets & nylon & Velcro & plastic. It'll have fewer features and more quality. Let us know if you are interested.

GEORGE REISECK

PRODUCT REVIEW: BEESWAX

All we are saying is give bees a chance.

Beeswax is the most under-utilized, hard-to-find, high-performance, environmentally correct bicycle-maintenance product you can use. It works for a lot of things, too, most of which have nothing to do with bikes.

Beeswax sticks to metal, so in acid etching, the metal surrounding the etched portion that must be protected is coated with beeswax. The recommended treatment for brass zippers is an occasional coating of beeswax. If you're having a hard time screwing in a wood screw, put beeswax on the threads, and it'll go in effortlessly.

Beeswax is also used in textile art (batik), leather tanning, furniture polish, and candle making.

But beeswax seems tailor-made for bicycles.

Minding your own

Beeswax in chunk form is too brittle. It fatigues easily and crumbles. To make it workable, break off a hunk and warm it in your hands until it's soft enough to knead, then knead it. It'll harden when it cools, but no matter—once it's kneaded, beeswax will not crack or crumble.

This done, you can rub it directly onto threads without having it crumble. In metallurgical terms, you have made it more ductile (though that's far from a perfect analogy).

Where to use it

Use beeswax instead of grease on things that have a habit of loosening—bearing cups, locknuts, threaded dustcaps, almost anything with threads. If maintaining adjustments is a concern, doesn't it make more sense to lubricate threads with tacky beeswax than with slippery grease?

If any of you still ride with Campy down-tube shifters, you know they come loose all the time. Just degrease the threads on the wingnuts and the braze-on bosses, rub in the beeswax, and screw

them back in. You won't have to tighten the wingnut for a long time.

It works on headsets, too. We have never had a beeswaxed headset come



You're in good hands with beeswax, the best-kept secret in bike maintenance.

loose. And a little beeswax at the seat tube/seatpost junction looks horrible but keeps rain out. Have some around and you'll figure out other uses.

A chain lube? Maybe not

If you're thinking of using beeswax as a chain lube, however, it is too sticky, unless you dilute it at least 50-50 with paraffin. The higher the percentage of beeswax, the longer it'll last (but with correspondingly higher friction).

On the other hand, a 50-50 mix of beeswax and butter works pretty well but tends to collect dirt almost as much as standard chain lube. The only way to mix the two is by heating and stirring, always a risky proposition. So we are not officially recommending this mixture.

Finding your own

Look up beekeepers in the Yellow Pages. We found our beeswax that way, and we bought a five-pound chunk—about the size of a small loaf of bread—for \$12 from the beekeeper. Expect to pay more. (In other words, don't quote us on price).

Even still, remember that beeswax is considerably cheaper than an equal amount of Loctite®—and, environmentally speaking, it's much friendlier. Every household, garage and bike shop needs a hunk.

DOCTOR BOB: THE MECHANIC WITH THE ANSWERS

Dr. BOB is an East Coast Bridgestone dealer who can answer nearly any mechanical question about your bike. Write to Dr. BOB, c/o Bridgestone, 15021 Wicks Blvd., San Leandro, CA 94577. He'll respond to all questions promptly and personally, so please include your name, address and phone number. We'll print selected letters right here.

Dear Dr. BOB,

What effect will adding a suspension fork have on my MB-2? Do I really need to spend all that money on suspension?

Suspension will slow the handling of your bike by decreasing the head-tube angle about 1.5 degrees (the exact amount depends on which fork you use). Plus, the fork will make your bike heavier as well as harder to pedal up hills.

A cheaper alternative is a BIG FAT tire up front. Try a Ritchey Z-Max 2.35 or a Specialized Ground Control Extreme 2.5 with about 35-40 pounds of pressure. Works good, costs less, weighs less, and there's no hassle changing back and forth.

Dear Dr. BOB,

My wife is only 5'1", and we can't seem to find a road bike for her. Why doesn't Bridgestone make a really small road bike?

They do—the '93 XO-1, 2, 3, or 4. Just add drop bars and some Specialized Turbo S/ATB tires. Then try a 12-24 or 26 in the rear and maybe slightly larger chainrings, and you'll have a light, fast, comfortable road bike. I did it on an XO-1 for a woman who is five feet tall. It works great and she loves the bike.

A FAST RIDE, A HARD COURSE, A NEW RECORD

continued from page 1

except ride the almost-ten-mile course as many times as possible.

I quickly settled into a pace that I knew I could hold for about six hours before slowing down. But after a couple hours I started slowing off my pace. I had noticed that my Gatorade/water mix tasted strange. It turns out my crew had filled the water jug from a hose, which should be avoided. I don't know if that affected me because there was something in the water or because I wouldn't drink it and got dehydrated. By the time my crew got me fresh water, I had lost a lot of time.

I also had some equipment problems early on. My elastomer-shock fork blew up and didn't absorb a thing for the last 22 hours. And my seatpost clamp loosened so that my saddle was pointing nose up. I stopped to adjust it and carefully tightened the titanium bolts.

As the day wore on, I leveled out at a good pace that projected to 315-330 miles. Then darkness came. The air temperature kept dropping, all the way down to 29 degrees, making the stream crossing more treacherous. Each time through numbed my feet. I almost fell in once but managed to get my foot out of my pedal just in time.

Just when I was getting over that, I noticed my light was dimming. I made it to the checkpoint and picked up a "fresh" battery. The light still was dim, and it soon went dead. So I alternated between walking with the light off and sprinting with the dim light on until it would die out (100 yards or so). This worked for a couple miles, but then the battery was completely dead. It was pitch black.

I remembered that someone stuffed a keychain squeeze light in my jersey. I started riding with that light in my left hand, my right hand on the bars and this tiny, dim spot of light in front of me. I crashed so many times. One crash knocked the light out of my hand. After finding it on the ground, I tried riding with it clenched in my teeth. This worked much better because I could keep both hands on the bars, though my jaw kept cramping.

BOB PRODUCT PROFILE: WOOL JERSEYS

After a two-year effort, our wool cycling jerseys are finally in stock and ready to ship. We ordinarily sell through dealers only, but since we got these in too late for any dealer's regular winter season, we're offering them to BOBers only for \$74—a bargain for the finest, Italian, all-wool cycling jerseys ever made.

They're made exclusively for us by Castelli and knit on the same exact machines as the unequaled Vittore Gianni jerseys produced between 1876 and 1978. (Gianni is Castelli's dad, but that's another story.)

Our four patterns are the national team jerseys from Holland (orange with red/white/blue trim), Belgium (blue with black/yellow/red stripes), Spain (gray with red/yellow/red), and Denmark (red with two white stripes).

Styling details are copied from cycling fashions from 1915 through 1935: Instead of a zipper, the neck closes with five buttons up the left shoulder and collar. Besides being very functional and versatile, this is the ultimate fashion statement. These jerseys are so soft—particularly after one washing (with soap, not detergent)—that you can wear them as pajama tops. They're so harmless-looking that you can wear them as

casual or general outdoor wear without having people think you're strutting your *ciclisme*. Most important, though, you can wear them without blighting the landscape with more advertisements for companies you know nothing about (and if you did know what they make, you wouldn't want your children to use it).

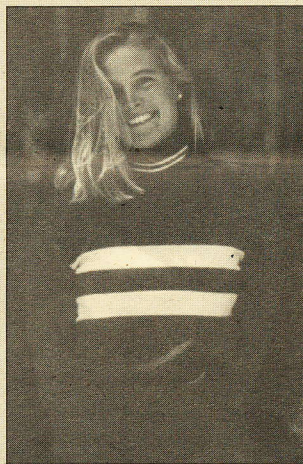
The buttons on our wool jerseys are made from tagua nuts that are harvested in the rainforests. This helps an exemplary rainforest industry. As always, it's a good idea to reinforce the button threads (a commercial machine does a poor job.) An extra tagua nut comes with each jersey.

There are no guarantees that we will ever have these fine jerseys

available again, and BOBs get the best price of all.

A word on sizing: It's kind of weird. We just got the first ones in, and they're different from the samples—damn! The arms are shorter than on our samples, so if you're the least bit gangly, forget it. Damn! We will work on this. *Damn!* (If you aren't gangly, don't worry about it.) Here's a list: Very small, 2; Small, 3; Medium, 4; Large, 5; Extra-large, 7.

The price is \$74. Californians add 8.25 percent sales tax (which comes to \$80.11) Visa and Mastercard only.



Norwegian Karen models her Italian jersey in Danish colors.

After the longest nine miles I have ever ridden, my crew informed me there were no more fresh batteries. I waited for 45 minutes while they devised a new lighting plan, wrapping two flashlights in foam and duct-taping them to my handlebars. This worked, but not very well. I could not see well enough to go fast.

Finally, dawn came and I could see again. Normally in a 24-hour race, your speed and spirits improve dramatically at dawn. That didn't happen this time.

Although I was on pace to break the record, I wouldn't attain my goal of 300 miles. I knew it wasn't my best, so I figured, what's the point? I was really cold and bummed out, and I just got slower.

I finished with 274.4 miles. For all the obstacles, in some ways it was easier than a 24-hour race, because I didn't have to deal with competitors. But it wasn't my best. I'm planning to do a 24-hour off-road ride this year, because for me, doing my best means more than any win or record.

EDITORIAL

LETTERS

The Gazette's early praise

I just saw the first issue of *The BOB Gazette*, and *wow*. The writing, the design, the feel, are all first-rate. Usually club newsletters are the boring ramblings of some frustrated egomaniac, but *The Gazette* is a pleasant exception to the rule. Congratulations! I can hardly wait to see what else you come up with.

A Loyal Reader

Loved the first ish—just fab. It's not every newsletter that makes me laugh like that. The rest of the stories are pretty righteous too. My only complaint is that I can't buy a lifetime subscription right now.

Raging BOB

Your first issue? I like it, it's good, but please—more training tips, food recipes, interviews with famous racers, video reviews, rain-gear reviews. And how about a feature on the benefits of fiber, stretching and cross-training? I'll be watching to see how closely you meet my expectations.

Unsatisfied

I've seen a lot of new publications and premier issues over the years, and it always strikes me as odd, how the letters column contains favorable letters by people who seem to have read it before anyone else. What's the secret? Focus groups? Friends? Made-up letters?

I am curious (fellow)

THE BOB GAZETTE

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF BRIDGESTONE

Bridgestone was formed in 1939 by Shojiro Ishibashi. In Japanese "Ishi" means stone, "bashi" means bridge, so the name wasn't picked at random—but why not Stonebridge?

Bridgestone started building bikes in 1949, and by 1970 we were Japan's largest bike manufacturer. That was the year of the Bike Boom in America, and when Schwinn found itself unable to supply the demand from its own factories, it went to Bridgestone for help. From 1971 to 1980, we built close to a million bikes for Schwinn—more than three times as many as we've sold in the U.S. under our own name since we began trying in July 1984.

There were so many strong, successful brands then—Fuji, Miyata, Schwinn, Raleigh, Specialized, Trek, Panasonic and Nishiki, to name eight—and here we came with a name known only for car tires. Life was rough, but the yen-to-dollar exchange rate made it worth a try. (That house collapsed the next year. See page 16 of our 1993 catalogue for details.)

Whatever reputation we have today began in 1986, when our MB-1 came with narrow handlebars, a racing saddle, quick-release wheels, toe clips, steeper seat and head-tube angles, and short chainstays—most of which were mountain bike firsts. It was an unusual bike for its time, and it sold well.

Then in '87, the MB-1 came with drop handlebars and SunTour's original handlebar-end shifters (sans indexing)—in a year when the industry chant was "if it don't click (that is, if it don't have index shifting), it won't sell." We managed to sell 500, and to this day we still regard the '87 MB-1 as the best and bravest mountain bike we've ever built. It was a formative bike and a formative year.

Ever since, Bridgestones have been known as much for what they lack as for what they've got. We refrained from using U-brakes, straight-bladed forks,

neon paint, under-the-handlebar shifters, oversized headsets, front indexing, and gel saddles, all at the height of their popularity; and as of this writing (February 1993) we remain the only bike manufacturer without a suspension model (and now it's "if it don't bounce, it won't sell"). Hoo boy. We aren't contrary for its own sake, only when it makes a better bike.

The media often refers to us as "retrogrouches," because we're often the last to use a new gizmo or frequently do so

A bike should work well and look nice

only when there are no other options. We just don't like seeing good, simple designs replaced by complicated gimmickry, and certainly not in the name of "high technology." A bike, like any tool, should be simple, work well, look nice, and allow for human input. And the best tools are not foolproof, because there's no satisfaction in using foolproof tools.

The notion that some of the pleasure is in the using, and not just the result, is a tough sell to those who take up cycling obsessed with instant fitness and overnight expertise, but it's an important part of the overall experience of bicycle riding, or woodworking, or sewing, or lots of things.

That's why we try to spec shift levers that have friction-mode options—the bicycle equivalent of a camera's manual override or a car's manual transmission.

In future editorials we'll talk about more interesting topics. In this first *Gazette*, though, we wanted to give you an idea of our approach to bicycles and some of the forces that shaped it.

Thanks for riding a Stonebridge.

— Grant Petersen

OP-ED

CYCLING'S UNTAPPED FEMALE MARKET

by Gail Ross

Women have been asking for a say in cycling for years, and recently they've begun to get it. Take the written word, for example. NORBA News introduced its "For Women Only" column—now more inclusively titled "Especially For Women"—last year. The National Bicycle Dealers Association also has a women's column now.

And there are active cycling organizations like the Women's Cycling Coalition, the Women's Cycling Network and Jacquie Phelan's WOMBATS. But words and groups only go so far. What can bring the most change for women is buying and selling power, and things are looking up.

When I was shopping for my first good road bike in 1987, I was disappointed to learn that I couldn't get the Italian frame I'd been imagining for years. A man at the bike shop explained that Italian production frames have long top tubes to fit men's long torsos (he said Italian frame-builders like to see women on pedestals, not bikes). In fact, he said, few road frames are made with geometry suitable to women, who generally have longer legs (proportionally speaking) than men. That limited my choices considerably, though I finally found a bike that I rode in comfort for years. I've heard of similar problems from women who have a hard time finding shorts, shoes or gloves that fit.

These are all real-life experiences of real cyclists, and they deserve better than being dismissed as feminist rantings. It's a common-sense issue—women comprise more than half of active cyclists and a much smaller percentage of bike-shop customers. You spot the discrepancy.

Most manufacturers, buyers and dealers are male, and when they don't know what women want, they are missing an important market. "The woman cyclist has money, and she'll buy if it's the right color; the right fit," says Cathy

Schnaubelt Rogers, president of Schnaubelt Shorts and the coordinator of the Female Cycling Research Project. That project is working to help dealers better serve women and is also developing a product line for women. Elsewhere, a Boulder committee called Marketing Cycling to Women and a National Bicycle Dealer Association interest group are also trying to get the industry to better serve the female market.

Then there's the flip side of the coin: women as sellers. It's exciting to see the likes of Juli Furtado and Ruthie Matthes featured in magazine ads almost as much as men. This selling power means more sponsorship dollars, and thus more prize money, for all women. And that could mean that we'd have more women to ride with at races. On bikes that fit.

Gail is a former editor of Bicycle Guide.

WHEN STYLE WAS EFFORTLESS AND UNMISTAKABLE

by Chris Kostman

It used to be easy to spot a good cyclist—you just looked for a good bike. Sometimes good riders rode so-so bikes, but the opposite was almost never true. It is now. There's nothing wrong with that, but cycling has become trendy, hip and stylish. (And stylishness, you know, is the antithesis of style.) Cycling has also become a status activity. Now when one sees a really nice bike, it is almost invariably being ridden by a great credit rating, not a great cyclist.

Back in the '70s, the trained eye could even note the subtle clues that revealed a rider's movement up the ladder from novice to veteran: Clues like white bar tape (first the plastic Benotto, then the padded Bike Ribbon). Or dual toe straps on a road bike. Track pedals on a road bike were also a good sign. And a pre-glued and slightly used tubular in a gym sock secured under the seat with a toe strap was a great tip-off. Simplex retro-friction levers on an otherwise Campagnolo-equipped bike marked a member of the illuminati. (Mike Shermer, Lon Haldeman, John Marino and Greg LeMond—my heroes of a decade ago—all used Simplex retro levers.)

Another subtle clue—in those days before aero brake cables—was whether the brake housings passed over or under the handlebars en route to the calipers. Over the bars meant a good rider, under the bars meant someone used to department-store bikes. Plus, was the frame as

small as possible, with a nice long stem and lots of post showing? Must have been a good rider, for only those in the know would prefer a smaller frame. And of course, they looked just right on that tight-fitting steed.

Some clues were less a question of equipment, more of riding. If the rider had loose shoulders, a light grip on the drops, a flattened back, and butt slid back on the seat, there was no doubt they could ride. That type would even look fine on a cheap bike. The riders who looked like that moved down the road quickly and seemingly without effort. It *was* effortless.

Etiquette was unmistakable as well: Good riders had a sense of grace about them, an air, maybe even an aloofness. Yet it was only the calm that comes with knowing how to signal one's intentions or road hazards to other riders, how to trim the derailleurs so they purred just so, how to track-stand without a waver, how to pre-shift when entering a hilly curve, how to ride smack down the center of a white painted stripe, how to *ride*.

Yep, those were the days. People rode bikes for the sake of cycling and for nothing else. Style and etiquette were king, status was measured by technique instead of by component or frame-material choice, and good riders were just plain simple to spot.

Chris likes to stir things up. He's really not a snob. And he's not even that old.

ASK PINEAPPLE BOB

Pineapple Bob has been our ad and catalogue model since 1986 and is the closest thing there is to a Bridgestone celebrity. He's also an experienced all-around rider, everyday commuter, and a paid-in-full BOB member (no honorary memberships!), so he is reasonably qualified to give advice. We made up these questions. To keep us from having to do that again, send your questions to Ask Pineapple Bob, Bridgestone Owners Bunch, 15021 Wicks Blvd., San Leandro, CA 94577. And if you feel funny calling him "Pineapple Bob," just drop the "Pineapple," or call him Robert.

Dear Pineapple Bob,
Last weekend my friend and I agreed to go for a ride, but he never showed, and after waiting a few hours I finally went out by myself and felt guilty for leaving without him. Next time this happens, how long should I wait?

Shinehead

Dear Shinehead,
Thirty minutes is max.

Dear Pineapple Bob,
When you have to carry a lot of stuff, do you ride with panniers, a fanny pack, or a day pack?

Confused

Dear Con:
Panniers, if I have to carry a whole lot, but otherwise, I use a musette—a shoulder bag. I like musettes that have a flap and that can be tied around my waist, so they don't flop around.

Dear Pineapple Bob,
When I go into a bike shop these days, I get confused by all the clothing and accessories. How much of it is really necessary?
Mixed up

Dear Mixed Up,
I'd buy in this order: Pump, spare tube, helmet, shoes, shorts, and shoulder bag (musette). It's hard to find musettes. Everything else tails off really fast after that. I realize that I've put pump and spare tube ahead of helmet, but that doesn't mean I'd rather hit my head than get a flat.

Dear Pineapple Bob,
For the past five years I've been into mountain biking, and I've watched the once laid-back attitude of mountain bike riders decline into the same ill-mannered mess of society in general. What am I going to do?

Attitude sick

Dear Att:
Just enjoy riding. Besides, cycling isn't a team sport—and despite the popularity of clubs, group rides and organized events,



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some of the very best rides are solo, anyway. Look at it this way: Mountain bike riding is mainstream enough that you're bound to find creeps on bikes now.

Dear Pineapple Bob,
I'd like to do a century in two months, and I have a question. How many miles do I need to ride before then? How many calories should I eat per day? How many hours should I sleep? What else do I need to do?

Goal Setter

Dear Goal Setter,
I never ride 100 miles in one whack, so I'm not a good person to ask. A hundred miles! I like to get off the bike after about 50. Don't be a slave to your bike, your goals, or goals that others set for you. If you ride a bike only when you want to, for only as far or as long as you want to, you'll ride more in the long run.



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