





Issue #11

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Urban Velo is a reflection of the cycling culture in current day cities. Our readers are encouraged to contribute their words and art.

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On the cover: Portland, OR. Photo by Brenton Salo - www.raincityfix.com Contents photo: Want to tie and solder your spokes? Learn how on page 70. Photo by Brad Quartuccio

# Editor's Statement By Brad Quartuccio



Iways the last to the party, this is inevitably the final piece of the puzzle each and every time. This issue is no different; in the hustle to bring together what is now Urban Velo #II these words have been put off until the final moments of production. Only as the lights go down does the intro come into play.

The running theme of Urban Velo lies in the stories and people that make up the intertwined web of culture that is the urban bike community. In this issue we look to mechanical traditions of the past and to the urban riding of the future, individual struggle and tales of just riding along.

Our Ghost Bikes cover feature shows the human aspect of the community at its best, reaching out to memorialize those individual lives lost on two wheels and help to heal the scars left behind. The power of bicyclists as an organized front is documented in Great Roads, Great Protests to provide a historical look at how the current state of affairs came to be, and how similar the movement of today is to that of a century ago.

From beginning to end it is a tale about people and the machines that they power, not the other way around.

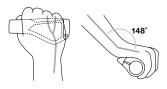
We want your words. Send your editorial contributions to brad@urbanvelo.org





# Radfahren

Radfahren. That's German for riding your bike and from fixies to mountain bikes we like to ride. Ergon was the first company to address the achilles' heel of round grips and the first to scientifically change the way riders interface with their bikes. The GP1 Leichtbau featured here utilizes our popular original wing design rendered in a lightweight rubber which reduces pressure on the palm for more comfort and control. Visit www.ergon-bike.com and see for yourself how our innovative grips will change the way you ride.



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■ German Innovation

### Publisher's Statement By Jeff Guerrero



t's 2009? Seriously? Well, happy New Year, then. If you're into New Year's resolutions I bet yours involves more time on the bike and less time spent on vices. It's funny to think of how different the world would be if we actually stuck to our New Year's resolutions.

It's also funny to think about how the great sciencefiction novelist Arthur C. Clarke imagined the world in the year 2001 when he wrote his breakthrough novel in 1968. Then in 1982 he penned the follow up novel, 2010, envisioning great scientific breakthroughs and extensive space travel.

Instead, the reality is that our greatest minds are scrambling to revive and stabilize a struggling economy. They're working tirelessly to combat diseases without cures. And they wrestle with complex notions of how to avoid the next energy crisis.

A theme consistent with nearly all of Clarke's works is the life cycle of the sun. Like all stars, it will eventually show signs that it's running out of energy. Ours will likely swell into a red giant and engulf the Earth, but not for a billion years or more. In the meantime, we're going to run out of the energy source we've based our entire civilization on-oil.

So it's incredibly ironic that as we enter 2009, the powers that be in transportation community aren't looking up to the heavens with dreams of interstellar mass transit. And they're not mobilizing to build expansive 22 lane highways to accommodate an overabundance of automobiles (hybrid, electric, gas or otherwise). In this new age of energy instability, the great minds of our generation are looking back at the most brilliant physicist of them all. And they see Einstein riding a bicycle.

Urban Velo issue #11, January 2009. Dead tree print run: 5000 copies. Issue #10 online readership: 40,000+



san marco

MASH



NAME: Most of you know me as Minx, but I'll answer to Kelly as well LOCATION: Minneapolis, MN

LOCATION: Minneapolis, MN

OCCUPATION: Art Director/Photographer

#### Where do you live and what's it like riding in your city?

I live in the land of ice and snow: glorious Minneapolis. I've been riding a bicycle here since 2002 and have watched the scene (for lack of a better word) grow slowly and then just totally explode in the past couple of years. After spending years and years riding with groups of people, I largely ride alone now.

The increase in cyclists has been a very interesting thing to watch. There's definitely been an upswing in people giving your bicycle the eye as you ride by, and so of course there are now a lot of neat bikes you can ogle, too. The availability of bike lanes seems to be going up. And we are also lucky enough to have a great system of paths and trails all over the city.

This summer marked a significant drop in my riding due to some health issues that set in during the spring. Fall brought with it a nice reprieve from the heat and I was healthy, so there was more riding. And now that winter has arrived, bringing ice and snow, I'm back indoors on rollers. So right now, riding in the city consists of riding inside my apartment. Ugh!

#### What was your favorite city to ride in, and why?

I traveled to London in 2005 and got in touch with the cycling community there before I went. They hosted a little alleycat for me and that was definitely the highlight of my visit. There were pints and pool-playing at the Duke afterward. The photos are still hanging on my wall. Coming from Minneapolis, a city with a strict grid system and pretty calm traffic then just being thrown into London, a city with no rhyme or reason to its streets and totally insane traffic PLUS riding on the wrong side of the street was an interesting adventure. You have to be totally fearless to ride there on a day-to-day basis.

#### Why do you love riding in the city?

When you're a passenger in a car or on a bus, it's all about rushing to wherever you're going and keeping your head down. Riding a bicycle forces you to take time to notice and appreciate things that you wouldn't otherwise. You get to smell the city (for better or for worse, usually worse) and notice things like new buildings going up, hear the crazy people shouting on the sidewalk, things like that. You can stop and say hello to a friend you see walking on the street. Those are all things you can't do when you're not on a bike.

#### Or just say whatever you want about riding in the city...

Can I put in a plug for the Ladies of Team Pegasus and Friends 2009 Calendar? The proceeds will split 50/50 between Team Pegasus and World Bicycle Relief, so you can get your sexy on all year long for a great cause. Check out the Team Pegasus website (www.teampegasuscycling.com) and you can look forward to some outtakes and other shenanigans on my Flickr.

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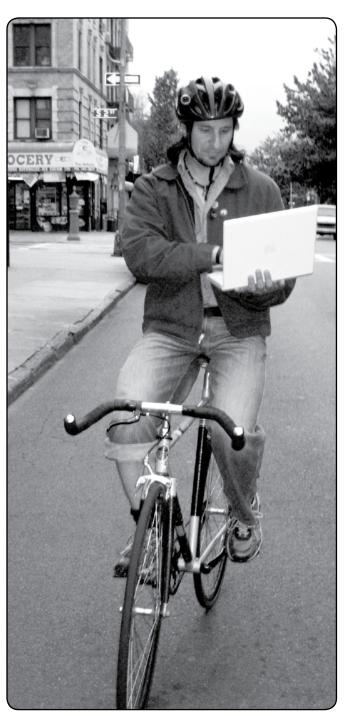
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Name: Michael Green Location: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Blogger, Filmmaker, Film/Television

**Technician** 

#### Where do you live and what's it like riding in your city?

Besides being an exhilarating life or death struggle of dodging vehicular traffic, NYC is the front line for cycling as a political act. Ever since the police declared war on our Critical Mass bike ride, it has been a five-year battle challenging the basic fundamentals of defending public space and free assembly. Besides the police constantly trying to spoil our fun on a bike, this town is still the best place to showcase urban bike culture, messenger culture, bike polo and an unlimited array of competitive bicycle sports both above and underground. I think it has something to do with what Old Blue eyes said about if you can make it here...

#### What's your favorite city to ride in and why?

Las Vegas during Interbike. Because the bicycle is such an alien concept on the strip and I love to ride in cities where its stacked against the bicycle to fail. Its like riding on a giant tarmac, dodging Hummers, limos and cops with M-16's, who tell you to ride on the sidewalk.

#### Why do you love riding in the city?

Because riding in the city is like some kind of badge of honor. It's mental as much as it is physical. There is such a vibrant community of cyclists here, growing everyday. You get to discover the best kept secret...that riding a bike is still the fastest and most efficient way to get around the city. It's the best place to launch world bicycle domination.

Every second I sit and wait for the overcrowded subway that never comes, as they threaten fair hikes, I regret not feeling the freedom of riding a fixed gear between two busses and living to tell about it, and that's just an average commute home.

Check out www.bikeblognyc.com



In our quest to develop the ultimate light set, we have partnered our two best lights into the **Blaze lw & Superflash light set**. Both lights are super bright and have the Superflash blink to help cyclists stay safe whether commuting or out on a training ride. They're also bright enough to use as daytime running lights!



We believe in the potential of the bicycle to improve our health and environment. That's why we donate 25% of our profits to grassroots causes that promote bicycle use. Since our founding in 1996, we've donated more than \$650,000 with a goal of \$1 million by 2010.



NAME: Telegram Sam LOCATION: St. Louis, MO

OCCUPATION: Unemployed musician, poet, artist and writer

....

#### Where do you live and what's it like riding in your city?

I live in St. Louis. In St. Louis, you can always stop off at a place and hang out with friends or kick back at the park and take a break. Riding for almost three hours goes by a lot faster most of the time. but not too fast if that makes sense. Also, there is this great mix of bikers in St. Louis. There are a few shops here that support all the roadies. Then there are a few co-op style bike shops that refurbish old bikes for cheap. Then you have all the great people that will ride with you all day and then go drinking before a crazy ride home.

#### What was your favorite city to ride in, and why?

I told a friend that if I were to write one of these, I would put that St. Louis, MO is probably my favorite city to ride in. However, I think that I would actually prefer to ride in Denver because of all the great people there. All the great folks at Track Shack and Mile High Mess. are simply wonderful examples of fellow bikers. Once, I went to the twin cities in Minnesota. I didn't ride there, but man they have the fever and should probably be hospitalized with it. They are probably the city that I would travel to ride at.

#### Why do you love riding in the city?

I love riding in the city because it makes me feel important. I'll be honest. It's nice to know the city and the pavement and to love it. I really enjoy waving at other riders and making cars get over.

#### Poetry anyone?

There was once a time when I rode my bike for six hours in one day.

non-stop.

Pedalling into infinity.

With nowhere in particular to go.

No destination and loving every minute.

Not a single time spent lost, though not having any agenda pressing.

The gripping feel of the sun on my body a mile high with sound and complete nothingness.

Spirituality is coarsing through my body.

I had a backpack on with sunglasses and my yellow shirt/white and red shirt combo.

Shoos and shorts. All was well for just over seventy-five dollars.

Drinking water from the nice lady with leasing information. "We have water in the hallway."

I only came in to cool off and seasonally decide whether I should live or continue moving.

Constant movement is the way of life.

Never stopping. Only sleeping.

Always moving with no passing time. Only movement.

I have a great deal of body. I have a great deal of spirit. I have an impressive arsenal. I am not going to die. I am not going to live.

I have a white substance on my forehead.

It is salt.

From my body.

Sweat has been cooling me off for the duration and leaving salt for the evidence.

Drink.

Replace the confusion with clarity.

I can see through my head.

I don't look up, only watch the road pass beneath my feet and my bike and the earth above with my soul floating in the absence of time.

I love my new family and my place in life.

The energy flows in. Always a cycle. Of energy, I do not know.

I do know of the action and the potential and the life. I have discovered. This is not mine.



For those that need their bike, the road and little else.









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NAME: Dan a.k.a. east side cyclist LOCATION: Nashvegas, TN

OCCUPATION: Wrench, local government annoyance

#### Where do you live and what's it like riding in your city?

Nashville is ranked in the top ten worst bicycle friendly cities in America. Do the math.

#### What was your favorite city to ride in, and why?

Moab Utah. Cuz those dudes totally get it.

#### Or just say whatever you want about riding in the city...

There are so many neat things to see and hear when you ride. I often wonder if the people around me driving cars, all closed up inside and "protected" from the outside world, even think about the fact there is so much beauty they are missing. Daily rides even on the same redundant route offer new things. I used to commute 25 miles each way by car, and I could never be trapped like that again.

Check out eastsidecyclist.blogspot.com



NAME: Nicole Baraga Coffelt **LOCATION: Denver. CO OCCUPATION: Software** business analyst

#### Where do you live and what's it like riding in your city?

My name is Nicole Coffelt and I live in Denver, Colorado. I love riding in the city. I ride to work almost everyday, even in the winter. Denver is a decent town for riding. There are lots of bike trails and it's easy to get around on the grid system streets in the central part of Denver.

My 3 1/2 year old daughter also loves to ride in the city. The first time she rode her bike, she said, "I feel like the wind!"





Photo by Dave Jennings

NAME: Burd Phillips LOCATION: Indianapolis, IN OCCUPATION: Bootlegger

#### Where do you live and what's it like riding in your city?

Riding in Indy is pretty smooth. Everything is flat and straight for the most part. It's fairly nondescript actually... not much to say about it to be honest. Some great people to ride with here though, and that's what matters.

#### What was your favorite city to ride in, and why?

Chicago is nice, Boston is sketchy in an entertaining way, Seattle is beyond tremendous, but NYC stole my heart (and thankfully not my bike). Lots of other towns I'd like to get to someday... Tokyo, London, and SF are tops on that list.

#### Why do you love riding in the city?

Cities are gritty, and that makes for interesting terrain and interesting people. Plus, the bigger the city, the bigger the underground, and that's where all the fun is. It inspires the hell out of me when riders organize random underground events just so everyone can have a reason to hang out and enjoy themselves.

#### Poetry anyone?

What, "cities are gritty" isn't enough poetry for you?

Check out www.bootlegsessions.net

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NAME: Jade Tran LOCATION: Columbus, OH OCCUPATION: Grad Student

#### Where do you live and what's it like riding in your city?

In Columbus, the bike scene's getting bigger. It's awesome to see that more people are riding—from cruisers to teched-out road bikes, and everything in between. There have been some great initiatives in Columbus that are getting people to ride bikes, and also educating them about safety and maintenance.

#### What was your favorite city to ride in, and why?

I like riding in Chicago a lot—maybe it's just because I love the city itself and the fact that there are bike lanes. Or maybe it's the lack of hills...regardless, it's super fun.

#### Why do you love riding in the city?

It's a challenge—there's always so much to pay attention to—and you feel good dodging traffic and getting where you're going that much faster.



Do you love riding in the city?

Can you answer a few simple questions and find someone to take your photo?

We want you to represent your hometown.

NAME:

LOCATION:

**OCCUPATION:** 

Where do you live and what's it like riding in your city?

What was your favorite city to ride in, and why?

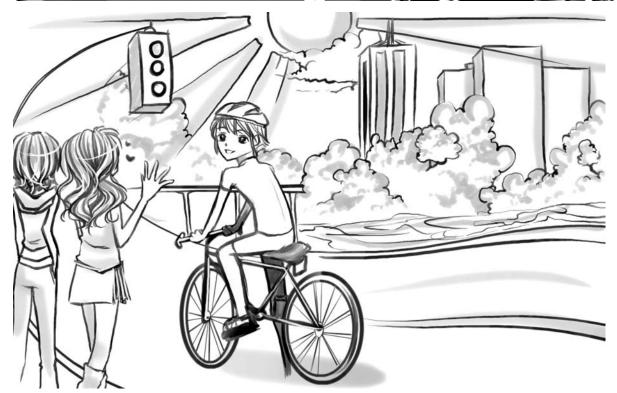
Why do you love riding in the city?

Or just say whatever you want about riding in the city. Poetry anyone?

Email your responses to jeff@urbanvelo.org



PASSIONE CELESTE TECNOLOGIA VINCENTE BIANCHI



NAME: Paul Tay LOCATION: Tulsa, OK

OCCUPATION: Business Development Associate for an

outdoor mobile advertising agency

#### Where do you live and what's it like riding in your city?

I live and ride in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where bicycling is very safe. I roll day or night, summer or winter. Motorists and cops love cyclists. Within city limits, there are over 1.500 miles of bike routes and bike lanes.

#### What was your favorite city to ride in, and why?

I've biked Portland Pedalpalooza 2008. I rolled Denver during the DNC. I've worked as the first Bicycle Program Manager for the City of Los Angeles. But none compare to Tulsa, Oklahoma. Tulsa boasts the world's most advanced bike route system in America and the world, beating out even Copenhagen. Unbeknownst to the rest of America or UV readers, Tulsa actually has a very unique sub-culture on two-wheels. Send a reporter/photog for the rest of the story. I'll show him/her a REAL, top-secret Tulsa bike surprise!

#### Why do you love riding in the city?

Because that's where the cute girls are. Most Oklahoma girls outside of Tulsa look like monkeys. Bikes are non-threatening. I've hit on some pretty cute city girls stuck at the red light. Gotten a few e-mails... And, maybe one or two dates, which rolled on a tandem bike.

But, the real fun is sneaking up on a really cute blonde at the wheel yapping into a cellphone, scaring the panties off her, and then offering to sing NAKED for \$1, ALL before the light turns green.

#### Or just say whatever you want about riding in the city... Will Sing Naked 4 \$1.

Check out pimpthistownvotepaultay.blogspot.com

22 URBANVELO.ORG Illustration by Lyly Pham





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Photo by Brad Quartuccio

NAME: Coyote DeGroot LOCATION: Chicago, IL

OCCUPATION: Optician/Techno Producer

#### Where do you live and what's it like riding in your city?

Chicago. It's completely flat with a very regular grid system, so navigation is a breeze. With the exception of Critical Mass, bicyclists are largely an invisible tribe to the police. You can pretty much do whatever you want on a bike in Chicago and no one will bother you. Except motorists.

#### What was your favorite city to ride in, and why?

Chicago, because of: Lower lower Wacker. Riding through movie sets. Sharkula. R. Kelly: Trapped In The Closet (The Alleycat). Beef N' Bitch. Cruel Simon, champion skidder. The Tamale Guy. Barack Obama. Contributing to Team Beer'd delinquency. Tour Da Chicago. Malort

(probably the best thing about Chicago). House music. Juke music. The Classics. Yojimbo's Garage. McCormick Place's continued use as a race track. Campfires at Northerly Island. The fact that Batman lives here. Snow. Kuma's Corner. Late nights on the Bloomingdale Tracks. IRO Sprints. And the list goes on. That's why everyone's moving here.

#### Why do you love riding in the city?

Because walking blows.

#### Poetry anyone?

City grows colder Huddled riders pass the flask Barf froze on my shoe





NAME: Amanda Sundvor LOCATION: Chicago, IL OCCUPATION: Bicycle Mechanic

#### Where do you live and what's it like riding in your city?

Chicago. You know... I can't really say riding here is like this or that, because it is so different everyday. One day I could be the one of the handful of cyclists on the lakefront path and the next day it's just me and thousands of roller-bladers all listening to John Cougar Mellencamp on their Walkmans. Much love John Cougar. Monday I am weaving through backed up traffic. Tuesday I'm sprinting on a wide open street. Some things will always stay the same here. The winter will be so cold you think it might kill you, but it probably won't. The wind will shred you. Bus drivers and taxis hate you.

#### What was your favorite city to ride in, and why?

When I lived in Denver I had many o' nights where it felt like my friends and I were the only ones on the roads. We would ride laps at wash park and mess around in parking garages. The streets were wide. The traffic sparse. I could ponder the next move I was going to make in my

chess game with my pen pal while I traveled from A to B. There is none of that in Chicago. There is no thinking. Just acting. Reacting. Even if it's just to the store. Bam! You are in it and you have to be two step ahead of every Tom, Dick and Harry who are oblivious to the fact that you are barreling down the bike lane that they just blindly stepped into. Bless their hearts. To answer the question...it's hard to pick. Sometimes I'm a little country and others, rock n' roll.

#### Why do you love riding in the city?

For me, riding in the city is a pure form of living in the moment. I am not thinking of work (big ups Kozy's Cyclery!), bills, or the economy. I am just going as fast as my legs allow. When I hit 88mph, I travel back in time (or into the future, depends), have zaney adventures that always work themselves out in the end and then return to present time.

Check out www.kozy.com







NAME: Mark Neal LOCATION: London, UK

OCCUPATION: Cycle Shop Assistant Manager and gen-

eral liver of life

#### Where do you live and what's it like riding in your city?

Well I live in Londinium in London Village UK. Riding in the city is a unique experience and changes with every turn and every drip of rain! No it's great and I love the fact you are quicker than those polluting four-wheeled metal monsters of the highways and byways!

#### What was your favorite city to ride in, and why?

I guess I would have to say Barcelona due to the fact I have always rode there on a cruiser style bike and they are so relaxed and chilled to ride its makes the whole experience amazing! The city is great with the most stunning architecture and great facilities for bikes and bike riders.

#### Why do you love riding in the city?

It's a challenge every time you saddle up and ride off into the sunset. Being able to swerve in and out of the near stationary traffic is a buzz! I love to cruise by the traffic and just watch the world go by.

#### Poetry anyone?

Cement carpet with yellow and white go faster stripes, they fade into one as I streak by on my two wheeled steed. As I weave in and out of the steel road monsters they chug their over-priced fuel induced smoke into the clean crisp winter morning air. One hour later and I am there, work... I count down the hours till I do battle again with those road beasts.





NAME: Brandon Mungal

LOCATION: Altamonte Springs, FL

OCCUPATION: Artist, musician, budding tattoo artist,

and a bicycle ninja

#### Where do you live and what's it like riding in your city?

I live in Altamonte Springs, FL a few miles away from Disneyland and all that other touristy trappy kind-o-stuff. I ride my bicycle because I'd rather not spend my hard earned cash on an environment harming fuel such as gasoline. I ride my bicycle because I like to see the city and all of it's nooks. I ride my bicycle because I like seeing smiling faces on the sidewalks, roadsides and on the faces of children riding by in the backseats of their parents' gas guzzling monstrosities. I ride my bicycle because it keeps me awake all day at work. I ride my bicycle because there's nothing I look forward to more after a long day at work. I ride my bicycle because the night wants me to. I ride my bicycle because It's good for my lungs and makes me sing better when I play my guitar. I ride my bicycle because I enjoy rolling through a crowded gas station and watching all the people bobbing and weaving for the next available pump. I ride my bicycle because it's fun!

#### What was your favorite city to ride in, and why?

I guess I would have to say Florida because it's the only city I've ridden a bicycle in, although I have taken my skateboard to Paris and a few other places!

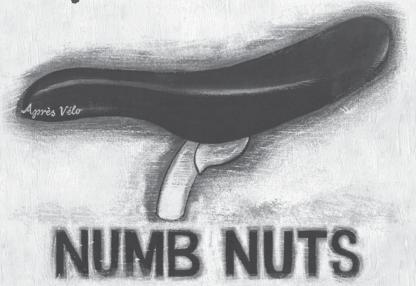
#### Why do you love riding in the city?

When you are on a bicycle crusing at a reasonable speed/pace, it's so much easier to take in the sights and to know where you are (I have a horrible sense of direction unless I'm on a bicycle). I have found more shortcuts and side streets than I've ever known about in my whole 25 years of living here.

#### Poetry anyone?

Pebbles and rocks would bounce into my socks, if I wore them. Knats on my face, the sweat glues them in place as if I meant to adorn them. The wind in my face reminds me of a place down by the beach side. The sounds in my ear make it so clear that I'd rather be outside than inside. Sometimes I fall and the pavement takes my skin away, but the scars create memories that immediately take my pain away. Scars are like tattoos, much like roadways on a map. Like bridges converging and filling in the gaps. Where will these two wheels take me in life? Anywhere I want to go if the weather is just right.

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# J O Ma, J A Mo To the Black Sea by Bicycle

By Marilen Corciovei

he beginning should start, "I woke up and prepared..." however that night I did not manage much sleep, and between the mosquito hunts and mind storms I could count no more than a couple of hours of rest. At 3 am, before the ring of the alarm, I was awake and making the last preparations. At 3:30 I touched the street and started the long journey.

There is always the question about beginning: which rhythm should I start with? If I start too hard then I will tire soon, but to go slow I must fight the initial urge for reaching the goal. As I was pedaling that night, going out of the city I managed a self-imposed slow movement, "There must be no goal to push to, I must not get tired so soon, I must start slow." I am pedaling with care, feeling my legs and I imagine the machine of my body filled with sensors, the mind monitoring each of them and detecting the level of fatigue. I must not push hard at any point.

As I leave the city followed by some angry dogs and leave the lights behind, my soul is getting cold; I fear the night on this road, I fear the dogs, I fear failure. Yet, if I can manage to reach the sea, what a great accomplishment on two wheels. Each moment I must be sure that I am not making any excess effort. I force myself not to know in which gear I am since this always brings about the urge to speed up, shift gears, and gain a few more km/h. I know that this time such an approach will empty me and force me to fail. As I would deplete my energy I would make stops, eat energy bars, and fuel a fast fire soon to burn out.

There should be nothing behind and nothing ahead, no road, no plans, nothing. And at each moment I must listen

to my legs and breath then change the gear accordingly. I forget the computer and do not look at it, I forget the gear in which I am and only switch it based on the current state of my body.

The night is still around me on this poorly illuminated road and I pass large warehouses from time to time. I imagine the dogs guarding them and hope they are asleep. Sometimes a lone car passes as I stop pedaling and stick to the right most side of the road.

"I o ma, i a mo", I am here, in this moment. I inhale and exhale regularly, I feel my legs in good shape, there is no goal and no speed. "I o ma, i a mo." Light emerges at the horizon and around me the shadows disappear. As I pedal I know my speed has increased as the muscles are getting used to the movement, but until now I forced myself not to look the computer screen. I take a glance, I am at 28km/h, around 40 km into the journey. I do not know the gear in which I am and I do not want to know, there is little effort in the pedaling. I inhale and exhale, "i o ma, i a mo".

The sun raises and I stop for a moment to take a photo. The road is deserted, the asphalt good. I grab my first pack of "papagal" jelly to eat on the road. From my last trip to the sea by car 2 years ago I remember a bad portion of the road, would that be fixed by now? The roads are not always good and such a problem could slow me down. With each pedal stroke and misplaced rock the bike and my soul would be hurt. I inhale and exhale, "i o ma, i a mo", and from time to time I eat a jelly. There is no rush; I feel the sugar candy melting in my mouth. There is no rapid fire here, yet a steady one burning in my blood.

I am passing Ileana.

With one package of jelly the sun is now fully up. The mind wakes up with plans and deadlines, "When will I be in Lehliu? What speed do I have?" I inhale and exhale, my legs are fine, "i o ma, i a mo" there is no rush.

I remember this curve of the road, I am approaching Lehliu, I inhale and exhale, "i a mo, i o ma." What is that? What happened? Am I up, am I down? "i a ma, mo, i o?" I am pedaling on this road, the sun is here, and the trees, people are fishing in a little pond.

This asphalt is of a different nature, with thousands of little rocks inside, probably for better adherence. I look at the music player I bought specially for the bike rides, yet I cannot leave the moment and use it. My mind cannot yet leave the legs pedal on their own, "i o ma, i a mo," I inhale and exhale.

People, cars and dust, even a donkey and sheep. I reached the point near Drajna where the autoroute is ending and all cars are switching to the road I am on now. Vrum, vrum, vrum, cars are driving with speed to my left, they still have the autoroute speed in their system. And trucks, I hate trucks from the opposite sense, the wave of air and dust they create hurts me. My water is nearly gone, I am still so far away, lost ...

Cip, who could not make this journey warned me about this portion of the road: long, narrow and with no water. I still have half of a bottle yet it is getting wamer and I already ate a mars bar and another jelly pack.

"I a mo, i o ma," the cars are more silent now, the trucks more rare. I inhale and exhale and look at the markings: Fetesti 30 km. "I a mo, i o ma," Fetesti 20 km.

I am glad to find a bottle of cold water for 30lei at a truck stop I2 km from town. The drivers, sitting and talking at a table look curiously at me. Sweating, black cycling pants, gray t-shirt with a bunch of nods I made to reduce wind resistance and a gray, fisherman-like hat. What a sight. I am not staying for long, I inhale and exhale, "i o mo, i a ma" continuing my journey.

Fetesti, until here the road was excellent, but now I must head to the autoroute. Will I be able to ride it? Luckily I find it under repair, cars are using only one lane and there are plenty of riders with those old bikes you can find anywhere.

I inhale and exhale, the air is hot yet my legs are still in good shape, "i o ma, i a mo," there is a descent to Stefan cel Mare. Hopefully I do not have to climb this at the return.

It's hotter and my computer screen does not work

anymore, I can only estimate a speed. Now the road is different, with ups and downs, I change the gear frequently yet I do not want to know in which gear I am. There is no reason for that; in this moment, and exactly in this moment, I am pedaling, and I do not need to make any effort, there must be a gear change anytime the fine sensors feel the muscles pushing harder.

"I o ma, i a mo," I inhale and exhale, there is heat, I can estimate a speed around 40 km/h on some descents. The phone rings, the girls are behind me, they have reached me near Castelu. Irina is waving her hand at me. A deserved pause, I refill the two bottles I have, and eat some Dutch cookies. They continue their road and I remain at the bottom of a hill.

It's so hard to start from the bottom and I must control my urge to impress as they are still in sight. Yet I inhale and exhale, "i o ma, i a mo, i a mo, i o ma," the moment is of pedaling and there is no goal.

As I pass Valu lui Traian my body starts to hurt, the road is now in pieces formed of blocks of concrete with two meters in length and with 2-3 cm of empty space between. I must break often and drops of pain are hurting my soul and mind. "I o ma, i o ma, i o ma..."

From Constanta the road is better yet the sun is up, my mind is orange with the heat. I stopped eating anything when the bar I tried to open melted away. Each gas station is a heaven and I stop often to refill the bottles. There is no pain in the legs yet a warm bath of it is all around me. I go up and down with the road, switch gears, inhale and exhale, "i o ma, i a mo." At this point I could not think even if I wanted to. I feel my body with each nerve as the pain in my back grows.

A gas station... and another... no stop, just water, Coke, 7up, something cold.

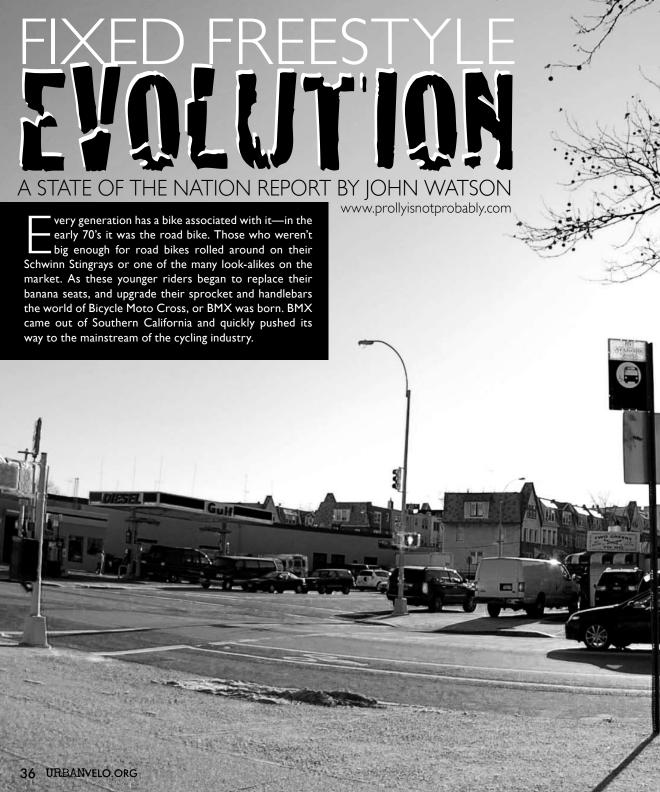
Finally I reach Mangalia, "i o ma, i a mo" floats around the road as my body is melting down. All problems from the job, tasks and projects I started with are somewhere on the road behind, forgotten in the dust. I could ride like another 100 km as it would be like 10. "I o ma, i a mo, i a mo, i o ma", inhale, exhale, left leg, right leg. 2 mai, vama veche. I call Cip to tell him the news, I arrived. It's 15:00. I pack the bike in the trunk of the parked car to avoid curious looks, change myself in the tent and go end my journey in a soup ("ciorba de burta") at Scoica.

When the heat decreased and the computer screen was on again I could see the numbers: 299km, 29km/h avg speed. To the Black Sea by bicycle.

# happy ho/ida

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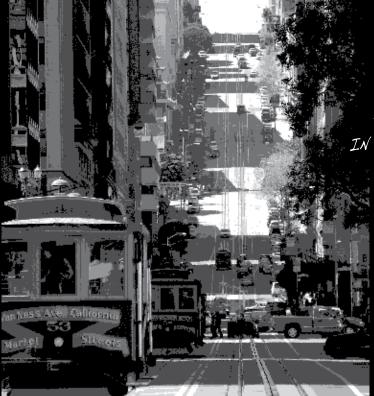
From one manufacturer came many, many of which are still around today. Pop culture influenced the sport early on, and with stars like Greg Hill, Bobby Encinas and Stu Thomsen, BMX had become the coolest sport around. Then the pros grew up. Some of the riders who were big into BMX discovered mountain biking or freestyle. For the next two decades, BMX grew in silence compared to its reign over the mid-late 70's and into the 80's. Decades of rider progression has influenced the design of the bikes to the point that the BMX of today has changed so much that its ancient cousin, the Stingray has vanished.

The modern day mountain bike grew out of another California subculture, this time of hacked balloon-tire cruisers and the will to ride up and down the local fireroads. Through many iterations the bike and riding transformed, and during the explosion of extreme sports in the 90s, took over cycling culture by and large. Road bikes boomed with Lance, but into this millennia it seems by pattern that we're due for a "new" bike.

Even with the technological leaps and bounds the cycling industry has made over the past 30 years, the fixed wheel bike is as popular as it has ever been. Road racers and messengers may have been riding fixed wheel, or fixed gear bicycles, for years, but not until the 2000's has there been such a pronounced presence. Films like MASH accelerated the process, and has fueled the growing fixed gear culture we have today. Track bikes have quickly become the hip thing.

Everyone's aware that its prominence has grown in recent years and with the sheer number of people riding them came those who experimented with their basic mechanical principal. Thomas Edison shot a well-circulated film in 1899 of a gentleman doing backwards circles, barspins and other tricks on his fixed wheel. In recent years, we're seeing this again. Over 100 years later, people are still toying with fixed wheel bicycles.

In the late 90's and even early 2000's track bikes were relatively inexpensive



RIDE FIXED IN THE CITY



Hubs





to purchase. Not many people were riding them on the street, and the ones that were doing so were mostly contained to the larger cities in the US. Now, almost a decade later, a vintage track frame is in much higher demand, with prices to match. To meet this demand companies began marketing "street-friendly" bikes. The steep angles of a track bike sometimes make street-riding difficult, and aren't always the most comfortable. Issues like toe-overlap can be hazardous to inexperienced riders and some companies addressed this, making more relaxed geometries with horizontal track ends to accommodate the demand for road use. Since most people who ride track bikes in cities are doing so as a form of transportation, the bicycle industry has shifted its interest towards this sector. Urban fixed gears have become a big agenda item for many manufacturers.

In Delco, Pennsylvania, Tom La Marche picked up a Raleigh Rush Hour and started riding it. He had ridden BMX for a few years and wanted to give a track bike a try. After commuting for a few months, he began to experiment. Within a few weeks, he could wheelie with two hands or one, land 360 tire taps, wall rides and other tricks

that not many people foresaw happening on a track bike. This was a milestone for the way people rode their fixed gear bikes, and the evolution happening today. With the growing popularity of Youtube, people began posting their videos and soon everyone was trying out tricks on their fixed gears.

In the same way that the kids in the 70's may have looked awkward riding their Stingrays, the track bike riders began to push the limits of their bicycles, often to the point of failure. Many of the people now riding these bikes didn't spend years riding them like messengers had, so the first few months had a steep learning curve. Some of the kids hadn't even ridden a bike before, so it was even steeper. Once people become comfortable on a bike and learn its capabilities, the bike and the ways in which people ride it is subject to extreme metamorphosis with the right nudge.

In recent *months*, a new form of track bike rider has emerged. More akin to a BMX or mountain bike rider, he is bunny-hopping stairs, gaps, ledges and other environmental elements. Once again, they've upgraded their components with parts that will endure, rather than just look

"...the Vittoria
Randonneur is the
most consistantly
wearing, flat
resistant, even
skidding tire on
the market. We
would not use
anything else."



- MashSF





pretty. It's not uncommon to see BMX and mountain bike components on these bikes and very little track-specific components. Rigid mountain bike forks, BMX platforms, riser bars, chainring guards and even 29er rims are just a few of the obvious changes. All of these components are creating the future of the fixed gear.

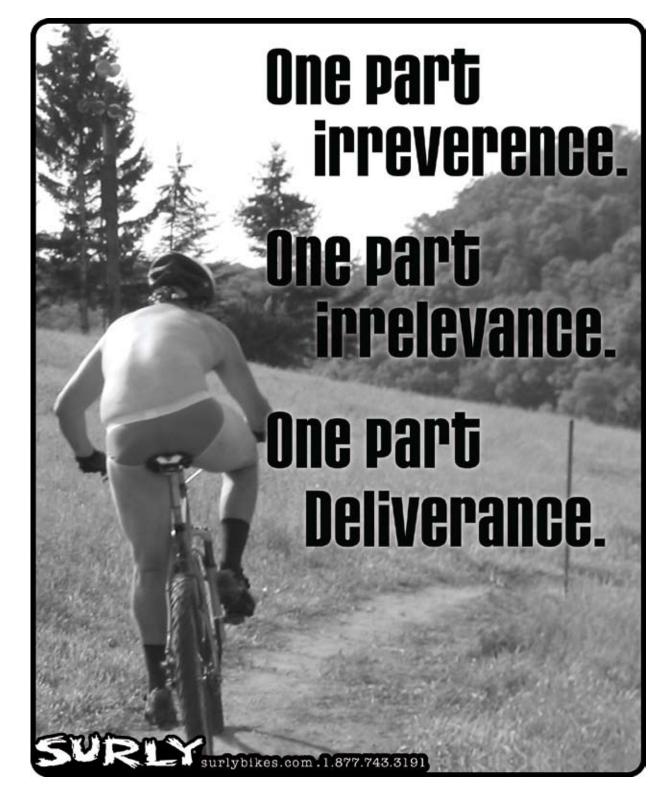
I began to ride a track bike because I needed an efficient way to get around New York City. I had ridden mountain and road bikes in the past and out of my own curiosity, I tried a track bike. The gearing I chose was adequate for my environment, as were my early set ups. Now, because my fixed gear (it's not a track bike anymore) is my primary form of transportation, it has to be comfortable and efficient. For me, these two factors set fixed gear bikes apart from a traditional bike used for tricks. Trials bikes and BMX have a higher potential for being trick bikes, but they're not ideal for spending long amounts of time and moving through a dense city on. I couldn't imagine riding a downhill bike in the city, or a trials bike through traffic. Transportation is still a vital part of the bike.

I commute every morning from Brooklyn across the Williamsburg Bridge and into Manhattan. If I see something along the way to ride, I'll take a detour and mess around for a few minutes. There's no going home to get my "trick bike." To me, that's a very valid point and the main reason why I enjoy riding my bike in the city. An all-day excursion throughout the Boroughs will yield multiple

opportunities to ride different terrain. As I mentioned before, people have begun to ride BMX and mountain bike components. The wheels are getting wider, tires are getting bigger. After breaking other frames, people are switching to beefier set ups. To the people who are going big in the fixed gear trick world, a bike that is built to take abuse is more appealing than a bike that resembles a traditional track bike.

It's not that the track bike was cast aside; it's that the most central element to the track bike was selected and applied in a new form. Riding a fixed gear is fun, which is why it's so popular, and most people who are riding a fixed gear and doing tricks on them know traditional track frames are not meant for such riding. Whether people are bombing hills or bombing traffic, these bikes will need to handle high speeds and perform in the more aggressive riding taking place today.

Companies have begun to add gussets to their frames and are designing unicrown forks with boasts of lifetime warranties. In time we'll see what designs are most durable. A process of elimination, or in some senses, natural selection is taking place. Once again, the BMX and mountain bikes are influencing bicycle design and in the end, we'll see this influence in fixed gear freestyle frames. I'm fairly confident that the new face of fixed gear freestyle will be a familiar one. 700c BMXs? Fixed mountain bikes? Something in-between? Something.



# Good Roads Great Protests

### A BRIEF LOOK AT THE BEGINNING OF BICYCLE ADVOCACY

### By David hoffman

he other day I was riding through a road construction area when the pavement abruptly disappeared and I found myself slogging through a muddy, sticky, clay-filled morass. I only needed to ride a couple of hundred feet through the mess, but found that it was nearly impossible to do with my skinny road tires. Once back on terra firma I began to think about how good we all have it when riding the roads these days. Conditions

have vastly improved in the past 125 years. For the most part, outside of distracted and clueless drivers, we only need deal with the occasional piece of glass or thorn in our tires.

Curiosity piqued, I began to do a little research into the early days of bicycle advocacy and the push for better roads. I knew that the League of American Bicyclists was the nation's oldest transportation organization. I also remembered that Joe Breeze had mentioned in a previous interview that the League was behind the "Good Roads Movement" around the turn of the century. In fact, I found that those early advocates set the stage for much of the same work that advocates are undertaking today, and what could be the first Critical

Mass-type ride from 102 years ago!

#### In The Beginning, There Was Mus

One hundred or more years ago if you moved in any sort of wheeled contraption outside of a large city or town



—anything from stage coaches, to buggies, to primitive automobiles, or a bicycle—you were almost certainly rolling along a dirt or gravel road. When it rained, the roads turned to mud. When it was dry and hot, the roads were dusty. Wheels could get caught in ruts. Mud would cake in to the spokes and permeate the drivetrain. Gravel could present serious puncture hazards (after the introduction of the pneumatic tire in 1889) in additional to being some-

what unpredictable under the wheels of early bicycles.

In 1880, a group of bicycle enthusiasts, manufacturers and riding clubs began talking about how to both improve road conditions and protect the rights of bicyclists from legislative discrimination. They met on May 30, 1880 in Newport, Rhode Island and formed the League of American Wheelmen. The League changed its name to the League of American Bicyclists in 1994, a move that is much more gender neutral as well as less arcane.

The League's first major effort was called the "Good Roads Movement." It worked to educate poli-

cymakers of the economic and social benefits of improved roads in rural areas, as well as providing good, networked infrastructure. Of course, this also allowed bicyclists to enjoy the roads outside of an urban environment. In 1891 the League began to publish Good Roads Magazine; within three years, the magazine had a circulation of one million

Support the Count Mistir-Psycles.com Conversion bits FU-bars dissent Fah-Q tensioners 416-779-3827 Photo Credit to Kenneth Johnson, P.I.M.P. copies. By 1898 the League had more than 100,000 members. The League's website proudly notes that some of its early members included the Wright brothers, who were bicycle builders before turning to aviation, and the Gilded Age industrialists and philanthropists, John D. Rockefeller, and "Diamond" Jim Brady. In 1895, Brady was also noted to be the first owner of an automobile in New York City, ushering in another era.

#### Abvocates Take To The Streets

As bicycling rose in popularity at the end of the 19th Century, so did frustration with cyclists. Some municipalities began to enact ordinances that would limit the speed of bicyclists or their hours of operation. Advocates began to get politically organized, pushing for access to the streets and for better roads. Local groups and riding clubs gained political clout, sometimes making the difference in the election (or deposing) of a candidate. These groups joined forces with the League's Good Roads Movement, with tremendous success at the end of the 19th Century.

Bicycling as a way of life reached a zenith in the United States in the late 1890s. The Good Roads Movement that had flourished with the help of bicyclists, farmers, and rural citizens, was to gain a new advocate in the earliest years of the 20th Century. The motorist. The American Automobile Association was founded in 1902, and motorists quickly joined the Good Roads Movement, rapidly becoming more powerful than the bicycle lobby. At the same time, bicycle sales went from a high of 1.2 million bikes sold in 1899 to only 160,000 a mere ten years later. By 1916 the Good Roads Movement was essentially over, with the new, powerful automotive lobby successful in getting projects such as the coast-to-coast Lincoln Highway project underway in 1913. As noted in Urban Velo #10, automobiles would continue to dominate and dictate road design for years to come with the first traffic light in 1914, the "No Left Turn" sign in 1916, and the Eisenhower Interstate System built beginning in 1956.

#### The Great Bicycle Protest of 1896

Bicyclists had been successful in lobbying for bicycle-friendly roads throughout the 1880's and 1890's, sometimes utilizing mass rides and demonstrations to achieve their political goals. In 1896 San Francisco was supporting a population of 360,000 people on roads that had originally been designed to serve 40,000. At that time, railroads, trolleys, and horse-drawn streetcars crisscrossed San Francisco's streets, creating hazards for bicyclists everywhere. Bicycle advocates proposed to have the

City abandon all un-improved land set aside for rail lines if they weren't active within six months. This proposal was backed by the Southside Merchant's Association and the Cycle Board of Trade. Additionally, bicyclists wanted unused rail lines removed, paving between remaining rails, and a reduction in height of the metal slot through which cable cars gripped the steel cable that pulled them up hills. At the same time, advocates in other areas of the City were lobbying for greater access, better roads, and nighttime lighting. San Franciscans were thick in bicycle advocacy; a July 25th rally was planned to celebrate the opening of a road through the Mission district.

The San Francisco Call, a local newspaper that supported the advocates and conducted interviews of local cyclists and merchants, reported that the upcoming rally had a three-prong purpose: I) to celebrate the opening of Folsom Street, 2) to demonstrate the power and numbers of cyclists, and 3) to protest against the general condition of the pavement in San Francisco, Market Street in particular. The press attention allowed cyclists to unite and strategize prior to the rally. The Emporium Department Store actually went so far as to "pave" a portion of Market Street with tarred wooden blocks in order to demonstrate the possibility of a paved street.

Reports of the rally sound strikingly similar to a modern-day Critical Mass ride. Cyclists were noted showing up in drag, on tandems that formed pirate ships, old high wheelers, sporting parasols, contraptions like chariots, children's bicycles, and even cow-bells. Cyclists from all over the Bay Area arrived to participate; some estimates claim 100,000 spectators were present. As typical with modern-day Masses, trouble ensued part way along the ride, with rowdy crowds pulling up the tarred blocks and throwing them through trolley windows, or even trying to tip a trolley. Ultimately, the rally was a success; Market Street was paved in 1898.

Interestingly, it was nearly 100 years later in 1992 that a group of San Franciscans once again took to the street en masse to rally for improved cycling conditions, setting off the modern-day Critical Mass. That group would take to Market Street once again 101 years later on July 25, 1997 to protest for bicyclist's rights and assert their rights on the streets.

#### further Reading

If you're interested in reading more about The Great Bicycle Protest of 1896 there is an in-depth and fascinating article available in Issue 2.001 of Processed World, a 'zine out of San Francisco published from 1981 through 2005. Plenty to go through at: www.processedworld.com

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## fyxomatosis gallery



#### Coffee with Crazy Nick

Crazy Nick was the first guy to notice I was working on a track bike. He thought I was mad, particularly for having no brakes. That was in 2003 and I could count on one hand the number of cyclists who rode fixed gears in Melbourne.

Crazy Nick is a biker through and through. Obsessed with portage, he modifles bags on a regular basis to suit his needs. Rides a beautiful red Perkins road bike. Loves a cigarette and a coffee as much as the next velophile.

# Urban Warrior

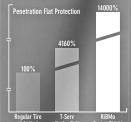
### RiBMo = Ride Bicycle More!

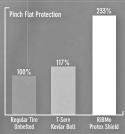
RiBMo is the first Panaracer tire to utilize the all new Protex<sup>TM</sup> Shield. Protex Shield is a revolutionary and proprietary tire and tube puncture protection component. The Protex Shield fabric layer creates a tire that is three times more puncture resistant than an un-shielded tire of comparable weight. This also applies to tires with other currently available casing reinforcement systems. Super light-weight, Protex Shield provides sidewall to sidewall tube and tire protection. A perfect urban warrior, RiBMo is available in the following sizes for your cycling joy.

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700 X 28c	Aramid	370g.	
700 X 32c	Aramid	420g.	
700 X 35c	Aramid	520a	

₹ TIRE SIZES	BEAD	WEIGHT	COLOR
<b>~</b> 26 X 1.25		340g.	
26 X 1.50	Aramid	460g.	
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#### NEW RiBMo with Protex™ Shield





The charts demonstrate the comparative puncture and pinch-flat protection between three Panaracer tires. Unbelted, Kevlar belted and Protex Sheild belted. Protex Sheild provides almost 4 times the flat protection and more than double the pinch flat protection of a Kevlar belted tire.

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## fyxomatosis gallery



#### Prequel Apocalypse

Melbourne hosted the prequel event to the CMWC in Sydney, 2006. We had a track day which featured a scratch race, devil takes hindmost, mini bike madison, and bike jousting. Reconnecting with people around the world in different cities is one of my favourite experiences. Pictured is Allen from Ottawa, who I'd met at Monstertrack NYC a few years earlier. He won just about everything that day. Go Canada!



#### No Half Measures

Dan Hale. Forget the hair, the tattoos, the music. Dan IS the heart of bike culture in Melbourne. Dan's studio Shifter Bikes is a homage to his many loves. Art, music, and bikes. Dan is my sounding board for builds, projects and events, and who better than a man who has respresented his country at the highest level in mountain biking, repaired wheels for Mavic, shaken the hand of Ernesto Colnago, and brought the Singlespeed Worlds to Australia for the first time. Rock on!

## fyxomatosis gallery



#### Head in the Clouds

Before I was a bike courier, I already had the idea planted in my head. After I started in London, the idea of working in New York was planted by SuperKid who had just been there and was racing these "alleycat" events. It seemed so daunting back then. I cut my teeth there for a few stints through the winter periods and by the time I left the locals had made me one of their own. I was no longer an "out of towner." I was a New Yorker. Yo!



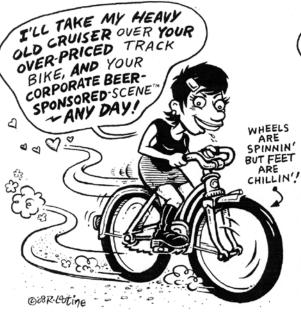
#### First Loves Juxtaposed

I love a classy pair of 7" heels as much as polished Super Record. C Record is a different story. Cycling is a sexy sport and even sexier transportation alternative. I try to preach that through photography—more than likely to the converted. Amen!











## A celebration of the world's finest bicycles



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Ray Wroblewski (a.k.a Lunatic Biker)
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f communal grieving is a basic part of what makes us human, Ghost Bikes are a remarkable sign of humanity. Part political statement, part memorial Ghost Bikes are an outward sign that the bike community cares when one of our own is struck down.

Propelled by their own effectiveness of message, Ghost Bikes have spread across the United States and into the rest of the world to over 75 cities to date. While remarkable such an outward expression of grief could spread the world over, it is unfortunate that the memorials are still spreading as cyclists become victims.

The following reflections on Ghost Bikes come from the people behind each memorial; the family and friends, the organizers who put them up and the strangers who pass them by. –Brad Quartuccio

Visit **www.ghostbikes.org** for information on Ghost Bike projects around the world.

Photo: Penn & Negley in Pittsburgh, PA, May 2004. Photo by Michael Browne



#### ANDRE'S GHOST BIKE-REFLECTIONS OF THE LOVE OF MY LIFE

By Audrey Anderson

A beautiful person; a beautiful life; a love so pure but one I could not secure.

Andre was and still is the love of my life; my shinning star, the only person I ever loved more than myself in this entire world. So when he was abruptly taken away, my entire world was shattered. I immediately found myself thinking and feeling that no one cared about my loss, my sorrows, or the aches and emptiness that now reside in my heart that I am instantly forced to live with for the rest of my life. So I started to surf the internet for articles on cyclists killed on the streets of New York City and I came across an article written by the Right of Way, an organization that does street stencils of cyclist/pedestrian fatalities. This link took me a step further and I was connected with a group of ladies from Times Up!, the organization that installs Ghost Bikes on the streets of NYC. Before the passing of my son Andre I had no idea what a Ghost Bike was or of its significance. The idea that a group of total strangers wanted to recognize and memorialize my son was astounding. My perception that no one cared changed immediately after our first conversation.

We made plans to have Andre's Ghost Bike installed on February 18th 2006, what would have been his 15th birthday. It was one of the coldest days that winter yet four caring, loving and dedicated ladies from Times Up! came all the way to the Rockaways to honor him. I called them my Angels. It was no easy task as the location is parallel to the Atlantic Ocean so you can only imagine how harsh the cold breeze was on our hands. At one point we thought it would have to be postponed but I insisted that the sun is going to emerge from the clouds and we would feel much better and so it did; we were all amazed. I knew it was my Andre's way of saying thanks.

Now we have a Ghost Bike that we all call Andre's Ghost Bike. I have developed a forever love for this Ghost Bike as I do for Andre. It is very precious to us and is constantly cared for by his friends and family because we consider that spot his home; the place where he took his last breath. When we are feeling down and lonely without him we would visit his Ghost Bike and sit around and talk just as if he was there and everything would feel normal for that moment. Its white color reminds us of how pure his heart was. Its stillness indicates the end of his vibrant life. Its installation symbolizes the love of people.

Ghost Bikes are a commanding symbol that serves to inform everyone who encounters them that the most precious gift anyone on this planet has received, the "gift of life," has been lost, gone forever because of carelessness. They are a reminder that more caution should be taking when approaching cyclists and pedestrians on the streets.

I truly believe that there are angels on earth such as the ladies from Times Up! who are eager and willing to cast their angelic touch to broken hearts and make you want to love and live again.

RIDE IN PEACE ANDRE F. ANDERSON 2-18-91 - 9-24-2005

59



#### MATTHEW MANGER-LYNCH

By Scott Mullen - www.rushinrevolution.com

Matthew Manger-Lynch may or may not have been participating in an underground bike race when he was struck and killed on a bright February 2007 morning in one of Chicago's infamous six-way intersections. Fault could be assigned to him or to the motorist with whom he collided. I wasn't there so I won't guess. All that remains is his Ghost Bike.

Ghost Bikes themselves exist without context...they simply mark the spot where a life violently ended. Maybe it was driver error, or rider error, an errant door, or just bad timing that ended the life each Ghost Bike memorializes. But the red thread of the Ghost Bike is not simply death, it's death by automobile. And the irony of the Ghost Bike is that those who can benefit most from their stark reminder of death—the motorists that bring so much of

it to our roads—are blind to these shrines. Who has time to reflect at 40mph?

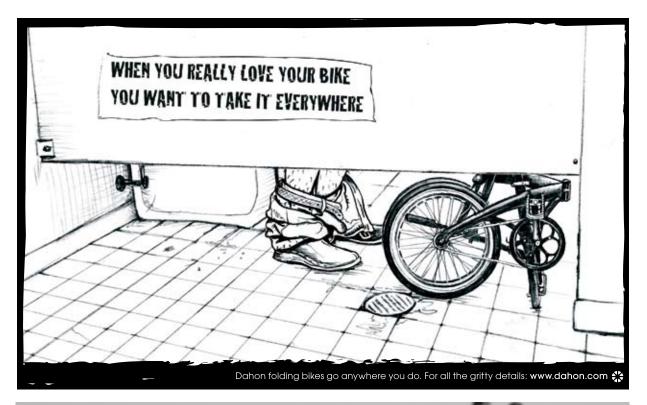
And since we live in a car culture it's this pervasive sense of futility, the quick return to business as usual after these tragedies, that irks me. The ceremony around Matt's Ghost Bike was solemn, well attended, desperate, and brought me to the edge of tears even though I'd never met the man. I was moved both by Matt and by the knowledge that Matt's was not the last Ghost Bike to be placed.

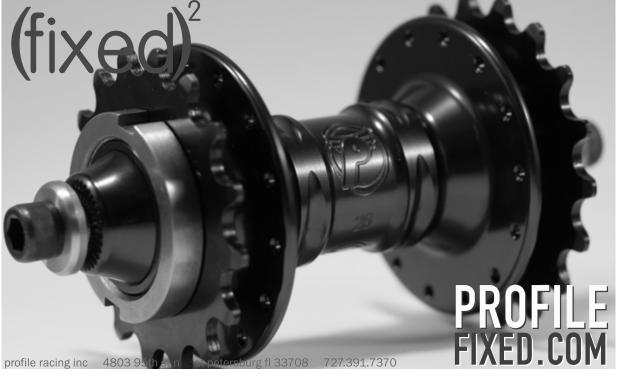
According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 698 cyclists were killed by automobile in the United States in 2007.

772 in 2006.

786 in 2005.

727 in 2004.



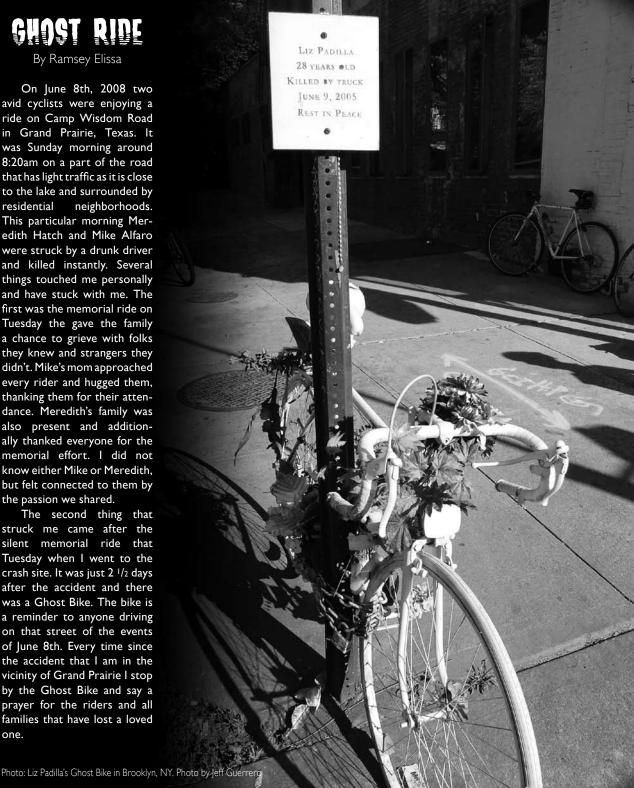


## Sugst Rine

By Ramsey Elissa

On June 8th, 2008 two avid cyclists were enjoying a ride on Camp Wisdom Road in Grand Prairie, Texas. It was Sunday morning around 8:20am on a part of the road that has light traffic as it is close to the lake and surrounded by residential neighborhoods. This particular morning Meredith Hatch and Mike Alfaro were struck by a drunk driver and killed instantly. Several things touched me personally and have stuck with me. The first was the memorial ride on Tuesday the gave the family a chance to grieve with folks they knew and strangers they didn't. Mike's mom approached every rider and hugged them, thanking them for their attendance. Meredith's family was also present and additionally thanked everyone for the memorial effort. I did not know either Mike or Meredith. but felt connected to them by the passion we shared.

The second thing that struck me came after the silent memorial ride that Tuesday when I went to the crash site. It was just 2 1/2 days after the accident and there was a Ghost Bike. The bike is a reminder to anyone driving on that street of the events of June 8th. Every time since the accident that I am in the vicinity of Grand Prairie I stop by the Ghost Bike and say a prayer for the riders and all families that have lost a loved one.



## JEN FUTRELL

By Jimmy Flaherty - www.lattitudezine.com

Yesterday was shock—today it's anger. I take it personally when people in cars run over people on bikes. Around 3:40pm on Tuesday, September 30 2008, Jen Futrell was rear-ended by an inattentive driver on Bardstown Road in Louisville, KY. She died in the hospital on a few days later.

Although I did not know Jen, her death has a significant "oh shit" factor for me as I leave work at 3:30pm and would generally be riding this stretch of road at that time. My sincerest condolences to all her friends, family and community members.

On Thursday, October 2nd a Ghost Bike was chained to a tree near the accident site in Jen's honor with a gathering of riders, family and friends. As one rider was being memorialized, another was being struck down only blocks away in a hit and run by yet another person too concerned with themselves to look out for their fellow humans.

I am, for lack of a better term, at a loss.

Prisons are not the answer. I don't think prison is ever the answer for mistakes and bad judgment. Locking someone in a cage should be a last resort for only the most violent and malicious humans. Financial restitution to the families of these individuals who have been harmed or killed seems most appropriate, however impersonal. Informing people that when these kinds of mistakes are made that their pockets will be emptied may have a positive effect on driving habits—and likely the cyclist population as well.

Of course, there are people who would continue undeterred. Most humans have the mindset of, "It isn't going to happen to me."

I could be completely wrong. Mine may not be a utopian vision of everyone giving a damn about those they are surrounded by everyday, but it seems like a much better idea than locking more people in cages as many are calling for. As angry as I may get at these careless drivers, I do understand they are people too. Most drivers just don't understand why there are people on bicycles in the middle of the road or how to interact safely with them. Stronger financial incentives may help.

At the same time, I am well aware than many of these same drivers cannot be reached. They drive cars for a reason, and that reason doesn't have anything to do with anybody else. They need to be somewhere, and they needed to be there 5 minutes ago no matter what, so get out of the way.



Regardless of this lack of concern some motorists posses coupled with the deaths and injuries inflicted on so many of our fellow riders, we still have to ride. The more we're out in the streets the more visible the riding community is. Enjoy it while you can because you never know what tomorrow may bring.

Be careful out there everybody. Take some responsability and ride like you mean it.

Photo by Jimmy Flaherty URBANVELO.ORG 63



### ATIP

By Reverend Phil - www.bikesmut.com

I was in San Diego on the Westward Ho! Bikexploitation tour when the city was removing Atip's Ghost Bike a day before they had agreed to do so. Our host frantically ran out of his home, incredulous that the city was resorting to deception. If cities continue to remove the bikes as a nuisance (or whatever lame reason they choose) then bikers wanting to remember their fallen friends will need to be more clever.

I remember helping memorialize bikers who were maimed or killed in Portland. We used large stencils and laid some thick white paint down on the road. We were so worried about being seen we had a team of lookouts with two-way radios. It is insane to think that we US citizens, "the freest people in the world" needed too use such subterfuge in

order to say, "A friend was killed here, so please be careful."

This was before I knew about Ghost Bikes, which allow for more creativity, but also require ongoing maintenance. If they are not kept fresh and pretty they become an "eyesore" to some. Looking at a faded white bike with a rusted chain and some dead flowers isn't that hard on the eyes, not as compared to the accident that brought the bike in the first place.

One behavior I have tried to curb is my referring to these incidents as "accidents." While I generally hope that most drivers are not trying to actively harm cyclists I feel that the automatic assumption of "best intentions" is wrong. Spilled milk is an accident, 43,000 deaths involving auto collisions is an epidemic.







### PITTSBURGH GHOST BIKES

By Michael Browne

Every day, we are faced with the same choice—to accept things as they are, or attempt to change them. We certainly cannot change everything, and it would be tough to go through life accepting everything. So it is with great care that we choose which aspects of life to attempt to change.

The story of Ghost Bikes was born from a moment when I and countless others across the nation faced crisis in our communities and simply said, "No more," to the senseless violence born from deliberate and ignorant motorist action.

The Pittsburgh campaign—the dedicated effort of a core group of individuals—vaulted the concept of Ghost Bikes as we know it into the public mind.

Motivated by the original "Broken Bikes, Broken Lives" campaign by Patrick Van Der Tuin of St. Louis, a similar awareness project in Cleveland and the news of a friend as victim of a hit-and-run, I wrote a series of articles in a certain Pittsburgh-based mountain bike publication. I promised to provide the readership with a How-To and continued updates on a larger national campaign, but quickly became sidetracked by simply making an impact in one city.

The local community bike shop FreeRide got behind the concept and brought the necessary resources to help collect information and create the Ghost Bikes. Together, we tracked recent collisions in the city as part of a larger effort to supplement largely non-existant city statistics about bicycle-related traffic violations.

With 50+ collisions on file, we picked about a dozen accident sites of personal significance.

\*\*\*\*

Of the two deaths we uncovered, I followed up on one of them. A widowed, immigrant voice answered the phone.

Sunday morning. Time he always rode, and she hit him. She ran him over! The police, they don't care. Before church, and the woman was drunk—how else do she end up hitting him and then driving over the curb?! You are the only one who cares, why do the police not care like you do?

Two years later, this was the only Pittsburgh Ghost

Bike that still stood as authorized by the local police department.

\*\*\*\*

The difference between Pittsburgh Ghost Bikes and what the national movement is today is that our campaign was a public awareness effort, not necessarily a collection of roadside memorials.

14 bikes deployed in one evening. Locked to infrastructure. Handmade signs. A dedicated website. The Associated Press. Great photography.

The news broke on May 27th, 2004, my birthday. The greatest gift in over two decades of birthdays.

For two days, those bikes lived and breathed on vibrant city streets with people and traffic that was desperate for something more than a billboard or the sirens of an ambulance. Louder than sirens, more striking than catchy ad copy, those bikes did more than capture the attention of Pittsburgh—most importantly, they turned the eye of Dan Nephin, a cyclist riding on his way to work at the Associated Press. Through his efforts, our story spread to London, to Tokyo, to Chicago, to every place the AP's beautiful, instantaneous efforts could touch.

Within days, our small group was fielding questions from New York, San Francisco, Austin, asking what they could do to create their own campaign. And thus began Ghost Bikes as we know it.

\*\*\*\*

And so it goes...

Like with so many do-it-yourself efforts, other interests battle for attention, and groups fragment. Such is the story of Ghost Bikes, one of the most meaningful things of my life.

\*\*\*\*

Has Ghost Bikes saved lives? Certainly. I can't come close to quantifying, but I can say that when I made the move to Madison, WI in 2007 I was pleasantly pleased to find two yard-signs promoting Madison's own Ghost Bikes.

67







## BRONX JON

By Kevin "Squid" Bolger - www.cyclehawk.com

Bronx Jon was a good friend and associate for many years. His sudden death was a big shock to our community. In the months that followed, I realized that his positive energy was missed by more than just his family in NYC. Seeing his Ghost Bike makes me feel him, always makes me check my riding and realize all the little things that I am thankful for.

I got to know his Mom in the days that followed; we are still in touch. I want to thank the people who made his Ghost Bike and those who have showed it love in his name.

We are here for a limited time, make the best of life and stay positive! Stay focused when you ride, the dangers are all too real.

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# By Brad Quartuccio, mechanical wisdom by Scott Wickham Jr. Spokes



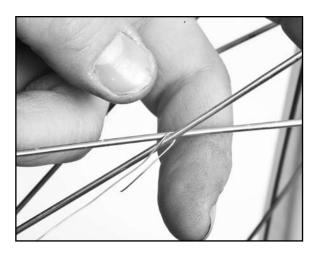
ied and soldered spokes were once a final touch from the finest mechanics upon the highest quality wheels, but have for the most part faded into obscurity. Seen only rarely these days, many cyclists have never personally laid eyes upon a set of tied and soldered wheels, let alone question the history of the practice or learn to tie their own.

Cycling lore has it that wheels can feel stiffer and more responsive to the discerning rider after having been tied and soldered. The explanations given vary, most culminating in an effectively shorter spoke that is less able to vibrate and move in relation to its neighbor. Attempts to quantify any structural difference between a tied and untied wheel have all come up short, with no measurable differences yet detected. History points to a possibly more practical origin; in the days of high-wheelers with longer spokes and

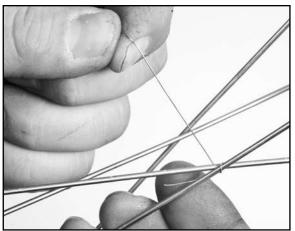
lesser manufacturing the tie was to help prevent a broken spoke from becoming entangled.

There are adherents to each school of thought, those that swear by tied and soldered wheels and those that dismiss them as nothing but a myth. Sometimes tradition has its place no matter the empirical evidence. Tied and soldered spokes have been around forever in bicycle terms and there is no reason not to carry on the tradition; here's one mechanic's method of finishing his best wheelbuilds.

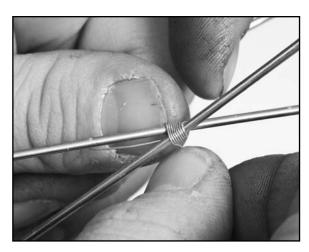
Materials: Besides a finely built wheel with clean spokes and a few items common to any workshop you'll need the following: beekeeper's wire for the tying, thin gauge rosin core solder, soldering flux, and a common propane brazing torch. It should go without saying, but you're playing with fire and could get burned. Wear some safety glasses and proceed with caution.



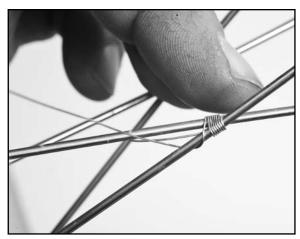
Some builders work from the wire spool, others break off a short working length of wire. Either way, create a hook in the wire and place it around the outside overlapping spoke as shown. Only the spoke crossing farthest from the hub is tied.



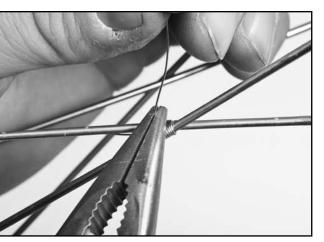
Wrap the end of the hooked wire to the inside of the cross. With the longer end of the wire wrap one revolution around the crossed spokes. The short end of the hook will be between the spokes, within the finished wire coil.



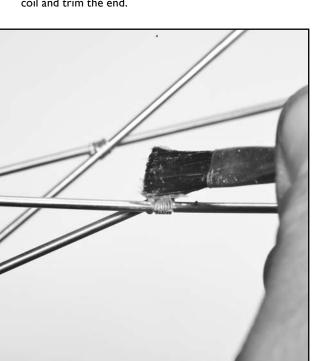
Coil the wire up the spoke intersection as shown, seven full times around. Keep the wire taut through this process, and the wire stacked neatly, pressing it in place each time around.



Once the seventh wrap is complete pull the wire through only the outside overlapping spoke as shown. Push the wire into place so this wire is across the top of the finished coil.



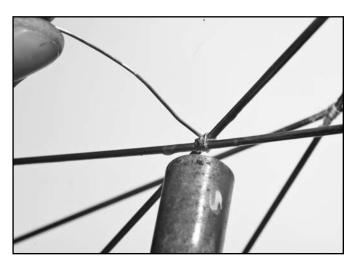
With needle-nose pliers cinch the wire close to the coil and pull it tight, breaking it in the process. Fold over the wire coming from the inside of the coil and trim the end.



Spread a liberal amount of soldering flux on the wire coil. This cleans the joint before applying solder as it burns off, also giving a helpful visual indication of when the joint is at the proper temperature for solder.



This is an example of a cleanly tied junction, ready for flux and solder. Even wraps forming a tight coil and cleanly trimmed ends will lead to a perfectly finished job. Tie the rest of the joints before moving on to the next step.



Heat the joint with a propane torch until the flux sizzles and burns off with a yellow/orange flame. With heat still applied, touch the joint with the soldering wire and fill the joint. The solder will flow into the joint, but it helps to work with gravity.











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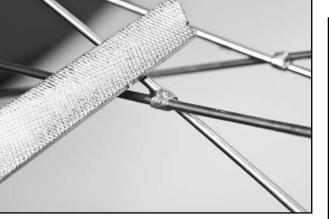


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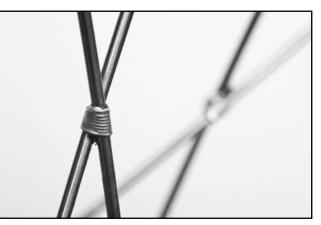
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Use a light file to knock off any excess solder and make sure any potentially sharp wire ends are dulled. The strength of the tie does not hinge on how pretty the final product is, but having it finished right doesn't hurt.



Like anything in life, practice makes perfect and the subtleties of the technique vary between builders. The key is a tight wind of the wire and not overheating the spokes while applying solder, as you don't want to adversely affect their metallurgical properties. Removing the tied and soldered joints in the case of a spoke replacement or to fix a far-from-perfect job is as easy as heating the solder and pulling the wire loose with pliers.

Performance benefits are for each to judge, but it seems few who have tried tied and soldered wheels completely dismiss the practice. From the standpoint of finishing touches this is a step beyond such niceties as lining up the valve stem and hub logo during a build. The final touch of many master wheelbuidlers, yet within reach of the patient amateur.



Scott Wickham Jr, has been building custom wheels since the 1980's.

FOR MORE TECH INFO VISIT WWW.URBANVELO.ORG/TECH







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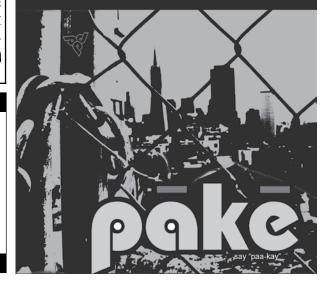
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## The Rotafix Method

By Brad Quartuccio





he rotafix method is a technique to install or remove a fixed cog without a chainwhip, turning the frame and wheel into a no-slip tool with loads of leverage. Attributed to the Italian track racer and master mechanic Giovanni Pettenella, this method allows you to quickly and easily install a new cog properly (tight!) or remove a stuck cog without cursing.

Facing the drivetrain as in inset A and with the chain removed from the chainring and slack on the bottom bracket shell, you will turn the wheel counterclockwise to thread a cog onto the hub. Start by taking up the slack in the chain by slowly rotating the wheel and stacking the chain up on itself as in inset B. This will make the chain fully wrap around the cog and become tight against the bottom bracket shell, effectively turning the entire wheel into a chainwhip that can't slip. Continue turning the wheel and the cog will be installed as tight as possible, ensuring a long hub life once that lockring is installed to keep everything snug. Reverse directions and turn the wheel clockwise to remove even the most stuck cog. If it doesn't come off

with the rotafix method, it's not coming off.

With this great power of leverage comes great responsibility. It is feasible to overtighten a cog with this method, pulling the threads clear off the hub. It is also possible to cross-thread a cog completely on, once again ruining the hub threads. As for removing a cog, be sure to remove the lockring first to avoid carnage. Delicate bottom bracket shells should be protected with a rag, this method is likely to leave marks in fancy paint and aluminum frames.









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