

# CHAIN REACTiON

SUMMER 2019



A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE ORANGE COUNTY WHEELMEN

The poster for the Pacific Coast 100 2019 cycling event is framed by a decorative border of repeating wave patterns. At the top, the year "2019" is written in a simple, dark blue font. Below it, the words "Pacific Coast" are written in a large, elegant, red cursive script. To the right of "Pacific Coast", the number "100" is displayed in a dark blue, stylized font where the zeros are shaped like bicycle wheels. The central illustration depicts a cyclist in a red jersey and black shorts riding a blue road bike. The cyclist is positioned on a large, stylized wave that resembles the Great Wave off Kanagawa, with white foam and dark blue-green water. At the bottom of the poster, the date "September 7, 2019" and the route "Irvine to Carlsbad, CA" are written in a white, sans-serif font against a dark blue background.

# OCW CLUB LINKS

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**HOME PAGE:** [www.ocwheelmen.org](http://www.ocwheelmen.org)

**CALENDAR:** [www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/418357-calendar](http://www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/418357-calendar)

**OFFICERS:** [www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/419328-officers](http://www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/419328-officers)

**DIRECTORS:** [www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/419332-directors](http://www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/419332-directors)

**SUPPORTING MEMBERS:** [www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/424483-supporting-memberships](http://www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/424483-supporting-memberships)

## MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS

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Held the first Sunday of each month starting 11am at Carl's Jr., Newport Beach. Take the 405 Freeway to the MacArthur exit. Go south 0.8 miles and turn left on Campus. Go 0.3 miles and turn right into Carl's Jr. (at Von Karman). All Officers and Directors are expected to attend to conduct business. Other interested members may also attend.

## MONTHLY BRAINSTORMING PARTIES

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Held once a month, typically the last Thursday or Saturday of the month. These special "parties" are a way for OCW members to get together and "brainstorm" articles and ideas for our monthly NewsBlast and quarterly Chain Reaction while enjoying food and beverage. **COME JOIN US!**

If you would like to host a Brainstorming Party or supply food or beverage please contact Monica McCarthy at [monica.mccarthy@cox.net](mailto:monica.mccarthy@cox.net). **OCW REIMBURSES UP TO \$150!**

## REGISTRATION FOR OCW EVENTS

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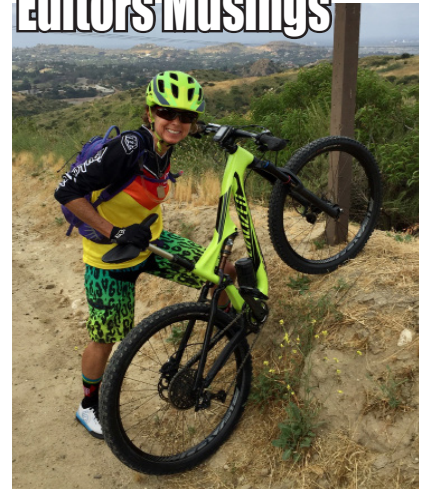
All Registration for OCW events require the registrant to be logged in. Be sure to always check for discount codes. You will only see the discount code if you are a current member of OCW. The discount code if applicable will be located on a separate page in the specific event area. To confirm if you are current, check the membership data base. If you do not see the link for the membership data base, your membership has expired by at least a month or more.

The new website, registration code, and discount codes are only visible to current members. The website functions are different and I have learned new ways within this site logic, to apply new and different ways of maintaining privacy for our members from email skimmers and other nefarious internet hacking. I am continually upgrading the website when there are better ways to protect your personal information, but have it available for our members to connect to each other.

Thank you for your continued support and membership to OCW.

[events@ocwheelmen.org](mailto:events@ocwheelmen.org)

## Editors Musings



Michelle Vester

Happy Summer!

Don't forget to sign up for the Pacific Coast 100, and say hi to Alan and I at the first rest stop where we will be making sure you are all fueled up for your fun day of riding. Oh, and the jersey looks pretty cool too!

Earlier this year we experienced more rain than we have seen in a long, long time. It sure did help the drought situation, and also created a bumper crop of flowers, other vegetation, as well as bugs, rodents, and SNAKES! I personally have ridden or hiked into several of the slithering Serpentes. So, I thought I would do a little research on them. Check out Hiking Corner for more information.

As usual there are lots of great adventure stories from our members in this issue.

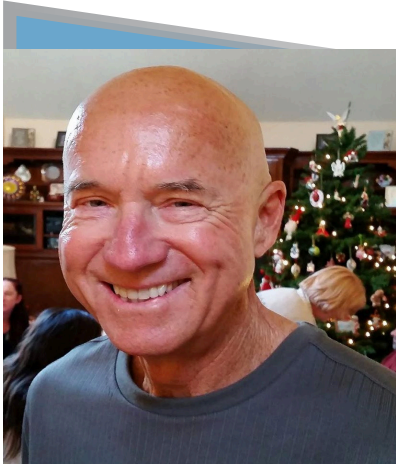
Have a great summer!

Enjoy the ride!

## IN THIS ISSUE

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President's Message	Page 3
VP Message	Page 6
Mountain Bike Dude	Page 14
Events	Page 15
Hiking Corner	Page 25
Hungry Cyclist	Page 29
OCW Premier Partners	Page 31



Joe Bernhardt

# The President

Our fine editor of Chain Reaction, Michelle Vester, has been wondering when I would submit my message for this issue. I needed to wait until we found out whether or not we would be able to secure a train for the annual Amtrak Century. After months of asking, Amtrak finally notified us that for the second year in a row, they do not have the equipment to lease us a private train to return riders back to Irvine.

As a result, the OCW Board of Directors has decided to move on from the Amtrak Century and create a new, more exciting event known as the OCW Pacific Coast 100. When we looked at what made Amtrak so successful, we realized that the draw of this ride was the party on the train ride home. Last year we used buses and saw attendance fall from 1300 riders down to just 600. Most of those riders had signed up in the first week when they believed we had a train. Then Amtrak told us that no equipment was available and they would not provide us with a train. As a result, we had to go to plan B (for buses.) We ended up refunding 120 entries and saw another 100 paid not show up on the day of the ride. Anticipating what could happen this year without the train, we had to come up with a fresh idea.

We had the option of repeating our historical route ending up on Pier B in San Diego and once again bussing everyone home to Irvine. However, we thought at best we might attract 500 riders and we would still be burdened with the high cost of renting the pier. We also knew

that once riders passed Torrey Pines, they had to endure the terrible roads and traffic in San Diego. Based upon our rider projections and our high fixed costs, we had to do something different.

Out of this disappointment came the birth of the OCW Pacific Coast 100. The ride will still begin at the Irvine Transportation Center on September 7th and will head down the coast to Torrey Pines. After finishing the climb, riders will celebrate with a traditional popsicle then turn around and HEAD UP the coast. They will turn inland and finish in Carlsbad at a celebrated local brewery where the party will begin. Each rider over 21 will receive a custom beer mug and the first glass of beer courtesy of OCW. All riders will receive a finishers medal. An excellent lunch will once again be provided by the good people of Bristol Farms. As I write this, final arrangements are being made so I can't go into too much detail. However, by the time you read this, you will have already read the specific details of the century on our website. The great thing about this course is that if someone tires, they can turn around anytime and go directly to the finish. The route will be more scenic than in the past with more views of the Pacific ocean, and there will be more options for those riders who are not up to a full century. We expect this to be a fun event that will become a tradition just as Amtrak had for the past 43 years.

As in the past, we need the help of all of our

members to volunteer to make this event a success. Please mark on your calendar the weekend of September 7th to volunteer. Even if you plan to ride the event, you can help out on Friday's staging and/or Sunday's clean-up. The more people we have to help out, the easier it is on everyone. Watch for an announcement when sign-up begins for both the ride and volunteers.

### **Breathless Agony**

On a second note, I want to personally thank all 53 volunteers who turned out to make Breathless Agony a success. We had 169 paid riders and the day of the event was blessed with great weather. The biggest complaint from prior rider feedback was missing turns and getting lost. This year the club invested in tent style turn signs that were placed at strategic locations

and riders gave high praise for this improvement. These same generic OCW turn signs will be used at the OCW Pacific Coast 100.

Next year we will look closely at possibly changing the date of the event to avoid conflicts with several other major centuries on the same date. Having just returned from a week of riding around the beautiful Lake Tahoe area, I hope each of you has the opportunity to get away from SOCAL and seek out new adventures on two wheels. Several of our members, John Renowden, Miguel Perea, Shawn Tuberg, Charles Berzon, Bruce Campbell, Mark Denney, and myself will be riding the Italian Dolomites in early July. I hope that we experience as much beauty there as I witnessed in Northern California. Have a great summer, and I hope to see you on one of our many club rides.



# WANTED

**Are you an OCW member**

**Do you have a home and enjoy entertaining**

**We are looking for members who would  
like to host a Bicycle Social Party**

**We will reimburse you up to \$150 for the  
event!**

**It's a great way to become more involved  
and meet more members and have fun**

**We are looking for a host for March and  
any month thereafter**

**Contact Monica at**

**[monica.mccarthy@outlook.com](mailto:monica.mccarthy@outlook.com)**

BOARD  
meeting  
minutes





# the *VICE* President's Message

**By Bruce Campbell, Vice President**

The past few months were pretty exciting for cycling in So Cal and for OCW members highlighted by our annual Spring event Breathless Agony. Although attendance was down from the previous year the event was a success based on reports from our numerous OCW volunteers and riders alike. We also had tough competition from rides like Ride for Rwanda and several others. We are strongly considering targeting a May vs April event date in 2020 to avoid the competition with this ride and the Belgian Waffle ride.

We could never pull this event off without the generous commitments by so many of our members that volunteered. We hope that same volunteer spirit will get behind our premier event, Pacific Coast 100, which is scheduled for Saturday Sept 7th.



Many cyclists joke about avoiding rides with names that include "Breathless" or "Death Ride" but if you want a change from crowded, congested and stop light infested suburban streets, then the mountains is where you want to be riding. Assuming the weather cooperates the riding uphill can

be eased with the right chaining like the Shimano 34 tooth compact small front ring combined with an Ultegra 11-32 rear cassette. Remember you do not have to do the whole ride as there are convenient turn around points at the first few rest stops.

However, there is a very strong sense of accomplishment when you reach Onyx Summit at 8,443' of elevation (and considerable relief). Plus, you get a photo opportunity with the Grim Reaper as seen in these photos.



So Cal also enjoyed an exciting Amgen Tour of California Mountain top finish on Friday, May 17th on top of Mt Baldy ski lifts. Several OCW members joined the hundreds of other cyclists that day to watch both the women and the men pro riders compete for the stage win. I always enjoy the colorful costumed characters that join in the fun.

We had several successful OCW General Meetings the past few months including member Don Car-



son and his Brethren of the Bike team presenting this March on the Taiwan KOM race that 6 of them entered last Nov 2018. This annual event attracts 700+ riders from 30+ countries to compete in a one-day race from sea level to 10,000' over 100+ kilometers! The photos and videos of this event were outstanding and combined with the presenters' enthusiasm resulted in a very entertaining evening for our member and guest attendees totaling 50.



Carmichael Training Systems Pro Trainer, Paul Ruggiereo, is a certified CTS trainer and presented in April on the experience and benefits of Carmichael Training Camps. Paul coached OCW member Mark Denney remotely from Jan-March and then in person at the March Santa Ynez training camp. Mark will tell you this power meter based interval training has really improved his fitness and I have witnessed the results trying to catch

Mark on a number of challenging rides this spring.

Once again, keep Saturday, September 7th, marked on your calendar for The Pacific Coast 100. Consider which of the many volunteer opportunities on Friday, Saturday and Sunday you would like to help out with.

Thanks in advance for your much appreciated volunteer support for our premier events Breathless and Pacific Coast 100 which make our OCW club standout from all other clubs.



After 43 years of providing a premier cycling event the Orange County Wheelmen has retired the OCW Amtrak Century. The OCW would like to announce its newest long- distance ride, called the:

## OCW PACIFIC COAST 100

We believe this beautiful ride down the Southern California coast will be your new favorite! This event will be on 7 September 2019 and will start at the Irvine Transportation Center. After miles of scenic coastal riding and a cold popsicle at the top of Torrey Pines, you'll turn around to finish at the Rouleur Brewing Company in Carlsbad. You will get the first cold beer and an OCW PACIFIC COAST 100 souvenir glass, courtesy of OCW! The finish line festivities will also include music, a hot lunch by Bristol Farms, soft drinks, chips & salsa. The journey home to Irvine will be by chartered Party Buses.



# VIVA LAS VEGAS!



I wanted to verify that I could still do this ride, and it wasn't that bad. Breathless Agony and various other century rides were a good prep for this type of ride.

I got 3 hours sleep due to waking up at 1:30. I had to get up early in order to have plenty of daylight while on the freeway. The freeway is really dead at 2 AM but there's still homeless folks out in Fontana and Rialto. I was carrying a taser, pepper spray and a giant can of whoop-ass if anyone tried to derail my plans. No problems though.

Weather was pleasant except it was 39 degrees coming up to Cleghorn Road. I had 2 pairs of gloves, 2 pairs of arm warmers, toe warmers, a yellow micro fiber towel, 2 plastic bags, and that was barely enough. I can't carry a ton of clothing because it's going to be 90+ degrees in Baker and I already had a ton of gear. Besides the taser and pepper spray I had 3 spare inner tubes, 20 patches, 4

tubes of glue, 3 tire irons, 2 hand pumps, 3 USB chargers, cell phone, multiple cords, 3 front lights, 2 tail lights. Not a ton but an extra 5 pounds for sure.

The section from Glen Helen to Cleghorn Road is a boring grind. It's uphill, false flats and not rewarding at all. Climbing the Cajon Pass is no big deal as it's half of GMR and not as steep. Temps of 50 degrees and power from climbing allowed me to dethaw. Riding on the I-15 is cool, if you don't freak from the traffic and trucks. Have to compartmentalize and just focus on riding straight and avoid all the debris on the shoulder. It's actually safer than riding on Culver or Barranca because no cars turning in front of you. Hesperia to Victorville is a nice section of gradual downhill and good road surface. You can easily maintain 30 MPH without working hard.

Generally I tried to keep my heart rate low, around 110 BPM for the first 100 miles be-

cause it's important to save yourself and pace. Ended up slumming it some and probably should have worked a little harder to go faster.

Victorville to Barstow is also mostly gentle downhill and I was making good time. I was 30 minutes ahead of schedule but got lost and turned around in Barstow when I made my first stop. Barstow to Baker is mostly good but your feet start burning from relentless pedaling with force. Few riders experience this unless you do a long time trial like the 100-mile Stagecoach TT. It's hard to train for that. Group rides and Santa Ana River Trail won't cut it. You have stop lights or momentary turnarounds or the bridges on the trails. All these little micro pauses allow valuable circulation in your feet. But Barstow to Baker there is absolutely nothing, non-stop pedaling and you're anxious to keep moving because traffic is whizzing by. It's unnatural to just stop on the shoulder, so you don't. But the soles of your feet are really burning by the time you get to Baker. Stopping for lunch makes everything better.

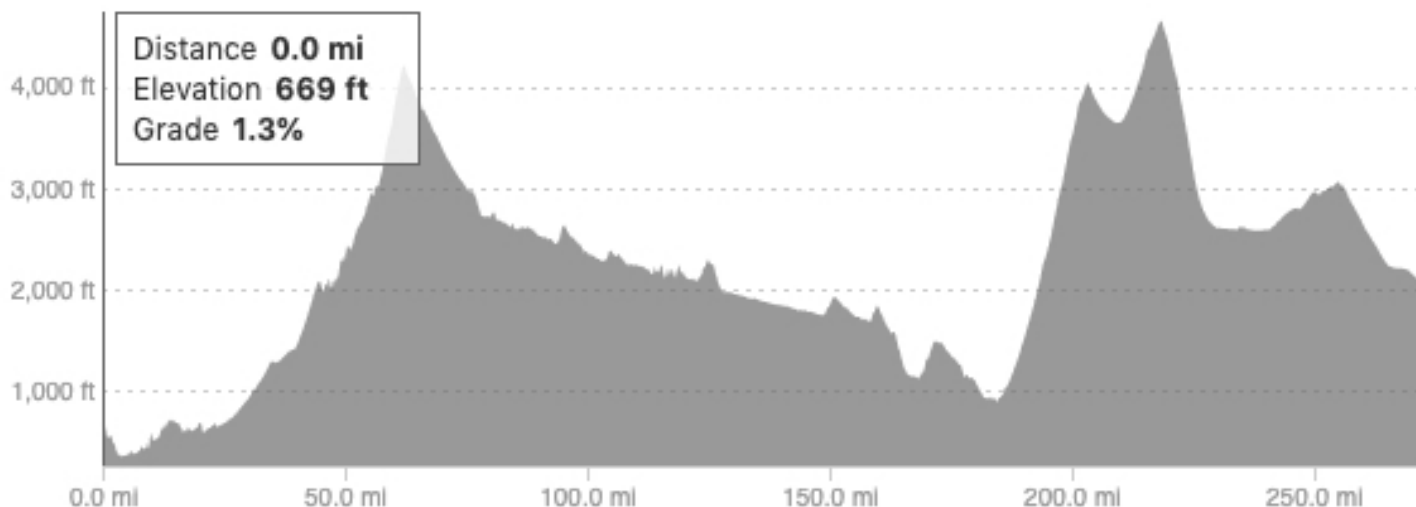
Going up the Halloran Summit is a serious undertaking and one of the most difficult

things. At least 50 cars honked at me or cheered on the freeway. I felt like the queen of the Rose Bowl Parade as I waved to all the folks. Oddly enough one guy pulled over on the shoulder at the top of the Halloran Summit to give me a bottle of water. His name was Allan Cobar, not on Strava, but had his bike in the back seat of his minivan. That was quite welcomed because I had burned through most of my water on that climb.

The Baker to Primm section is the most grueling, for sure. The descent into Primm is quite dicey because it's a steep downhill, lots of rocks on the shoulder, deep drainage grates that will flip you, and rumble strip on the left side of the shoulder. It's not for the faint of heart. You navigate all that stuff at 38 MPH... until you hit something and flat, like I did. Now you're fixing a flat on the shoulder as trucks whiz by, which is unsettling.

Got into Primm at a decent hour and plenty of daylight left except another rear flat. This time due to a steel-belted wire from worn tires. I think people with gambling problems and low on money run their steel-belted tires bald and generate a zillion little wires to

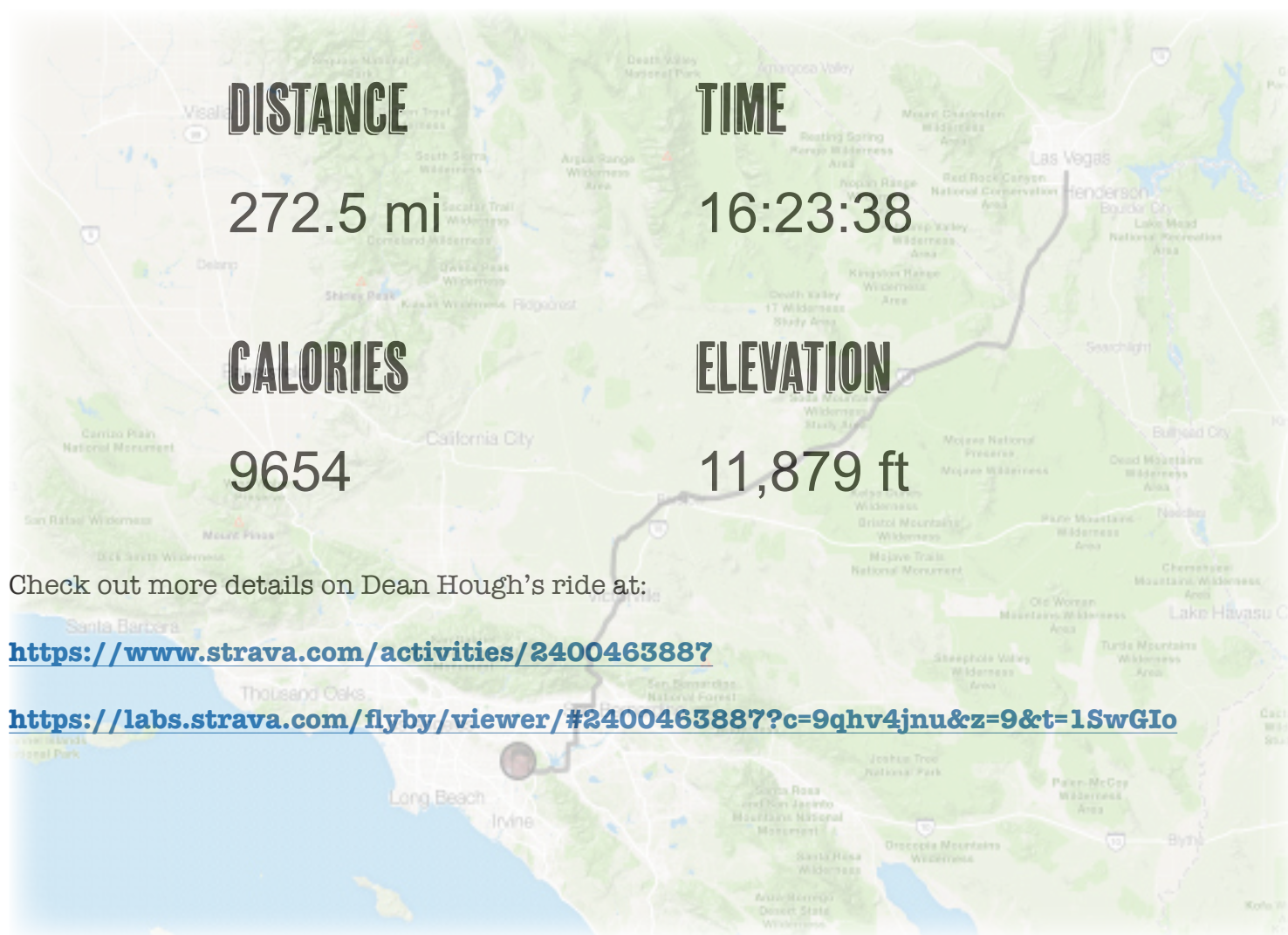
## Elevation Profile



flat you. I got 4 flat tires from those things between Primm and Jean. Are you kidding me? Honest, 4 flats, 3 back one front, that ate up valuable time. After the 3rd one I rode as hard as I could to race the clock because I didn't want to be on I-15 in the dark. I've done that in the past, no fun. You suffer night blindness momentarily as cars come by and you can't see debris on the shoulder for 3 or 4 seconds. Stuff that will flat you or crash you. Plus the light piercing the darkness amplifies the roar of the trucks and it really plays games with your head. I mean serious physiological games with your head. So you want to avoid that.

The last flat came a quarter mile before the exit for Jean, just as dusk was slipping away and I had it with fixing flats on the freeway. So I pe-

daled with only my right leg to limp along at 8 MPH because I was too unstable with a front flat. Didn't want to risk swerving into traffic, so kept my left leg out for safety. Now it's night in Jean and flat's repaired, only 31 miles to Vegas left. It's very peaceful and quiet on Las Vegas Blvd out there by Jean, so it's a nice gentle ride into Vegas. Once you crest the initial uphill, you have a nice 20-mile downhill into Vegas as you look at all the lights in the distance. It's really nice. I didn't feel wrecked from the ride, I felt surprisingly good. Worst thing was all the flats. And woke up to find another rear flat caused by a good old steel-belted tire wire. UHG. I'm not planning to repeat this anymore but I could if I wanted to. It was basically a cake walk, except for the danger and the flats.



Check out more details on Dean Hough's ride at:

<https://www.strava.com/activities/2400463887>

<https://labs.strava.com/flyby/viewer/#2400463887?c=9qhv4jnu&z=9&t=1SwGIo>



# Save Those ! Old Tires !

Next time you change out an old tire due to wear, if it is still safe to ride for one more ride, hang on to it and bring it to an upcoming OCW General Meeting. We are collecting useable tires from our members to be used by our SAG drivers at our major events, Pacific Coast 100 and Breathless Agony. Rather than purchasing a new tire to help out a stranded rider with a cut tire, we would prefer to save money and use one of these donated tires to help get them to the finish line. They can then replace the worn tire with a fresh one at their own expense rather than the Club's.



# Tour of Provence



*By Link Lindquist and Kathy Taylor*

Greetings from St. George, Utah! It is hard to believe but this will be our 17th year leading bicycle tours in Provence!!

Did you know that Link continues to hold the record for the Triple Ascent of Mont Ventoux, and Kathy has climbed Mont Ventoux from each of the three villages?

With 17 years of experience in the region we definitely know where to ride, and where to eat.

Provence is truly a great place, with wonderful

people, beautiful scenery, and 4 star accommodations.

Everyday on the tour brings a new adventure. Sipping cafe au lait, talking to the locals, eating beautiful fresh foods, and shopping at the unbelievable farmers markets. And, don't forget, tasting the great wines of Provence in the Cote de Rhone region! Check out [linksbiketours.com](http://linksbiketours.com) for more information.

Our next tour date is September 7-16 and September 21-30. [Hâte d'avoir de vos nouvelles.](#)





# Mountain Bike Dude

By Alan Vester

## Mountain Biking Geared Toward the 50+ Rider

### The Tyranny of the Default

I have been riding mountain bikes since 1992 and ride every week, weather and trail conditions permitting. Lately I have been noticing my right thumb gets very sore and painful while riding. Considering that most modern mountain bikes use some sort of under the bar thumb activated shifters, it's no wonder my thumb is sore after thousands of shifts over the years. Many mountain bikes today use single rear derailleur configurations, so no more front derailleur and no shifting with your left thumb. All shifting takes place on the right side using your right hand or thumb. I thought no problem; I'll just purchase a shifter for the left side of the handlebar and use that for my rear derailleur.

I soon discovered an odd fact. Neither Shimano nor SRAM make a left-handed thumb shifter for the rear derailleur. Right side shifters are for the rear derailleur and that is the default configuration by most every bike company. So now I had to consider an alternative way to shift the gears without using my right thumb. I thought to myself, "I could not be the only cyclist on the planet with a defective or missing right thumb."

I did some research and discovered other riders with deformed or missing right hands or thumbs were reaching over with their left hand to shift or they were using their fingers on their right hand to shift. Not exactly great solutions. So here is what I came up with as an alternative.



[SRAM makes a Twist Grip Shifter](#) that works with the new 12 speed Eagle. SRAM also makes Twist Grip Shifters for 11 speed and 10 speed cassettes. The other alternate to shifting is to go electronic, which virtually has no resistance to activate. The only negative to electronic shifting is the cost. The range is between \$2,000 - \$2,500. Not an attractive option.

I decided to go with the SRAM Eagle Grip Shift system, which is between \$45.00 - \$150.00 range. There are three levels of shifters, so I went with the middle X01 level, which is about \$110.00. I've been using it for about a month now and I really, really like it. The grip shifter is activated by twisting the inner portion of the grip, which does have more resistance than a thumb shifter, but instead of using your thumb for every up and down shift, you are using your hand in a twist motion a lot like a motorcycle throttle. I still experience a little discomfort in my right thumb, but it is not nearly as painful as using a traditional under bar shifter. I like the cleaner look also. I'm sure I could have sought out an engineer who could make a custom shifter for my left hand/thumb, but I did not. I did find a company in the Netherlands who make shifters and brakes for disabled riders who have

custom-built bikes. It was also an option, but not what I was looking for.

I did go to an Orthopedic Surgeon and had my right hand and thumb x-rayed and examined. Sure enough, after about 57 million shifts with my right thumb, no more cartilage to be found anywhere in the joints of my right thumb. Who would have guessed I have a finite number on shifts in my joints?

I also went to a hand therapist who specializes in hand injuries and disorders. I purchased a Push MetaGrip, <https://bracelab.com/meta-grip.html>, which is a special waterproof brace that can be worn under your cycling glove. I wear it every time I ride, and the good news is that it is covered by some insurance companies.

My thumb will never be perfect again, but who cares as long as I can ride, and I'll gladly live with some minor discomfort.



Have a great summer, the trails are calling, and as always, I'm ending this article with the "Rules of the Trail." The trail rules are courtesy of the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA):

### Rules of the Trail

1. Ride open trails.
2. Leave No Trace.
3. Control your bicycle.
4. Yield appropriately.
5. Never scare animals.
6. Plan ahead.

See ya on the trails.

**Alan Vester (Mountain Bike Dude)**  
[alanvester7@gmail.com](mailto:alanvester7@gmail.com)



# Get Out and RiDE



# *Right as Rain... How We Can Avoid Self Sabotage*

*By Charlie Celano*

As I pulled into the parking lot, decked out in my multi-colored spandex cycling kit, I was halfway through my bean burrito (an excellent pre-ride meal by the way) when I suddenly lost my appetite. The morning sun was quickly being enveloped by some ominous looking clouds... cumulus, I think.

With the half burrito re-wrapped, I mustered the courage to get out of the car and begin my pre-ride routine. Bike out...tires pumped...lights on...shoes on...helmet on...that's when I felt it. That first prophetic drop of rain right on my forearm. It was like a moment frozen in time as I stared at that solitary raindrop rolling off my arm. Slowly, but surely, more drops began to sporadically fall on and around me. It was at this very moment I had a decision to make.

Do I ignore those drops? "This is not happening, this is not happening..." Do I mount my two-wheeled steed and forge on, regardless of the elements?

Or, do I give in to the rapid-fire thoughts, rationalizations, and excuses racing through my head and pack it in?

More on that later.

Something clicked inside my brain. I drowned out the noise for a fleeting moment, got onto my bike and started turning over the pedals.

As I traversed the sparsely populated streets of Orange County suburbia, I suddenly felt invigorated. The cool wind in my face, the smooth feel of the tires on the asphalt...it all felt right again. Right as rain. How could I have even hesitated to go on this training ride? I mean, cycling is one of my great passions in life. I love the feeling of being on my bike and it truly represents a Zen-like therapy for me.

Then, the rain came.

Fierce and furious, at least for the better part of ten minutes. By the time I got to the turn-around point of the ride, I was soaked to the bone. Here come those pesky thoughts again...

"Why would you do this? Why not ride your trainer at home in the dryness of your garage? That is why you bought that thing in the first place anyway. Why are you putting yourself at

risk? You know how dangerous it is to ride in the rain! Oh great...now I will probably get sick.”

Oftentimes, we are our own worst enemy. We can literally sabotage ourselves. Our brains are absolutely amazing machines that are still not fully understood by modern science. When we are facing a difficult challenge or obstacle, our brains immediately revert to “defense mode” or “fight or flight”. It is literally baked into our DNA. The brain reverts to the self-preserving process which manifests itself in rationalizations, justifications and excuses. It tells us all of the reasons why we should not do that thing that may cause us to suffer.

The great Viktor Frankl said “If there is a meaning in life at all, then there must be a meaning in suffering. Suffering is an ineradicable part of life, even as fate and death. Without suffering and death, human life cannot be complete.”

There is great value in suffering, if we can simply open our hearts and minds to it. Unfortunately, we do not often realize it until the suffering is over. If we can simply “will ourselves” to put on those running shoes and step out the door, clip into those pedals and start riding, dive into that water and take a couple of strokes, all of the rationalizations, justifications and excuses fade away. By the time we are finished, the endorphins kick in and we enjoy a sense of accomplishment and gratitude...that natural reward.

On the way back to my car I really paid attention to the sights and sounds around me, as opposed to the asphalt bike lane directly in front of me. I wanted to get my mind off of the feeling of soaking wet feet in soaking wet socks in soaking wet shoes and the inevitable blisters that were to come.

As I looked around, I noticed that I was not alone in my attempt to brave the elements. There was the utility pole repair man diligently fixing a busted power pole, the landscaping crew donned in miscellaneous types of rain gear, cutting, mowing and trimming, and the group of two dozen strawberry pickers scattered across the local grower’s farm filling their baskets with

those gorgeous red beauties.

They didn’t seem fazed by the weather. They were out there, getting it done! No complaints, no excuses...at least not that I could hear. It reminded me that there are times in our lives (often actually) where things are not lined up perfectly. It is too cold, too windy, too hot, too humid, too “fill in the blank”. The reality is life is never perfectly lined up for us to take that meeting, finish that report or complete that project. If we wait for things to be perfect, we will be missing out on so much in life and our productivity will suffer overall.

Voltaire said, “The perfect is the enemy of the good.” Waiting for perfection is a form of self-sabotage. We sacrifice so much progress in our lives waiting for the elusive perfect moment. If we are not careful, life will pass us by, and it will be too late. More often than not, we need to pull ourselves up by the bootstraps and...go to work!

Sure, by the time I got back to my car, I was soaked. But I went to work and got it done. I was better off for the effort, felt an incredible sense of accomplishment and continued the virtuous cycle. We are faced with similar challenges in our workplaces every day. We can either think and talk ourselves out of the hard work...or we can just get started. If you need to complete a three page monthly report, start with the first line. If you need to create a pitch presentation, just get the first slide done. Once we start moving, the inertia becomes our ally and things start to move in our favor. When we are at a standstill, we can fall prey to paralysis; waiting for that perfect moment, waiting for the stars to align.

As I put my cycling gear away and loaded my dirty, wet bicycle back into my car, the clouds parted and the sun started to shine, as if on cue. I felt the familiar fatigue in my quads and calves as I sat in the driver’s seat...a pain that signals success. I did it.... I got to work and got it done.

By the way, I only edited this article about 17 or 18 times before I published it. And it is still far from perfect. Oh wait.... I still have half of my burrito left!

# ACROSS AMERICA FAST: RIDE 31



BY MITCHELL GASWIRTH

I'd like to tell you we awoke to brilliant blue skies, a golden Sun rising slowly in the East, and favorable tail winds from Keene to the Coast . . . but this is a work of non-fiction.

We awoke to gray and gloom, and wet roads. It wasn't really raining . . . but the mist hung heavy in the hills and hollows of Southern New Hampshire. Ours would be an inglorious start to what would be a truly glorious day.

We were reminded at morning Route Prep that this would be a serious day of cycling, not a ceremonial spin. We were reminded the same dangers that have lurked since Day 1 were still lurking today, road debris, potholes, vehicles, more of the latter because for the first time in a long while we would be riding in an urban environment.

Once on the road our first challenge was wetness. No one was dressed for it, we didn't expect it, and we knew it wouldn't last long. But the combination of wet roads, tired muscles, and more fatigued minds made for a tentative launch. We climbed out of the "hole" in which

Keene is located and rode back country roads with continuing climbs and descents for most of the morning. Several pitches were quite steep, and it was difficult to get the quads to answer the call. Each ascent was a challenge, I was just riding to survive. After our first rest stop we rolled through Goffstown and encountered "Shirley Hill"; it had extended doubled digit sections and wrung from us a lot of effort.

The remaining sections of the course were along mostly untraveled roads with lakes, ponds, and small streams in both the fore and backgrounds. It was a really pretty course, but the beauty was lost on us . . . we wanted beach, and we wanted it quickly. It was still many miles away, however.

We lunched in Manchester, and both before and after we had to navigate cars and traffic, something with which we were of recent somewhat unfamiliar. It annoyed me. And I got lost; despite the computer navigation system, I made a wrong turn, and ended up downtown, when lunch was on the outskirts. Pissed off! After snickering repeatedly the computer navi-

gated me back to the course, and I was actually able to follow directions for the balance of the day. But that balance seemed to have an endless series of rises and drops, not long, not exceptionally steep, but it seemed to be a continuous battle against two to three hundred yard climbs anywhere from four to nine percent, followed by the corresponding descents.

When my computer registered an absolute elevation of 175 feet I started to get excited. How far away could sea level be? I got my answer, which I didn't like . . . a ways yet . . . but with under three miles to go I reached the "Rendezvous Point". We all wanted to ride in together, so by prearrangement we met at a designated destination, and shared more than a few hugs and tears. Then Mike, our Tour Leader, helmed the train, hopping on his bike to lead us to the shore. As we approached the beach we fanned out six-wide for the final five hundred yards to share the moment as one.

The scene on the sand was unforgettable. We shed shoes and socks, carried our steeds to the water line, and dunked our bikes in the cold waves. We poured into the Atlantic a bottle of water that we had carried in the van from the Pacific; it was a tradition the Tour Staff established years ago, and we were only too happy to participate.

There were more than a few emotional moments. All the effort, all the obstacles, all the challenges . . . all overcome. The term is over-used, but truly it was special. My moment was made even more special by the surprise that met me at the finish - my Family had conspired to have my daughter-in-law's Father represent them all, and see my finish. It made an incredible moment even more incredible still.

To be challenged so epically, to find within myself the physical strength and mental will to complete this challenge, more than 3,450 miles, over only 31 riding days, with more than 230 hours on the bike, well that's a special feeling. It was a combination of elation, exhilaration, accomplishment, beyond anything I have ever experienced. At age sixty-two, I am unlikely to ever experience this feeling again. But for me,

perhaps uniquely, if I did not have this challenge, if I did not have this opportunity one time to experience such a feeling, I believe I would have missed an essential part of life's journey.

As previewed by our amazing Tour Staff, today's was a real ride . . . 109.25 miles, 7:32.58 of saddle time, with a punishing 5,627 feet of aggregate elevation gain.

**Thirty-one ride (and final) totals:**

**3,466.97 miles**

**231:03.59 saddle time**

**117,433 feet of elevation gain**





## Kahler Cycling Academy has changed hands!

Married couple Michael Morrell and Erin Colshan have a passion for the bike. Both found the saddle in different ways, but now they love riding together and taking on new adventures. Their newest challenge is taking over the Kahler Cycling Academy and the renowned Torture Clinics.

Michael has been riding competitively for over 28 years. In the early 2000's, he won a handful of local races and took overall mountain bike wins in the Amateur Cup Series, Rim Nordic Series and the California State Championship Series. In 2014, Michael & Erin both participated in their first mountain bike marathon event, The Mongolia Bike Challenge, a 7-day stage race over the steppes of Mongolia's rugged landscape. Today Michael prefers to participate in the occasional one-day race or century

ride, whether it be on the road or in the dirt. Michael is an Architect by trade, but a cyclist



and coach by passion. He is licensed through the United States Cycling Federation (USCF) and also runs Pedalhound Coaching where his lifelong passion for cycling now helps others achieve their cycling and fitness goals.



son to take over his brainchild. For Michael and Erin, the timing seemed right and the fit too perfect to pass up. Together they are bringing new ideas and excitement into the clinics and training programs beginning with adjusting clinics so they run throughout the year basing its instruction and goals on the season.

OCW members get a 10% discount on any cycling packages. Please visit the web site at [kahlercyclingacademy.com](http://kahlercyclingacademy.com) for dates and times of all the classes.



Erin found her love for the bike more recently in 2011, but hit the pavement hard, riding 3 centuries her first year in the saddle. Erin has raced several local mountain bike races but after the Mongolia Bike Challenge, prefers more casual rides. An avid athlete, cycling is only one of Erin's go to sports. She is a certified yoga instructor and aerialist and finds this mix of flexibility and strength helps her on the bike.

Michael has been taking clinics at the Kahler Cycling Academy since 2000. Through the clinic's use of ergometers, rollers and trainers and the physical and mental conditioning that come with the different apparatus', he credits some of his great successes to this training.

Becoming more involved in the cycling community has always been Michael's dream, whether that be through owning a bike shop or becoming a cycling guide. Nothing had seemed like the right fit until Robert Kahler announced his retirement and was looking for a passionate per-





# OCW GAP

BY:  
KEVIN AND XIMENA ANSEL

If there was ever a Bucket List Bike Ride, This is it! It's the Great Allegheny Passage, better known as the GAP / C&O Trail. Five of us, Joe, Margaret, Dave, Kevin and Ximena, were excited when we met in Pittsburgh, where the GAP begins. We hired [Golden Triangle Bicycle](#) to help with the details of the 335-mile trip. This included rental bikes, panniers, B & B reservations, maps and directions. They covered everything. Three of us rented hybrid bikes with front suspension. Dave rented a Surly Long Haul Trucker touring bike and Margaret rode a pedal assist E-Bike. All bikes had 700 x 38 tires.

The GAP starts in Pittsburgh, the zero mile marker, at Point State Park. It's where the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers meet the Ohio River. We headed off on the paved bike trail. After about 15 miles the trail turned to crushed limestone. It remains that way until a few miles before Cumberland, Maryland at about the 150 mile mark and the end of the GAP Trail.

The C&O Canal Trail starts in Cumberland and

ends in Washington DC, another 185 miles down the trail. That means 335 miles of fire road type trail and no cars! The trail parallels rivers and canals the entire way. It is absolutely beautiful. Imagine riding the majority of the route under a canopy of trees. It was like riding through a forest. Even though the trail is hard packed there are places with mud puddles, tree roots and some potholes. So pay attention. The trail is also very flat. We only climbed 3,600 feet in the 335 miles. The route goes over the Eastern Continental Divide at a 1% or 2% grade. We rode through several tunnels. Two of them were over 3,000 feet long and required a head light for visibility. The trail follows some abandoned railroad lines, which meant that we had some outstanding trestles to cross. The tracks have been replaced with boards and modern fencing. The views of the rivers were spectacular from those vantage points. The C&O Canal has 75 locks where horses pulled barges loaded with supplies up river back in the colonial days. The barges made several stops between Washington DC and Cumberland. The towns are approximately 20 miles apart.

We rode an average of 46 miles per day. We had one day with 64 miles and another with 70 miles. The B&B's we stayed in were fantastic. All of them were restored homes in small towns and close to the trail. There were also options to camp for free, if you don't mind humidity and a few....no....lots of mosquitos. Our outfitter said that when we arrived in Little Orleans we should eat at Bill's and call the Town Hill Inn for a shuttle to pick us up after our meal. Bill's was a biker bar, similar to Cook's Corner that also catered to cyclists. The clientele was a mix of tough looking, leather clad folks along with mud covered, tired looking cyclists. It works. Bill's called the shuttle for us. They said that the ride up to the Inn was long, steep and at the top of the mountain. Last year 800 cyclists stayed with them and only 3 rode up. After seeing the road from the air conditioned shuttle we were glad to have them drive us up. It would have been a nasty ride with narrow roads and no bike lane.

We took a day off in Shepherdstown. It was an old civil war town which today has a small



Liberal Arts college. Since it was a day off, we decided to tour the Antietam Battlefield in Sharpsburg. We booked a tour with a guide on an E-Bike and we rode our bikes. The tour is typically done by car, if you have one. The Antietam battle was the bloodiest battle of the Civil War with over 23,000 casualties, 15,000 of which were lost in the first 8 hours.



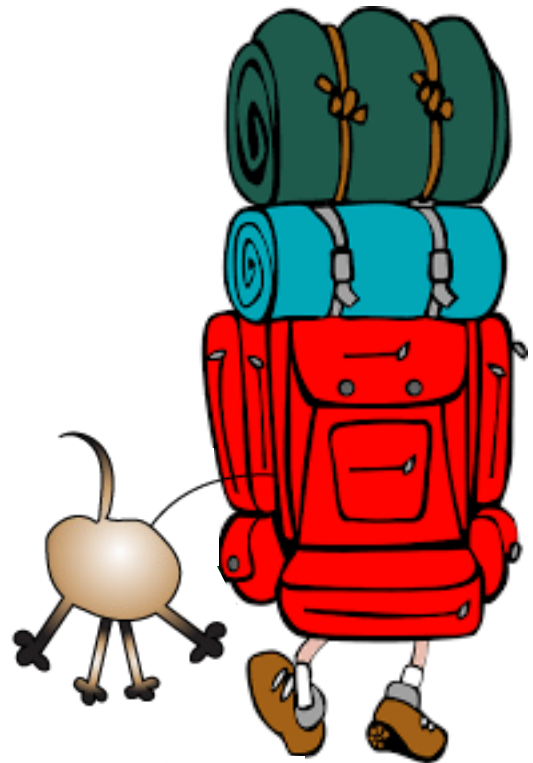
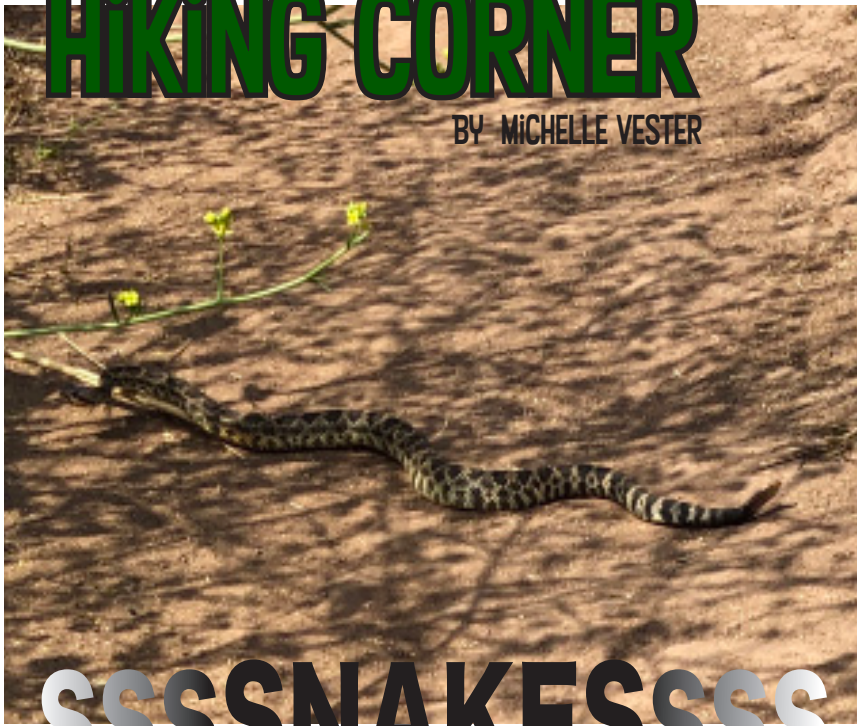
Along the trip we encountered a mix of weather. In Connellsville we almost got caught in a huge rainstorm but we ducked into a local bike shop and waited for it to pass. The owners were very gracious and let us hang out in their shop. We had rain gear but didn't want to ride in thunder and lightning. The light rain that fell afterwards was fine to ride in. A few days later the heat brought lots of humidity and more bugs. We all came away with a few bites. It didn't deter from the joy of riding this awesome trail. We often encountered wildlife too. There were turtles, frogs, snakes, deer,

ground hogs, cardinals, robins and owls. Many more that we weren't able to identify. After reaching mile marker zero in Washington DC, we continued riding to return the bikes at a downtown bike shop across from one of the Smithsonian museums. Once we handed over the bikes and panniers, our tour was officially over. We spent some extra days in DC touring our nation's capital. As mentioned before, this is a bucket list bike trip. Even though it is flat, it still takes some work on your part since you are on a gravel path. You need to watch out for the mud and potholes. We would highly recommend the outfitter we used: Golden Triangle Bikes in Pittsburgh, PA. <http://goldentrianglebike.com/>. In closing, there is nothing like five friends riding through some of the most beautiful country you will ever see. Check the GAP / C&O Canal off your bucket list too. For more information on this ride go to [www.gaptrail.org](http://www.gaptrail.org).



# HIKING CORNER

BY MICHELLE VESTER



# SSSSNAKESSSS

So, while hiking through Santiago Oaks and encountering many snakes, mostly rattlesnakes, a question came to my mind. Are there other snakes that eat rattlesnakes? Are those snakes non-poisonous to humans and our companion pets? I went on an internet search and here's what I found:

Common **kingsnakes** (*Lampropeltis getula*) are notorious ophiophages, and will consume rattlesnakes as readily as they will garter snakes. Immune to the venom of native pit vipers and capable of consuming a snake nearly as long as they are, kingsnakes also consume frogs, lizards, turtles, rodents and eggs.

And, what about **bullsnakes**, do they eat rattlesnakes? Bullsnakes are primarily consumers of warm-blooded prey. ... It is possible that a young bullsnake may eat a lizard, but no rattlesnake population could be significantly affected by bullsnakes. **The natural mortal enemy of rattlesnakes is, in fact, the kingsnake.**

If I have rattlesnakes around my property

should I run out and get a bunch of kingsnakes? Are kingsnakes harmful to humans? If they are threatened, kingsnakes will emit an unpleasant musk and shake their tails. They are also known to bite, though their bite is not poisonous to humans.

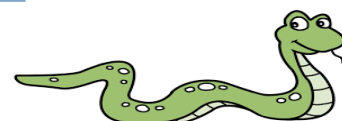
And there you have it. The websites I researched are below. One of these days we are moving to the mountains, and I thought it just might be good to know this stuff. Or, just hire a snake exterminator.

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Keep-Me-Wild/Rattlesnakes>

<https://animals.mom.me/snakes-can-eat-rattlesnakes-8155.html>

<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingsnake>

<https://www.livescience.com/53890-kingsnake.html>



# STRENGTHENING FOR THE CYCLIST

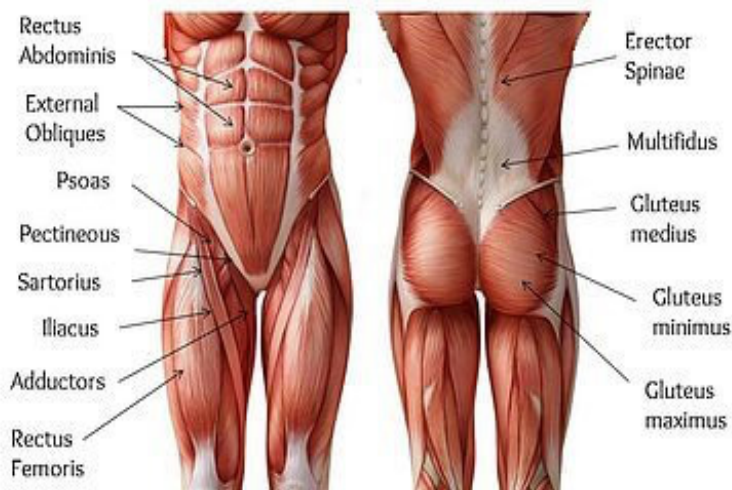
BY AMY SCHULTZ, PT, DPT, CSCS

Many cyclists (guilty) will try anything from shaving our legs to using carbon fiber wheels on our bikes in order to be faster. However, many of us may not focus on the main driver of speed... OUR BODIES!

By strengthening our stabilizing muscles, we can become faster, stronger, and pain-free cyclists. Our core muscles are our foundation for power output. By having a strong core, we provide the foundation necessary for our legs to push and pull through each pedal stroke. The core is much more than 6 pack abdominal muscles. The core collectively covers our hips, low backs and abdominal regions. Therefore, more compound and dynamic exercises will target all the regions and help us use them together as one unit.

Seems pretty important... but how do we strengthen our cores for cycling specifically? Listed below are a few exercises that will carry over to pedaling power.

## Abs & Core Muscles

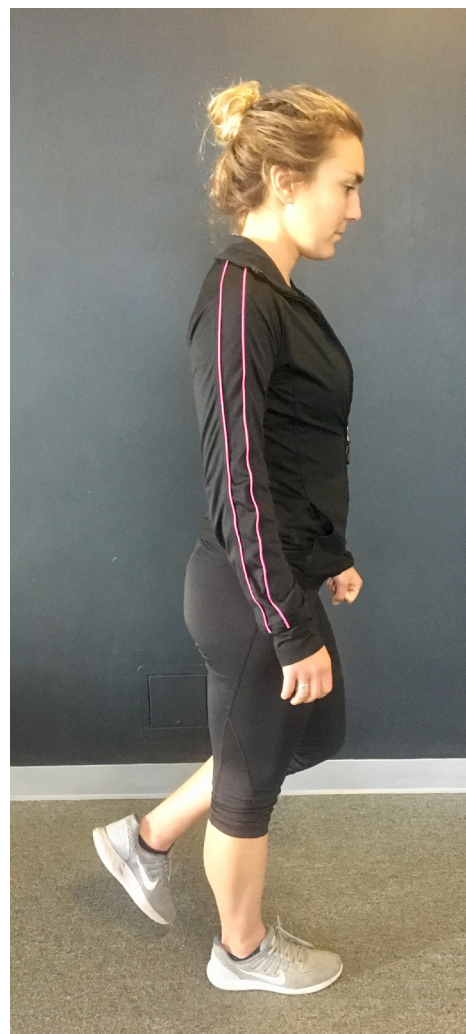


### **Single leg romanian dead lift (RDL):**

Lower your torso forward and downward while raising your back leg. Make sure to:

- Keep back straight and knee of supporting leg slightly bent.
- Keep hip and knee of lifted leg extended throughout movement.
- Once stretch is felt or hands contact floor, return to original position by raising torso while lowering lifted leg.

Perform 3 sets of 10 on each leg



### **Side plank with hip flexion:**

Lie on your side, legs straight and elbow on floor directly under your shoulder. Lift hips off the floor, keeping trunk straight.

Once stable, flex top hip forward and back in cycling motion.

Perform 3 sets of 30 sec on each side



## Bird dog

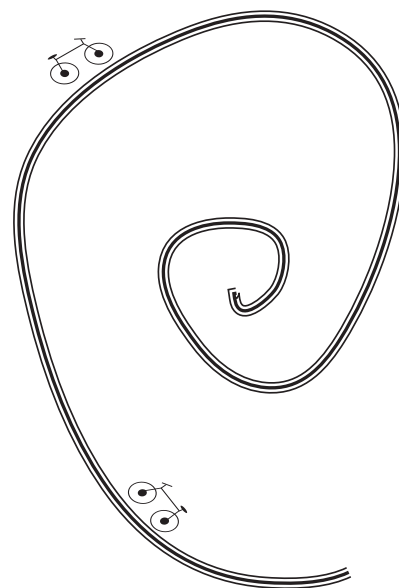
Start on hands and knees with a flat back.

Lift leg and opposite arm into the air.

Only lift leg and arm in a range where you can maintain a flat back.

Lower leg and arm back down to mat and repeat on the other side.

Perform 3 sets of 10 on each side



Amy Schultz, PT, DPT, CSCS  
Clinical Director, Costa Mesa

**e**volution  
physical therapy



# The Hungry Cyclist



## Chicken Tawook Skewers

### Chicken

1/4 cup lemon juice  
1/4 cup vegetable oil  
3/4 cup plain yogurt  
4 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
2 teaspoons tomato paste  
2 teaspoons red wine vinegar  
1 1/2 teaspoons salt  
1 teaspoon dried oregano  
1/4 teaspoon paprika  
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper  
1/4 teaspoon ground allspice  
2 pounds skinless, boneless chicken  
breast halves - cut into 2 inch pieces  
fresh parsley

### Instructions

Whisk together the lemon juice, vegetable oil, plain yogurt, garlic, tomato paste, salt, oregano, paprika, pepper and allspice in a large bowl; add the chicken and toss to coat. Transfer the chicken mixture into a large plastic bag; refrigerate at least 4 hours.

Preheat an indoor or outdoor grill for medium-high heat and lightly oil grate. Thread the chicken onto metal or wooden skewers. Cook on preheated grill until the chicken is golden and no longer pink in the center, about 5 minutes each side. Sprinkle the parsley over the skewers.

# COME RiDE WiTH US!



## SATURDAY RiDE LiKE A PRO

Please check out the opportunity to ride the Saturday short ride with one of our friendly League Certified Instructors (LCIs).

We are fortunate that we have a dedicated group of LCIs that volunteer to head this ride every Saturday.

This ride is for those who would like to have a bit of personalized training, like learning to be a bit more comfortable riding on the road. Our LCIs cover many topics, and you can ask all the questions you want.

The Saturday Ride Like a Pro is a slow “no drop” ride to sharpen your skills. So come on out, learn to ride safer and have some fun!

For more information go to: [www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/419732-ride-like-a-pro-rides](http://www.ocwheelmen.org/page/show/419732-ride-like-a-pro-rides)

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