

# Rollin'!

*Newsletter of Silver Wheels Cycling Club, Inc.*

*June, 2011*

## **Editor's Column**

**Larry Best**

**So there I was...minding my own business as usual, when all of a sudden I** get the idea that Rollin' should be published once per month during the cycling season. Those who know me are aware that I ride throughout the year but many riders don't. I thought May through September or October would be ideal times for monthly issues. I contacted Ed Stewart with my idea and he said that's fine, but you have no #%^%^# idea how much time it takes me to assemble the issue and send it out. I told him, "No biggie, I'd be glad to do it myself."

At 3:00 PM today I have an appointment with a counselor who can hopefully explain to me **why** I do things like this, because I certainly have no idea why. I'm paying \$60.00 per hour just to find out where I went wrong.

Hey! Great weather, huh? I've lived in this area since 1957 and I can't remember a spring season like this. In case you haven't been keeping up with the weather stats, we broke an all-time record for rainfall during April. I'm typing this looking at 6' waves, driving rain on my living room windows,

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## **Sad News**

Jean Etzler, wife of Joe Etzler, passed away in May. Although health kept her from riding with the club she was an enthusiastic supporter. She volunteered her help whenever possible, supplying food, cooking, and offering her home for the Etzler Annual Picnic Ride. She will be greatly missed. Our hearts and well wishes go out to Joe during this difficult time. We hope he will be riding with us again soon.

## **How Do I Get Better?**

**Ed Stewart**

How do I get faster, stronger, become a better climber, ride farther?

In my years of riding with Silver Wheelers I have heard these questions numerous times. And why not? We all ride for some purpose and each of us would like to get at least a little better, a little faster, and a little stronger.

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listening to howling wind, and wondering when I'll get to ride next. And speaking of that, why do we ride? I suspect there are as many answers as there are cyclists. Fun, comrade ire, exercise and fitness, commuting, travelling, shopping, excitement, are a few reasons I've heard frequently. I don't read minds well so I don't know why you ride. Here's why I do:

**5. Fitness** – It's a necessary thing. A health teacher I worked with had a sign on her classroom wall that said, "If you don't take care of your body, where will you live?"

**4. Testing myself** – It's different from fitness. It's a measure of what I'm able to do compared with last week, month, year. It not only applies to speed and power but also to handling, balance, mechanical skills, and my attitude of willingness to maintain and/or improve my health.

**3. Mechanics** – Despite having been born with 10 thumbs mechanical stuff has always interested me. To me it's satisfying to adjust something so it works perfectly, to diagnose a problem, to silence a click or a rattle.

**2. Camaraderie** – It's a fact that as we age (not that I'd know anything about that) we have fewer friends. Thanks to cycling I have dozens of friends, close friends, all over the U.S. We've ridden together, laughed, been lost, rained on, snowed on, and been left behind. Some are conservatives, liberals, deeply religious, atheists, black, white, oriental, but in spite of our differences we share a common bond in cycling. When we're together we never discuss our differences, rather we concentrate on why we like each other.

**1. Beauty** – I think bikes are beautiful. They look beautiful. They're interesting, yet simple. The clothes worn by cyclists have wonderful colors and designs. And there aren't many more things that are as beautiful as riding on a silent, well maintained, shiny bike along a scenic road, listening to nothing but the song of the tires on the road, the wind, the birds, and leaving all my cares behind.

I'd like to hear from you. Tell me why you like to ride. Send me an email and it'll appear in the July issue of Rollin'.

Let's go ride.

## MEMBERSHIP: WHAT'S NEW?

**Eva Weber**

We're 238 members strong! Here are 16 more new or renewed members since I last reported to you in the April Rollin'. Here they are...How many have you met?

- ✓ Laurie Archibald, Oberlin (renewal)
- ✓ Hollis Bailey, Strongsville
- ✓ Paula Cahill, Lakewood (renewal)
- ✓ Nick Cicone, Elyria
- ✓ Robin D'Aloise, Avon
- ✓ Phyllis Davis-Lottman, Amherst (renewal)
- ✓ Ellen & Benny Higgenbotham Jr., Sandusky and son Benny Higgenbotham III.
- ✓ Nancy Khoma, Sheffield Lake
- ✓ Ann Klunzinger, Elyria
- ✓ Janet & Scott McKernan, North Ridgeville (renewal)
- ✓ Ricardo Monte, Oberlin
- ✓ Cookie Schue, Amherst
- ✓ Charlie Startup, Oberlin

## April ride stats Lynette Paine

27 Total rides 158 TOTAL RIDERS  
 4380 Total miles - 12 Starting points  
 10 Different ride leaders -  
 Two \* rides—8 riders  
 8 \*\* star rides—28 riders  
 10 \*\*\* rides—31 riders  
 1 \*\*\*\* star ride – 3 riders  
 1 All star ride – 9 riders  
 4 Chase a star rides – 72 riders  
 Affrost – 7 riders

As of the end of April 2011 the club has had 30 Rides - 6741 Miles - 247 Riders That's 2361 Fewer Miles than 2010 and 89 Fewer Riders.

## How Do I Get Better?

(cont. from page 1)

One time a member told me he was getting better because he was riding four times a week. I asked him about those rides and he said it was a particular route on two days and another specific ride he always does with the club. I asked what speed he usually rides. "About 12 to 14 miles per hour," he answered. So, I repeated back to him that he rode the same routes every week at the same speed, right? He agreed. I told him I doubted he was getting any better. Of course he wouldn't believe me. After all, how could he be riding so much and not getting better? I expanded my answer: "By always doing the same route and the same speed you are doing a good job of maintaining your ability. But you are not getting better because you're not working harder."

Getting better is often an elusive goal. It doesn't just happen. It requires work, and effort. Having a plan will help, too. While getting better is not easy, it does not have to be all that hard, either. Here are some tips to help you make gradual improvements in your cycling speed, power and endurance over a season:

1. In group rides, stay in the front half of a group, preferably among the first few riders. By staying in the front you will tend to ride a little harder.
2. When riding rolling hills, not big climbers, use one gear harder while keeping your same pace with the group. This allows you to work harder but not so much you are likely to stress your joints – especially knees.
3. If you know the route the group will be riding, ride ahead a mile or two at a faster pace. Then ride the normal pace or slower and let the group catch up to you.
4. The Silver Wheels' Catch a Star rides are an excellent way to make gradual improvement. By riding at least a ways at a faster than usual rate, you are working harder than usual, which will pay off in time. It takes a while but you will see the difference in a few weeks of regular challenges like that.
5. Most of the training experts agree that some form of interval training is the best for

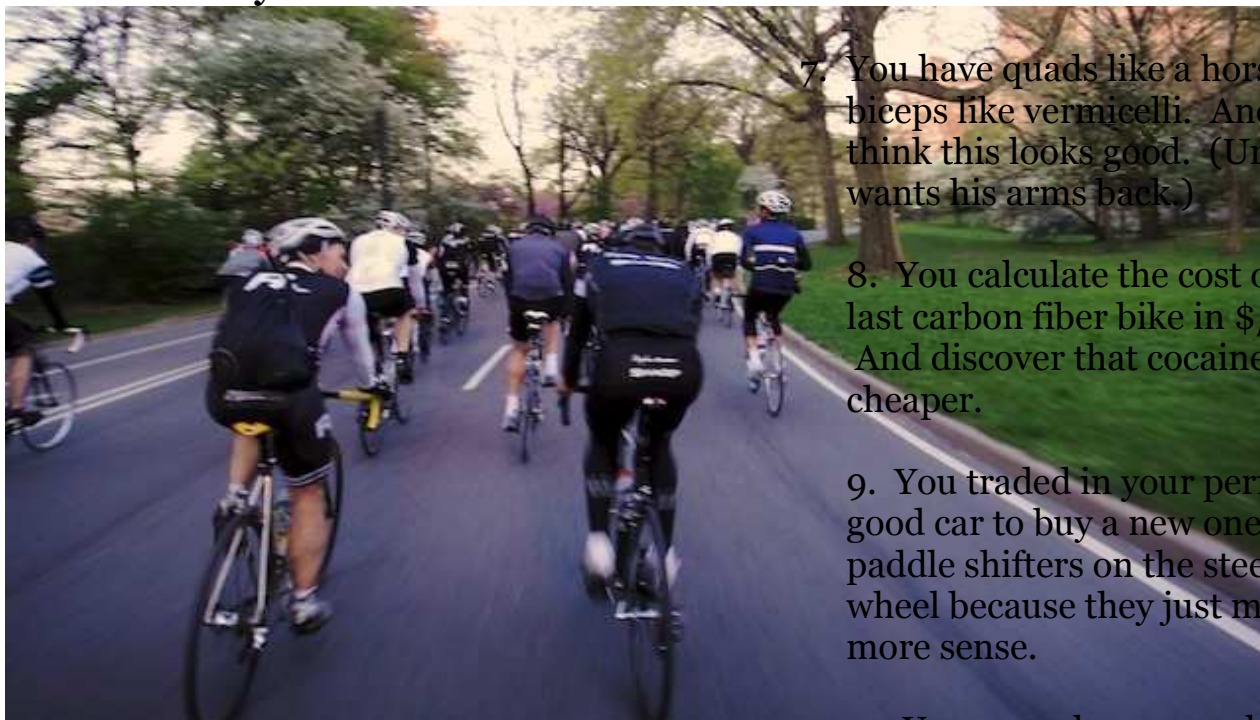
improving speed and power. The idea behind interval training is to work very hard for a period of time (on a ride) then perform at a much more easy pace, then go back to the hard work then back to the easy pace. Start carefully by making your hard work interval brief in comparison to your easy interval. Gradually over time (weeks rather than days) increase the hard interval time, making it closer to the same time as your easy pace.

6. How hard is hard? How do I know I'm really working? Seems like a silly question of course but it makes sense to ask it. Without a lot of expensive gadgetry, you can tell how hard you are working by your breathing. If you can breathe normally while riding you are working at a rate in which your muscles are getting enough oxygen. As your breathing increases, that means you are working harder – in order for your muscles to get enough oxygen, you need to breathe more. If you are breathing hard enough to make conversation strained or difficult, that's when you are working to make an improvement. That is called your lactate threshold, or LT. The more often you work in the LT range, the more improvement you will see. A caution is necessary: you should not make every ride a workout in the LT range or you will likely do more damage than good. Your muscles build during rest, not during work. So, schedule some form of interval training or other exercise style (just riding harder or hills) no more than every other day.

7. Will I feel it if I have ridden enough to make an improvement? After working enough for improvement your muscles will have some pain in them. If you have overworked the muscles there may be a lot of pain and you'll need to lay off for more than a day. Your goal should be to have a little soreness, not a lot.

To summarize, in order to get better, you have to work at it. By work we mean you have to go at it harder than before. If you continue to ride at the same pace all the time, you are doing a good job of staying the same but you will not get any better. I've put together a related article that will show up in this issue or another, called How's Your P/W Ratio Going? It will help you be a little ore scientific in pursuing your goal of getting better.

## 10 signs that cycling has taken over your life



7. You have quads like a horse. And biceps like vermicelli. And you think this looks good. (Urkel wants his arms back.)

8. You calculate the cost of your last carbon fiber bike in \$/gram. And discover that cocaine is much cheaper.

9. You traded in your perfectly good car to buy a new one with paddle shifters on the steering wheel because they just make more sense.

10. You never leave your bike in the garage because the environment is too harsh out there.

1. Distances are measured by how long it would take you to cover it on a bike. New York to Los Angeles is 208.34 hours. 197.59 hours if you use your aero wheels.

2. Farmers' tan lines have nothing on you.

3. You start drafting behind people on the sidewalk.

4. You read articles like this about cycling and impotence, shrug your shoulders, and go for a 50 mile ride.

5. You try to lift your butt off the car seat when you drive over a bump.

6. You shave your legs more than your wife or girlfriend. She borrows your Nair.



# Getting There: Right turns and bikes mean danger.

Larry Best

## We're all drivers as well as cyclists and for many, these rules were never taught in driver's ed

A bicyclist is riding in a designated bike lane on the right side of a city street, or in the street close to the right berm. **You are in a car** traveling in the same direction in the adjacent travel lane. You want to make a right turn into a driveway or at an intersection where you don't have a stop signal. What to do?

**A:** Come to a stop in your current lane; wait for the bicyclist to clear the driveway or street and then turn.

**B:** Accelerate enough to just get past the bicycle, flash a signal and make a right turn in front of it.

**C:** After signaling, merge into the bike lane behind the bicycle, slow down and make the turn from the bike lane.

**D:** Honk to alert the bicyclist to your intentions, then signal and turn from current lane.

**E:** "I didn't see that bicyclist, Officer. I swear he came out of nowhere."

For the record, the best choice is "C". Choosing

"A" probably won't hurt anyone but still involves crossing the bike lane (a serious mistake if there's a second bicycle trailing). "B" and "D" could have catastrophic results for the bicyclist. "E" is the story behind many a fatality.

"Drivers **MUST MUST MUST MUST** (a thousand times) USE THEIR SIGNALS," he wrote. "Drivers have to communicate their intention so that bicyclists can adjust accordingly. **BICYCLISTS NEED TO DO THE SAME THING.** It's all a part of riding/driving predictably, communicating and negotiating with everyone else on the road."

Some bicyclists, by the way, might erroneously think of the entire bike lane as theirs. **It's not.** Drivers have the right to use the bike lane when initiating a turn. When cyclists come upon a car in the bike lane in front of them, waiting to turn right, the worst thing they can do when going straight ahead is to pull alongside the car even farther to the right. The correct move is to pull up behind the car and wait for it to proceed.

Moe said some progress is being made in driver's education as far as covering interactions with bicycles. He said the Motor Vehicle Administration is including bike-related questions on its licensing test and covering bicycle rules in its manual.



## Historical Happenings

### Joel Edmonds

A historical look at the cost of riding.

1878

The first American manufacturer of cycles begun with the Columbia Bicycle at the Weed Sewing Machine Company factory in Hartford, Ct. The first regular trade catalogue was twenty pages long. The first bicycles were the 60" High Wheelers and sold for **\$125.00**



**This Century,**

**The Trek "Butterfly" Madone – \$500,000**



This Trek Madone was decorated in honor of Armstrong's return to cycling. When Damien Hirst got his hands on the bike, he coated it with hundreds of wings taken from butterflies. While PETA were predictably angry at Hirst's chosen medium, the "Butterfly" Madone became the most expensive bicycle in the world at the Bikes of Stages auction.

I too have a decorative bike, I once ran over a woolly bear caterpillar and his remains are splattered all over my Trek Hybrid. I hope to sell it on EBay for \$75

## Merchandise

### Karen Paulson

Silver Wheels Jersey's for Sale. Orders will be taken until June 4th. Jersey's will be available for try on at the May 19th meeting and at Depot Days 4x4 ride June 4th.

Short Sleeve (men & Ladies)	\$69
Long Sleeve (men & Ladies)	\$79
Windbreaker (unisex)	\$79
Lined Windbreaker (unisex)	\$94
Silver Wheels T-shirts	\$10.00
Medical ID (insert in helmet)	\$1.50
Cue-Clips	\$5.00
Whiplock (lock that stores inside handle bar)	\$15.00

# How's Your P/W Ratio Going?

By Ed Stewart

In physics and mechanical engineering, two fields I have absolutely no business ever writing about, there is a conceptual framework for comparing engines and their efficiencies. As athletes, we can borrow from those fields for making similar comparisons to check on our individual improvement over time. (See my related article on Getting Better.) Coaches and trainers and physiologists will refer to an athlete's Power to Weight Ratio as one way to measure improvement over time.

I've come up with a simplified way for you to adapt a Power to Weight Ratio for your use. Why would you want to? If you want to prove to yourself you are, in fact, improving over time you should be able to do it in a more or less scientific manner. This method will give you numbers for comparison. And the whole process will surely impress everyone around you.

First, we need a measure of weight. That is pretty easy because you probably have a scale at home that you use once in a while to measure your body weight. The most consistent weight measure for each of us is first thing in the morning, and while undressed, as in nude. This time of year we don't really like the numbers showing on the scales because we still have what we fondly call "winter fat" – a fact especially haunting this year because we have not been able to ride as much as we want, due to all the nasty weather. So, go weigh in. Record the number on a piece of paper.

Speaking of weight, you should also have some sort of goal in mind. Remember, we are doing this for comparison purposes and we will want to be able to compare with change over time AND to compare with a goal we can set for ourselves. More on that in a moment.

Next, we need a measure for power. Some athletes use a watt meter to gauge the amount

of power they generate and use during a workout. My method is a lot simpler and free. Our measure of power here will be the time it takes you to travel a specific distance. What you need to do is find a segment of uninterrupted road or trail you can travel for a couple of miles or more. One mile seems too short; ten miles would be about the upper limit. For myself, I selected the segment of Oberlin-Elyria Road from the intersection of West Ave. down to where Rt. 511 intersects just outside Oberlin. A distance of, coincidentally, 5.11 miles. You can find your own segment by going to a road you are familiar with and zero out your computer and ride it from point A to point B. The actual distance is less important than the time it takes you to ride it. Those two numbers are all we need for you to compute your own Power to Weight Ratio. And as you improve throughout the season you can refigure your ratio to see how you are improving.

Okay, let's use a specific example so you can better see what the heck I'm talking about and how it will help you. First, the Weight. My nude winter weight is 215. Please, no comments, I get enough at home. And my modest goal weight would be 200 lbs. (yes, I know, it should be more like 185 or even 165 but let's be realistic here). Keep those numbers handy, we'll use them in a minute.

Next, the Power, or in our case, the time. Let's say I rode that segment of road (5.11 miles) in 25 minutes. In order to make our formula work in a positive sense, we need to use the inverse of that number ( $1/25$ ) and express it as a decimal. Use a calculator. Divide 1 by 25. This gives us .04. In order for the formula to continue in a positive fashion we need to make that number larger by degree; so, let us multiply it by 10,000. That gives us the number 400. We will be dividing the power by the weight to give us our ratio. Let's call it a Fitness Ratio.

(cont. page 8)

## **P/W Ratio** (cont. from p 7)

So we take the Power number of 400 (1 divided by time of 25 X 10,000) and divide it by the weight number (215) and we get my Power to Weight Ratio for that particular point in time.  $400/215 = 1.86$ .

Is that a good number or a bad number? Well, it's MY number, relative only to me, and that's the good thing about it. You will come up with a different number relative to you.

Now what can I do with that number? The purpose of this is to compare change over time. And I can also use it to compare with a goal I set for myself.

Remember my weight goal was 200? Suppose I set a Power goal to be to ride that 5.11 miles in 18 minutes instead of 25? Then my goal Power number is  $1/18 \times 10,000$  or 555. Plugging those into our formula we get  $555/200 = 2.775$ . And I can use that number to always compare my performance.

Let's say on a good day I weigh in at 209 and ride the route in 20 minutes. How does that compare to before (my base rate) and to my goal? Easy enough to compute.  $1/20 = .05 \times 10,000 = 500$ .  $500/209 = 2.39$ .

How much of an improvement is that? We can compare my base 1.86 to the new ratio of 2.39.  $2.39/1.86 = 1.285$  or about 128% improvement. I'll take it. Or, I would if that were the case.

Using numbers like these will help you determine how much you are improving over time, when you can compare a base set against new numbers with about the same set of conditions. And they can be helpful in measuring how close you are getting to a goal.

What you will normally find is that as your weight decreases your power will increase. This makes reaching your goal all the easier. Do you have to have goals? Do you have to improve? Not really. Can't you just ride for the fun of it? Absolutely. But sometimes it's nice to know if you are getting any better.

**Bored? Locked inside by bad weather? Got extra time on your hands? Is that your problem, Bunky? Not to worry, my friend. Check some of these out:**

## **Interesting Cycling Links**

### **Larry Best**

Some of these are commercial, selling parts or clothing. Some are regarding safety. Some are humorous, and some are just jaw dropping!

Number 4 is my personal favorite. It's just impossible. Awesome.

1. [http://youtu.be/Op\\_Xhx0Cu\\_E](http://youtu.be/Op_Xhx0Cu_E) (pikes peak ride)
2. <http://www.mikebentley.com/bike/index.html>
3. <http://www.qbike.com/>
4. Danny MacAskill trials film  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z19zFlPah-0>
5. Danny MacAskill trials film  
[http://www.redbull.co.uk/cs/Satellite/en\\_UK/Event/021242908456696](http://www.redbull.co.uk/cs/Satellite/en_UK/Event/021242908456696)
6. <http://miamibikescene.blogspot.com/2010/07/riding-too-far-right.html>
7. <http://www.active.com/cycling/Newsletters>
8. [http://www.onf.ca/film/60\\_cycles](http://www.onf.ca/film/60_cycles) 1965 TDF film 16 min.
9. How to change your chain:  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q7VDIKN WG1k&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q7VDIKN WG1k&feature=player_embedded)



# Sounds of Spring Ride

Edward Stewart

Cars arrive one by one  
As though on cue,  
Determined.

Doors slam, feet hurry  
Metal drags on carpet,  
Rubber hooks snap undone.

Pumps huff and huff  
then p-shew  
With relief

Friends greet, catch up,  
Joke, laugh, hug, sigh

They huddle together, listen,  
Split into groups akin

“We’re Rollin’”  
The first group leaves  
Then the next and the next.

Old knees creak  
Rear ends jostle for  
Best position.

Shoes click to pedal,  
Chains tighten.  
On the roll again.

Early wind lacking,  
Breath comes hard,  
In pants.

First hill grunts,  
Fire in thighs,  
Shifters thunk and clink.  
Whew. Gasp, Whew.

On the flats  
pairs small talk,  
Chatter, yuk  
And nod

All stop,  
Breaks squeal,  
Bottles glug  
In the shade.

Cars ease by,  
Drivers stare  
Then move on.

Roll on faster  
Tires zing past  
mail boxes, bridges.  
Shift, click to big ring.

Hot tar bubbles pop  
Breath comes hard  
Sniffles drip,  
Eyes water.

Fly past tractor  
Farmer waves  
Wave back and smile

Cruise easy on trail,  
Shift back down,  
all grins,  
knowing this was good.

# Picture Page

## Cycle Camping



## Always Ready?



## Spring bike for use in Ohio



## Safety First



We **WANT** your feedback. If you have suggestions for articles, links, pictures, or maybe you just want to throw eggs or rotten tomatoes just write to me at [bikespokin@gmail.com](mailto:bikespokin@gmail.com).

Til next time:

