

Rollin'

Newsletter of the Silver Wheels Cycling Club, Inc.

January, 2013



Editor's Column

By Larry Best

So there I was, minding my own business as usual when all of a sudden I realized the holidays were over & it was time to get started on January's Rollin'. Those who know me are aware that I ride year 'round.



The recent snow has thrown the proverbial monkey wrench into that activity. The temperatures don't bother me much, but the roads have to be clear-no exceptions. I'm leading rides from Amherst Township Park on Mondays and Fridays at 9:30 am and from Oberlin CVS on Saturdays at 9:30 am. The rides will go as long as the temperature is 25+F and the roads are clear. The rides are listed on the Club calendar as **+, but the pace will be determined by the slowest rider. During winter rides I tend to not be in a hurry.

Some members have been hiking and cross country skiing. These activities are attended by SWCC members, but they're not listed on the calendar because they're not officially club sanctioned activities. What they are, however, is a whole bunch of fun with other SWCC members. Watch for them to appear on the "News Forum" in your email. They may also arrive as an unmarked box tied with string that starts ticking when you pick it up. Joel Edmunds usually leads the hikes. Cross country skiing depends on the amount of snow so their activities tend to be less regular. Watch your email for announcements of where and when to start.

Our annual New Year's Day ride took place in Oberlin on (uhh-mmmm- hey honey...what was that date?..Oh Yeah) January 1st. Seven brave souls rode some miles and then stopped at Pat Serio's house for tea, coffee, hot chocolate, cookies and assorted other "health" foods. Thanks to Pat for hosting this yearly event.

I know it's a little late, but I wish all of you a happy and healthy new year.



WET WEATHER BIKE HANDLING TIPS

Cornering and braking becomes a whole new game when the road is wet. In extreme conditions, traction can become almost non-existent. In the Giro d'Italia a few years ago, a sudden rainstorm turned the Italian roads into a skating rink. The best bike handlers in the world were sliding across the pavement on their Lycra at every corner. They even fell when they stood up while riding a straight line!

Although cornering on wet roads will never be as secure as on dry pavement, good technique can help keep you upright.

The most dangerous time is when the rain starts. Motor vehicles emit oil, gas, and exhaust fumes, which is a combination of the two. This gets laid down in the center of each lane. It's easy to see during dry conditions and appears as a dark stripe between the tire tracks in each lane. When it's dry this isn't a big issue, but when the rain starts this oily film gets washed all over the pavement. It can be **VERY** slick. After a half hour of steady light to moderate rain the film will be mostly washed away and traction will improve markedly. Even pro cyclists often slow almost to a stop on sharp turns when rain first begins.

Reduce tire pressure. If it's raining when you begin a ride, let some air out of your tires. If you normally run 100 psi, go down to 85 or 90 psi, depending on your weight. The tire will be more pliable at the lower pressure and will remain in contact with the road better than at higher pressures.

Treads on tires are there to prevent hydroplaning. When driving your car at 60+ mph in the rain if there aren't deep grooves (treads) on the tires there won't be enough time for the tires to "sweep" the water out from under them. The tires lose all contact with the road and ride on a film of water. All control of steering is lost. Race cars e.g. drag racing, NASCAR, and even motorcycle road racing use tires known as slicks. They have no tread at all, and are perfectly smooth. Slick tires have the best traction of all because they have the most friction due to surface to surface contact.

Bicycle tires are a bit different. (I'm confining my remarks to road cycling only.) Treads on road cycling tires are there for decoration only. They don't help alleviate hydroplaning because the tires are so narrow. Even using the widest tire commonly available you'd have to be riding

at 80+ mph to even start worrying about it. So slicks are fine even in the rain. Tires with treads offer no advantage.

Watch out for slick spots. One of the most common slippery surfaces results when painted lines and markers on the road are wet. Turning while on them could easily cause tires to slip. If you can't avoid riding on them, keep your bike as upright as possible. Treat wet road paint as if it were ice, because it can be almost that slick. Other dangers when wet include manhole covers, metal plates, steel-deck bridges, railroad tracks, fallen leaves and pine straw, and tarry crack filler.

Be smooth. Don't make any abrupt movements that might break your traction. Initiate all turns smoothly in a wide arc. Don't wait until the last minute and then heel the bike over all at once.

Braking. Here's a news flash...your bike won't stop as well in the wet as it will when it's dry. A rough guide is to estimate that your bike will take almost twice the distance to stop in the wet. If the rims on your bike are steel, make that four times as far. When approaching a stop hold your brakes gently against the rims. This will wipe most of the water from them. Then you can apply them with more force.



Speaking of brakes, this is an article that I found in this week's Road Bike Review.

Tip: Rims are the “discs” of your braking system on a traditional road bike. Your brake pads rub the rims when you operate the brakes. So, it's important to take care of your rims and wheels in order to keep the brakes operating at their best.



Luckily, this rider was climbing and moving slowly when his rim wear caught up with him. In the photo you can see what happened. Clincher tires are held onto the wheel by the sidewalls of the rim. The rim “clinches” the tire to keep it in place even though there's tremendous pressure inside the tire trying to blow it off the rim.

That's exactly what happened to this wheel. The tire blew off the rim because the worn-out rim no longer had the strength to retain the tire. The rim blew off before the tire followed. That separate strip of metal in the photo is the piece of the rim that blew off before the tire.

The rider was able to stop and step off his bike and marvel at the damage, the whole time with

a high-pitched ringing still in his ear from the sonic boom of the explosion. Imagine if it had occurred at speed, though.

What to look for and what to do

Rim wear takes a while, and it has several causes. The first things to know is that you can keep it at bay almost indefinitely if you keep checking your brake pads and make sure nothing has gotten embedded in them like grit, sand, gravel, etc.

All manner of debris manages to get in them, but it stands out to the eye if you look closely with a bright light. And it's easy to pick out with an awl or pointer.

Tip: Riding in the rain or where there's dirt and mud will accelerate rim wear, because it's almost a certainty that you'll pick up debris in your brake pads. So if you ride in these conditions, it's a good idea to brake less if you can or even stop and clean your rims and pads if there's any way you can -- before you brake too much with them, anyway.

Replace those pads

Another rim-saving step is to replace the brake pads frequently to keep fresh rubber rubbing on the rims. Even clean pads will wear the rims over a long period of time, but the wear will be minimal compared to what occurs when there's debris in the pads.

Tip: I recommend always having at least one pair of the right brake pads on hand in your home shop so that you can replace the pads whenever they get bad. That way you won't put it off. It's much cheaper to buy new pads than to buy new rims and the labor to rebuild the wheel.

Once you've logged many miles without paying attention to bad pads, some damage will have been done. On rims that are anodized a dark color, the color will be rubbed away, which is a visual clue that wear is taking place. It's harder to see on silver rims, which will usually develop lines on them more than changing color.

Look and feel your rims to check

If you see these signs, check your rims. Look closely at them to see if there are brake pad tracks cut into the rim on both sides. If so, there will be a depression in the rim and an edge. It might even look like the rim was made that way, but it most likely was not (there are some unusual rim shapes, but you'll be able to tell the difference between an unblemished rim and a worn rim).

If the rim has a noticeable track worn into it, the rim could fail like the rim pictured did. A slight track is not as worrisome as a deep one. If you see tracks a millimeter deep, it means there isn't much metal left in that part of the rim, and the rim is worn out. I recommend inspecting the rim and also using your thumbnail and sliding it across the rim to feel how deep the pad track is. You'll feel quickly if there's serious wear.

With luck you'll spot minor wear early, get in the habit of cleaning or replacing your brake pads, and never have your rim wear out on a ride, causing a crash or stranding you far from help.

Tip: Some riders brake much more than other riders. The more braking you do, the more rim wear you can cause. So, sometimes just changing how you brake can prevent wear. For example, some riders keep their brakes on a little bit all the way down long descents. More

experienced riders know that it's better to only use the brakes intermittently, both for better braking and to save their equipment.





Bicyclist Deaths Rose Nearly 10 Percent in 2011

An recent **Associated Press** report said bicyclist deaths increased 8.7 percent in 2011, according to a study by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

While overall traffic deaths are on the decline, reaching their lowest level since 1949, bike deaths are rising – an alarming fact of life on the road for cyclists.

According to the AP report, the increase in bicycle deaths probably reflects more people riding bicycles to work and for pleasure, said **Jonathan Adkins**, deputy executive director of the Governors Highway Safety Association, which represents state highway safety agencies.

"Our culture is beginning to move away from driving and toward healthier and greener modes of transportations," Adkins said. "We need to be able to accommodate all these forms of transportation safely."

The disconnect between the "healthier" mode of transportation that cycling represents, and

the fact that it is becoming less safe as more people seek to use it to become healthier, points out the fact that all cyclists need to remain vigilant in their safety precautions on the road, and we all need to continue to work with our local and national cycling advocacy organizations to help improve overall cycling safety.

WANT ADS

Got something to sell? Looking for something to buy that's cycling related?

This is the place

Send ads to me, Larry Best at cycletheus2012@gmail.com along with your check for \$127,050.25 and I'll guarantee your ad will appear in this space. Don't forget to send photos, too.

Ok listen. I have to tell SWCC the ads will be posted free but just between you & me there's a nominal "I want to make sure it gets in there" fee noted above. Pres. Ed Stewart thinks I'm joking about this & that's why I'm typing in this small font. He's too old to read anything smaller than 14 bold.

For Sale:

Al Kreitler Rollers ... VERY quiet and smooth

Solid aluminum 4 1/2 inch dia. rollers

Extra belt

Front Fork stay up attachment

\$100

Steve Hill [440-967-0566](tel:440-967-0566)



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Please, always remember to wear your helmets.