

ROLLIN'

Newsletter of the Silver Wheels Cycling Club, Inc.

March, 2013



Editor's Column

By **Larry Best Editor**
Helene Pasquin asst. Editor

So there I was, minding my own business as usual, when all of a sudden I read somewhere that March is women's month. Hmm. Our club has a lot of women riders; more so than any other club to which I've belonged in 51 years of riding. So I decided to dedicate this issue to them. Some of the women in the club I know very well, others not at all.

Overall I suspect, but can't prove, that women are a minority in cycling. If you look at clothing, bikes, and equipment in general, you'll find that there are lots fewer things available that are women specific.

In this issue there are articles gleaned from interviews and questionnaires that were returned from female club members. I made an effort to get a good cross section of riding abilities, club officers, those who rack up mega miles every year, as well as those who rarely ride. I hope to see what they like, what they don't like and what, if anything, that we in SWCC could keep the same or change in a meaningful way.

There are also two **brand new columns** that will appear monthly. One is a **monthly poll**

that will start in the **April** edition. It will cover general topics related to cycling. You get to vote anonymously and the results will be published in the next month's issue. The other is called **Hey Cycling Guru!** and will answer any questions about cycling from choices of equipment, tires, frames, clothing, bike handling, rides, group riding, cycling etiquette, credit card touring, self-contained touring, mechanical questions and anything else cycling related. The questions will be answered by a variety of club members who have expertise in whatever area the question asks.

I will continue as the Editor of Rollin' (unless I get fired) for the 2013 calendar year and my wife, Helene Pasquin, will remain on board as the Assistant Editor even though I haven't told her this yet.

Just one more thing...I want to thank all of you who sent cards, came to visit, called, and wished me well after my recent surgery for a knee replacement. You'll never know how much it encouraged me and made me feel cared for.

Hey Bike Guru!



What's all this stuff about women's specific bikes? Is there really any difference or are they just painted girly colors?

Bike Guru sez...there are lots of differences.

Given the same height men tend to have longer torsos and shorter legs compared to women. It shouldn't be a surprise that women's bikes are built with shorter top tubes. Some women are quite short and to build a bike to fit their specs the head tube and front fork have to be shortened. This requires the bike to have different size wheels. The rear wheel will be an industry standard 700c, but the front wheel might have to be a 650b. It also means that you will have to have with you or at home two different sizes of tires. The tubes won't matter; the standard 700x23-25 will fit either wheel just fine.

Other differences come in the width of the handlebars. Bars come in stock sizes measured across the bar outside to outside. Typical standard sizes are 40, 42, 44, and 46. Bars can be had larger or smaller, but they're usually a special order. They tend to come stock on smaller frames for women. Reach is another consideration with both bars and the stem. Short reach bars are all the rage now on both men's and women's bikes. A shorter stem might also be needed.

There's more, but I gotta go try to get the grease stains off the dining room carpet before you know who gets home.

Gotta question for The Bike Guru? Any subject regarding bikes, riding, repairs, reviews, etc., is fair game. Email your question(s) to cycletheus2012@gmail.com

{These questions are answered by a variety of club members who have expertise in the subject of the question}



I'm curious, something that's landed me in hot water more than once. I wanted to know what women faced as day to day issues when riding. Are they discriminated against? Do they get hassled? Do they enjoy riding with men or prefer to ride alone or with other women. If they have any wants or needs, what are they?

I started by sending a survey to various SWCC members. There were various answers and I have picked the majority answers. Here are the results:

How/why did you start riding?

Most started as children or had a friend who rode & decided to join them.

Has your significant other influenced you? *No, I influenced him*

Do you have enough choices in clothing, bikes, etc.?

Bikes yes. Clothing no.

What would you like to see improve in those areas?

“Women’s cycle clothing makes you look like you’re a volunteer at a children’s ward at a hospital. The sizes are either too small or I’m stuck with men’s sizes & cuts, neither of which work.”

At what star level do you ride

*2/3**

Do you want to improve your skills or speed?

Yes

What, if anything, would you like to see changed in SWCC that would improve women’s cycling?

Generally

nothing, but there were a few comments:

“More variety for 1 riders.” “Different starting places besides Oberlin. Most of us work outside the home and Oberlin involves too much travel time.” “Whoopee cushions on seats” (yes, that was an actual quote – no, I won’t tell you who said it)*

What are your top peeves as a female cyclist?

Not enough bathroom

breaks on rides, not enough clothes for short people, negative attention from motorists.

Are you interested in learning more about the mechanical aspects of your bike?

“Yes. I’ve taken a couple of your classes and learned a lot. Yes, but it’s hard for me. I read & take your classes. No, that’s what husbands are for.”

What do you like most about cycling?

Great exercise, camaraderie, friends, outdoors, fresh air.

FACE TO FACE WITH SWCC WOMEN

A conversation with Betsy Nestor ** rider

Q When and how did you start riding, Betsy?

A I started riding when I lived in Indiana. After I moved here I became overweight and concerned about my health. I bought a new cheap bike with knobby tires and rode mostly on back roads. When I joined SWCC I saw right

away that the knobby tires and mountain bike weren’t ideal, to say the least. I went shopping for a used bike because I didn’t want to spend the money for a new one. I went to Dale’s Bike Shop and as luck would have he had a used Trek that fit me perfectly. I’ve ridden that one ever since.

Q Are you aware of and satisfied with the availability of women specific bicycles and clothing.

A Yes. I didn’t want to spend the money on a new bike so I took what they had instead of looking for a woman’s bike. I know that there are plenty of choices for clothing, but I wish the local bike shops would stock some. If they have any they’re usually in very small sizes.

Q Do you have a significant other or kids that you’re encouraging to ride?

A Yes, but it’s hard because my kids both work full time and then rush off to the games their kids play. They don’t have time for themselves. One has a weight problem and I’d love to see them do something to improve their health.

Q As a woman rider are there any changes would you make to the club as it is?

A I’m not sure they apply to women only. I like that there are plenty of meetings & I think they’re necessary. They function to bring the club together and encourage the exchange of ideas.

Q Betsy, you’re on the membership and social committees, and are in charge of the Christmas lights. That seems like a lot. How do you make time for all of those duties?

A. Fortunately I’m self-employed and I’m not always tied to my desk. That gives me an opportunity to take most of the time I need to do that kind of work for the club.

Q So what about changes, if any?

A. I’d like to see the evening rides changed back to 6:00PM. When they start at 5:00PM there

are too many people who cannot attend because they're working.

I also wish the club would spend more money on the banquet so that we could have better food.

It's disappointing that I'm on all these committees, go to meetings, volunteer for work and when I show up it's always the same 20 people who are there every time. There are 300 members in the club. I don't know what it would take to get them out. I also think it's very important to recognize those members who are doing the work at the awards banquet in a meaningful way. They're the ones who really make the club run.

Q So as far as you're concerned and in the opinion of other women you've talked to, SWCC makes everybody welcome and tries to accommodate the widest variety of members?

A Yes. My main complaint is about the rides, especially the speeds. I'm a two star rider. When I go on rides many of them start riding at 14-16 mph and I can't keep up. They eventually slow down to the posted speed and finish within the posted average speed, but I wish they'd keep to the speed limits even at the start. The star chase rides are not successful unless you're a 3* and above rider. I'm a 2* and if I start with the 2* group and can't keep up, the 1* group is supposed to catch up to you and you can ride with them to the end. That doesn't happen. I, and other women as well as some men drop off and wait for the 1* riders and they never come. At the end of the ride we find out that the 1* riders decided to take a different route or even cut the ride short. This needs to be addressed. I think this has happened to some 3* riders too.

While I'm talking about changes I would cut some extras from the Dog Days Ride, such as the music at the barbecue after the ride. I like the barbecue because I think it sets us apart from other organized rides who don't offer that kind of hospitality.

Q Are you aware of the educational opportunities the club offers?

A Yes. I know you teach some classes and that Ed Stewart teaches a different class.

Q Have you attended any of these classes.

A. No, but I plan to attend at least one of yours. I'm interested in improving my knowledge of mechanical adjustments and lubrication. I like taking care of my bikes. I like to see a 1st aid class offered to club members. It would also be handy to know what 1st aid supplies to carry with us when riding and how to use them.



Face to face with Colleen Linn ** rider**

Colleen Linn

Colleen has been a SWCC member for about six years. Before joining SWCC, running was her main source of exercise.

What influenced you to start riding?

I'd been running for a long time and as it was starting to wear on my back and knees so I started riding a hand-me-down mountain bike with a child's seat on a rack. I pretty much just

rode around the block. When my oldest child went off to college I wanted to be more active. I was so proud of myself when I went a full 17 miles on that bike! That was hard and I decided maybe the bike was holding back my progress so I bought brand new Trek hybrid. Wow! What an improvement, it literally felt like angels were pushing me when I turned the pedals. Loved it!

So your significant other didn't influence you to start riding?

No, in fact it was the other way around. My husband rides a little and I keep encourage him to ride more. I only hope I can whip him into shape (grins). No seriously, he is already in good shape. He has a nice road bike also. I envision us riding together more as time goes on; in fact he's doing GOBA with me this year.

What about your kids? Do they ride?

Mom's "family bike rides" are part of our family lore. I took them on a 20 mile ride one day and their butts were sore for a week. That was the end for them. In retrospect I wish I had introduced them to cycling more gently, and then perhaps they would still consider riding with me. So no, they aren't interested. My oldest son, the Marine, tells me he looks forward to riding with me when he gets back home, and he also does spinning classes for his physical training, so I feel my cycling has been a positive influence on at least one of my offspring.

How did you find about SWCC?

I learned about SWCC on the internet searching for cycling clubs. First I found LWCC but I quickly ascertained they were not "noobie friendly." I remember going on my first club ride. Steve Woosley was leading and Mal Lumadue was along for the ride. It was a 2** ride and I was hanging on by my fingernails. After that you (Larry) and Steve mentored me and I'm very grateful because as a new rider I needed all the encouragement and knowledge of group riding I could get

You're a 4* rider now and have been for at least 4 or 5 years. How did you improve so much in such a short time?***

Riding with men who were stronger than me helped a lot. I also started losing weight and getting in shape and that inspired me to keep going. I just kept riding with the guys in the club and eventually I bought my Serotta road bike which was another quantum leap. It's easier to handle, easier to pedal, more comfortable, and much lighter than either one of my previous bikes. When I got that bike I started to keep up with some of the faster, stronger guys in the club. As anyone who considers themselves a cyclist knows, it can be very addicting but in a good way.

As a woman, what do you like the most about SWCC?

They're very accessible from where I live. The club isn't intimidating; they're friendly and look out for everybody when on rides. The concept of "no drop" rides is great. Anybody new can come out and be assured they won't be left behind no matter what. The absolutely greatest thing about the club is the friendliness. I also like the "open" rides which have no speed limits. Almost the only time I see these are on the Wednesday star chase rides. That's good because if anybody can't keep up they just slow up a little and the next group catches them. In essence it's still a no drop ride.

Is there anything you dislike about the club?

There are way too many rules, meetings and picky little stuff that doesn't mean anything and isn't needed. Sometimes it's too restrictive. I joined to ride my bike, not to bother with that other stuff. Another thing is that rides simply take too long due to lunch stops, etc. I'm a working person with a family, I don't want to be out all day just to ride 50 miles. Most of the time I just want to ride and get back home.

As a woman, when you ride alone do you get hassled by cars?

I can't say I never have, but for the most part, no. When I'm riding alone I tend to wear pink and other girly colors. Cars seem to give me a wider berth when I do that. So no, I don't get bothered much at all.

About cycling in general, do you have any beefs?

I don't like elitism. Recreational riders who take themselves too seriously are very annoying. People who are strong riders who think they're too good to ride with anybody slower than they are. No, that carbon fiber bottle cage will probably not be the deciding factor in allowing you to be the first rider in to the parking lot on the Sunday morning pancake ride. C'mon, were all too fat for this sport! Let's have fun and ride our bikes. Fortunately this kind of attitude is almost completely absent in SWCC, which is just another reason to like the club.

How do you feel about women's specific bikes and clothing? Is there enough choice?

I think there's an adequate choice of bikes and equipment. I wish clothing manufacturers would make clothes, women's clothes, in larger sizes. They must think we're all 5'2" and 95#.

What would you think about an all-woman' club?

Bad idea! I enjoy riding with the guys. I learn a lot from them, they push me to be a stronger, better rider. I don't think an all-women's club would do that. I would, however, like to see more female role models who can ride at a faster pace. There are only 2 or 3 of us in the club. It would be nice to see more.

Do you feel your knowledge about the mechanical aspects of your bike is adequate?

No. I'd love to learn more. I plan to take classes and seminars to increase my abilities in that area. I'll be riding across the U.S. this September and I'd feel better if I knew more.

Lunch With Pat Serio * Rider**

Pat Serio

When & why did you start riding?

In 1997 I heard from a college roommate. She had just finished riding across the U.S. on a tandem with her kids. One was a teenager who rode a single. She did it not only for the adventure but to also build a closer relationship with her children. What better way to talk and spend time with them. I remember her as being kind of a nerd cream puff in college, but now she was lean and buff. My son was a teenager at the time and riding sounded like a good idea to get closer to him so I bought a couple of hybrid bikes and we used to ride the bike trail to Kipton and back.

When did you join SWCC?

I heard about the club from a woman I worked with. She urged me to join and I became a member in 1998.

What was your first ride with the club like?

I can't remember where it went, but Bob Gazer led it. It was 12 miles long. I kept asking myself, "How much longer, how much longer?" I had a real sense of accomplishment afterward along with some sore muscles. It was fun and I met some nice people. My impression of the club was that it was friendly.

From a woman's standpoint, what's the best thing about the club?

I think there's not much, if any, difference between men and women in terms of issues they might have with the club. One of the things I like the most about the club is that it's non-competitive. There's no emphasis on speed. It's very supportive. In my opinion there's no improvement needed.

What's the worst thing about SWCC?

There are too few single men.

A Few Minutes With Mary Dillon

How long have you been riding, Mary? Most people started riding as children, but I'm talking as an adult.

Actually, I never rode as a child. It was during the war (WWII) and most of the men were gone. All of the metals being produced went to the armed forces. Car production and bicycle production virtually ceased. We had prisoners of war, both German and Japanese on our farm doing the farm work that our men used to do. My mother was afraid to let me out of the house with the POWs around so there wasn't a lot of opportunity for me to go cycling. I had been riding horses for a long time and when we had kids and grandkids we bought them bikes. I bought a bike so I could spend time with them and besides, the bikes were closer to the ground.

Did your significant other influence your riding in any way?

Not really, He never rode. I do remember when we would get in a spat from time to time; I'd announce I was going on a ride. By the time I got back I felt much better.

How did you learn about SWCC?

My daughter found out about it and joined. She came home and said it would be perfect for me and I joined as well.

Are you aware that there are specific clothes as well as bikes designed for women?

Yes. I see them in the stores and catalogues.

Are you satisfied with the amount of choice that women have in terms of clothing and equipment?

Yes, I think there's plenty of choice. I can't think of anything I'd like to have that I don't already have or can't readily get.

Are you aware of the educational opportunities the club has available, such as my classes or Ed Stewart's class?

Of course. I took Ed's class quite a while ago and I've taken two of yours.

Would you like to improve your mechanical skills and knowledge regarding your bike?

No, I'm just not interested. I'd rather take it to the bike shop and have them fix it.

How about your riding abilities? Would you like to become a stronger rider able to ride longer distances?

No, I'm fine the way I am. I can ride 2** rides and get up to 15 mph, but my knees hurt afterward. I've been having trouble with my knees. They've given me cortisone shots and I'm afraid if I abuse them by riding too fast that I'll need a knee replacement.

As a woman, what's the best thing about riding?

It keeps me fit. I get some fresh air, socialize with friends, and get out of the house.

Do you get hassled when you're out riding alone?

I never have. Ever. I've seen other riders get bothered by cars, but I haven't.

What would you change about cycling if you could?

There should be many, many more bike lanes and wide shoulders that are clean, well paved, and have no rumble strips. The bike lanes and shoulders we have now are littered with potholes and debris like

People on the bike trail that seem oblivious to others. Kids on small bikes or tricycles and dogs with long, expandable leashes are a menace on the path. I've had to come to a complete stop to avoid colliding with a youngster on a trike or a bike. The parents or adults with them seem to be unwilling or

unable to control them. Adults also seem to ignore any rules or common courtesies when on the trail. It makes riding annoying and dangerous.

Are the 1* riders interested in some variety in starting places, ride destinations, or ride length.

I have to say they're not. The people I ride with don't want to ride anywhere but the bike trail and starting from Misslers gives them a choice of distances. I don't know what kind of turnouts Rich (Kolofer) gets for his rides or exactly where he takes them, but the folks I ride with simply do not want to ride on the road.

The 2, 3, and 4 star riders all seem to know each other pretty well. When I'm at all-star rides or other social events I don't see many, if any 1* riders there. Any idea why?

I don't know why either. They (1* riders) don't seem to want to socialize much with the rest of the club.

What do you think SWCC can do to make rides and social activities more attractive?

I just don't know.



LAST PAGE

