



KEEPING YOUR CLUB CONNECTED TO THE BICYCLE TRAVEL SOURCE

Dear BIKES,

August is half over, but don't start thinking it's too late to start your tour. Here are some articles that should zap some life back into those adventurous legs:

- A Decade of Dirt
- Bicycle Safety
- Late Summer Touring
- Awards Program
- Magazines for Your Members
- Iconic Artwork

Ride On!

Joshua Tack
Club Coordinator

THE BIG PICTURE

A DECADE OF DIRT

Great Divide Mountain Bike Route turns ten
By Michael McCoy, Adventure Cycling Field Editor

One day in 1990, Gary MacFadden, then the executive director of this organization, and I were enjoying lunch at our favorite Mexican restaurant in downtown Missoula, Montana. Brainstorming for new routing ideas, one of us said to the other something like: "Let's map a mountain-bike route along the Continental Divide from Canada to Mexico."

As intriguing as it sounded in 1990, the idea was shelved for the time being. Then, early in 1994, Gary and I were having lunch again, same place. "Mac?" he asked. "Do you remember that long-distance mountain bike route we discussed a few years back?"

Yes, I surely did, and we agreed that the time was right to do it. Why? For one thing, we realized that our organization could and should take the lead in helping to bridge the gap between bicycle touring and mountain biking. Secondly, the concept fit snugly with our new (at the time) name, Adventure Cycling Association. Gary and I agreed that few things could be more adventurous than bicycling from Canada to Mexico, following little-used roads and back tracks where cyclists would encounter more deer and elk than humans. Such a route could, we imagined, become to off-road bicyclists what the Appalachian Trail is to hikers. We pictured the activity of riding the route as a blending of the three sports of bicycle touring, mountain biking, and backpacking. We called it "bikepacking."

We chose to name the project the Great Divide Mountain Bike Route, in part to distinguish it from the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, a hiking route composed primarily of rugged single-track trails. Rather than following trails, we would link together the sorts of existing low-use roads that web U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands in Montana and elsewhere in the Rockies.

The task of researching the Great Divide fell on me in 1994, though it was anything but a one-man show. As it turned out, the route comprises roughly 80 percent dirt and gravel roads, 10 percent paved roads, and 10 percent single-track trails.

The route is ten years old this summer, and the number of through-bikers is long and growing. And now not one, but two self-supported races are being held on the route each year: The Great Divide Race (www.greatdividerace.com) and Tour Divide (www.tourdivide.org ... this race tacks on the 221-mile Canadian extension of the route). Whereas most of those who ride the Great Divide for pleasure and adventure take around two months to do it, in 2008 record holder John Nobile rode from the U.S.-Canada border to the U.S.-Mexico border in an amazing fifteen days, one hour, and twenty-six minutes.

You can learn more about the Great Divide Mountain Bike Route at our [website](#).

CLUB TO CLUB

Bicycle Safety

The New York Cycle Club, a 1600+ member organization, has been busy putting together a [worldwide bicycle accident survey](#). The results will be published as part of a cycling risk assessment study that will be made freely available to the public at the conclusion of the survey. It is for education and advocacy purposes. The survey contains dozens of data points and its design is streamlined to have folks get through the survey as quickly and efficiently as possible. Please pass this on to your club members to encourage them to participate.

It's Not Too Late to Start Touring

Think it's too late to start your bike tour? Think again! Here's a quick glimpse at a long distance tour one of your fellow newsletter subscribers will be embarking on later this month.

On August 17th, Linda and three of her friends will start to pedal their bikes from Chicago to Santa Monica, California. They will be following the Old Historic Route 66 highway, also known as the Mother Road. There is a great deal of history along this route and holds some dear memories to the participants.

They will be carrying a SPOT satellite tracking device throughout their travels, and you can track their adventure from their [website](#). If anyone sees them out on the road, give them a friendly honk or hello to lend support.

ACA UPDATE

There's Still Time to Nominate Your Bicycle Travel Hero

Adventure Cycling is welcoming nominations for our four annual bicycle travel awards. Celebrating the heroes of bicycle travel in America, they include the [Pacesetter Bicycle Travel Award](#), the [June Curry Trail Angel Award](#), the [Sam Braxton Bike Shop Award](#) and the [Adventure Cycling Volunteer of the Year Award](#).

Adventure Cycling's national awards program recognizes the 'above and beyond' contributions made by individuals and organizations in America to improve conditions for bicycle travelers. These awards are celebrated by the bike industry, cycling groups, local communities – and especially by the many thousands of traveling cyclists who benefit from the selfless actions of these award-winners.

Nominations for 2008 awards will be accepted until September 30, so get your nominations in today. For further details visit www.adventurecycling.org/outreach/awards.

Load Up on Magazines for Your Club Members

Just in time for your club members, Adventure Cycling has sample issues of Adventure Cyclist magazine to give away. We have copies of our Bike Tour Company Guide (March), Southeastern Bike Tours (June), and our general 2008 Sample Issue to pass along to interested groups. You can hand these out to members of your club, or anywhere else that you might find cycling enthusiasts.

We will be shipping them out in mixed boxes of 50-55 around July 20th, limit 1 box per club. If one box isn't enough, let us know what it will be used for and we can see about getting a second box out to you. Quantities are limited so reserve your copies today by emailing me at jtack@adventurecycling.org with your club name, address, and how you plan to use them.

Thanks for all you do to support bike travel and Adventure Cycling!

ARTWORK FOR YOU

If your weather has been anything like ours recently, it can be described in one word, WET!! Get clip art for any mood in our Library Archive at <http://www.adventurecycling.org/library/>.

You can search for images and articles to include in your next newsletter or on your website. Stay dry!

Bike-News is a monthly publication of Adventure Cycling Association (www.adventurecycling.org) which comes out the second Tuesday of each month. Our goal is two-fold:

- to provide you with industry information and graphics to share with your members and
- to connect your club with others from around the country for your benefit.

Use this information for your website or put it in your newsletter... anything that helps you get the word out. Just give us a little by-line. If you do use our information, we would love to hear about it.

You can email me at jtack@adventurecycling.org, tell me how and when you used it. Thanks!

If you no longer want to be on this list or if you have an updated contact person, email me, jtack@adventurecycling.org. Thanks!