



# Backcountry Tracks

The Official Newsletter of the Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club

“ All right everyone, Let's make it a clean fight! “

March - April 1998

Volume 1998 • Issue Number 2

## Spring Cleaning

Leonard Francis - BBTC President

Spring is the great rebirth after Winter has stilled the land. The hill come alive with flowers as the snowpack begins to recede. Daylight returns and those of us with SAD come out of our lethargic funk. Spring is a great time of year to ride, but not the best time of year. The ground can become saturated with water to the degree it is easily impacted. The good news is we know lots of places where it is OK to ride this time of year where the soil is rocky and the soil surface can't be moved so come out on a BBTC ride and lets start getting in shape for the best riding season: summer. For those wanting to go on the big backcountry adventures of 3000 or more feet of climbing you'll want to start climbing hills as soon as is feasible once the snow recedes. The road climb to the top of Tiger will get you in pretty good shape if you get out there once or twice a week for about a month. Another thing I encourage everyone to consider is to take a little time this spring to make sure your home, cars, and bikes are all put together in preparation for summer so that when the daylight is here you'll have no reason to be hanging around the house except to get ready for the next trip.

***For more articles on Mt. bike cleaning and maintenance see page 3...***

### About This Edition of Backcountry Tracks

Bicycle maintenance and cleaning. Sooner or later, whether you want to or not, it is something you'll have to tackle. You may have to deal with a broken brake cable while tackling Tiger or have a shifting problem due to the mud hole you just couldn't avoid. In this issue of Backcountry Tracks we are going to discuss a couple of different angles on how to approach this loaded subject. Now we all know that everyone has there own opinions and idea's on how to clean or maintain their gear. Hopefully, in this issue while you may not agree with everything you read, you will get some new idea's or a new tip on cleaning and maintaining your bike so you can continue to enjoy your bike rather than being bummed because it's stuck in the shop...again.

## The Mountain Biker's Prayer

Notice: this is intended for entertainment purposes only. It is not meant to offend anyone. Although it is a spoof on a Biblical document, it is not meant to be sacrilegious. With that said, enjoy.

Our Father, which art in Mob,  
Mountain Bike be Thy name.  
To Thy trailheads we come,  
Thy maintenance be done,  
On fire road  
As it is on singletrack.  
Give us this day our daily ride,  
And forgive us our trespasses  
As we forgive those that trespass on us.  
And lead us not onto illegal singletrack,  
But deliver us from equestrians;  
For thine is the lycra,  
The SPD,  
And the knobby, forever,  
Amen.

### Annual Election Results

As you can see from the sidebar at the right, a number of new officers were elected to help lead BBTC into the future! Congratulations to all our new officers and thank you to those who served us in 1997!

#### Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club

P.O. Box 21288  
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(206) 283-2995

#### — Voting Officers —

##### **Leonard Francies**

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##### **Nancy McKinnon**

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##### **Mike Larson**

*Casey&Pruzan* (206) 623-3577

*David Graves* (206) 526-9003

*Legal Representation*

BBTC Board meetings are held on the fourth Monday of every month.  
Place: Various locations throughout the Puget Sound area

#### BBTC Events Hotline (206) 283-2995

Email listserv: [bbtc@cyclimg.org](mailto:bbtc@cyclimg.org)

Web Site: <http://www.dirtnw/bbtc>

Thanks to DirtNW.com for the web space.

Send Backcountry Tracks submissions to [mtnbykr@worldnet.att.net](mailto:mtnbykr@worldnet.att.net) (preferred) or snail mail:

## ***To Hose or Not to Hose...***

Written by: Roger Donahe

That is the question.

Whether 'tis best to suffer the missed shifts and friction of outrageous mud, Or to take hose to the beast and by force displace it.

Well, enough of that Shakespeare business, my apologies to William and his fans alike. When it comes to mountain biking in our neck of the woods, your steed can take some real weather induced abuse. Bringing some mud home with you it seems is inevitable; you don't have much say in the matter.

If you want to keep your machine running, you've got to have a few things to perform the twin rituals of cleansing and lubing your bike. My list includes; Simple Green degreaser, old toothbrushes, medium size brush, several grease rags of various heritages, WD-40, TriFlow & a bike stand. True, technically you can do just fine without a stand, but boy does it make life easier. For tips on a kewl DIY stand, see page 5.

### **Now, to the bike**

Now that you've got your bike securely up in a stand we come back to that ageless question; to hose or not to hose. And the answer is... it depends. My personal strategy is to stay away from the hose as much as possible. I'll turn it on the bike if I come home and I've got a lot of muck & grass mixed in around some chainstays and brake pads. Otherwise, I let the bike dry out for a day or two and take a brush and knock the dried up earth off the bike.

If you go the hose route the cardinal rule is "Stay away from the bearings!" When you're spraying down that ride of yours keep the stream out of areas such as the bottom bracket, hubs and headset. If you direct a strong stream of water into those bearings you're sure to blast away some of the grease, possibly giving rust a head start, and accelerating your maintenance schedule considerably. Just do a quick hose down of the frame, brakes, & wheels to get things more or less free of mud.

Now here we are with a bike relatively free of trail-like substance. What I like to do at this point is use one of those old toothbrushes and a liberal amount of Simple Green and spiff up the drivetrain. I concentrate on the chain, cassette & rear derailleur. The chainrings I get to if I'm feeling real thorough or if they're looking down in the dumps and starved for attention. Try to get things clean here, the objective is for function not a beauty contest. You want to remove the dirt and grit that will cause your drivetrain to shift poorly or not at all. Once you're satisfied you'll need to get that Simple Green out of there. Again you can use the hose, go lightly around bearings, or use what's left in your water bottle.

Spin those cranks and get as much of that water to fly off of there as you can. Next, spray some of that WD-40 on the chain, cassette & derailleur. ***WD-40 is not lube folks***, it is used here to displace all that water in those little nooks and crannies that water likes to hide in. Don't be stingy with the WD here.

Break time. In fact this is where I usually put the bike and all my supplies away and let that WD-40 just hang in there a few days. Then I'll come back out to the garage and with tender loving care, hit each link of that chain, and the rear derailleur, with a drop or two of TriFlow for lubrication. Whether it's a few days or not, always make sure you get this last step complete. Your drivetrain will be clean, lubed, ready to ride and your bike will love you for it!

# ***Maintenance for the Masses***

Written by: Dan Lopes

As many of you already know, cleaning and maintaining a Mt. bike (for those of us who live in apartments) is an often repeated and much dreaded chore, I'd like to share with you some tips and regular routines I go through in hopes that your apartment neighbors and roommates don't stereotype you as an abusive tenant.

## **Consolidate your space as best you can.**

A Futon can literally turn your bedroom into a shop/multipurpose room. My pull-out cutting board and barstool serve as a wheel maintenance/building station in my kitchen (with fluorescent lighting!). Dairy crates make great shelves. I've even used some of mine to prop up one end and an old desk I acquired to use as a work bench with drawers for tools. More space means less clutter, and you're likely to keep the bike clean if it's easy to do.

## **Use cleaning products and lubes that simplify the process.**

A tile grout brush works great for drivetrains, loosening stuck on muck from the tires, frame, cleats, etc. and costs less than \$2.00. They're also small enough to carry if your chain or cleats need cleaning and lubing in the middle of a long ride. Foxtail brushes (often sold in a set with a dustpan) work great as a final step to whisk away fine dust. You can also use them with a light spray of cleaner/polisher (such as Cyclepro Cycle Brite) on the bristles (rinse and clean first) to dab into places that a rag won't reach. Polishing often makes the dirt brush off easier. Pedro's ATB is my chain-lube of choice. It's substantial enough to stay put reasonably well, and has detergents that dissolve dirt. Be careful to slowly backpedal as you lube so a drop hits each roller at the sideplates, then repeat on the other side after one revolution of the chain. Then backpedal while messaging it in with one hand (optional) and wipe off excess with a low lint rag (I recommend an old poly cotton sheet). On the bike chain cleaners (such as Finish Line) work great in between a complete solvent tank dip (Wright Brothers) and I've even used them dry to brush dust out. The chain should be the last item you clean on your bike, otherwise you'll be doing it twice. Simple Green works great in the on-the-bike chain cleaners, and as well for cleaning rims in conjunction with a 3M scouring pad.

## **Clean your bike when it's easiest.**

A quick brush right after a ride is much easier than after your body has stiffened. It may also be darker or colder when you get home or worse, raining. Those of us with no garages (we don't need no stinkin' garages!) need to remember these things. If, however you forget your brushes or whatever you use, don't panic and go to the car wash. Pressurized water is a lazy and damaging way to clean your bike. There are times when it's better to wait to clean the bike. Dirt that is less organic (not much needle and not black, such as clay) comes off better when dry. For this reason, it is best to polish your bike before riding such areas (Capital Forest). You may opt to wait because of rain or a restaurant rendezvous. For whatever reason, don't use it as an excuse to haul your bike up to your flat completely grungy, you'll probably dread the chore later anyway (procrastination leads to reluctance and expensive wear). Now stop complaining and clean that bike! It's probably probably the best investment you've made regarding your health and where else have you had a better time with your friends than on your bike?

## Wood Shop 101

Written by:  
Roger Donahe

Unless your reading this edition backwards, you've just read 3 super fly articles on cleaning and maintaining your beloved machine. Now here is a great tip and making it all easier without droppin' a "cool mill" on a bike stand at the bike shop (not that there's anything wrong with that if so inclined...).

The bike stand, that indispensable tool of bicycle maintenance. This handy homebrew device is nothing more than a garden-variety sawhorse with a skewer run through it to secure your mount by the fork. I took my inspiration from the Blackburn Workhorse retail bike stand.

Materials: run down to your favorite local hardware store and get yourself some sawhorse brackets, a couple of stud grade 2x4's, & fasteners of some sort (nails work for me). An extra skewer won't hurt either.



Pick the sawhorse brackets that have a narrow profile as your cranks will have to clear these buggers when you've got your bike up on the stand. What you're going for here is the basic sawhorse, making sure that it's long enough for your bottom bracket shell to rest on the end and your fork to

**Congratulations, you've now got a bike stand and you've still got some money left over so you can afford to eat this week.**

clamp into the skewer somewhere near the other end. When you get the basic sawhorse together now is the time to remove your front wheel and size up where you need to drill the hole for that skewer.

Once you've placed the skewer you'll undoubtedly notice that the space between the fork dropouts is much wider than a 2x4 placed on edge. You will need to come up with some spacer blocks to throw on the skewer as well, so when you clamp the fork it has something to clamp against. I recommend measuring the inside width from dropout to dropout so you can be precise. Then find some small blocks of wood that will add up to this width. Drill a hole through the little devils, mount them on either side of the skewer and you're set. Now you can work on your machine with ease.



Kinda reminds ya of Lenny and Jenny's New Years Party, Don't it!?!?

# **Ride Reports**

## **Tol t McDonald Rambler**

**Sunday, Jan. 18**

Written by: The Ride Guru

Five riders enjoyed a mild winter's day ride in Carnation. Attendees included Paul Healy, Leonard Francies, Ken Hankin, Kurt Kreager, and the Ride Guru. We started at 10 am and rode for about 2 hours and approximately 8 miles on clear, mostly dry trails under overcast skies. It was my inaugural, official BBTC ride of 1998 and the first time this year for riding with only fingerless gloves on my hands. The area has many overgrown trails begging to be rediscovered. Great views of the snowy Cascades from the scenic overlook accompanied our brief lunchbreak. After, we all chowed down at the River Run Cafe in Carnation, before heading home.

## **Nighttime at The Worm...I and of a thousand dabs**

**Wednesday, Jan 1998**

Written by: Greg DiGiovanna

Unfortunately for anyone that wasn't there, it was a great night for a ride. The rain (Rain? , What rain???) must have kept people away. Just as I was getting ready to head up from the parking lot by myself, lo and behold here comes Roger! Roger Donahue and I headed up to the trailhead at about 7ish. Both raring to go of course. It must have been the lack of rain that got us both so excited about the worm this evening. On top of that, up until now I was a virgin to the joy of night riding. What a trip! If you don't have lights right now, put them on top of your "Need to get for my bike" list! Not only was it a fresh change from day rides, it also brought about a number of new challenges that you would not be able to experience on a day ride.

Around, over and under we went. Twisting our way through mountain bike happiness. In fact I believe we both went OTB (over the bars) at least once. "With a Dab dab here and a dab dab there..." And I thought The Worm was tough during the day... I think Roger had quite a few less dabs than me but never the less, we had a great time! After making it through The Worm, we were hungry for more. Keeping in mind this was only my second time at The Worm, I'm not exactly sure where it was he took me. I believe it was over to Mr. DNA. Up and down we went. Our lights penetrating the darkness as we went. Out of Mr. DNA we came and then (to my surprise...) there go my lights ending a wonderful night of night riding at The Worm... So, with mud in our gears and smiles on our faces we headed back to our cars. What a way to experience the joys of a first night ride...

*Check out the next page for more killer ride reports...*

# More Ride Reports

## Anacortes Mystery Ride

Sunday, Feb. 1

Written by: The Ride Guru

The mystery is still intact, as only three of us (Scott Peterson, Ken Hankin and the Ride Guru) made the journey north to the banana belt of Skagit County (we later learned that the rain started in Seattle around 1 pm). Fortunately this allowed us to carpool with Scott in his gold VW van. We got to the Cap Sante Marina in plenty of time to leisurely prepare for the ride while waiting for any stragglers to arrive (nobody else showed). The weather was mild and partly sunny, so we enjoyed 2.5 hours of singletracking through lush green forest. We climbed to the viewpoint for lunch, then wound our way back along more excellent trails. On the way out, we met up with Craig McKinnon, who was on a spontaneous solo mission. We exchanged greetings, then sped on back to refuel at the Village Pizza in Anacortes. As usual, the rain didn't arrive until we were headed south at around 3:30.

## Anacortes Mystery Ride II "Superbowl Spectacular"

Written by: Tom Fitzpatrick

"You gotta have faith."

George Michael, 1987

Six riders braved the doom-laden weather forecasts and met at the Cranberry Lake trailhead for our ride in the Anacortes Community Forest (ACF). Besides yours truly, they were Maria and Bob DenOuden, Greg DiGiovanna, Steven Nolen, and Pandora Fitzpatrick. It turned out that the area had suffered high winds last week, but almost no rain, so we ended having beautiful weather for riding, and horrendous weather for much of the drive home. We only found two really muddy spots and a very few puddles, so we didn't even get very dirty. We had a wide range of rider skill levels (Greg levitated his bike over most obstacles, I paddled; Maria motored up a hill that everybody else walked!). We rode between 7 and 8 miles in about 2 and a half hours, and had a blast. Jeff Hanna brought a party of four along a bit later, and we met them a couple times on the ACF's extensive trail network. Toward the end of our ride we met the City of Anacortes Parks Dept. honcho in charge of the ACF; he said there's a volunteer trail work party there on Feb. 7. He rides himself, and was glad to see so many of us enjoying the trails.



**Here we are. Ready to hit the trail!!!**

## Tahuya State Forest

Jan 7, 1998

Written by: Ranger Phil

Dan, Robert, Doug and Ride Leader Phil Wolff (DNR & STM) had a great ride. The trails consisted of single track and fresh new re-routes around Salmon Streams. These re-routes have been established by the: Bremerton Crusiers Motorcycle Club, Single Track Mind, and the DNR. A funny thing happened on this ride we encountered 0 motorcycles 0 whoops and little water. Is this a sign that the end is near or the environmental president has taken office....NO these trails are just a tiny example of what the Tahuya can offer. These trails are primitive un-mapped un-signed but politically and environmentally correct. These particular trail lies between the Sandhill road and the new section of the Overland trail. They were established and maintained by motorcyclists for on-going enduro events (this is 180 deg. from motorcross).....maybe someday there may be a MTB "enduro" which is not really a race but a predicted time event.



### "Scholarships" Now Available for New Trail College

"Scholarships" are now available for adults and kids interested in enrolling in the new Trail College at King County's Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park. The King County Department of Parks and Recreation and the Washington Trails Association have nearly 500 scholarships available. Classes at the new Trail College will begin on Saturday, November 8th at 8:30 am.

Trail College administrators hope to enroll 40 residents 10 years of age and older in each of the classes (youths 14 and under must be accompanied by an adult). Trail College has been created to train King County-area volunteers to work on critical trail projects here and throughout Washington State.

Trail College students will receive several hours of free training before receiving their diploma. Students will learn a variety of skills, including how to construct new trails, build drainage improvements, repair storm damage, and keep trails clear of brush and debris. Students will also learn about native plants and wildlife as part of their training. Trail College graduates will be invited to volunteer for trail projects coordinated by King County, the Washington Trails Association, and the Volunteer Trailwork Coalition.

Trail College will be in session the second Saturday of each month from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. All classes will occur at Cougar Mountain Park, located between Newcastle and Issaquah. Residents interested in receiving a scholarship to Trail College should call Parker Xander at King County at (206) 296-2990, or the Washington Trails Association at (206) 517-7032 or 1-800-587-7032.

## ***Trail Park Pass Update***

The passes are almost here! I've just received word from the Cle Elum Ranger District. You'll need these passes for most trailheads located in Nat'l Forests in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. BBTC has decided to support Cle Elum District because of their support for Mt. biking opportunities close to the Puget Sound.

TWO DOLLARS FROM EVERY TRAIL PARK PASS SOLD BY BBTC GOES TOWARD OUR TRAIL FUND. That's right, all that money goes straight to buying tools, gravel, wood for bridges and other expenses necessary to help maintain YOUR TRAILS IN YOUR PUGET SOUND! Encourage your friends to buy passes from BBTC, you know where the money is going!

Trail Park Passes are \$20 each for the 98 calendar year, and can be purchased for \$20 each by sending a check to:

Andy Woods  
BBTC Treasurer  
8055 Brooklyn Ave NE  
Seattle, WA 98115  
206 527-1122

**For Sale: Litespeed Titanium Mt. Bike. 18' frame, lots of extra's, too many to list it all... Low hours. \$2000.00 firm Call Scott Toevs at 425-481-8184 for more details.**

**Keep your eyes peeled for the May/June issue of Backcountry Tracks. We'll be taking a look at the issue of access in the greater Seattle and King County area. This is something that everyone one of us has had to deal with at one time or another. Whether it be the Redmond Watershed situation or just a decision as to whether or not to throw your bike over a fence to get to some sweet hiker only singletrack, this is an issue you will not want to miss...**

**If you would like to share about how you have been affected by the issue of access or you know of someone who might be able to give an interesting perspective on access to trails, please let me know. You can call the hotline at (206) 283-2995 or Email to [mtnbykr@worldnet.att.net](mailto:mtnbykr@worldnet.att.net).**

# BBTC Membership Application

Looking for someone to ride with? Want to find new places to ride? Want to learn about backcountry trail ethics? Then join the BBTC. Help keep our trails open!

- \$15 Regular
- \$30 Family
- \$50 Contributing
- Voluntary Trail Fund donation
- \$150 Commercial
- T-Shirt ( \$18 each)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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- Leading Rides
- Trail Patrol
- Government Affairs
- Trail Maintenance
- Education Program
- Newsletter

**Total**

**Thank You!!**

## Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club Affiliations

*To become a BBTC affiliate, please contact Art Tuftee at (206) 226-4837*

**League Of American Bicyclists (LAB), International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) (303) 545-9011, National Off Road Bicycle Association (NORBA), Washington Wildlife Recreation Coalition, I-90 Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Single Track Mind Cycling Club (253) 565-5124, Cascade Bike Club (206) 522-BIKE, NOWBike (206) 224-9252 nowbike@accessone.com**

## BBTC Corporate Members

**Gregg's Greenlake Cycle** 7007 Woodlawn NE Seattle, WA 98115 (206) 523-1822  
**REI, Inc.** 222 Yale Ave N Seattle, Wa 98109 (206) 223-1944  
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**Support the shops that support BBTC!**



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