

SURLY STRAGGLER REVIEWED • MINNEAPOLIS VELODROME • ANTWERP BELGIUM



URBAN VELO

Bicycle Culture on the Skids

Issue #43 • August 2014



URBANVELO.ORG

SURLY
surlybikes.com

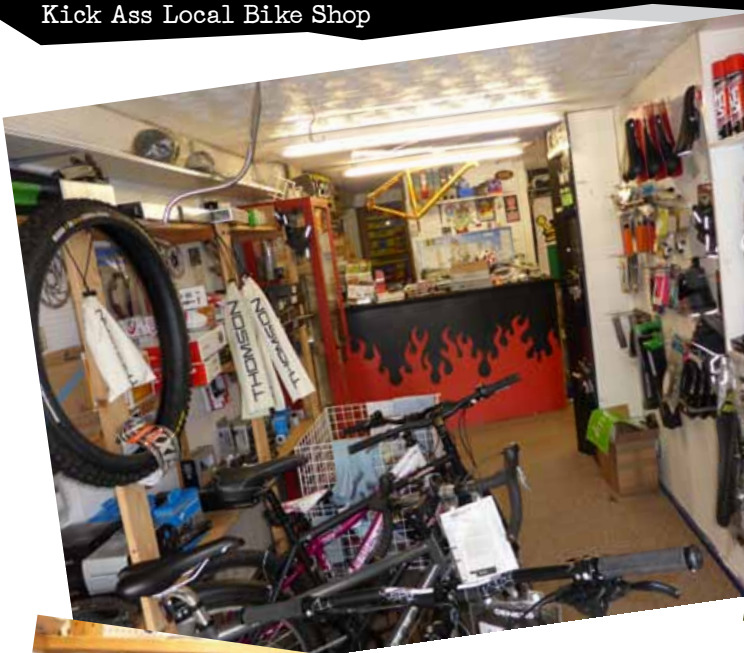
Surly Ogre Stock Build

BUILD YOUR OWN

Surly Ogre Custom Build



SURLY
surlybikes.com



When you visit **Sideways Cycles** for the first time, you start in a state of puzzlement. It's on a quiet residential street for starters. Then you have to walk through a car spares shop, past the windscreen wipers and Autoglym polish in order to get into the bike shop. Once there, though, your puzzlement soon changes to happiness as you start to take in the many splendid corners of this tiny shop. It might not have much space, but the space it has is full of quality gear. Where else do you have a local kid coming in for a BMX tube, standing next to a happy customer picking up a custom Borealis carbon fat bike? Tim and his wife Judith have been running the shop forever and they have a fiercely loyal following of customers who travel a long way to make the pilgrimage to Sideways. Tim was an early single speed adopter and has probably the only complete set of Outcast magazines, sat in a trophy cabinet next to awards from magazines, trophies from races and titanium free-wheels. Look deeper and you'll find Maverick service parts, Independent Fabrication frames and some of Tim's legendary wheels—usually built with a cup of tea while watching TV in the evenings. —Chippis Chippendale

Check out www.sidewayscycles.co.uk

SUBSCRIBE

5 ISSUES

\$15

USA mailing addresses only. Subscribers outside of USA must choose "International" option for an additional \$20 USD. Postage is expensive. Boats are slow—please allow 6-8 weeks for international delivery.

URBANVELO.ORG



Urban Velo, PO Box 9040, Pittsburgh, PA 15224

Issue #43

August 2014

Brad Quartuccio Editor brad@urbanvelo.org
Jeff Guerrero Publisher jeff@urbanvelo.org

Contributing Web Editor: Krista Carlson

Contributing Web Editor: Scott Spitz

On the cover: Dave Rodebaugh on his way to first place in the individual competition at the Red Bull Mini Drome: New York on June 27, 2014. Fifty teams of two battled it out for the fastest times over ten laps, with the riders on the top eight teams going head-to-head to crown a solo champion. Teammates Darren Lee and Austin Horse took home top team honors. Photo by Takuya Sakamoto, www.newyorkbikedreams.com

Co-conspirators: Brandon Carter, Jeff Lockwood, Aaron Thomas Smith, Kevin Sparrow, Sarah Pearman, Mike Mac-Kool, Dave Mercier, Rachel Krause, Zach Bauman and Andy Singer.

Urban Velo is a reflection of the cycling culture in current day cities. Our readers are encouraged to contribute their words and art.

Urban Velo will be published five times in 2014, on the even months from April through December. Issues are available online and on iOS, Android and Kindle platforms. Print copies are available at 350+ bike shops across the USA.

Bike shops, check out urbanvelo.org/distribution

Printed in Pittsburgh by JB Kreider - www.jbkreider.com

Subscribe at www.urbanvelo.org/subscribe

All contents © 2014 Urban Velo, no unauthorized reproduction (online or otherwise) without written consent.

ZIP MOLD[®]

Thinner, tapered, and lighter with a higher strength to weight ratio than EPS helmets.

16
VENTS

More than twice as much airflow than Bern's other leading models.



Bern's signature low profile fit and feel.

©2014 Bern
photo: Alex Mumford



ALLSTON
BERNUNLIMITED.COM/ALLSTON



Contents: The 2014 NAHBPC went down in Minneapolis this July. Read about it on page 14. Photo by Brandon Carter.



8 Editor's Statement

Brad Quartuccio

10 Publisher's Statement

Jeff Guerrero

12 I Love Riding in the City

Readers share their tales of city cycling.

14 News & Views

NAHBPC 2014, Amtrak Roll-On Service and Wolf-pack Hustle Civic Center Crit.

16 Product Spotlight

Superb, Specialized, Gevenalle, Brooks and more.

20 City Report: Antwerp

Jeff Lockwood

Bikes, beer, beef stew... And did we mention beer?

24 MPLS Velodrome

Aaron Thomas Smith

Cyclists in the Twin Cities love their wooden track.

36 Gallery

Kevin Sparrow

42 Product Reviews

Surly, New Albion, Illumenox, ABUS and more.

56 Fun Rides

Scott Spitz

Rolling parties never go out of style.

62 On the Move

Rachel Krause

Female riders in Kansas City are hitting the streets and changing the face of cycling.

68 Narrow-Wide Rings Explained

Brad Quartuccio

70 Outro

Brad Quartuccio

Knog night ride.

EDITOR'S STATEMENT

By Brad Quartuccio



Critical Mass, New York City, August 2004. This ride of an estimated 5000 people ended with over 260 arrests and to some marked a shift in the trajectory of Critical Mass as a whole. Photo by Brad Quartuccio

The notion of “critical mass” has changed, and we may have entered the post-Critical Mass era without fully realizing it. Hindsight is like that, the past only becomes clear as time marches on. Well-attended group rides are no longer revolutionary, roving bands of riders on a Thursday night are as newsworthy as church on Sunday. The end result is as the old slogan declared—we are traffic.

Critical Mass functioned as protest and social gathering, a show of solidarity between largely solo commuters, and an incubator for the current bicycle culture and advocacy groups. I can trace back a few of my dearest friends and my involvement in the past decade of bicycle advocacy to a tattered flyer posted on a telephone pole: “Last Friday of Every Month.”

The new crop of Group Fun Rides are different than the Critical Mass of old, but perhaps more effective in the long haul. It’s a ball rolling downhill, without the specter of arrest that protest rides can bring about. People are coming together in the name of fun and being energized around the bicycle in numbers Critical Mass could have only dreamed of, and in turn demanding infrastructure and respect more effectively than ever before. I have no doubt that the next generation of bicycle advocates will cite a ride like those we profile on page 56 as their jumping off point.

Things are not how they used to be, the cycling landscape has dramatically changed. It’s exciting to see where this will all go next if we have in fact reached critical mass.



We want your words. Send your editorial contributions to brad@urbanvelo.org

W E A R A B L E S E C U R I T Y

HIPLOK D | PATENT PENDING CLIP SYSTEM | COMFORTABLE AND SECURE ON PANTS, BELTS, BAG STRAPS ETC

HIPLOK

HIPLOK BICYCLE LOCKS | DESIGNED FOR RIDING | ENGINEERED FOR SECURITY

SEE THE FULL HIPLOK RANGE AT INTERBIKE 2014 BOOTH # 1087

HIPLOK.COM

PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

By Jeff Guerrero



It's been said that few things in life can compare to the simple joy of riding a bike. This statement was once again made plain to me on my commute today. One of Pittsburgh's most popular bike paths is colloquially known as The Jail Trail, and it runs parallel to one of the city's busiest highways for a stretch. As I zipped past the cars stuck in standstill traffic, I couldn't help but feel a touch of *schadenfreude*. That's the German word for taking pleasure in the misfortune of others.

Even without the satisfaction of avoiding traffic, I was in a pretty good mood already. The sun was shining and there was a light breeze that made 80° feel more like 70°. Best of all, I was in no hurry, so I decided to take the scenic route to work.

Ironically, I almost didn't ride at all. I woke up on the wrong side of the bed this morning. My muscles ached from a weekend of manual labor, and my head was a little worse for wear from the Sunday night drinks that had brought temporary relief. Despite my

state of mind, I managed to put on my bike shorts and hit the road. The healing power of the bicycle never fails to amaze me, and before I knew it my head was clear and my body felt good.

On top of everything else, for reasons that I won't elaborate upon, I was kind of dreading the workday. But I had such a great ride that by the time I got to the office I was ready to tackle any challenge that came my way.

I had a great day, so I decided to celebrate by backtracking the same scenic route on the ride home. The route made for a 30 mile round trip when it's usually only 20, but I felt absolutely no worse for wear.

I know I'm preaching to the converted in these pages, but I'll say it again—bikes are amazing. I'm certain that no bus ride ever cured a hangover, nor did any car commute ever provide physical therapy. Bikes can do all that, conserve natural resources, and bring a smile to your face in the process. Yep, amazing.



Urban Velo issue #43, June 2014. Print run: 7500 copies. Issue #42 online readership: 55,000+

URBAN



UTILITY



chromeindustries.com

i ♥ riding in the city



NAME: Terry Crock

LOCATION: Massillon, OH

OCCUPATION: Technology and Automation Shop Manager

Where do you live and what's it like riding in your city?

I live near Massillon, Ohio. I build custom bicycles for myself and my children, which we use to ride on biking trails between Massillon, Navarre, Dalton, and Canal Fulton, Ohio. These are all small towns, fun and easy to ride around in, without much traffic. Canal Fulton has a canal boat pulled by horses that people can ride as the biking trail in that area follows the old Ohio and Erie Canal that was built during the 1800s. Sometimes one has to make their way around the horses pulling the canal boat as one rides the trail. Massillon has a bicycle shop directly on the trail for any needed parts or repairs. The biking trails in this area are generally flat and easy to ride.

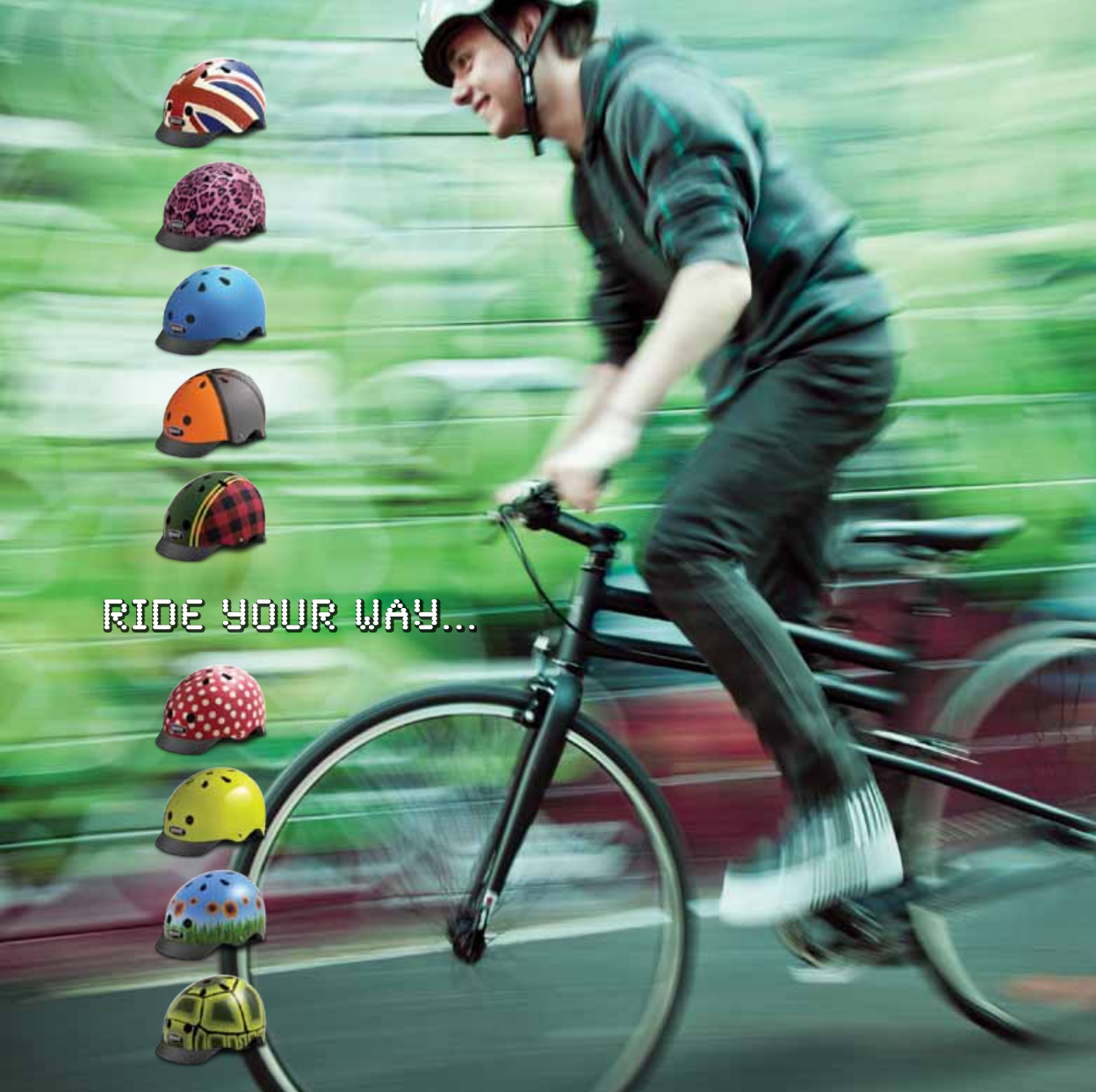
What was your favorite city to ride in, and why?

Right now that city would be Navarre because it is somewhere safe to ride with my children. And one can smell the fresh bread being baked at Nickle's Bakery!

Why do you love riding in the city?

The cities I ride in would be considered small with populations below 40,000. The good thing about that is the small town attitude in which auto drivers tend to see bicyclists as other people instead of targets.

We want to hear from you!
urbanvelo.org/ilritc



RIDE YOUR WAY...

GEN3 THE EVOLUTION OF NUTTY



Removable visor, magnetic buckle and 360° reflectivity.

For a chance at a free helmet, send us your nutty pix: nutcasehelmets.com/contact
[facebook.com/nutcasehelmets](https://www.facebook.com/nutcasehelmets) • twitter.com/nutcasehelmets

nutcase



Photo by Brandon Carter

NAHBPC 2014

On July 11, bike polo players from across the United States, Canada, and Mexico met in Minneapolis to participate in the North American Hardcourt Bike Polo Championship (NAHBPC). The championship, operated by North American Hardcourt and local organizers, featured three days of competition between 48 teams who earned their place in regional tournaments throughout the year. These teams of three competed in less-than-ideal conditions for the majority of the tournament, suffering through rain delays and courts slick with water.

Bike polo is for all purposes in its infancy, and as such the tournament was played despite the weather. Were this an older, more veteran game, one may expect outrage at having one set of players earn their way to the finals bracket while others struggle to earn the same reward on a surface littered with pools of rain. The players, however, do not feel nearly so entitled, and as such grumbled and went about playing the sport regardless.

The competition is broken into three parts: Friday consists of seeding, with the top teams from the morning and afternoon bracket securing a place on Sunday.

No matter how they perform on Saturday, they will advance to the final competition. The other teams must again compete on Saturday in an attempt to avoid elimination. Sunday is the main event, wherein teams can only suffer one loss and advance—with two losses comes elimination, and more spectators to cheer or jeer the remaining teams.

The likely podium finishers: the Beavers from San Francisco, the Guardians from Seattle and Portland United all once again proved why they are the most challenging and able teams in North American bike polo. Despite outstanding performances by the Assassins, The Ringers, Cucumbers and the like, the faces were very much the same in the final few games. The Beavers took home first (even after requiring a substitution due to injury), with Portland United taking second and the Guardians taking third.

Despite the repetition of podium finishers, the NAHBPC maintains a light, if not jovial, atmosphere. What is missing is a seriousness that comes with high levels of competition—but not in such a way that it reduces the competitiveness of the sport itself. At this tournament most people know each other, and are just as willing to battle as they are to joke around and congratulate good plays. It's this attitude that divides this championship from other sports—the camaraderie of players to switch from opponent to supporter as soon as a match is over.

It caps a year of increasingly professional and responsible tournaments by hosting clubs and NAH, further solidifying the growth and foundations of the sport. —Matt Kabik, Lancaster Polo

Amtrak Announces Roll-On Service

In big news for bicycle travelers Amtrak has announced that they are adding baggage cars with bicycle cargo capability to all 15 long distance train routes that they serve. By the end of the year riders should have roll-on bicycle service, expanding the horizons of where you can take your bike, or where you can ride to and find an affordable way home. Look for 55 new cars capable of carrying bicycles by the end of 2014. —Brad Quartuccio





Photo by Krista Carlson

Wolfpack Hustle Civic Center Criterium

On rare occasion, number two actually is better than number one. This was the case with the second Civic Center Criterium hosted by Wolfpack Hustle in Los Angeles. The course stayed the same, but the competition had undoubtedly leveled up.

While a few heavy hitters had dropped in to see what all the fuss was about in 2013, this year the fields for every race were stacked. Coming off the heels of high-intensity events such as the Cycle Messenger World Championships, Junior National Road Championships, and the formidable 11-day Tour of America's Dairylands, the Civic Center Crit rallied some of the toughest men and women on bikes to the heart of Downtown L.A.

An event for cyclists of all breeds, men and women from professional and street-level backgrounds put their skills to the test in road and track category races, 24 laps around City Hall; a few hit the course twice, doubling their efforts to rack up more title points. In between the qualifiers and finals, the Angelopes and other local freak bikers had their own freaky crit race.

With Aventon, TRAFIK, LAPD support officer Gordon Helper, and other local supporters stepping in with cash awards of \$100 for multiple mid-race prime laps—10, 12, 13, 15—there was hardly a moment for any racer on the course to do anything but push harder. As the sun moved from east to west and dropped from

the sky, competing cyclists came to know the course's left, right and hairpin turns—two of each—its down and up grades, and where to make their game-changing moves.

Those that mastered the game edged their way to victory, and for the first time in Wolfpack Hustle history, the Dog Tags have left the country. Brian “Safa” Wagner is the lucky devil who will take his first set of tags across borders, but since he only has to go as far as Mexico, it's highly likely he'll be back for more. Wagner, riding for Leader Bikes, was joined on the men's track podium by men who actually traveled much farther—third place finisher Christopher Rabadi, from D.C.; and second place Francesco Martucci, who crossed the world to race thousands of miles from his native streets of Italy. The men's track podium stood doubly proud as Rabadi and Wagner bonded over their status as working messengers; the Mexico City courier also took pride in seeing two of his fellow teammates, Lucas Binder and Steven “Neu York” Mergenthaler, in the top five of the men's track finishers.

It was Wolfpack's own who took their places on the women's track podium, with Jo Celso taking top honors and Erin Gunn taking second. Beatriz Rodriguez, SoCal contender Kelli Samuelson and Italian powerhouse Stefania Baldi (another working messenger) rounded out the top five in a race where a strong lead from Celso made the rest of the field fight for second.

The geared races were just as intense, where Binder eked his way ahead for a slim lead in the men's race, putting returning 2013 champion McElroy in second. The women's race was dominated by ladies from the She Wolf Attack Team (S.W.A.T.), many of whom were racing for the first time. With a solid field of Southern California bike babes, Jen Whalen made sure to secure the win—thanks to Whalen, one set of Civic Center Crit Dog Tags gets to stay in L.A. —Krista Carlson

Got news? Email us.
news@urbanvelo.org

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT



Superb Bicycle Overland Prototype

The widespread epiphany that big tires are comfortable and can take you to awesome places on a “road” bicycle has led to a number of choices in the realm of versatile frames built for real world riding rather than pure racing. Superb Bicycle just posted a few pictures of their latest efforts, the Overland. Build it with flat bars and racks for commuting and city riding, or drop bars for gravel and cyclocross endeavors. Clearance for up to 40 mm tires gives you more cushion for the pushin’, steel tubes keep it real. The prototype is 4130 steel, but Superb is threatening to make it out of Columbus Zona for a much better, and lighter, ride. Check out that flat crown and hooded dropouts (with replaceable hanger!). www.superbbicycle.com



Specialized Diverge

The 2015 Diverge lineup is Specialized’s latest incarnation of the “all-road” concept for when your road bike takes you to where the smooth pavement ends. As opposed to a cyclocross frame the Diverge features a lower bottom bracket for stability, more tire clearance, fender mounts, and thru-axles front and rear (as lightning fast wheel changes are not a concern) on the highest end carbon models. Pictured is the Diverge Comp Smartweld featuring an 11-speed Shimano 105 drivetrain, hydraulic disc brakes, and a tapered carbon thru-axle fork for \$2700. Check out the top end \$8500 Diverge with a full carbon frame, Di2 electronic drivetrain and dropper post for a glance at where bikes in this category may (or may not be...) heading in the future. www.specialized.com

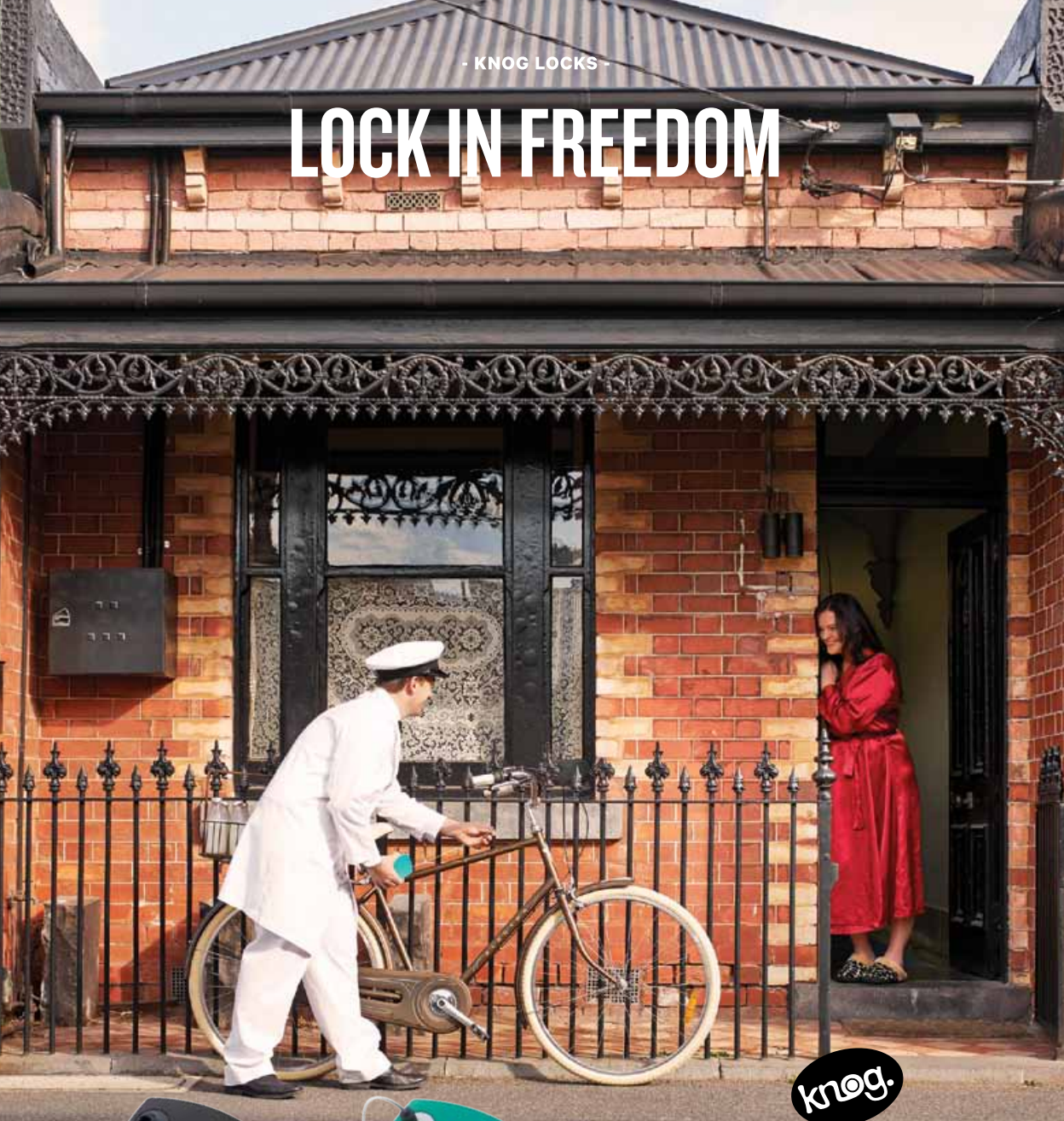
Fiks:Reflective Classic Reflective Stickers

In addition to their signature reflective rim stripes, Fiks:Reflective offers two different reflective sticker packs. The classic stickers are made from 3M Scotchlite Reflective Film and retail for just \$4. Available in eight colors. www.ridewithfiks.com



- KNOG LOCKS -

LOCK IN FREEDOM



knog.



MilkMAN

SOLID / COMPACT / SECURE / 90CM RETRACTABLE CABLE

WWW.KNOG.COM.AU/MILKMAN



Retrosift is now Gevenalle

The new name roughly translates to “give all” in Dutch. Having expanded the line past the original Retrosift downtube-shifter-on-a-brake-lever, the makers of Retrosift and the B.U.R.D. have rebranded to Gevenalle, and introduced a hydraulic version of the Retrosift that first put them on the map. www.gevenalle.com



WOHO Flying Fender 2.0

WOHO has released an updated version of their Flying Fender. Version 2.0 is one-size-fits-all, and has a distinctly Gundam Wing inspired design. Like the previous version it's super lightweight (45 g) and attaches with Velcro. It can be rolled up and stored in a number of ways, and retails for \$15. www.wohobike.com



Brooks Cambium C15

Brooks England's leather saddles have been a classic bike component for a century, with countless people swearing by their well worn, old-school Brooks over more modern materials and construction. Just a couple of seasons ago Brooks introduced their first Cambium saddle made not of leather but of an organic canvas and vulcanized rubber top, providing a waterproof and maintenance-free Brooks. The latest is the narrower and racier C15 Limited Edition, meant for distance riders and people that prefer a lower profile perch. Brooks saddles have never come cheap and the C15 retails for \$225, but given that it isn't rare to find decades old saddles still in service the price can be a bit easier to swallow. www.brooksengland.com



EighthInch Dispatch

As time goes by it's not getting any easier to find relatively affordable made in the USA framesets. EighthInch worked with Waterford to create this Wisconsin born and bred chromoly track frame—combined with the Tange track fork, the \$700 Dispatch is in line with many overseas options. Available in four sizes and black, white or red powdercoat. Provisions for brakes, fenders, and 32 mm tires (28 mm with fenders) make it suited for a daily driver, with geometry that should hold up on the track if you ever see fit to race. And can't forget two bottle mounts—some of us get thirsty. www.eighthinch.com



Photos: Marty Wood



Proud supporter of team Koochella.

All-City^{MPLS}



ANTWERP, BELGIUM

By Jeff Lockwood

Photos by Brad Quartuccio and Jeff Lockwood

City: Antwerp, Belgium

Nickname: Koekenstad

Claim to Fame: Antwerp is the second largest city in Belgium behind Brussels. Eighty percent of the world's diamonds come through Antwerp, where they are bought and sold between dealers from around the world. According to some, the fashion industry in Antwerp ranks with those of Milan and Paris.

History in 100 Words (or less): Local lore holds that Antigoon was an unfriendly giant who lived near the Schelde river. His job was to collect a fee from people who wanted to cross. You can't pay the fee? Antigoon would cut off your hand and throw it in the river. Brabo was a brave young soul who found this act unacceptable. He gave Antigoon some of his own medicine before killing him. Brabo lopped off the hand of the mean giant and threw it into the river. From it grew the current city of Antwerp. The name, "Ant-

werpen" is actually a Dutch phrase that translates to "hand throwing."

Random Fact: There are two tunnels under the Schelde river specifically for bicycles and pedestrians. When you head west under the river away from the center part of the city, towards the "Linkeroever" (translated as "left bank"), the farm roads of East Flanders welcome you for some amazing cycling routes.

City's Terrain: Flat. Very flat. Yet the roads outside the city are dotted with brutal cobble stone sections and farm mud.

Weather Forecast: Belgian weather has a reputation for being nasty, which, in turn, has produced some of the toughest and most successful cyclists of the world. Cloudy skies definitely prevail, and it's often damp or raining softly. But the sun does shine enough to keep people happy. Fortunately it generally doesn't get too hot, nor does it get too cold.



Top Shop(s): While there is one dedicated fixed-gear shop in town, Fixerati, you're not going to see many fixies darting across the city. Instead, most people ride true city bikes: Dutch-style townies, or other rather non-descript aluminum or steel bikes where the rider sits more upright. These bikes almost always feature baskets, boxes or bags. As such, almost all shops cater to this market. De Fietsenfikser on Amerikalei is a great specimen, as is Fietsen De Geus several blocks away. Looking for a high-end road shop? You only need to visit Velodome. It's one of the most high-end shops in the country, and it's plenty capable of soothing your Rapha cravings. As an added bonus, the shop is associated with the De Koninck brewery across the street, and you can walk past the service area of the shop, right into a very nice brassiere and bar.

Best Watering Hole(s): If you're reading this magazine, you need to visit Cafe ZeeZicht. Situated on the wonderful Dageraadplaats, this unique bar welcomes a very diverse range of customers to engage in lively conversations while sipping the best beers in the world. About one kilometer away, in the Borgerhout section of the city, sits Cafe Mombassa. You like bikes? You'll like this bar. Enjoy choosing from an amazing beer selection while watching all the major and minor bike races on a large, retractable screen. A very diverse and interesting clientele will surprise you with how much they know about pro cycling.





Summit of the Paterberg on the Tour of Flanders route.

Authentic Local Food: Stoofvlees (beef stew); paardenvlees (horse steak); fritjes (French fries). Let's also consider beer a food, too.

Coffee: Cafe Nation is the most... and only... "American-style" café in town. And that's a good thing.

Must See: Antwerpen Centraal Station. Hands-down, this is one of the most breathtakingly beautiful train stations in the world. A recent renovation has added state of the art amenities and infrastructure, but has maintained the incredible original architectural integrity of this monumental station.

Must Ride: Ride out of the city along the Albertkanaal. After about ten kilometers, turn left onto the gravel path along the Antitankkanaal where you'll pedal past WWI and WWII bunkers and fortresses. Turn right when you reach Antwerpsesteenweg. Follow that for about six kilometers until you reach Cafe Trappisten, where they serve the freshest Westmalle beer, which happens to be brewed across the street by monks.


Best Time to Visit: Early April. The weather starts to get nicer, the days get longer, and people begin to emerge from their winter hibernation. The Tour of Flanders and Paris Roubaix, held on the first two Sundays of the month respectively, are both about a one-hour drive away the city.

Need For Speed: Want to ride fast? Drive an hour out to Circuit Zolder. It's an auto racing course, but each evening in the summer, a couple hundred Flemish cyclists show up with their best race bikes to ride around the course as many times, and as fast, as they want.

Two Wheeled Celebrities: Someone from Omega Pharma Quick Step lives at the end of my street, but I haven't yet figured out who he is.

Top Tourist Attraction(s): Kulminator is consistently noted as one of the best beer bars in the world. Check it out, for sure. The MAS (Museum Aan de Stroom) is a brand new museum built smack in the northern port area of the city. The permanent collection housed in this ultra-modern, cantilevered building focuses on local and Belgian art, while varying rotating exhibits engage a wide range of visitors.

Advocacy: Fietsersbond is a very large and active cycling advocacy organization. But cycling is so woven into the fabric of society here that municipal governments already do a good job of making wise policy decisions relating to cycling infrastructure.

Locals Only: The locally-brewed De Koninck beer can be ordered four ways: In a bowl-shaped glass, ask for a "bolleke"; in a small bowl-shaped glass, ask for a "prinske"; in a pilsner-style glass, ask for the "fluitje"; finally if you want it in a tulip-shaped glass, you'll want to request a "handje." 



Cafe ZeeZicht



RiDE *WITH* US

leave the car at home.

RECREATIONAL PERFORMANCE LUMINA™ SERIES



750



550



400



FLARE



MICRO 250



mPLS

Velodrome

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY AARON THOMAS SMITH



It's basically a wall made out of a mixture of afzelia and oak wooden strips which have definitely seen better days. That's what we ride and race on, every Thursday from around seven to ten at night. Saturdays a crew spends time repairing the surface, removing the soft boards and replacing them with ones that will support the seventy racers that will make innumerable laps across it in the coming week. Patching the holes and painting the lines—preserving this gift that a few fought so hard to acquire all the way back in the late 1980s.

“The splinters, and how I don’t have any right now.”
—Erin Young when asked his favorite part about the track

How it Got Here

An outdoor, wooden velodrome shouldn’t exist in a sleepy suburb north of Minneapolis, MN. It should be a Cold Stone, or maybe a Kohls. Possibly a soccer field, but definitely not a giant wooden bowl. Still, the NSC Velodrome in all of its World Class glory, exists, and not only does it exist, it thrives to this very day due to that same tenacity and sense of community that brought us this beautiful velodrome in the first place.

That initial drive, born from a handful of local cyclists bent on bringing track racing to Minnesota, found an opportunity when the 1987 Minnesota Legislature set in motion plans to create the National Sports Center (NSC) up in Blaine, MN. They jumped at the chance, and soon they broke ground on what is today the site of the velodrome. It was the first wooden velodrome built in the United States since World War II and it was designed and constructed by Ralph Schuermann, a third generation velodrome architect. Faster and steeper than any velodrome built in the United States before, the design went on to inspire other Olympic velodromes shortly thereafter. The knowledge gained by building our anomaly helped form the future of track cycling as a whole—and that’s pretty damn awesome.





The Velodrome

Even if you were completely unaware of the NSC Velodrome's history, it's hard not to feel the gravity of it when you approach the track. It's an imposing structure, and a relatively open one at that. You can see the underside quite easily from all around and watch the boards move with the riders above you. This makes for a weak covering during our typical harsh winters, but adds to the beauty. You walk underneath the track to get to the infield, the grass only broken by an inner asphalt cycle-track for warming-up, cooling-down or just killing time between races. The judge's box stands guard over the staging area and the white and black of the start/finish line. Benches line the middle and a podium sits close by in perfect view of the stands. To come here at any other time than Thursday is peaceful, the breeze gently playing with the grass, its invisible hand changing the way you ride.

Once you've put your bike on a rack, pumped up the tires and rode around the infield enough, you make your way to the apron, the blue band which lines the bottom of the velodrome. Here you clip in, get up to speed and work your way up the boards. You pass the black line shortly thereafter, moving through the "sprinter's lane" which is made up of the black line and the red line, painted about a shoulder width above. Above that still is the blue "stayers" line and at the very top is the rail, a device which, should momentum and gravity fail at their task, ensures that users do not stray from the confines of the bowl.

The rail serves the dual purpose of being the line-up for many of the mass-start events, generally the more endurance-based. It is here that the racers are presented to the crowd for various crowd games and unofficial side bets. It's also my favorite place on the track as you can see everything, but you're only there if you are ready to drop down and begin the race.

“It’s kind of a field of dreams, you know? I think you could say that 25 years ago they were crazy to build an outdoor, wooden, 250 m velodrome with 43° banked walls in Minnesota where it’s winter for like, thirty months out of the year—and it’s in a swamp! It’s in a former swamp. But in that time there’s been a thriving racing community that’s developed.” –Mattio Montesano

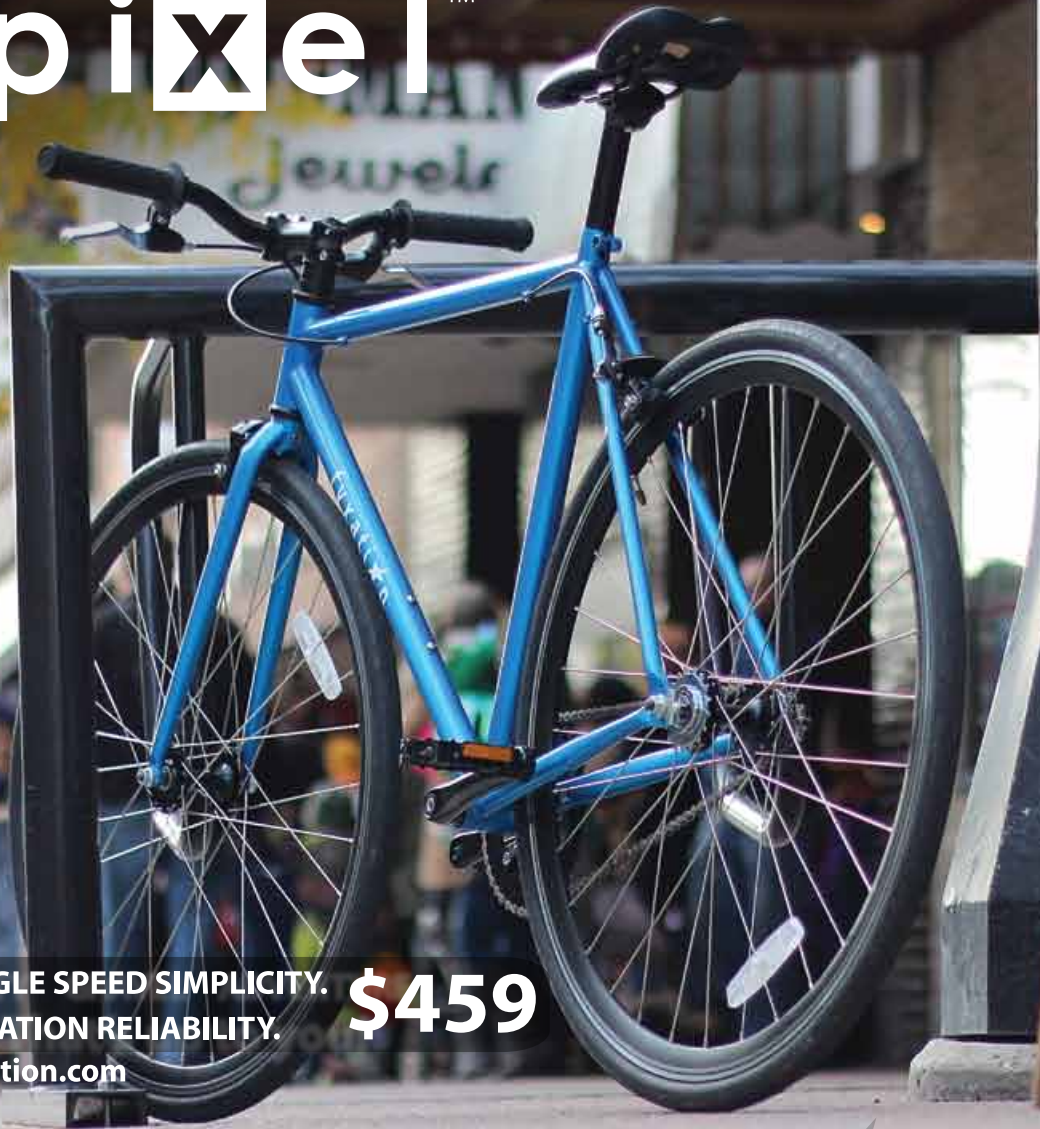


“Beautiful” Bob Williams

A community needs its leader and Bob is the NSC Velodrome’s. Styled as the Track Director, Bob was there when the first plans were laid and has since kept the dream going by educating new racers, announcing and promoting the races, taking care of the maintenance of the velodrome, and anything else that the velodrome needs to keep going.

Although Bob does so much for the velodrome community, he’s a little bit of an enigma. Everyone I know has their favorite stories and some sound more than a little outrageous, but my favorite has to be a description of his diet by one of the local shop owners that raced with him in the ‘70s : Diet Pepsi and popcorn. If not racing season, popcorn to be replaced by Doritos, Cool Ranch preferred.

pixel™



SINGLE SPEED SIMPLICITY. **\$459**
FYXATION RELIABILITY.
fyxation.com

fyxation★

BICYCLES - MILWAUKEE, WI USA

Sprint Events

1. Sprint
2. Team Sprint
3. Keirin
4. Chariot Race

Endurance Events

1. Individual Pursuit
2. Team Pursuit
3. Scratch Race
4. Points Race
5. Madison
6. Miss N Out (Devil take the Hindmost)



Thursday Night Lights

It wouldn't be Thursday Night Lights without a little gridlock along the way. The disadvantage of the velodrome's location is the mass of commuters making their way up 35 towards their own little slice of the American Dream in the early evening. It's a great time to get yourself pumped with some tunes, spend some time watching dogs in other cars or talk about the coming track night with a good friend. Usually you can spot the other racers heading up as well; there's really only one good way to get up there.

Once you're there, it's like you never left. You see the same faces week in and week out, figure out which wheels to follow in the event, who can be trusted, who you should stay clear of. Everyone high-fives and has a kind word to say. Occasionally early in the season, there are nerves that get the better of us and it can subdue the typically fun and free atmosphere, but those go away soon enough. Everyone is there to have a good time, and it's hard to have a bad time when you're racing your bike.

And if you're up there, that's probably what you love to do. Track racing, at its heart, is just a game. It simplifies the act of racing a bicycle to its bare necessities. There are no brakes, there is no turning back, there is

just forward. Forward and "Who should I follow?" and "Why am I at the front this early?" and a lot of staring at the wheel in front of you in a haze.

You get three races a night, if the schedule pans out the normal way. This is changing for a couple of the categories as we grow and expand, but generally you get three. Three attempts at making your mark on the results board with some time to recover in between. This is a great format as it keeps the races short (the longest you do as a Cat 4 is 10 km), and allows you multiple chances at redemption. You messed up? Here, have another. It's a pretty great way to run a competition and leads to smart racing as opposed to all-out efforts that may result in a lapse of judgement, or worse, an accident. These events generally are split into two categories, sprint or endurance.

Everyone has their most loved and their most hated event. Some only show up on nights when their particular style of racing is well represented—there are a few Thursdays when the average quad size jumps up a few inches—but most stick with it and do everything. As for my own personal favorite, I'd have to say the Chariot. Two laps of 250 m each from a standing start as fast as you can go. No tactics, no games, just go. Lovely.



New Nano Brake Light

With new appearance, new function, New NANO brake light brings the different experience from before.

iLUMENOX®

INTERBIKE 2014
BOOTH No. 25179

SHIELD 200 200 lumens USB Headlight

The light of SHIELD 200 is designed depending on German regulation. And with 200 lumens light output, it has great performance of illuminating without hurting eyes. Its housing made from aluminum helps radiating heat efficiently. Besides, the metallic surface with the decent appearance looks more stylish and carving. SHIELD 200 uses a lithium polymer battery which could be charged via the micro USB port. This could be fitted on variety shapes of tubes by its adjustable bracket and rubber band.



AN INTERVIEW WITH ANNA SCHWINN



Aaron Thomas Smith: Tell us a little about yourself. Who you are, what you do.

Anna Schwinn: I'm the Lead Engineer for All-City [Cycles] which is an important title because it doesn't mean anything at all—I'm the only engineer at All-City. I like bikes. I like bikes a lot. They kind of run every aspect of my life. I decided to start [track] racing last year because somebody made some comment about how if I showed up there could be a women's field and then the women who deserved to be able to race could race. I found something really offensive about that for some reason, and then I showed up and I saw that there were all of these awesome racers up here but they didn't have a race. And the reason for that was purely because they were ladies.

ATS: Last year I remember there would be three ladies and races would be cancelled or fit into the men's class, and now tonight there are enough to have two separate women's fields?

AS: So we're anticipating at least twenty-five women, realistically about twenty-eight. What's really exciting about that is that I took two good representatives of our field [to other velodromes] and we did great. We are competitive with other more well-established fields—real racers. We don't just have bodies, we have talented women.

The Women's Field

A recent Thursday night had a maxed out women's field. In the first time in the history of the NSC Velodrome there were enough women racing that it necessitated two separate fields to allow all to compete. Generally, the women's field is one, with all categories bunched up to compete together. This tended to discourage new racers from competing as most of our regular female attendees were quite strong and regional, if not national, contenders. Lately, however, the field was put in with other men's categories or cut outright due to the small number of racers. Last year it seemed as if women's track racing was on its way out at the NSC.

Enter Koochella and the indomitable Anna Schwinn. Their kits are bold, loud and neon. They have an affinity for dinosaurs (specifically the triceratops). They're far from the subdued, focused racing type—they're fun and keep a positive, supportive attitude not just for their own teammates but set the tone for every competitor as well. They've gone from a handful of women last season to a full on invasion in only one off-season, but how did they get here?

Presented with the state of women's racing up at her own local track, Anna wasted no time and started the hard work. Recruiting a number of exceptional young women with talent and the drive to compete, she banded them together under the Koochella moniker and began to build the women's racing scene one kick-ass lady at a time. But Anna has done more than just build her own team,

DESIGNED FOR YOUR JOURNEY

KWICK TENDRIL ENDRUANCE | The Kwick Tendril Endurance was designed with dual layer flat protection underneath the tread area with a single layer guarding the sidewalls, topped with a long lasting rubber compound making the perfect urban tire. Whether you are commuting, riding with friends, or headed to the cafe these tires won't let you down.

KWICK TENDRIL ENDRUANCE

CAFE CRUISER

CITY PROOF

KendaTire.com

KENDA

ATS: Why Koochella? Where did the name come from?

AS: It was a Powderhorn 24 Team. Actually [it was] on my birthday in March and I basically pointed at these five really fast women at my party and said “You need to be on an awesome team. We need to have a women’s super team that can rival any team out there and we need to do Powderhorn better than anybody.” So we got matching bikes and we got tents and we got sponsorship. It was nuts. We showed up in these crazy kits and we were monsters for twenty-four hours. The crazy thing was that everyone was really stoked on us. For months afterwards I would be riding around in street clothes or whatever and people would know who I was. They would yell “Koochella” at me. The name was basically just a funny name that was really aggressively feminine and it should be. It should scream WOMEN.

ATS: Quite honestly I think you’ve been the driving force behind the women’s field. What’s the long con?

AS: Honestly, it’s tonight. We’ve maxed out the track. You remember, that was inconceivable last year. And we’re maxing it out with a genuinely talented field who wants to be here. These are ladies who are looking at racing cyclocross or road down the road and because they’re attached to this very positive entity. Look around—we’ve got this base-camp for ladies going on, both wearing and not wearing Koochella kits. This was inconceivable last year, it was completely inconceivable. I remember the first time this popped into my head last winter, I started counting up in my head all of the ladies and I was like “We could max this out, this could happen.” So that’s tonight. What’s really cool is we finally have enough women that we can Cat up a bunch of 4s and we’ve got seven or eight Cat 3 women hanging around, we could upgrade some to [Cat] 2s.

ATS: What’s the next goal? If we’ve made it, where now?

AS: I kind of joke about the five-year plan. But I’m looking ahead—track season—people are getting through track season for this season, I’m looking at ‘cross honestly. For the rest of track season I want to get the team to other velodromes. I’ve had some friends come to me and ask me how they can set up women’s track teams where they are. What’s the Kool-Aid that they need to serve to scoop up the ladies and where do they find them. I’m developing new teams for track, because I’ve done one. You’ve got this set of tools set up—you know what to do. You know the language to use, you know how to talk to people. Setting up development teams under my team’s umbrella and setting them up to find resources and structure, you know, get them set up like businesses so they can set up and be their own clubs next season. The goal isn’t to have this singular “chick entity” the goal is to create the chick community.

she provides a “base-camp” for everyone who is interested in racing at the NSC. You’ll see multiple different kits hanging out at the southern-part of the infield, the de facto Koochella homebase for Thursday’s events. With a designated snack person every Thursday from the team and support from their sponsors, Sunrise Cycles and All-City Cycles, it’s a welcome sight for many new racers.

I’ve been in many meetings where older racers try desperately to figure out a way to appeal to a younger audience and grow the sport they so love. I’ve heard everything, from advertising in newspapers to trying out “that new Tweeter thing.” But at the end of the day, if you want to get anyone to do anything, being a nice, positive human being with a vision is a good way to get that done. Anna Schwinn and Koochella are a shining example of what can be done by just shutting up and doing the work and I applaud her and her crew for that. It’s made our little wooden bowl a better place and I’m sure it will continue to for years ahead.

The Next Step

It’s amazing what can be accomplished with a lot of passion and the drive to put it into action. Our velodrome has provided us with 25 years of track racing and will most likely keep providing its unique services for years to come. That said, it will not last forever and much like those racers in the ‘80s who made it happen, we have another band willing to take up the cause. There are multiple proposals on the table for where we go next, but one thing is sure, track racing is here to stay in Minnesota and a venue will be built to provide a home for our dedicated community. In the meantime, on Thursday evenings in Blaine, MN around seven o’clock you can witness something special.





photo: Rich Adams

**Blazing trails for 25 years,
and counting...**

Tools, Lubes, Cleaners, & Accessories



Enjoying the Ride Since 1989

pedros.com



KING OF IT ALL

**GRAVEL KING
ALL-ROADS
ALL-CONDITIONS
ALL-WEATHER**

ZSG
natural
compound

AX-a
Advanced Extra
Alpha Card

**Anti-Flat
Casing**

 PANARACER

GRAVEL KING
700x23, 26, 28

Panaracer
www.panaracer.com











Surly Straggler

Shortly after Surly introduced the Cross Check some fifteen years ago, someone chimed in that they wished for a disc brake option. After introducing a bunch of other bikes and “inventing” a category or two along the way, Surly took a sideways glance at their cyclocross bike and gave us the Straggler. It’s like the Cross Check with all of the same rack and fender braze-ons as the current generation, but different. Larger tire clearance, disc brake mounts and a new horizontal dropout design for either single speed or geared drivetrains. And it’s even heavier at 7 pounds for the frameset, give or take an ounce. This isn’t really a bike for someone counting the ounces of anything but their beverage of choice.

The Straggler excels at no single thing, but is capable of many. It’s a disc brake ‘cross bike erring towards adventure and utility rather than speed and lightweight. The Straggler has clearance for up to 44 mm wide tire with full fenders, and builds up with as standard components as you can get for a versatile bike that can evolve as your interests change. I decided

on a mix of ‘cross and mountain components—a 46/36 crankset, 12-36 cassette, riser bars, top-mount shifters and hydraulic disc brakes—for an all day, all terrain city explorer capable of wherever an aimless ride may steer. It’s 26.5 lbs as pictured, but I didn’t put any thought into lightweight spec, and there are some easy places to trim.

Describing the ride isn’t full of superlatives—it’s well-worn cyclocross geometry tuned for larger tires, “monstercross” as some may have it. The chainstays remain short (430 mm on my 59 cm sample) even with the clearance for large tires, with the ride height kept in check by the 72 mm bottom bracket drop, yielding a very stable ride with smaller diameter road tires, and a bottom bracket height in the normal range with the largest tires that will fit. I’ve not had any issues with my wheel sliding forward in the dropouts even without using the included screw adjusters. It has never felt particularly fast, but it’s a stable ride—the Straggler goes where you point it and keeps at it. What it lacks in speed in makes up for in fun. Rip it through the woods

today, bolt on racks and head out for a few day tour tomorrow, ride it to work again next week. About my only wish for the bike would be a third bottle mount under the downtube for when the going gets extra thirsty, and maybe a pump peg.

Over time I'm sure this build will change, and that's part of the long term plan. Changing tires and dropping the derailleurs doesn't take much time in the stand, and makes for an entirely different ride experience. There are a lot of parts combinations to build a super commuter or dirt road tourer or something in between on the Straggler platform. Just don't mistake it for a cyclocross race bike or fast-guy road bike and you won't be disappointed.

The Straggler frameset is available for \$600 in a remarkable ten sizes, 42-64 cm, in either Glitter Dreams purple or Closet Black. Newly announced is the Straggler 650b, a similar flavor in the betweener wheel diameter in eight sizes including the smallest Surly yet, 38-58 cm. www.surlybikes.com



Second Opinions Count

Sarah Pearman rides her Surly Straggler for transportation, endurance road rides like the 375 mile Crush the Commonwealth, and occasionally on the local single-track. She had some things to report.

Disc brakes on a road bike are a game changer, especially for me as a small-handed human who has had serious difficulties getting my past bikes to stop with road levers and cantilevers. Given the “standard” frame specs—English bottom bracket, 27.2 mm post, 135 mm rear spacing—I was able to build mine from parts I already had.

Most of my struggles with bikes are related to fit since I'm just barely tall enough to ride a 700c bike and hate toe overlap. The 46 cm Straggler manages not to have toe overlap up to a 32 mm slick tire, which is better than some tiny bikes, but anything larger and I find my frustration level rise.

That's not to say it isn't fun with big tires—I can fit skinny 29" mountain tires on it, but it's even better now that I've realized I can fit my 650b mountain bike wheels. It fits a 2.1" up front without significant toe overlap, and 2.0" in the back, for serious monstercross activities. Surly read my mind and just announced the 650b Straggler, which seems like it might fit me even better out of the box.



New Albion Homebrew

In 1579 Sir Francis Drake landed in northern California and dubbed it New Albion. In 1976, Jack McAuliffe founded the now defunct New Albion brewery in Sonoma, which was regarded as the first American microbrewery. And in 2012, New Albion Cycles formed with the idea of bringing classic bicycle designs to the market. The Homebrew is their flagship model.

The Homebrew is best described as a classic road bike with hint of modern technology. It joins just a handful of production bikes currently on the market with downtube shifters. The steel frameset is lugged and TIG welded, and of course readily accepts racks and fenders. The fork features a 1" quill stem and eyelets for a mini rack and fenders.

The Homebrew offers a classic cycling experience that countless cyclists have enjoyed in recent

years by restoring second hand bikes from the '80s. But not only are those old bikes becoming harder to find, their downfalls are eventually exposed, namely poor braking, a lack of hill-friendly gearing, and limited tire clearance. The Homebrew takes care of all of those things with aplomb.

If you've never ridden with single-pivot brakes you might not appreciate the mechanical advantage that dual-pivot side-pull caliper brakes offer, but it's night and day, and so thankfully New Albion decided not to go that retro. The IRD B57's have clearance for up to 32 mm tires, which is good because the Homebrew can accept them. It ships with 700 x 28c Kenda Kwicks tires.

The tires might be more aptly named Komfortable, as their rather high volume and low pressure (85 psi max) makes for an incredibly comfortable ride. The tires are mounted to 32-spoke polished aluminum rims.

The drivetrain is predominantly composed of Sun Race components. I have nothing but good things to say about this groupset, and the pairing of a 50-34 crankset with an 11-32 cassette was highly appreciated. New Albion's San Francisco home is known for its steep hills, and people that go up and over them.

Downtube shifters aren't for everyone. They're not as convenient as STI or even bar-end shifters, but they get the job done. They also make for a clean looking handlebar with less cables to interfere with a front rack, should you choose to go that route.

I did, in fact, ride the Homebrew with both front and rear racks for the majority of the test. I occasionally strapped packages to the rear rack, but I rode with a handlebar bag nearly every single time. The additional weight on the bars was quite obvious at times, especially on rough roads and when locking the bike up. But for the most part it wasn't a hindrance. And because I was usually able to fit everything I needed for the day in said bag, I was able to commute on the hottest days of the year without a backpack or messenger bag. For someone like me, who almost never rides without one, the experience is refreshing.

And that might be the essence of the Homebrew, it's a refreshing change of pace. It's not a technological wonder, it's a classic. The kind of bike your parents rode, the kind that made millions of people fall in love with cycling. It's also worth noting that the bike is simply beautiful, as countless people pointed out during my time on the Homebrew.

Detractors may point out that the frame and fork are made from high tensile steel and not chromoly, but the difference is predominantly a matter of weight, not performance or safety on a bike like this. The decision of course is a matter of cost, which might seem unlikely since at \$999 the Homebrew doesn't fit into the category of affordable, but I contend that it's worth considering. You're not going to see a million of these on the streets of your city, and some people like to have a bike that no one else has.

At the moment I have 16 working bicycles at my disposal. Even though another one might be more appropriate for a given ride, I keep opting for the Homebrew. That pretty much sums it all up.

www.newalbioncycles.com



Assuming you're doing it right, tires should be the only thing on your bike to contact the ground. As such, tires have a huge influence on the overall ride of a bicycle, and what sort of terrain you can traverse. Not all tires are created equal—here are four favorites from this season, for four different types of riding.



Kenda Kwick Tendril Endurance

Price: \$39

Width: 28, 32, 35 mm

Bead: Folding

TPI: 60

Weight: 540 g (32 mm, tested)

Features: Bead to bead puncture resistant material combined with under tread shield for double flat protection. Long lasting tread compound.

The double layered flat protection of the Kenda Kwick Tendril Endurance yields as close to a flat proof pneumatic tire as one can hope to find, though with a significant weight and ride quality penalty as compared to more performance oriented tires. No one wants to fix a flat on the way home from the office, and a heavy tire with air in it is far faster rolling than the lightest, most supple tire gone flat. For commuting and utilitarian riding, the long lasting tread and effective flat protection keeps you rolling through whatever road debris your city may throw at you. www.kendatire.com



Panaracer Gravel King

Price: \$50

Width: 23, 26, 28 mm

Bead: Folding

TPI: 126

Weight: 270 g (28 mm, tested)

Features: Natural rubber compound and 126 tpi casing makes for a smooth and supple ride. Bead to bead flat protection.

The Gravel King is a performance tire with lightweight puncture protection, a tire that allows more adventure than just smooth pavement without a terrible ride, or weighing down an otherwise lightweight build. The tires prove supple and smooth riding, a very real upgrade to the handling and ride as compared to pure city commuter tires. Dirt roads and smooth trails are no problem, and the puncture resistance is enough to ward off most intrusions, but for gnarly gravel one had best max out the pressure to avoid pinch flats or wait for the 32 mm version later this year. www.panaracer.com



WTB Nano 700

Price: \$50

Width: 40 mm

Bead: Folding

TPI: 60

Weight: 450 g

Features: Elevated centerline tread for smooth rolling on hard surfaces, numerous small knobs for traction on dirt and gravel. Large volume casing.

The 700c version of the WTB Nano has quickly become a favorite tire for mixing pavement and dirt. Whether blasting through the park on a friendly night ride or hitting full on singletrack on a 'cross bike, the Nano is a capable performer. Remarkably fast rolling on pavement when at full inflation, with less air the Nano hooks up like a mountain bike tire on all but the slickest surfaces and mud. Put it on your 'cross bike (assuming it fits) and hit trails that were otherwise out of reach, run it on a mountain bike when you need more pavement speed without sacrificing all off-road grip. www.wtb.com



Lit 360° Ultra-Reflective

Price: \$50

Width: 28 mm

Bead: Folding

TPI: 127

Weight: 250 g

Features: The 9 mm tall reflective strip provides near 360° visibility. Race quality casing with bead to bead flat protection.

Reflective piping on tire sidewalls isn't particularly new, but the 9 mm tall ScotchLite strip on the Lit 360° might be the largest out there, covering enough sidewall for near 360° visibility to allow drivers approaching from the front and rear an eye-catching glimpse. The race quality casing, lightweight flat protection and 28 mm size make these tires a good choice for road riders and performance oriented commuters looking for additional visibility without compromising ride quality. While 28 mm tires can handle rougher surfaces, a heavier casing would be preferred for heavy gravel and dirt riding. www.litcycling.com



Illumenox Slash USB

Pretty much every urban cyclist needs bike lights, but almost every urban cyclist's needs are a little different. Some need extreme brightness, others need long battery life. And different bikes require different mounting options. This keeps the light manufacturers busy, and arguably, happy. Take for example, Illumenox. The Taiwanese light manufacturer already has an array of lights, not to mention its offerings under the brand names S-Sun and Skully.

The Slash USB is a decidedly modern looking light, with five SMD LED bulbs, numerous beveled edges and a narrow profile that makes it look like it belongs on a fast bike. That's no accident, as the Slash USB is designed to fit aero seatposts, carbon fork blades and any number of shapes. But it's equally at home on a round seatpost, mountain bike handlebars or even strapped to a bike rack. With three different sized elastomers and an optional rubber mount-

ing pad provided, the mounting system is extremely versatile.

The Slash USB is reasonably bright with good runtimes (up to 12 hours for the white light, 9.5 max for the red light). As a headlight, it's more for being seen than for seeing, though it will get you home if the streetlights go out. As a taillight, it's excellent, providing more than 180° of visibility. Unfortunately, the headlight is also visible from more than 180°, which means it might cast light back towards the rider depending on how it's mounted.

Of course, the Slash USB is rechargeable. I'm a fan of this particular design, which incorporates the male USB input jack into the light unit, eliminating the need for a cable.

Both the red and white lights are available in five different body colors and retail for \$35.

www.illumnox.com

REAL BIKES THAT FOLD.™



MONTAGUE[®]
Performance + Portability

www.montaguebikes.com 617.491.7200



ABUS Granit Futura Mini U-Lock

The ABUS Granit Futura Mini U-Lock has been my go-to lock for almost three years now, locking up my bike on streets across the country and throughout Western Europe. Whether making my daily Post Office run or locking up in high theft cities like New York, San Francisco and London, in every instance my bike has been there when I've returned, which is perhaps the ultimate positive review.

One only needs a lock better than the next person to avoid theft in most cases, and the sense to only lock to sturdy immovable objects, and with this mini u-lock from ABUS I'm fairly certain that in the vast majority of cases I have the next guy down outgunned. The reputation of German engineering is well-earned, and the family-owned ABUS lock company upholds the lofty national standards. The 11 mm shackle and case are made of a custom formulated hardened steel alloy with a double locking cylinder that requires a thief to cut the shackle twice in order to free the lock without a key. The top-end lock cylinder is pick and corrosion resistant—I'd know, as an unplanned back pocket lock ejection left one of my ABUS Gra-

nit Futura locks laying out in the rain and mud for a weekend before being retrieved, and working as well as ever. Each lock ships with a pair of keys and a key code card for additional keys, or for ordering an identically keyed lock. It's hard to explain how convenient having a pair of u-locks using the same key has proven in high-risk theft areas.

At 690 g the ABUS Granit Future mini is the lightest high security mini-shackle lock I've used, beating similar competition by 300 g or more. Be forewarned however that at just 2.75" wide the shackle opening can be impossible to fit around certain parking meters or large diameter signposts other locks slide over. That said, over the years I've yet to find myself completely frustrated by the size—quite the contrary, it easily slides into pants' rear pockets and my backpack and I'd prefer the lighter weight to larger shackle any time. Being made in Germany by well-compensated, dedicated employees with top-end materials and testing comes at a retail price of \$85. There are less expensive locks, there are higher security locks, but this one fits my needs just right. www.abus.com



MISSION WORKSHOP // SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
WEATHERPROOF BAGS AND TECHNICAL APPAREL
LIFETIME WARRANTY // MADE IN THE USA

MISSIONWORKSHOP.COM



Kali Protectives Chakra Plus

This helmet started out as a west coast loaner when I absentmindedly arrived for a stint of riding and shooting with just a cycling cap in tow. After a couple of weeks worth of riding, it became mine, and back on home turf the helmet I grab when heading out more often than not.

The Kali Protectives Chakra Plus is a cross country mountain bike helmet, complete with visor and bug guard netting out of the box. It's racier looking than what is seen as "urban" these days, but my riding takes me between road and trails seamlessly and I tend to burn hot—I prefer the ventilation and weight of this style of helmet most of the time. I removed and promptly lost the visor as I'm wont to do, but the bug netting is just as useful on pavement as in the woods.

Other notable features include an in-mold shell (including a lower wrap on the front edge of the helmet to prevent shelf wear), extended rear coverage as compared to a road helmet, locking strap adjusters and a rear dial fit system. The weight, or lack thereof, was one of the first things I noticed about the Chakra Plus, with the M/L helmet coming in at a remarkable 295 g without the visor.

In most respects the Chakra feels like a much nicer helmet than the \$55 retail price would indicate. I did have one side of the rear fit system pull out of the dial, but was able to pull it apart and fix it on the spot. Always best to try before you buy, the helmet that fits one person's head may not do it for the next. Available in XS/S, S/M and M/L sizes, in a number of different colors. www.kaliprotectives.com

THE SMARTS
IN CYCLING



SUPERIOR
SIDE VISIBILITY

FLEXIBLE MOUNT

SEAT-STAY HANDLEBAR

SEAT POST FRONT POST

CATEYE.COM



TRUST THE CAT

JAPANESE TECHNOLOGY

CYCLING SUPERIORITY

SHINE On to RIDE ON

RAPID X

BRIGHT.
SMART. SAFE.

The Rapid X brings safety to the next level. Sleek and bright, this USB rechargeable, 6-mode, water-resistant light offers superior side visibility with multiple mounting options. Also includes a Battery Auto Save function which automatically changes your light from solid to flashing then gives you a full hour to make it home safe and sound.



fig. XXIX. RAPID X



Banjo Brothers Convertible Waterproof Pannier Backpack

Being a teacher carries with it many rewards, an unencumbered commute not being among them. Panniers help with this at least while on the bike, removing the overstuffed backpack and providing relief for the sweaty back and achey shoulders that can accompany. But how about when I dismount and unhook the panniers? Off the bike, most perform as well as a lopsided briefcase.

The transformer mechanism of the Banjo Brothers Convertible Waterproof Pannier Backpack is one of those so-simple-it's-stupid concepts. A large flap provides top closure and conceals the backpack straps in pannier mode, with a simple hook and elastic strap rack attachment. Unhook the bag from the rack, flip over the flap to expose the backpack straps and hide the pannier mounts, adjust the straps and you have a backpack. The pocket on the flap remains outermost

in both modes, with zipper access on both sides, which is convenient for never fumbling for wallet and phone. Though it may not be my first choice for hiking around all day, the padded straps and chest strap make it a serviceable backpack. To transform back to pannier, the straps fold back neatly and quickly, securing the ends and requiring little fuss. Flip the flap and you're good to go. Banjo Brothers' execution is simple, fast, and functional.

The bag has 1100 cubic inches of space—plenty of room for laptop, change of clothes, work shoes, and lunch and the roll-top closure with burly, removable welded-seam waterproof liner keeps everything dry. Two side outer pockets, one zippered, one open, are decently sized and though the zipper was mangled on our sample, Banjo Brothers has a reputation for great warranty and replacement service. This bag would have been replaced right away, but I was too busy using it to bother. Light loops and reflective piping help with low-light visibility.

When overstuffed with an open top the roll-top waterproofing is null and void, and unfortunately, the straps to clip the flap over the top in backpack mode when it's this full sometimes aren't long enough to reach. At 3 lbs, it's not the lightest, although removing that waterproof liner on dry days can save almost half a pound. At \$80, it's a total commuter bargain.

www.banjobrothers.com



KRYPTONITE®

MESSENGER % COLLECTION

“Without a bike
I’m nobody... I’ve
got nothing left.”

Greg Ugalde, Urban Cycling
Hall of Fame inductee 2013

Follow us:



kryptonitelock.com

coming soon...urban security designed by messengers



CAPS
LOS

50
D
BOI

The Sprout

FLO
C

FUN Rides

By Scott Spitz

There is the saying “You can’t kill an idea,” and the idea of getting a considerable number of cyclists together for a rolling party certainly hasn’t died, though some oppositional forces have definitely tried to kill it. Most notably, Critical Mass embodied this idea of a roving, rolling party, “putting the fun between your legs,” and generally having a good time. As time moved forward Critical Mass became a contentious force to many, bringing a level of repression down upon the party and squashing its more positive vibes. Over the years, Critical Mass has struggled to keep its party vibe and initial momentum, but the idea itself has transferred or evolved into other forms, such as the large group fun ride. The idea is the same—get a bunch of cyclists together for a rolling party—but how that idea has been implemented consists of great diversity, barring easy definition. The logistics, however, remain simple and steadfast. Get a bunch of people together. Start riding. Have a good time. And that idea not only can’t be killed, but continues to get stronger as more and more group fun rides fill the void Critical Mass has left behind in many locales. How did we evolve into these new forms of rolling parties and what might come next?

Critical Mass wanted to be a rolling party, but depending on who you ask, the political protest element couldn’t be ignored and sometimes overshadowed the fun atmosphere. In some cities the political, defiant atmosphere hit such a fever pitch the police were an expected, unpleasant presence. Soon followed arrests, intimidation, and increased incidents of physical violence. The documentary, *Aftermass*, details this escalation and subsequent decreasing number of riders due to the growing hostility. The party was quickly

becoming a buzzkill. The cyclists, however, weren’t ready to quit riding.

What follows in the wake of Critical Mass is a new type of rolling party, where cyclists gather to be social and have fun, with no manner of confrontational agenda. These new rides often organize around themes rather than politics. There are the World Naked Bike Rides, Tweed Rides, Underwear Rides, Slow Roll in Cleveland and Detroit, Bicycle Prom in Miami, Flock of Cycles rides in Pittsburgh, Radder Day Rides in Indianapolis, among countless others. Sometimes they are sporadic, scheduled on a whim, while others are yearly, and yet others monthly. They all, despite their various themes, center around a couple of key principles. As Mike MacKool of Slow Roll Detroit states it, “Slow Roll started in 2010 with the initial intent of riding bikes with friends and contributing to the growth of cycling in Detroit,” or as the mission of Flock of Cycles states, “Flock of Cycles works to bring people together and make Pittsburgh a fun place to ride bikes,” and how “Dapper” of the Albany Tweed Ride explains, “The intent was just to try to get people together and have some fun on bikes, and demonstrate that you could do so without looking like Lance.”

The reoccurring theme is obvious. It’s not explicitly about breaking oil dependence, asserting one’s right to the streets, creating new expanses of public space, goading the authorities into a state of social tension or anything else. Whether an individual rides for these purposes or not, and whether these dynamics are part of the ride isn’t the point. The rides themselves are organized around no agenda but fun, and that’s where the break from the old Critical Mass approach is most noticed. With this break comes new riders as well,



Slow Roll in Detroit invites people to join right in. Photo by Mike MacKool

who are drawn to the fun and not the politics, contributing to the continued growth of this new type of rolling party. The Midnight Ridazz gathering in Los Angeles prides itself on hosting what they call “All Invites,” even explicitly inviting car drivers to their events.

“Roadblock” of Midnight Ridazz expounded on the All Invite dynamic, “Since we have such a diverse range of people that participate for the fun of the rides we end up with allies in various political and business realms that aid in the fight for safer streets and better access for bikes.” He goes on to cite, “For example, the Midnight Ridazz crowd was able to halt a \$50 million Federal bridge project in L.A. that didn’t include bike lanes and this would not have happened without all of the resources that have become available through the organization of fun rides over 10 years.”

The Albany Tweed Ride saw attendance grow from 30 riders the first year to 70 riders two years later, including a number of well-dressed children. The Slow Roll in Detroit grew from 5 riders during their inaugural ride to over 2500 just a couple years later. The Radder Day Rides in Indianapolis continue to increase each month and the monthly Underwear Rides in Pittsburgh have more riders than Critical Mass ever did. The numbers don’t lie, something is more appealing about these types of rides than the Critical Mass format. Or could it be a greater cultural change?

When Critical Mass first started, social media wasn’t even a concept as we know it today. Gatherings were spread by word of mouth, a consistent schedule, flyers and handbills, and phone calls... rotary phones even. The marketing playing field has changed, and all it takes is a few minutes on Facebook to reach hundreds or even thousands of local riders, which may be bring-

ing more cyclists to the streets and to the group fun rides all the same. Maybe the explosion is, in part, just better advertising.

Mike from Slow Roll Detroit clarifies, “Social media plays a big part, you see a picture on your feed of your friends posing around thousands of cyclists on a Monday night, you have to ask what it is, if they aren’t preaching it already. Plus we come across a lot of people on the ride who see us and ask. We give them a flyer with the code of conduct on it or they just join right in.”

Albany Tweed Ride organizers agree, “I use the blog and social media. We’ve been lucky to get coverage from some very popular local blogs, and that gives us a lot of exposure and, actually, a lot of word of mouth.”

While internet media seems to be the most effective, the Radder Day Rides in Indianapolis still utilize traditional flyering combined with sponsorship funds, as organizer Nat Wolos describes, “Radder Day Riders is a hobby and a burning passion, each month we get about \$100 in sponsorship money with \$200-300 worth of prizes for our riders. I spend about \$300 dollars a month on various forms of advertising just because I want the most people to hear about the ride. We do physical flyers and online promotion. To be honest with you our physical flyers don’t really get us many people right now but at least we are seen.”

How successful group fun rides have become, and how they grew, isn’t meant to disparage Critical Mass by any means, as ride organizers will give a nod to the history and momentum Critical Mass brought to these new forms of gathering cyclists. It can’t be denied that Critical Mass did create a definitive “mass” and brought



Neil Bezdek Red Hook Crit **BROOKYN**

photo: Eloy Anzola



VP-ARC6 Cleat. Simply Genius.

That's what everyone says about the VP-ARC6 cleat when they see how easy it is to replace. Upgrading your existing Keo® pedal system with the ARC6 allows quick and reliable cleat replacement in EXACTLY the same position every time. No outlines, no jigs, no templates, no pains, no hassles. It's simply Genius.



Learn more about the ARC-6 cleat and see it in action.
www.vp-usa.com



It's all smiles at the Albany Tweed Ride. Photo by Dave Mercier

many out of their cars and onto their bikes, even if only for a short ride through the streets. Although some of those riders may have been turned off by Critical Mass, they are being turned back on to these non-politicized rolling parties.

MacKool of Slow Roll explained, “We definitely have gotten a lot of riders through Critical Mass because it is a tight community, but I don’t think we have taken away from Critical Mass. We both have grown over the years, but I do know there are a lot of people who prefer Slow Roll to Critical Mass.”

Radder Day Rides drew from the spirit of Critical Mass, but breaks from that model with business sponsorship, professional flyers, and partnerships with other businesses and advocacy organizations, which only some Critical Mass rides mimicked in the past. On the other hand, Midnight Ridazz rejects any association with the Critical Mass experience as mass rides were, as Roadblock puts it, “Never much of a thing in L.A.” Ultimately, Critical Mass surely seeded the idea that can’t be killed in one way or another, but most of the rules, or lack thereof, have undeniably changed in this new format.

Organizing logistics and intents aside, the idea of the group fun ride is appealing because the riders bring their own agenda of fun to the events. Roadblock explains, “It’s great to see people create their own themes and ride leaders emerge and run their own FUNarchy.” Wolos expressed a similar sentiment, “People meet people and have fun riding at whatever speed they want.” Critical Mass rides differ only in degree, but there is a noticeable divide when we consider the conflicts of agenda that seem to take center stage on the mass rides, while the individual agendas

of the group fun riders tend to be obscured under the larger banner of fun. Dapper summarized, “Everyone just wants to have fun, that’s really the only agenda.” It’s that simple.

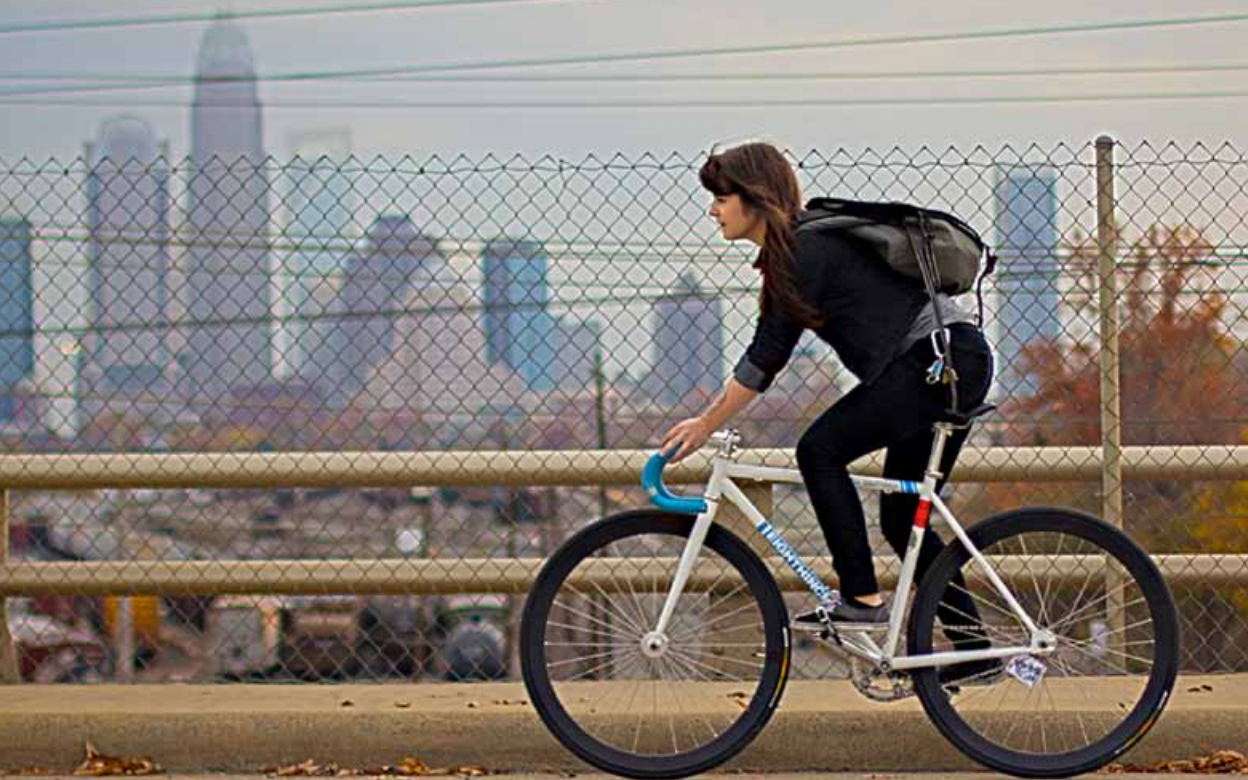
“Group Fun Rides” seem to be the “Neo-Critical Mass” of bicycle counterculture at this point, but only time will tell if they will be more sustainable than the Critical Mass model, which, arguably, still has legs 20 some years on. Group fun rides are still quite new, however, and the ride organizers have various perspectives on how they see their role in the near future. Nick Drombosky, the founder of Flock of Cycles, questions it completely, stating, “When it was started, cycling in Pittsburgh was in a much different place and organizations like Bike Pittsburgh were much smaller and capable of much less, leaving gaps in what could be done to help the community. Now with the explosion of the number of riders in the city, the added infrastructure, and other rides, activities, and events, it’s not clear if there is still a need.” Wolos of Radder Day Rides considers diversifying the event, “I grew sick of just doing things once a month. It is just too much space in between raddness, so this month we started the Take Over The Night ride,” he then detailed more planned rides, “...in the near future we will have a Sunday brunch ride and another themed ride so we have a ride every weekend. We will have a weekly ride if not this riding season, next riding season. I want to have a Monday ride because unfortunately so many people hate their jobs and get depressed on Mondays and I want to give them a boost.”

The momentum of the group fun rides seems to be growing at the moment and, so far, they are avoiding the logistical pitfalls and tensions that strained the efforts of Critical Mass. Riders, both new and old, are coming together, wearing underwear or tweed, getting Rad, at midnight, and in countless other ways, to simply have fun and ride bikes with friends. This group fun is no longer the enticement for other intentions or motivations, political or not, but rather the point itself. It will be interesting to see if these group fun rides continue to exist alongside the struggling Critical Masses or replace them completely, but most importantly, people are still on bikes, gathering together, and having a great time, carrying on the spirit of the rolling party and continuing to prove this is an idea you simply can’t kill.



EIGHTH // INCH

THE NEW EIGHTHINCH.COM



Dispatch

The Dispatch has arrived! The Dispatch is USA workmanship at the highest level. Designed, developed and produced in our homestate we are proud to introduce the new Dispatch. Smooth, quick handling and light the Dispatch is a versatile bike that can handle just about anything!

Frameset
\$599

Custom Build
\$1099





On the Move

Female Riders in Kansas City are Hitting the Streets and Changing the Face Of Cycling

By Rachel Krause

Bettys. Bunnies. Look in any cyclists' dictionary online and you'll find these two terms used to describe female riders. However, women would rather you call them something else: Cyclists.

Many well-respected advocacy organizations such as Bike Pittsburgh, Philadelphia Bicycle Coalition, and Washington Area Bicyclists Association have ramped up their women's bicycling initiatives to try and eliminate the gender gap among cyclists. Momentum is also building in Kansas City, a city not normally touted for its bicycle friendliness. The city still lags in bike rankings, but new data from the U.S. census showed a 42% increase in bike commuting in the city, moving the city up from #59 to #49 among the largest 70 American cities.

Only 33% of those biking to work in KC are women. BikeWalkKC, the region's bicycling/pedestrian advocacy group, launched its Women Bike KC initiative earlier this year to improve these numbers with the KC Women's Bike Summit in May. The event attracted more than 150 women to learn about touring, try their hand at maintenance and repairs, and discuss how they can encourage more women to bike.

During the summit, women were asked what the biggest obstacles were to riding. 24% said they didn't bike because of a lack of a network. 34% said safety and lack of confidence stopped them from riding their

bikes. Throughout the day women expressed feelings of vulnerability while on the road. Because of that, BikeWalkKC has begun work on establishing an anti-harassment ordinance.

Women on bikes may be a minority in Kansas City, but they are a very passionate and diverse group of women, and they're working hard to build a network of female riders.

Denesha Snell

Getting More Women of Color on Bikes

Denesha Snell, a public health specialist, started Sisters That Are Riding Strong (STARS) in 2013 to get more women of color on bikes.

"Looking at things from the viewpoint of an African American woman, I didn't see any of us riding bikes when I was growing up, so it wasn't something I thought about at all."

Snell's brother is a cyclist and she grew up watching him race. "It was just never something I thought I could get involved in myself."

According to Snell, Troost Avenue, a historical racial dividing line in Kansas City, also becomes a dividing line for women like her. "You will see women riding west of Troost, but you aren't seeing any African American or Latino women on bikes east of it."

When the women in our communities are healthy, our children are more healthy and our families are more healthy.
—Denesha Snell

The group usually rides every Sunday afternoon and welcomes women of all skill levels and backgrounds.

“We do have women that say ‘I’m old,’ or ‘I have arthritis’ or ‘I’m too big, I’ll break a bike,’” Snell says. “We get a lot of women that are apprehensive, saying ‘How can I keep up, you look so professional.’ And no we’re not, we’re here for them. We try to be as inclusive as possible.”

When it comes to addressing why women don’t ride as much as men, she cites the impact of traditional gender roles. “For women in my demographic: a mother with a career and a little bit older than your average cyclist, it’s hard,” Snell says. “I have to drop my kids off at school. That’s one of the biggest things for women who want to ride: what if i don’t have childcare? What do I do?”

Snell, who was overweight and struggled with diabetes before riding bikes, says when individuals support female cyclists, they are supporting their community. “When the women in our communities are healthy, our children are more healthy and our families are more healthy,” Snell says. “We are the backbone of the community and we have to be that example for others.”

She says the best part of riding in Kansas City is riding through the neighborhoods. “There’s nothing like riding past African American children along the way and they are like ‘There are black women on bikes!’” Snell says. “They wave and they run next to us, and they say ‘Hey we’re going to ride with you!’ And we say ‘Come on out and ride!’. We love that. There’s times we’ve gone down Paseo Boulevard, and we’ll see people who just are amazed to see us on bikes because it’s just something you don’t see.”



Photo by Rachel Krause

Teresa Jarzemkoski

Cyclocross at 50

The first time Teresa Jarzemkoski competed in a sport, she was in her 40s. She got hooked on cycling after visiting a cyclist friend in North Carolina. Soon after going on a ride with him, she began riding more and more and began to watch plenty of local races. A year later, she began racing in road races, time trials and cyclocross events.

Her first year of racing cyclocross nationals was her fourth cross race ever. “The night before the race, we did the pre-ride and I felt like everyone was standing on their circus pony and I was barely holding onto the reins.”

How’d she fare? “I didn’t get last.”

Teresa continues to race against other 50 year old women and says it’s frustrating the fields aren’t bigger. “Women tend to race in their 20s, and then come back in their 40s. In their late 20s and 30s they’re busy having families. Training takes up a lot of time, and so do little kids,” Jarzemkoski says. “Women in general, no matter how equal the relationship, tend to be the ones who stay home.”

Teresa started to organize women’s cyclocross clinics in partnership with Boulevard Brewery. “If I do a clinic just for women, they won’t feel like they’re going to get run over by the guys,” Jarzemkoski says. “I think cyclocross intimidates women more because it’s not the way we played on our bikes, like the guys have. We’re more risk averse than men are in general.”



• THE HOMEBREW •

LUGS, MINI RACK MOUNTS,
DOWNTUBE SHIFTERS
MSRP: \$999

ALSO CHECK OUT THE
PRIVATEER AND STARLING

www.newalbioncycles.com



THE ROAD BIKE FOR THE REST OF US

Don't get us wrong. You can build your Soma ES with rock hard 23c tires, carbon bars and rims -- with a cute little seat bag that barely fits a spare tube -- like the most of the wunderbikes at the local roadie loop. It still will ride more comfortably than most road bikes in its price range thanks to its lightweight Tange Prestige CrMo tubing...BUT...

You won't be taking advantage of all its "Extra Smooth" goodness. The ES can take tires up to 700x32c tires, which soak up road chatter better than carbon. It easily accommodates racks and fenders, so you can do more than just "hammer" on your bike. Last but not least its geometry is responsive, but not as twitchy as a those wunderbikes, so you'll feel more relaxed and less tired after century rides and commutes. For reading our long-winded ad, we want to thank you with a Soma Sutro cycling cap. First five to e-mail us gets one. (USA/CAN only)

SOMA
F A B R I C A T I O N S

WWW.SOMAFAB.COM

My job is to help other people feel comfortable and welcome in cycling. You don't have to wear funny clothes, you don't have to have a four thousand dollar bike. —Theresa Van Ackeren

Another obstacle both female and male cyclists have to overcome in Kansas City is dealing with harassment. “People just don't think you should be riding,” Jarzemkoski says. “You're going on your way and some car hurls obscenities at you. We're so far outnumbered where traffic doesn't consider us traffic, they consider us a nuisance.”

She also adds that a lot of women are afraid of riding alone. “Society has told us that women can't go out and do things on their own because they are vulnerable or in danger all the time, and they're afraid if they go out, something bad will happen. That's just not true.”

She recalls a conversation she had with her daughters who would see their male friends going out on their bikes and told her, “You would never let us go out that far on our bikes.”

“And I said, ‘You bet me? Go grab your bikes.’” Jarzemkoski says. “They just assume that they can't and we do as well. We do that to our daughters unwittingly and not just us, but society as whole. Kids don't play outside as much as they used to, they don't feel empowered to go do what they want. That needs to change.”

Theresa Van Ackeren

Breaking Through the Boys Club Environment of Bike Shops

When Theresa Van Ackeren turned 40, she was unhappy working day after day at a corporate job. Then she had a realization. “I should probably do something with my life instead of sitting on my ass.” As a birthday gift to herself, she quit her job.

During a year of unemployment, she spent countless hours in the saddle. “I would ride for hours and hours everyday,” she says. “Quite frankly, I would go



Photo by Rachel Krause

into bike shops and just had horrible horrible experiences—people ignore you or try to sell you what they have on the floor—and I kept saying to myself I wonder if I could do that better.”

Van Ackeren did her research, wrote a business plan, found a space, and hired a mechanic. In March of 2008, Family Bicycles was open for business. She spent her entire 40K to open the shop. Van Ackeren is in the minority as a female shop owner; nationwide, only 11 percent of bike shop owners are female.

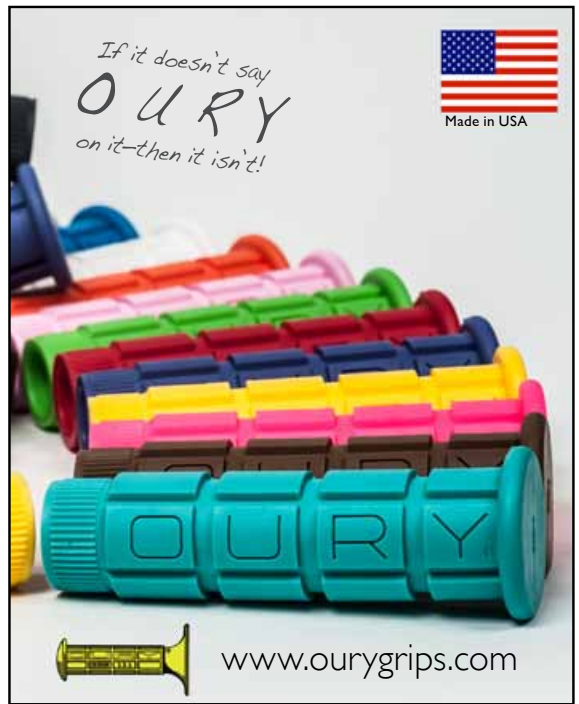
What's unique about her shop's clientele is that it is mainly female. She says the percentage of female to male customers is at least 60% to 40%. In fact, it's heavily weighted toward mothers. “We are the place they feel comfortable,” says Van Ackeren. “From day one, that was my goal. Anyone can come in here and ask any asinine, crazy-ass question and they are not going to get a response like they have ten heads.”

She also attributes this shift to the fact that the image people hold of cycling is changing. “For a long time, the face of cycling has been white guys,” Van Ackeren says. “Really, my job is to help other people feel comfortable and welcome in cycling. You don't have to wear funny clothes, you don't have to have a four thousand dollar bike. I think what's really important is that we work to create a climate where it's ok to ride your bike. The rest is just a means to an end.”



NO EXIT

© Andy Singer



**TOUGH. PRACTICAL.
AFFORDABLE.
BIKE BAGS.** MPLS
MINN

MIGHTY WHITEY

The Banjo Brothers #01150 Waterproof Commuter Backpack in brilliant white. Looks even better with a few skid marks. \$89.99 (1500 cubic inches)

banjobrothers.com ★ facebook.com/banjobrothers

Narrow-Wide Rings Explained

By Brad Quartuccio



Left: Narrow-wide chainring. Right: Conventional tooth profile for comparison.

Don't be surprised if your next bike has but a single derailleur to handle all shifting duties. Single chainring drivetrains are gaining more adherents by the day thanks to a simple chainring innovation, the narrow-wide ring, and advances in rear derailleur tech. For years people have experimented with single ring setups with varying levels of success, using all manner of purpose built and hacked guides to keep the chain from throwing. Today with the help of narrow-wide chainrings, clutch rear derailleurs and wide-range cassettes, the single ring setup functions and makes more sense than ever before.

Bicycle chains consist of alternating pairs of inner and outer links, and narrow-wide rings take advantage of the slight difference in the space between the links to form a more secure connection with the chain than a standard ring. Not terribly unlike skip-tooth rings of a century ago that had miniature teeth for the inner chain links, modern narrow-wide rings have teeth that alternate between narrow and wide, interfacing with the inner and outer links to help prevent the chain from moving excessively while engaged, and

in turn preventing a thrown chain. Combined with a clutch rear derailleur—essentially a mechanism that helps to minimize forward rotation of the derailleur body to keep the bottom of the chain wrap taut—a narrow-wide, single ring setup can reliably keep the chain on throughout the entire gear range.

With wide-range cassettes (ex. 11-36) readily available, and supplemental 40-tooth+ large cassette cogs available aftermarket, a single front chainring can provide almost as much gear range as a double or even triple chainring setup has in the past, with the simplicity of one fewer shifter and derailleur. In addition to that simplicity, with all gear changes happening along the cassette there are no redundant or out of order gear combinations as with multiple front rings.

There will be a place for multiple front rings for the foreseeable future—touring, road racing, bike-packing, epic mountain riding—but as clutch rear derailleurs and narrow-wide rings continue to come to market, expect to see more single ring setups making an appearance.



88
BIKES

GIVE A BIKE!

88Bikes provides a simple, direct way to donate bikes to kids who are challenged to be their own heroes.

Join us on our journey at www.88bikes.org

FRAME BUILDING CLASSES



ANTBIKEMIKE.COM



bikepgh.org



GREEN GURU™

RUCKUS
MESSENGER PACK




BUILT IN USA



Alliance
for
Biking & Walking



www.PeoplePoweredMovement.org



MESSENGER BAGS
PANNIER HYBRIDS
BACKPACKS
ACCESSORIES
HANDMADE IN NYC

VAYABAGS.COM



life changing.



WORLD BICYCLE RELIEF™



PEDAL PUSHERS
D.C. Club USA
CYCLING - SOCIAL

PedalPushers.Club
clothing for people who like bikes

OUTRO



Night rides are best spent exploring the grimy underside of things, at least that's always been my prevailing opinion. Nothing like 'cross bikes, charged lights and a sense of adventure. Knog came to town with a bag full of lights and we got together a few friends for a couple of hours of the finest bike paths, dirt trails and renegade no man's land railroad track riding we could throw together within city limits. Light car and lighter trail traffic make night riding all the better, even if on this particular evening rain made for some treacherous bridge crossings and wet feet all around. Stopped for some backpack beers atop a soon to be developed wasteland, hopped the tracks where trails unofficially converge, filled our stomachs with sandwiches that feature it all. Great times, as all friendly night rides should be. —Brad Quartuccio





ROPER

#HOWIRALEIGH



@RALEIGHBICYCLES

PROFILE #1: **CRAIG**
BIKE MESSENGER & HOT LAPPER
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON



I TRUST MY U-MINI 40.

abus.com

Christina Peck, messenger Godspeed Courier, two-time NACCC Champion, San Francisco, CA



Security Tech Germany