

# MOUNTAIN CYCLIST

LEADING THE PARTICIPATION OF MOUNTAIN CYCLISTS IN THE TRAIL COMMUNITY

MARCH-APRIL 2003

## Spring ROMP Events Need Volunteers

**ROMPers, clear your calendars for April and May and prepare to participate in some fun and exciting spring events.**

ROMP organizers have done a tremendous job this year in pulling together a wealth of cycling-related goings-on, from epics to swap meets, but these events are in need of support from ROMP volunteers to guarantee their success.

### Sea Otter Classic

The 12<sup>th</sup> annual Sea Otter Classic is coming up fast—it takes place April 9–13 at Laguna Seca in Monterey. This prestigious event has traditionally been staffed by 30 to 40 ROMPers who not only aid in vital staff activities, but give ROMP tremendous visibility and a strong reputation. With the Sea Otter Classic donating over \$1000 to ROMP each year, this event is a major fundraiser for the club.

ROMPers Michael and Jain Light will coordinate and organize volunteers for Thursday, Friday and Saturday events. Racers who volunteer for at least a full day will gain free entry to one event of their choice. In years past, ROMP has been responsible for Dual Slalom events. However, Dual Slalom is no longer a Sea Otter event, and as of press time, ROMP is still awaiting official notice of its assignments. To volunteer, contact Michael and Jain Light, (831) 662-9744 or [mlight@pacbell.net](mailto:mlight@pacbell.net). For more information on the event itself, visit [www.seaotterclassic.com](http://www.seaotterclassic.com).

### Coe IMBA Epic

On the weekend of May 3–4, ROMP will host an IMBA Epic in Henry Coe State Park (rain cancels). Also participating will be members of other area mountain-bike advocacy clubs, including BTCEB, BTCM, and MBOSC. The event comprises trailwork on Saturday, camping Saturday night and an Epic ride on Sunday. Participation is limited to 100 individuals who must also be members of IMBA and an affiliate club. Hard work and hard riding will be rewarded by a dinner, entertainment and a unique backcountry camping experience.

ROMP is seeking members to volunteer for this event. There are a variety of roles to fill, such as gate greeters, trail crew leaders, ride leaders, and National Mountain Bike Patrol (NMBP). Volunteering at this unique event will not only be fun, but will also be a sure way to participate in the event. Please contact Paul Nam, (408) 446-3745 or [president@romp.org](mailto:president@romp.org), to sign up. Check the websites [romp.org](http://romp.org) and [imba.com](http://imba.com) (see “Epic rides”) for more information.

*Continued on next page*

**CLIMBING THROUGH THE RANKS**—Riders push hard during a cross-country race at the Sea Otter Classic, an event commonly viewed as cycling's rite of spring.



Photo by Tom Moran/[www.stphoto.com](http://www.stphoto.com)



# ROMP MOUNTAIN CYCLIST

## ROMP Events

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The *Mountain Cyclist* is the monthly newsletter of the Responsible Organized Mountain Pedalers (ROMP). Mailing address:

ROMP  
PO Box 1723  
Campbell CA 95009-1723  
info@romp.org

Send general newsletter material directly to the editor (not to the club PO box):

Joanna Holmes/Julie Brown  
newsletter@romp.org

Send ride listings to the club ride coordinator (not to the club PO box):

Chris Voci-Nam and Paul Nam  
408-446-3745  
ride@romp.org

### Monthly Meetings

Monthly meetings are where the vast majority of ROMP business is conducted, including policy development issues, budgets, and cyclist education. They occur at 7 PM on the fourth Monday of each month (except December) at the Round Table Pizza, Sunnyvale Town and Country  
**Address:** 101 Town And Country Sunnyvale, CA 94086. (408) 736-2242

### Newsletter Mailing Party

Many thanks to all for helping fold, tab, and label the last newsletter.

This fun is repeated monthly, usually on the fourth Wednesday or Thursday of the month in Cupertino. If you would like to help next time (and eat some pizza and talk bikes at the same time), contact Glenn Wegner at 408-257-8284 or newsmailing@romp.org for more details.

### IMBA Rules of the Trail

ROMP, an IMBA-affiliated organization, supports and practices the IMBA Rules of the Trail. Following these rules is not only key to responsible riding, but essential to keep trails open to cycling.

1. Ride on open trails only.
2. Leave no trace.
3. Control your bicycle.
4. Always yield trail.
5. Never spook animals.
6. Plan ahead.

### Henry Coe Back Country Weekend

For one spectacular weekend in April, Henry Coe State Park will open the gate at Bell Station on Highway 152 east of Gilroy. The annual Coe Backcountry Weekend, held in the little-traveled east side of the park, is scheduled for April 26-27, 2003. This special event admits 330 vehicles into the remote spring wildflower hinterlands of the southeastern end of the park. Mountain bikers, along with hikers and equestrians, have a unique opportunity to enjoy an area isolated from the park's Morgan Hill entrance by long distances and rugged terrain.

This year's Back Country Weekend is set for April 26-27 (rain cancels). This event is so popular that access is only gained through a lottery. You can download the application form and instructions on the Internet at [www.coepark.org/orestimba-form.pdf](http://www.coepark.org/orestimba-form.pdf). Applications must be postmarked by March 29th. ROMP will be active at this event, staffing an information booth and leading interpretive rides. If you'd like to help ROMP at this event, contact Paul Nam, (408) 446-3745 or [president@romp.org](mailto:president@romp.org).

### Cupertino Bike Swap

The annual ROMP/Cupertino Bike Swap takes place on Sunday, April 27. At this fun event, you can nab that special something you couldn't find anywhere else. You might also be interested in setting up a booth of your own.

The swap meet requires many event-day volunteers, rotating all day long, for everything from traffic direction, gate-keeping and reception, staffing the ROMP booth, membership promotion, and vendor setup and breakdown. Contact Vance Sprock at Cupertino Bikes, (408) 255-2217 or [sprocket@cupertinobike.com](mailto:sprocket@cupertinobike.com), for information on reserving selling space. To volunteer, contact NMBP Coordinator Karen Morgan, (408) 224-6879 or [kmorgan@accesscom.com](mailto:kmorgan@accesscom.com), or Vice President



**WHEELS AND DEALS** — Looking for the perfect bike at last year's swap meet in Cupertino

**WANT  
TO  
VOLUNTEER?**

To volunteer for any of these events, please use the signup form provided in this newsletter or contact the event coordinator directly.

## Race Team for ROMP?

At the January ROMP general meeting, new Vice President Claire Nippress proposed that the group launch its own race team. Members would participate in cross-country races at local events such as the Sea Otter Classic and 24-hours of Adrenaline at Laguna Seca and/or Tahoe. Participation in the ROMP Race Team would be entirely voluntary.

ROMP has volunteered at local racing events such as the Sea Otter Classic for several years. As well as volunteering, ROMP has made its presence known through a booth that provides information to the public about its purpose and activities. If the group were to have a race team, says Nippress, the club could attract more attention at such events—and potentially more members and supporters.

Since its introduction, the proposal of a ROMP race team has sparked a flurry of pro and con discussion, which remains ongoing on the ROMP-mailing list as this newsletter goes to press.

ROMP members can vote in favor or against the formation of a ROMP race team on the group's website ([www.romp.org](http://www.romp.org)), under "Club" in the left hand menu—look for the "Race Team" link. Votes must be cast before March 20, 2003, after which the votes will be tallied and a decision on the ROMP race team will be made. The results will be posted in the next newsletter.

## ROMP to Get New Jersey

Tired of the teal and green ROMP jersey? Designs for a one have been posted on the ROMP website, and your feedback is invited. Let us know what you like or dislike about the designs. Or, if you are artistically inclined, e-mail a gif, jpeg or tif file of your own design to Claire Nippress at [vicepresident@romp.org](mailto:vicepresident@romp.org). The last day for submission of a ROMP jersey design is March 31, 2003.

In early April, ROMP members will be called upon to vote for their favorite designs. Keep checking the website for the latest updates! Find them at [www.romp.org](http://www.romp.org), under "Club" in the left hand menu—look for the "New Jersey" link.

**HARD WEAR DESIGN** — One of the proposed jersey designs on display at [www.romp.org](http://www.romp.org)



## ROMP Directory

### Responsible Organized Mt. Pedalers (ROMP)

PO Box 1723, Campbell CA 95009-1723  
[www.romp.org](http://www.romp.org), [info@romp.org](mailto:info@romp.org)  
voicemail and fax 408-380-2271, ext. 2171

<b>President</b> 408-446-3745	Paul Nam <a href="mailto:president@romp.org">president@romp.org</a>
<b>Vice President</b> 408-255-3464	Claire Nippress <a href="mailto:vicepresident@romp.org">vicepresident@romp.org</a>
<b>Secretary</b> 408-554-9456	Esther Kim <a href="mailto:secretary@romp.org">secretary@romp.org</a>
<b>Treasurer</b> 408-257-8284	Glenn Wegner <a href="mailto:treasurer@romp.org">treasurer@romp.org</a>
<b>Beginner's Clinic Leader</b> 408-739-3946	Jim Lauth <a href="mailto:beginnersclinic@romp.org">beginnersclinic@romp.org</a>
<b>Membership Director</b> 408-257-8284	Linda Wegner <a href="mailto:membership@romp.org">membership@romp.org</a>
<b>Social Director</b>	VACANT
<b>Volunteer Coordinator</b> 408-756-7396	Tyler French <a href="mailto:volunteer@romp.org">volunteer@romp.org</a>
<b>NMBP Coordinator</b> 408-224-6879	Karen Morgan <a href="mailto:nmbp@romp.org">nmbp@romp.org</a>
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<b>Newsletter Distribution Coordinator</b> 408-257-8284	Glenn Wegner <a href="mailto:newsmailing@romp.org">newsmailing@romp.org</a>
<b>Trail Education Coordinator</b> 408-725-0841	Jim Owen <a href="mailto:traileducation@romp.org">traileducation@romp.org</a>
<b>Trailwork Coordinator</b> 650-364-6785	Berry Stevens <a href="mailto:trailwork@romp.org">trailwork@romp.org</a>
<b>Ride Coordinator</b> 408-446-3745	Chris Voci-Nam and Paul Nam <a href="mailto:ride@romp.org">ride@romp.org</a>
<b>Sponsor Coordinator</b>	VACANT
<b>Webmaster</b> 650-233-1895	Karen McAdams <a href="mailto:webmaster@romp.org">webmaster@romp.org</a>

## Other Organizations

**Bicycle Trails Council of Marin (BTCM)**  
PO Box 494, Fairfax CA 94978  
415-456-7512 [btcmarin.org](http://btcmarin.org)

**Bicycle Trails Council of the East Bay (BTCEB)**  
PO Box 9583, Berkeley CA 94709  
415-528-BIKE [www.btceastbay.org](http://www.btceastbay.org)

**Folsom Auburn Trail Riders Action Coalition**  
916-663-4626 [www.fatrac.org](http://www.fatrac.org)

**International Mt. Biking Association (IMBA)**  
PO Box 7578, Boulder CO 80306  
303-545-9011 [www.imba.com](http://www.imba.com)

**Monterey Mt. Bike Association (MoMBA)**  
PO Box 51928, Pacific Grove CA 93590  
408-372-2134

**Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz (MBoSC)**  
[president@mboSC.org](mailto:president@mboSC.org) [www.mboSC.org](http://www.mboSC.org)

**Sonoma County Trails Council (SCTC)**  
[www.sonomatrails.org/sctc/](http://www.sonomatrails.org/sctc/)

**San Jose Inner City Outings (San Jose ICO)**  
[www.sierraclub.org/ico/sanjose/](http://www.sierraclub.org/ico/sanjose/)

**Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition**  
[www.svbcbikes.org/](http://www.svbcbikes.org/)

**Western Wheelers Bicycle Club**  
[www.westernwheelers.org](http://www.westernwheelers.org)

**Women's Mt. Biking and Tea Soc. (WoMBATS)**  
[www.wombats.org](http://www.wombats.org)

## Claire Nippress Elected New VP

At the general ROMP meeting on January 28, Claire Nippress was elected as ROMP's new Vice President. Here's what she has to say about her new role.

After riding with ROMP for five years, this year I decided I wanted to become more involved with other aspects of the club. My specific areas of interest include maintaining access to trails, promoting mountain biking within the community, and improving ROMP's relationships with other local voluntary organizations, mountain bike clubs, and bike shops. Many of Paul Nam's ideas for the club were aligned with my own, so I agreed to take on the position of vice president.

My husband, Dave, and I started riding with ROMP in 1998 when we came to the Bay Area. Our first ride was at Saratoga Gap. By the end of the ride, I was exhausted—but I had a lot of fun with a great group of people. Now Dave and I lead the ride at Saratoga Gap, as well as the ride at ECdM (Skeggs).

I'd like to see more members become involved with the voluntary activities: leading rides, helping with trail maintenance, campaigning to keep trails open, educating the community, joining the National Mountain Bike Patrol or helping at club events. I also want to make the club more fun for ROMP members. If you've got ideas, send me e-mail (vicepresident@romp.org), or talk to me on the Saratoga Gap or ECdM ride, and let me know how we can make ROMP even better.



New ROMP VP Claire Nippress

## Access News An Update on Trail Developments in ROMP Territory

By Paul Nam



ROMP President Paul Nam

Mountain bike trail systems in ROMP territory are undergoing changes. From as far north as San Francisco to the southerly Henry Coe State Park, ROMP has been active in trying to create a positive outcome for mountain bikers as well as other trail users.

### El Corte de Madera

You may have heard a shoe drop when the El Corte de Madera (ECdM) open space unit of the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD, or "Mid-Pen") came under the scrutiny of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRWQRB). These organizations have determined that erosion and sedimentation resulting from the ECdM road and trail network may have contributed to degradation of the aquatic system and may be considered a "take" of downstream steelhead trout under the Endangered Species Act. This situation affects mountain bike access, because the MROSD must mitigate the problem.

Toward this end, Mid-Pen commissioned a Road and Trail Erosion Inventory report of ECdM from an independent consultant. The report, filed in November 2002, includes detailed recommendations to address the siltation problems. It remains to be seen how Mid-Pen and the respective regulatory agencies interpret and implement these recommendations.

Mid-Pen has graciously included ROMP in the process, and ROMP officers and volunteers have had an opportunity to study this report and proposal. At the ROMP general meeting in January, MROSD Resource Planner Matt Freeman gave an informative presentation concerning the report.

It could be months before the other shoe drops and we learn what direction Mid-Pen will end up taking. Until then we can expect trail access status to remain the same.

One of the highlights in the report's recommendations was this: "...to reduce the number of trails that might need to be closed, the District should work with local mountain bike groups to develop appropriate ways to modify existing steep-gradient, high-use mountain-bike trails in order to slow mountain-bike traffic and thus to prevent erosion. In addition, the mountain bike community should take a proactive role in maintaining and upgrading erosion control structures on the trail system and to ensure that illegal trails are kept closed.

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(Page 34.) Another highlight reads, “Problems along patrol-width [i.e., wide enough for pickup trucks] trails can be reduced or entirely eliminated by installing larger and deeper cross-drains, rocking the trail surface, narrowing the road to the absolute minimum, and reducing traffic to dry periods with ATV access occurring in the winter months. (Page 27.) In other words, the report acknowledges truck patrols on steep, wet roads as a leading cause of erosion. A good example of this case is the upper end of the El Corte de Madera Creek trail, which will likely be reduced to trail width and is no longer accessible by patrol truck.

Popular trails that run close to streams are key targets for closure or realignment. “Certain trails located adjacent to streams need to be abandoned and rerouted (e.g., the central portion of the Giant Salamander trail) or rocked. Trails exceeding 20 percent gradient should be abandoned and rerouted (e.g., Leaf and Cutoff trails).” (Page 27.)

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### **ROMP’s actual role remains uncertain. Will our involvement make a difference between decommissioning and rerouting a trail?**

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ROMP’s actual role remains uncertain. Will our involvement make a difference between decommissioning and rerouting a trail? Only time will tell. We remain optimistic that ROMP can play a meaningful role in helping create sustainable reroutes. In most cases where we are faced with reroutes or closures, reroutes would provide better trails for riding. ROMP needs the support of the riding community and will lobby for reroutes and help create the kinds of challenging trails we all desire.

#### **Henry Coe**

In the south county, Henry Coe State Park faces threats from the other end of the spectrum. The development of reservoirs and the routing of a bullet train in the park are being taken seriously by many conservationists. A statement from the Santa Clara County Water District that ran

In a San Jose Mercury News article (Jan. 29, 2003) appeared to suggest that reservoirs in the park was a dead issue. But more correctly, plans to erect a dam within the park have been scrapped. In fact, the *San Jose Mercury News* posted a correction on February 6, saying “An article last Wednesday in the Valley section incorrectly characterized the Santa Clara Valley Water District’s position on water-storage alternatives in south Santa Clara County. The district continues to consider the possibility of a reservoir that would spread into Henry W. Coe State Park east of Gilroy; it has not dropped that alternative from consideration.”

There are two other dam sites located outside of park boundaries that would seasonally flood certain areas within the park; these sites are still on the table. One, the Los Osos site, would flood the popular Hunting Hollow trailhead, and will probably be used as a red herring to make the proposed Pacheco B dam site more attractive for development. The Pacheco B site would flood the pristine Pacheco Creek canyon all the way to the Pacheco crossing of the Kaiser-Aetna Road, deep in the remote southeastern section of Coe.

A new organization has formed to oppose the dams. I learned of the group, called Advocates for Coe Park ([www.coadvocates.org](http://www.coadvocates.org)), at the annual Pine Ridge Association (PRA) meeting in Morgan Hill in February. (The PRA is the official Coe State Park cooperating organization.) The Advocates for Coe distributed a flyer featuring a photo of mountain cyclist enjoying a ridge ride; this was their way of conveying the park’s beauty. Concerned mountain bikers should show their solidarity with others in the trail community and take an active role in this issue.

The bullet train is another project on the distant horizon that bears close observation. A *Mercury News* article titled “Death Knell to Bullet Train” (January 29, 2003) cited current budget woes as the demise of the bullet train plan. Both the dam projects and the bullet train route would have serious negative impacts on the landscape and wildlife in the park, not to mention some of our favorite trails. Potential construction activity would likely accelerate the introduction of non-native plants into Coe, which in places remains relatively uncontaminated by such exotic plants. The Greenbelt Alliance, The Nature Conservancy and the Sierra Club are also keeping watch on the situation.

#### **OSPA**

In yet another *Mercury News* article (Feb. 2, 2003), I was quoted in regards to the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority (OSA). “‘It’s great to have land preservation, but without access, the full benefit is lost,’ said Paul Nam, president of Responsible Organized Mountain Pedalers, or ROMP. ‘It’s time for the taxpaying public to have some real trail access.’”

## Access News

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In a subsequent conversation with OSA Manager Patrick Congdon, ROMP learned of the many constraints this organization faces. The OSA is grappling with a tough choice. It can afford to focus on either land acquisition or public access effectively, but not both. The OSA faces a climate of escalating property values and hence has focused on acquisitions until the present. Furthermore, burdened by litigation concerning the legality of the tax revenues that are this agency's lifeblood, with the outcome of one case still pending, a portion of the OSA's attention has been diverted from more productive activities. Additionally to the OSA's credit, a portion of its budget also goes towards granting funds to county-wide park enhancements, which have resulted in urban trail corridors and landscape improvements.

Last year witnessed the dedication of the OSA's first public access, the Boccardo Trail, a steep out-and-back trail that climbs 1100 feet to a grassy knoll in a short 1.5 miles. Accessed from Alum Rock County Park in East San Jose, the Boccardo Trail's multi-use access designation bears witness to the OSA's progressive policy towards the mountain-biking community.

Still, ROMP members feel that increased public access should not be too far away. In fact the OSA is trying to reach out to us with a volunteer program already in place. OSA Resource Coordinator Lori Raymaker informs us, "The purpose of the Open Space Authority Volunteer Program is to encourage active public participation in the management, protection and enhancement of the Authority's lands, provide public education on open space goals and promote community outreach programs. Authority volunteers will be an integral part of managing and protecting Authority lands. Citizens who volunteer their time and talents are valuable assets to the Open Space Authority. We encourage constructive participation of groups and individuals in our volunteer programs, to perform appropriate tasks under the direction, training and supervision of our staff. The Board believes that community volunteers enrich our program, promote a positive environment, and improve our community relations."

Furthermore, Lori adds: "Since this policy was approved, the Authority volunteers have logged over 1100 hours of volunteer time in tasks ranging from building fences, to patrolling the Boccardo Trail, to computer work in our office. If you are interested in our volunteer program, and what we have to offer, you can visit our website at [www.openspaceauthority.org](http://www.openspaceauthority.org), or give me a call. I would be happy to talk to you about our program. I would also be happy to attend one of your ROMP meetings to talk about the volunteer opportunities at the Open Space Authority."

In fact Lori Raymaker attended ROMP's National Mountain Bike Patrol training program last year. For more information, contact Lori Raymaker at (408) 224-7476.

*Continued on next page*

## Lend a Hand

Volunteer support at all levels is pivotal to ROMP's success. See the ROMP Events and Volunteer Opportunities insert in this newsletter or online for more details.

- **Annual Cupertino Bike Swap:** Help ROMP run another successful bike swap on April 27th. We need gatekeepers, traffic directors, booth people, and gofer help. †
- **Coe IMBA Epic:** An IMBA Epic comes to Santa Clara County in the hinterlands of Coe, May 3 and 4. ROMP is hosting a weekend of trailwork, dinner, primitive camping, and an epic ride. Volunteers are needed for a variety of tasks. †
- **Trail Education Stations:** An ongoing program at various trailheads throughout our area involves educating the public, taking surveys, and working closely with agency personnel. †
- **Ride Leaders:** ROMP would like to offer more rides for all sorts of riders. We are in particular need of easier rides and family ride listings. †
- **Independent Bicycle Dealer and Industry Liaisons:** ROMP is looking for individuals to adopt shops and businesses to share information and serve the cycling community. †
- **Parks and Open Space Advocates:** ROMP attends meetings and participates in workshops and volunteer programs to represent the mountain biking community. †
- **National Mountain Bike Patrol:** Perform a valuable service from the saddle of your bike. Join the NMBP.

## Access News

*Continued from page 6*

ROMP supports community involvement and suggests that mountain cyclists join the OSA volunteers to help manage and design sustainable multi-use trail regional systems. Such trail systems might, for example, connect the OSA Palassou Ridge unit to Harvey Bear Mendoza County Park and Henry Coe State Park.

### Soquel Demo

An ongoing discussion of multi-use trail status in the Soquel Demonstration Forest (SDF) has been smoldering over the Internet in recent weeks. Mountain bikers readily empathize with some members of the equestrian community, who feel that they've been squeezed out by the tide of mountain bikers drawn to the Demo's beautiful trails. Some equestrians no longer feel comfortable riding in the SDF; they constantly worry that a cyclist might spook their mount.

ROMP maintains that such user conflicts are a symptom the overcrowding brought about by unfair and irresponsible trail policies that ban cyclists from many public-land trail systems, most notably in San Mateo County (where abundant access for equestrians exists at the expense of mountain biking), but also systemically throughout the Bay Area. As popular as mountain biking is, enthusiasts are forced to drive greater distances to find bike-friendly off-road trails. ROMP has lobbied long and patiently, and will continue to do so, for greater trail access on public lands to reduce crowding, erosion, and trail conflicts. Until more mountain bike trails open in the Bay Area, equestrians are likely to continue to experience the sad effects of overcrowding on the SDF trail system. We must understand that such preserves exist adjacent to an urban metropolis, and that recreation in public lands is a legitimate pursuit, and sharing of these limited resources amongst the trail community is a matter of civic duty. Trail riders in the SDF, and in all places, must be mindful of their impact on other users, and ride accordingly. To ride otherwise is rude and offensive.

### Presidio

In our foggy Barbary Coast city of San Francisco lies another potential mountain-bike mecca, the National Park Service (NPS) unit known as the Presidio. The commentary period for the Presidio's Trails and Bikeways Master Plan—which includes plans to integrate bike access and the Bay Area Ridge Trail (BART) through the Presidio—ended on February 12. Now we wait and see how things shake out.

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## Sponsor Profile: Cupertino Bike Shop

*By Claire Nippress*

Next time you visit the Cupertino Bike Shop for a tube, chain, or even a new bike, take some time to check out the large collection of bicycle memorabilia displayed between the bike parts. The walls are covered in pins, signed photos and jerseys. The shop's original sign hangs from the ceiling, and Greg Lemond's first professional racing bike hangs above the door.

Cupertino Bike Shop has been associated with ROMP since 1991, when the club held its first swap meet, now a major annual event. But the store itself has been in business much longer—since 1953. Back in 1982, when mountain biking was still relatively unheard of, Cupertino Bike Shop began selling the Gary Fisher line. Today the shop carries mainly Specialized mountain bikes, as well as a large selection of road bikes, tandems, and bicycle parts and accessories.

Vance Sprock, the shop's owner, is a road cyclist of some renown—he came third in the US National Road Championship (Junior Men) in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1976. Watch for Vance on his custom-made mountain bike if you ever ride the trails at Stevens Canyon or Fremont Older.

Be sure to carry your ROMP membership card when you visit the stop, because members receive a 10 percent discount on Cupertino Bike Shop purchases.



**SIGN OF THE TIME**—Cupertino Bike Shop's original sign, dating from the Fifties, hangs inside the store.

**Cupertino Bike Shop**  
10493 South DeAnza Blvd.  
Cupertino  
(408) 255-2217  
sprocket@cupertinobike.com

## March and April Rides

Check Website for Updates!

*Tuesday, March 4*

### **B/INT/23/1500 – ROMP Alpine Road Auto-Free Mountain-Bike Ride.**

This all-legal, mostly offroad night-ride, will meet southbound Caltrain #66 at 5:02 PM, and northbound #81 at 5:05 PM at the California Ave. Caltrain station. From there we'll roll up through Arastradero Preserve to Alpine Rd. and Willowbrook in Portola Valley. At 6:15 PM we'll meet anyone driving up (please park on Willowbrook) at this intersection. Next we'll pedal up old Alpine Rd. to Page Mill Rd. at Monte Bello Ridge. Returning we meet the northbound Caltrain #95 at 8:26 PM, the southbound #66 at 9:03 PM. There are a bevy of bicycle-friendly eateries on California Ave. to hang at 'til the desired train arrives. This ride is for intermediate riders with 3+ hr. headlight systems; reflectors and flashing rear lights are also highly recommended. Route will consist of 2 miles on singletrack, 5 miles on dirt roads, and 16 miles on paved roads. The pace is slow, and cloudsplitting is a must at the summit. This ride is geared for fun. RSVP required. For further information, contact Jim at 650-493-8774 or [ssulljm@juno.com](mailto:ssulljm@juno.com).

*Saturday, March 8*

### **B+/DIFF/18/3000—Explore de Peninsula #3, Henry Coe State Park**

Meet in Headquarters parking lot at 9:30; ride at 10:00. Take 101 south to Dunne Ave., exit east to the hills. Follow Dunne to headquarters (about 10 miles). Coe is notorious for its climbing, long, steep and lots of it. Expect to be on the bike at least three hours. Contact Jeff at [Somarides@yahoo.com](mailto:Somarides@yahoo.com).

*Sunday, March 9*

### **C/INT/12-18/2500-3000 – ROMP 2nd Sunday Soquel Demo Forest**

Meet at 10:00 AM at the entrance to SDF on Highland Way. From Highway 17, take the Summit Rd exit and head S.E. Go 5 1/2 miles to the first stop sign. Turn right and then bear left onto Highland Way. Go another 4 miles to the entrance. More info at [www.mtb.live.com/rides/SoquelDemo.html](http://www.mtb.live.com/rides/SoquelDemo.html). Rides will vary covering singletrack such as Ridge, Braille, Tractor or Sawpit; double loop option if you didn't have enough fun the first time. For more information contact Jim Lauth at 408-739-3946 or [singletrack@sbcglobal.net](mailto:singletrack@sbcglobal.net)

*Sunday, March 16*

### **D/DIFF/15/2800 – ROMP 3rd Sunday Advanced Ride in El Corte de Madera.**

We'll leave at 10 AM from the Skeggs Point lookout on Skyline Blvd, approximately 5 miles north of the Hwy 84/ Skyline intersection. This advanced ride will be filled with technical challenges. For more info contact Dave at 408-255-3464 or [tripman@scoreone.com](mailto:tripman@scoreone.com).

### **C/DIFF/11/2100 – ROMP 3rd Sunday Not-As-Advanced Ride in El Corte de Madera.**

We'll leave at the same time and place as the Advanced Ride. For more info contact Claire at 408-255-3464 or [crashcall@scoreone.com](mailto:crashcall@scoreone.com).

### **Montebello OSP, Green Side of Black Mountain**

Explore the grasslands and ridges of Monte Bello Open Space Preserve by bicycle. This beginner-level ride slowly climbs Black Mountain on the sunny side looking for early spring flowers. Some easy narrow trails, some dirt roads bring you up to the summit and a spectacular view of the bay. Wind in your hair on the descent will give you rosy cheeks and a big smile. Women, kids and senior riders especially welcome, but bring low gears! Expect a 3 1/2-hour ride of about 10 miles, 1000 feet of climbing. A pace. Beginner level. Shortcuts available. Rain cancels. Bring a snack, water and helmet. Meet at 9:30 a.m. Reservations required: call 650-917-8699

## General Ride Info

### Ratings code

Pace / Technical difficulty / Mileage / Approximate elevation gain

### Pace

A – Slow; social or introductory ride. Riders need not be experienced or fit.  
B – Moderate; recreational ride.  
C – Quick; fun and fitness ride with multiple hours of strong riding.  
D – Sustained, fast; sweaty, intense training ride.  
E – Hammerfest; riders should have their heads and knees examined!

Pace generally reflects climbing speed; downhill speed in most local areas is limited to 15 mph. A, B, and C rides are “no drop” rides with regroupings as needed and rest breaks appropriate for weather, terrain and pace. D and E rides may drop riders who cannot maintain the pace; the drop policy may be stated in the ride listing, or ask the ride leader.

### Technical Difficulty

EASY – Smooth singletrack or fire road; obstacles such as rocks and roots might exist but are not numerous.

INTermediate – Steep, rutted fire road; singletrack with extended sections that can include medium or large rocks and roots; stream crossings; exposure; long singletrack descents.

DIFFicult – Singletrack with very steep and/or rocky sections; narrow trails; exposed sideslopes; downhill-side-sloped sections.

EXTreme – Singletrack with extended steep climbs or descents over rough terrain; many tight switchbacks and turns. Portions may require portage.

### Notes

For your first ROMP ride, try one of our monthly A, B, or C rides to get an idea of pace and technical difficulty.

HELMETS ARE REQUIRED FOR ALL ROMP RIDES. Please be prepared for the ride (make sure your bike is in working order, bring appropriate tools, food, water, clothing, etc.). All riders will need to sign a waiver before every ride; minors will need a parent or guardian to sign their release.

In general, rain at the area of the ride within 48 hours of the ride cancels. But, because different trails can withstand the weather differently, we allow the ride leader to make the final decision. If you are unsure about whether a particular ride will go on, contact the ride leader.

### Interested in leading a ride ?

Contact Paul Nam or Chris Voci-Nam at 650-493-8774 or [ride@romp.org](mailto:ride@romp.org) by the tenth of the preceding month for newsletter listing. Visit [www.romp.org](http://www.romp.org) for detailed help on leading a ride or to submit your ride online.



# MOUNTAIN CYCLIST

## Membership Update

### Renewals

Jon Abernethy & Sharon Clute  
Kevin Avery & Camille Moitozo  
Marjorie K. Balazs  
Rod Brown & Cornelia Woodworth  
Donald L. Brubaker, II  
Cheryl & Richard Herms  
Tim Louis  
Bob & Debby Malheiro  
John L. Richards  
Kevin M. Schmidt & Family  
Bob Slee  
Phil & Legaya Strenfel  
Glenn & Linda Wegner  
John Wetzel  
David J. Wieland  
Gregory Young & Anjali Tate

### New Members

Joanna Holmes & Family  
Isaias D. Job  
Andy Jones  
Jan Novak  
Lawrence Shubert  
Dan Spinozzi & Sue Choe  
Janet Wagner

## Rides

*Continued from page 8*

*Tuesday, March 18*

### **B/INT/23/1500 – ROMP Alpine Road Auto-Free Mountain-Bike Ride.**

This all-legal, mostly offroad night-ride, will meet southbound Caltrain #66 at 5:02 PM, and northbound #81 at 5:05 PM at the California Ave. Caltrain station. From there we'll roll up through Arastradero Preserve to Alpine Rd. and Willowbrook in Portola Valley. At 6:15 PM we'll meet anyone driving up (please park on Willowbrook) at this intersection. Next we'll pedal up old Alpine Rd. to Page Mill Rd. at Monte Bello Ridge. Returning we meet the northbound Caltrain #95 at 8:26 PM, the southbound #66 at 9:03 PM. There are a bevy of bicycle-friendly eateries on California Ave. to hang at 'til the desired train arrives. This ride is for intermediate riders with 3+ hr. headlight systems; reflectors and flashing rear lights are also highly recommended. Route will consist of 2 miles on singletrack, 5 miles on dirt roads, and 16 miles on paved roads. The pace is slow, and cloudsplitting is a must at the summit. This ride is geared for fun. RSVP required. For further information, contact Jim at 650-493-8774 or [jsulljm@juno.com](mailto:jsulljm@juno.com).

*Sunday, May 18*

### **Skyline OSP—Anniversary Celebration on the Ridge Trail**

A joint celebration of the Bay Area Ridge Trail (15 years!) and MROSD (30 years!). Hikers, equestrians and bicyclists will enjoy docent-led hikes and rides through wildflowers along the Ridge Trail in the morning. Learn about the history of the Ridge Trail and efforts to complete this 400-mile loop around the bay. A boxed lunch and fun thank-you gathering for supporters

is provided at a surprise location on the way back to the cars. Space is limited, so Reserve your spot early—before May 2! Call 650-917-8699 or e-mail [baridgetrail@yahoo.com](mailto:baridgetrail@yahoo.com) for more information. Helmet required. Rides vary: B/C pace, 7 to 15 miles, 500 to 1500 feet of climbing, Beg/Int levels. Meet at 9:00 a.m.

*Sunday, May 25*

### **ECdM Skeggs Point—If Wishes Were Fishes Ride**

Learn about steelhead trout, sandy soils and trail design on this intermediate/advanced ride along technical trails near El Corte de Madera Creek. MROSD docents will answer questions about fire roads that may be converted to single track, trail repair plans, geology and watershed management, and how mountain bicyclists can help improve habitat for fish in the creek. The group will split up at the end; some will do an additional loop. 10 to 16 miles, 1200 to 2500 feet of climbing. B/C pace. Int/Adv difficulty level. Bring lunch, water and helmet. 11:00 to 4:00

## April

All regularly scheduled rides in January continue through February. These include regular ROMP rides every Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday, as well as Interpretive rides with the Santa Clara Country Parks.

See [www.romp.org](http://www.romp.org) for updates on special rides.

## Save a Tree: Go Paperless!

Members with web access may forgo receiving the printed version of this newsletter. By doing so, you will receive an email notifying you when the latest newsletter is posted on ROMP's website (at [www.romp.org/news](http://www.romp.org/news)). If you would like to select this option, send an email to [memberdata@romp.org](mailto:memberdata@romp.org) with "No paper, please" in the subject and your name and preferred email address in the body.

## Land Manager Meetings

**Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD)** oversees many open space preserves throughout San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. Board of director's meetings are open to the public on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 7:30 PM in the district offices at 330 Distel Circle (off El Camino Real north of Rengstorff), Los Altos. The District also holds Trail Policy Committee meetings which deal with development and implementation of trail use policy.

**Los Gatos Trails Committee** meets on the second Thursday of each month from 6 to 7 PM at 41 Miles Avenue, Los Gatos.

**Santa Clara County Group of the Bay Area Ridge Trail Committee (BARTC)** meets on the third Wednesday of each month from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at Greenbelt Alliance, 1922 The Alameda, Santa Clara (may change – call before attending). Call Judy Etheridge at 408-248-3900.

**San Mateo County Group of the BARTC** meets on the first Wednesday of each month from 9:30 AM to 12 noon at Coyote Point Museum (odd months) and other locations (even months). Call Bill Smith at 650-873-0415 for meeting locations and other information.

## Land Manager Directory

**Acterra (Arastradero Preserve)** 3921 E. Bayshore Blvd., Palo Alto, CA 94303, 650-962-9876, fax 650-962-8234; [www.arastradero.org](http://www.arastradero.org), [www.acterra.org/info@acterra.org](http://www.acterra.org/info@acterra.org) (general), [www.participation.com/arastradero](http://www.participation.com/arastradero)

**California Recreational Trails Committee** Ken McKowen, Trails Coordinator, PO Box 942896, Sacramento 94296-0001, 916-653-6501

**Castle Rock State Park** Bob Culbertson, 408-429-2869; Dave Keck, 916-322-2997

**City of Palo Alto (Arastradero)** Recreation, Open Space and Sciences Division, 650-329-2423

**East Bay Regional Park District** 11500 Skyline Blvd., Oakland 94619, 415-531-9300

**Henry W. Coe State Park** P.O. Box 846, Morgan Hill 95038 Sector Office 408-848-4006, Barry Breckling, Unit Ranger 408-779-2728, David Gould, 209-826-1196; [www.coepark.org](http://www.coepark.org) <http://www.coepark.org>

**Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District** 330 Distel Circle, Los Altos 94022; 650-691-1200; [mrosd@openspace.org](mailto:mrosd@openspace.org), [www.openspace.org](http://www.openspace.org)

**Mt. Diablo State Park** District Office 96 Mitchell Canyon Rd., Clayton 94517; 510-673-2891; Larry Ferri, Park Superintendent

**Santa Clara County Parks & Rec. Dept.** 298 Garden Hill Dr., Los Gatos, 95030; Mark Frederick, Capital Projects Mgr., 408-358-3741 x 143; fax 408-358-3245; [mark.frederick@mail.prk.co.santa-clara.ca.us](mailto:mark.frederick@mail.prk.co.santa-clara.ca.us), [claraweb.co.santa-clara.ca.us/parks/](http://claraweb.co.santa-clara.ca.us/parks/)

**Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors** 70 W. Hedding, San Jose, 95110; 408-299-2323

**Santa Cruz District** 600 Ocean St., Santa Cruz 95060; 408-429-2850; David Vincent, District Superintendent

**The Trail Center** 3921 E. Bayshore Road, Palo Alto 94303; 650-968-7065, [www.trailcenter.org](http://www.trailcenter.org)

# ROMP's Long History of Trail Work

*by Berry Stevens*

For many years, individual ROMP members have been doing trail work, primarily with MROSD, but also with Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties and The Trail Center. Around 1993 we did our first project as a group, joining forces with MROSD. Along upper Alpine Road in Portola Valley was a bootleg single track, which was the lowest portion of the trail that came off what was then called Thompson's Droveaway. The district wanted to close and replace this last segment with a safer and more environmentally responsible alternative. Roughly ten ROMP members showed up, and we cut some bench and did finish work on what the district had already performed with a trail machine.

After that we participated in a series of work days to do finish work on both the El Corte de Madera Creek and Resolution trails up at El Corte de Madera (ECdM) open space preserve. As a group, we also built the entire North Leaf Trail at ECdM over the course of two seasons. These projects required entirely hand work, and we did it all. We worked out the alignment with district staff, cut the vegetation, dug the dirt and finished the trail—about 1.1 miles of it.

More recently ROMP members have supported Downieville Trail Days, held in the fall, to extend the North Yuba trail west from town and to do needed maintenance and reroutes on the Second Divide and Butcher Ranch trails. During the same period we've worked with the Truckee-Donner Land Trust on the Donner Lake Rim Trail to help create the 20-mile single track that will eventually encircle Donner Lake and connect with Hole in the Ground.

Locally, we've been building new trails and maintaining old ones at the Soquel State Demonstration Forest and Water Dog Lake in Belmont. Both of these projects are managed, run, and supported by ROMP members and are not only expanding our trail inventory, but are building good relations with land managers and other users. Come out and support either or both of these projects and participate in a long tradition of service and valuable contributions to the trails we all love to ride. See the ROMP web site ([www.romp.org](http://www.romp.org)) for current schedules and contact information.



**MUD, SWEAT AND TRAILS** — Berry Stevens and crew carve a new trail at Belmont's Water Dog Park.

# MOUNTAIN CYCLIST Mail Call

## *Bikers-Only Trails*

Long ago in a place very close, some people had a dream of riding their bikes in the woods. For a while, they had a good time and while starting a movement that created a lot of fun for people around the world. Mountain biking was born in the Bay Area.

The other land users got very jealous and teamed up to take the trails away from these visionary bikers. They closed almost all of the fun trails, which were called "single-track," based on the idea that bikers couldn't be trusted to share the trails with the slower-moving hikers. All that was left for the mountain bikers were the monotonous fire roads that wound endlessly up the mountains at seemingly fixed grades. Mountain biking seemed to be dead in the Bay Area.

Then all the mountain bikers and the bike shops got together to take back some of the trails for bikers only. The local bike associations petitioned each land manager for a biker-only fitness trail, to be used exclusively by bikers traveling in one direction around a loop. These loops were to be designed to appeal to mountain bikers, with technical single track, steep rocky sections, and a bare minimum of boring fire roads.

Once the trails were created, the bikers maintained them, and everyone agreed that mountain biking was again fun in the Bay Area.

**KARL STEINBRECHER**  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

## *The Desperate Mechanic*

*The following letter was directed to Igor Kotterkrank, The Desperate Mechanic, columnist with the Mountain Cyclist.*

Dear Prof. Kotterkrank,

Your advice last month [on field repair for burst rims] was brilliant! If I had known of this technique earlier, I could have sucked every last ride and useable micron out of the dozens of rims I've thrown away over the years. I used to be concerned that rims with .0003" or less sidewall thickness might leave me stranded. Now, however, I know that they can be useful up to the end, and that friendly "BLAM!" will let me know when it's time for a change. Economical, practical, and eco-friendly!

I do have one minor quibble with your advice, however: Don't give up so quickly on that tube that was in place at the time of the explosion! With a few dozen patches, it may very well be salvageable, even after temporary use as a tire for the rim repair. With enough rubber cement, even a tube cut in half can be made nearly good as new.

Keep the great advice columns coming!

With sincerest thanks,

**ROGER RIMBLAST**  
(ADDRESS WITHHELD)

*(Editor's Note: Igor Kotterkrank provides more great advice in this issue. Read his column on Page 12.)*

## THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN KICKSTAND



## ROMP MEMBERS

Next ROMP Meetings Are  
March 24 and  
April 28

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

# Chains Suck

by Igor Kotterkrank

**Long before the mountain bike was born, a few hardy cyclists mashed along among blue hills and fragrant orchards, gapped irrigation ditches, and gulped water from faucets, playing in the dirt.**

These days, we still rely on cranks, chains, and cogs for our fun. Some modern-day cyclists set back the clock to simpler times by riding single-speed. The rest of us—we who'd rather pedal uphill—need small chainrings and big sprockets. But now as then, chains still suck. Why is this, and why can't we make a quantum leap to a better technology?

What prevents the chain from releasing the chainring? Why does it ride up next to the chain stay, which wedges the side plates of the chain in the dreaded condition known as chain suck? In less enlightened times the causes of chain suck were blamed on bad trail karma, the result of running over small hapless creatures, and bad mojo. Chains suck because it is their destiny to wear and alter the original profile of the chain tooth.

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**It takes precision  
yanks and counter  
force to free a badly  
sucked chain.  
Good luck.**

---

When chain suck strikes, progress halts with a four letter word. A dirty wrestling match ensues. It takes precision yanks and counter force to free a badly sucked chain. Good luck.

Strive to maintain a clean and well-lubricated drive train. When the chain sounds like a holly bush full of merry sparrows, any rube knows you gotta use the lube, so keep some in your pack.

Your bike chain wears with extended use. The pins and rollers wear down slightly, and when you multiply this slight amount by 108 links or so, the chain gets longer. Bike tool manufacturers also provide tools called chain checkers, but you don't need them. Some people maintain that chain checkers are unreliable. The distance from pin to pin over 12 linked pairs on a new chain is 12 inches. The chain can stretch 1/16" (1.5 mm) before significant drive-train damage occurs. If you replace the chain at or before the 1/16" stretch mark, the sprockets and chainwheels should run OK. But if you wait until 1/8" (3mm) of

stretch (at which point the bike will be prone to chain suck), you'll have to replace the entire drive train to obtain optimal performance. Clean the chain before you measure it. Using a ruler or tape measure, focus on the top stretch of chain between the sprocket and the chainring above the chain stay. Measure from the edge of one pin to the same edge 12 linked pairs away. Or do it the easy way: Compare its length to that of a new chain by hanging both chains from one nail on the wall. You might even keep a new, cheap chain hanging in your garage at all times, ready for comparison. (Use a better chain for replacement.) You can then eyeball the stretch over 100 links, and if the used chain is more than half a link longer than a new one, it's toast.

But you can still use it, because you might decide that it's cheaper and just as effective to ride until it rides no more. Chains wear in concert with the rest of the drive train. But because different sprockets and chainwheels are made of different metals, endure different loads, and are used for different lengths of time, they wear at different rates. The lowest gears on a mountain bike are the ones that die first, and the only reason big chainrings get changed is because the teeth get bent and distorted on rock and log-overs. It's a vicious grinding cycle that eats up the small chainring and the largest sprocket.

Once the granny ring is worn with a chain stretched beyond the 1/16"-over-12-links rule, a new chain will not work properly. Conversely, replacing the granny ring and using it with the old chain will also suck. At a minimum you should replace the granny gear (and the middle chainring if you climb hard on this) with the chain. But when your chain is at the borderline, and you replace it with a new chain, you have to break in the new chain to match the old sprockets.

*Continued on next page*



## Chains Suck

*Continued from page 12*

You can extend your chain's life. If your chain sucks badly on a ride, you can try rotating the granny gear 72 or 90 degrees, allowing the chain to engage on less-worn teeth. This can be done without removing the crank. At home you can remove the crank and flip the granny ring over and re-install it. This loads up the other unworn tooth face. Try this when installing a new chain to double the granny's life.

A journey begins with but a single step, and a ride starts with a single crank of a single link. Likewise an accident starts with a single screw-up. Don't screw up your chain because it's fastened with pins. Always use either the SRAM Powerlink, or the Shimano nine-speed pins with the nine-speed systems. Breaking a chain with a chain tool to clean and measure it is bad. Use the Powerlink. Until Rohloff comes out with a 28-speed belt drive Power Hub, we're all linked to the chain of bicycle history.

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**In less enlightened times the causes of chain suck were blamed on bad trail karma, the result of running over small hapless creatures, and bad mojo.**

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## Lead a ROMP Ride

Why not volunteer to lead a ROMP ride? As an added incentive, ROMP will pay the membership fee for anyone who leads eight or more rides during one year.

Last-minute rides can be posted to the e-mail list ([romp@topica.com](mailto:romp@topica.com)) and the Web site ([romp.org](http://romp.org)). To post a ride on the Web, click on "Schedule a ride." Alternatively, you can phone the ride coordinator (see directory) or forward it to [ride@romp.org](mailto:ride@romp.org).

## Access News

*Continued from page 7*

ROMP member, advocate, and SF resident Aaron Thies had this comment: "Some say that mountain biking destroys and erodes trails. I do see erosion of trails within the park, but in fact, all user groups affect trail erosion in a similar manner. It is water, however, that is the true culprit of trail damage. Instead of excluding bikers from trails, the way to make the Presidio trails last for decades to come is to use sustainable trail-building techniques that prevent water damage. Multi-use trail networks that are sustainably built have been proven to work. Also, providing legal off-road bike trails can make the Presidio environment healthier, because the poorly built and unplanned social trails that erode can be replaced with long-lasting multi-use trails, and trail use can be consolidated."



San Francisco's unique urban setting poses many challenges. Certainly its central location between the three Bay Area mountain bike clubs, BTCM, BTCEB and ROMP, suggests no lack of volunteer involvement if the cycling community is given an opportunity to participate. We should add, too, that regular mountain biking through the park would make the hidden corners of the park less attractive to homeless people. Aaron has created a helpful website about riding in the city; check it out at [www.sfmtb.com](http://www.sfmtb.com).

### The Reality Check

ROMP admonishes trail community members to understand their roles in the equation of a balanced land-access program. Mountain bikers must realize that every action they take has an equal and opposite reaction. Whether or not you realize it, you are involved. Please make a conscious effort to enjoy your access, defend it, and expand its future by defining your role in the access equation positively.

We all like long-travel suspension more than long-winded essays, but trail testing indicates that both contribute toward a rewarding trail experience. The thumbnail thrash test indicates that ROMP 2003 Gruppo works. As the days grow longer we'll put it into the big ring for some long-term abuse.

*Paul Nam*

# ROMP Ride Reports

*By Rich "Air Endo" Andrews*

## Explore de Peninsula No. 2: Water Dog Park, February 2<sup>nd</sup>

Sixteen MTBers drove through the Sunday morning squall, intent on riding Water Dog Park. Their perseverance was rewarded by a break in the clouds and a warm reception by the ride leaders, Jeff ("Hurry up and let's go!") and Berry ("I'll explain everything").

All went well until the first intersection. If you're going to fall off the sidewalk, sure, why *not* have fifteen people watch? With that incident behind us, we felt ready for a long ride.

After a warm-up spin, we tackled our first steep uphill pitch. The hammerheads barely slowed, but the remainder of us bailed halfway. Sage Kathleen advised us, "Exit on the uphill side of your bike." Sound advice, considering the 100-foot drop to the ravine below.

Then it was on to the acute, rutted downhill. Better not to contemplate this section, just pick a line and let it rip. The trails were in good shape after the winter rains. An ample smattering of mud gave us that Real Mountain Biker look.

At the ride's halfway point, those with lives departed; the rest of us ventured forth. The fun continued as we navigated the 13 switchbacks to the ridge top. The single track offered a variety of surprises, unexpected whoops and low branches.

Near the end of the ride was the much-anticipated "yellow brick road," a sheer dropoff guaranteed to get the adrenalin pumping. It was a "too much thinking can be hazardous to your health" situation.

We all survived our Belmont Wilderness experience with only minor scrapes and rashes. Thanks again to Jeff Hane and Berry Stevens for leading this ride.

## Soquel Demo Forest Ride, Feb 9th

The six-pack of riders departed the chilly canyon Sunday morning, bundled up against the cold. Layers were lost as we climbed to the sun-drenched ridge top. The Big Tree trail single-track was a pleasant diversion from the fire road and offered our first technical challenge. No worries, stop in the slop, and chain suck comes with the territory.

At the trailhead we decided to initiate one rider to his first Braille experience. A chorus of yahoos echoed down the hillside. Regrouping at the bottom, we all shared our "brush with death" stories. Two riders then reluctantly departed, worldly duties called.

We planned a second lap down Saw Pit. The one single-speeder among us desired to climb up Tractor trail. The slog up the dimly lit trail was brightened by Patty Ciesla's smile. Her trail crew was grooming the water bars as Charles and company cleared fallen trees. At the Rock Grotto, Paule demonstrated how to take a big drop into a sketchy run out. As Paule bounced down the trail, we three decided to walk it. After the wild ride down, we regrouped to inventory our body parts: all present and accounted for. One of us had made the obligatory skin sacrifice to the mountain gods, a small price to pay. Thanks Paule and Jeanine Bates for leading the ride.

### Make a Note of it...

The Organization Formerly Known as

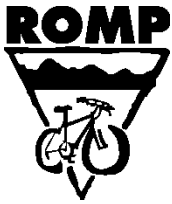
### The Los Gatos Trails Committee

Is Now Known as

### The Los Gatos Parks Commission

This committee meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the town's council chamber at 110 East Main Street. Call (408) 399-5770 for more information.





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**LIGHT & MOTION**

**TRAIL HEAD CYCLERY**



Crossroads Bicycles



Willow Glen Bicycles



**The Bicycle Outfitter** 963 Fremont Avenue, Los Altos 650-948-8092 [www.bicycleoutfitter.com](http://www.bicycleoutfitter.com)

**Broken Spoke** 782 Laurel Street, San Carlos 650-594-9210 [www.brokenspoke.com](http://www.brokenspoke.com)

**Calmar Cycles** 2236 El Camino Real, Santa Clara 408-249-6907 [www.calmarcycles.com](http://www.calmarcycles.com)

**Chain Reaction** 1451 El Camino Real, Redwood City 650-366-6620; 2310 Homestead (at Foothill Plaza), Los Altos 408-735-8735 [www.chainreaction.com](http://www.chainreaction.com)

**Cupertino Bike Shop** 10493 S. De Anza Blvd, Cupertino 408-255-2217 [www.cupertinobike.com](http://www.cupertinobike.com)

**Palo Alto Bicycles** 170 University Ave. Palo Alto 650-328-7411 [www.paloaltobicycles.com](http://www.paloaltobicycles.com)

**Slough's Bike Shoppe** 260 Race St., San Jose 408-293-1616

**Summit Bicycles** 100-A S. Santa Cruz Ave., Los Gatos 408-399-9142; 843 Gilman St., Berkeley 510-524-5398; 1111 Burlingame Ave., Burlingame 415-343-8483

**Trail Head Cyclery** 14450 Union Ave, San Jose 408-369-9666 [www.trailheadonline.com](http://www.trailheadonline.com)

**Calabazas Cyclery** 6140 Bollinger Rd., San Jose 408-366-2453 [www.calabazas.com](http://www.calabazas.com)

**Crossroads Bicycles** 217 N Santa Cruz Ave # C, Los Gatos, CA 408-354-0555

**Light&Motion**, 300 Cannery Row, Monterey, 831.645-1538 [www.bikelights.com](http://www.bikelights.com)