



MOUNTAIN CYCLIST

LEADING THE PARTICIPATION OF MOUNTAIN CYCLISTS IN THE TRAIL COMMUNITY

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2005

Bootleg Trails

The "elephant in the living room" of mountain bike access

By Paul Nam, ROMP President

Bootleg bike trails concern all mountain bikers. These illegal bike trails are paths that riders adopt or create without the consent of land managers or owners. They are secretly conceived, built, and ridden outside of the law.

"Cross-country riding on single track trails on public land has already been hurt by unauthorized trail building fueled by free riding. Land

managers revile illegal trail construction and even more so when the clandestine work includes rickety, wooden structures. In some locations, they've reacted by imposing a moratorium on new trails or even worse, banning bikes." - IMBA Trail News, Spring 04, pg. 2.

Bootleg trails often occur in areas where legal mountain bike access is prohibited or excessively limited, and where existing trail systems lack the sustained technical challenge that many cyclists seek. The various origins of these trails may begin with game trails, repeated free-riding lines, suggestive topographic and geological formations, a desire to reach particular landmarks, roads, and features, and conscious (albeit covert) deliberate planning.



Evidence of illegal trail construction by cyclists gives ammunition and credence to those who seek to abolish or limit trail cycling. At the same time mountain bike advocates incur the resentment of those peers who practice illegal trail construction, maintenance, and riding when they chastise bootleg trail builders and users. Illegal trail construction has a measurable negative environmental impact and divides the mountain bike community.

It is often said, and probably the truth, that it is the minority who cause the majority of the problems in our society. Amazingly, it is upon this axiom that much of our mountain bike access depends. Typically land managers give mountain bikers the benefit of the doubt.

Outlaw trails are the "elephant in the living room" of mountain bike access. The colloquialism, "elephant in the room", is appropriate. The elephant

denotes something so big and obvious it can't be ignored. Yet acknowledging it and trying to get it out of the room, where it ostensibly does not belong, is something that no one is willing to do because of the damage that could result. It can also be

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that those who see the elephant are not sure that everyone sees it, and do not want to risk being judged a fool upon identifying it.

In my case, I can't ignore the elephant, if that's what it is, because I am standing knee deep in elephant excrement. I'm not looking for sympathy here though. I know where the waste comes from and what the elephant is, this secretive denizen of the forest.

What would be your reaction if I were to say to you that one single local agency in one year spent \$100,000 of our local property taxpayer dollars to eradicate bootleg trails?

Maybe some might respond, "The agency got what it deserved, considering the unreasonable limits they set on trail access for bikes." Or, "That's an outrageous waste of tax-payer money!" Or, "Why don't they monitor these trails and see who uses and works on them, and bust them, make examples of them, and sue them for damages?" Or, "Yet another reason why mountain bikers are bad and should be heavily controlled and restricted." And "I wonder what sort of environmental damages have been incurred?" And maybe, "Too bad they can't legally obtain the sort of trail experience they are seeking."

Over the years exploring trails, one occasionally discovers new bootleg trails and installations of stunts. One marvels at the investment of love and labor poured into these shabby constructions. One imagines the exhilaration the builders obtain by way of their covert fabrication and their daring rides. One estimates the potential physical abuse that may occur to habitat and the riders themselves.



Paul Nam and other ROMP members ride at Fort Ord. Don't ride illegal or bootleg trails, especially at Fort Ord, where there is unexploded ordinance.

The reason the topic of bootleg trails, elephants in the forest, is avoided can be put as Mark Twain wrote, "I knew a man who grabbed a cat by the tail and learned forty percent more about cats than the man who didn't." That's a way of explaining what might happen when we disturb the elephant. In terms of feline study we might first hand learn the power sharp claws and fangs have to inflict wounds. Meantime we've all had plenty of time to privately theorize on how these elephants came into the forest and observe their habits.

Built with barbaric stealth and ingenuity, bootleg trails are inspired by the imagination of self-serving cyclists who crave a trail experience absent in established trail systems. A popular hypothesis states they are chronic adrenaline/endorphin addicts. Eventually finding the challenge of legal trails too easy (only after exhausting the possibilities of high speeds and trails closed to bikes) and therefore unable to produce an adequate dosage of peptide hormones, our local thrill addicts decide to take measures to create the facilities that will once again stimulate adequate adrenal secretions. A double bonus in dosage is achieved, gained similarly in previous experience riding closed trails: Eluding detection stimulates the adrenal gland.

If this hypothesis is true, like all drug addicts, they may be driven to take extreme measures in order to obtain satisfaction. Such measures may include committing crime. When questioned they may say that they were only trying to have fun and will deny that their activity incurs any damage to the environment. Indeed, these folks may be such passionate tree huggers, that they are willing to hurl themselves at 15 mph and 15 feet in the air .

Because of the metabolic biological urgency of their needs, waiting months, years or decades for even the possibility of a trail being built that suits their purpose is totally unacceptable. Instead, like the infamous slogan goes, they "Just do it."

The bicycle industry profits by making the delivery device: "the needle". The industry elicits a shrinking demand for products and innovations when they neglect aftermarket consequences such as bootlegging. They must support advocacy groups like ROMP or face their own demise.

Modern bikes are increasingly sophisticated. A typical bike utilizes state of the art aerospace materials, industrial design and production techniques. To a physically fit, skilled and experienced cyclist, the best suspension designs make it possible to ride over increasingly difficult terrain successfully with a greater margin of safety and ease. Many of the latest designs are overkill for the average difficulty level that local legal trails afford. Unsurprisingly more and more cyclists seek more difficult terrain, but are not finding it within legal trail systems.

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SDF Western Addition

By Charles Jalgunas

By the time you are reading this, we should have completed the Western Addition to the Ridge Trail in the Soquel Demonstration State Forest. We

expect to put the finishing touches on the western-most part of this multi-use trail where Ridge ends and Saw Pit begins. This section of the Ridge Trail is renown for the Rock Garden and the Wall.

The Rock Garden consists of a several hundred yard rocky section built steeply on the fall line. This trail section is famous for being ridden only by the most skilled of the riders that come out to the Demo, and has become a destination for riders looking for that sort of challenge.

grade. This trail section is famous for not being ridden by anybody, and is the only part of any trail in the Demo that can claim that.

The Wall and the Rock Garden haven't ever been safely passable for these purposes, and a reroute has long been sought after that would reduce the grades and provide a wider, smoother



Charles Jalgunas yields a chainsaw to clear some fallen trees. ROMP purchased the protective gear for work in the forest.

The Wall is where you regain most of the elevation you lost in the rocks, climbing at a 20 to as much as 40%

Mountain Cyclist

The Mountain Cyclist is the monthly newsletter of the Responsible Organized Mountain Pedalers

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

◇ newsletter@romp.org

Send ride listings to the club web master

◇ Josh Moore (408) 420 7342

webmaster@romp.org

One of The Stewards trail maintenance and construction goals in the Demo is to make it easier to access the entire trail system by ATV. Santa Cruz Search and Rescue will have to do this several times per year, sometimes at night, attempting to locate injured or missing trail users, and the California Department of Forestry also uses ATV's for recon, maintenance, and inventory purposes.

trail surface. Providing a bypass around the Rock Garden for the ATV that remains at a sustainable grade, and within sight of the cycling trail has proven to be a challenge.

We needed to stay within sight of the trail so Search and Rescue wouldn't have to dismount to have checked every part of the trail system, especially in an area as likely to have a rescue call

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Don't Ride the "Injury" Cycle: The Benefits of Flexibility

By Al Painter

You've just finished a long ride, and now you're back at your car loading up, but are you really done cycling? If it is only a matter of time until your body stiffens up and post-ride pain sets in, chances are, probably not.

The ride you may still be on is what the National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM) calls the "Injury Cycle." This is what it looks like: 1) Activity causes trauma to muscle tissue creating inflammation; 2) Knots set in to protect the muscles from moving and limit flexibility. Left alone, the knots can become permanent; 3) The result is shortened muscle length affecting how a joint performs.

Since riding a bike involves mass amounts of repetitive stress at the hip, knee and ankle joints, or "pattern overload," this makes cycling a prime factor in the loss of lower body flexibility.

Without the proper TLC given to your muscles post ride, you also increase the risk of: muscle imbalances

limiting joint range of motion (ROM); "substitute" muscles taking over the duties of the tight ones; faulty joint movements damaging to ligaments, tendons and cartilage; and decreasing the nervous system's ability to properly control muscle movement.

Two common examples of this are tight hip flexors, causing the glutes, hamstrings and muscles that extend the hip to work overtime, and tight calves putting excess stress on the ball of the foot leading to heel and arch pain.

For mountain bikers this means climbing automatically

becomes tougher because of reduced pedal force on the down stroke. The onset of low back or knee pain is also likely. One of the best ways to fight this is with flexibility training. This is one of the best weapons we have to protect joint health.

Flexibility training falls into three stages: Corrective, Active and Functional. The first stage is meant to correct muscle imbalances and dysfunctional joint movements. This typically involves removing and knots and increasing the length of



Not stretching could turn your ride into a hike, and lead to various joint pains.

tight muscles. If you've ever experienced the wonderful sensations of a deep tissue massage, you know how much fun this stage is. Stage two involves increasing flexibility to allow muscles to be properly controlled by the nervous system. Stage three, perhaps the most critical, involves making sure the body can safely move in any range of motion required.

Static, or traditional stretching, is one of the safest ways to insure the safety of your joints through proper flexibility. Post ride muscles can be "reset" to their proper length with 7-10 minutes of cool down stretching.

There almost as many sources on stretching as there are stretches to do. "Core Performance" by Mark Verstegen, "Eat, Move and be Healthy" by Paul Chek and "ProBodX: Proper Body Exercise: The Path to True Fitness" by Marv Marinovich, Edythe M. Heus are three of the better literary sources out there.

Anything by Chris Carmichael is also a good place to start. Your physician should also be able to point you in the right direction.

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Horses' Shoes

By Paul Nam

To many in the mountain cycling community, horses are not well understood. Why do these animals require respect and deference when encountered on the trails?

Horses are prey animals and have been bred only recently into large animals. In prehistoric times they were much smaller. Horses may still think they are small. Even though to us they are truly powerful and potentially dangerous animals, horses don't see themselves this way. Therefore it is erroneous to assume that a horse has confidence and a sense of security just because it is big and powerful. Small, seemingly innocuous things will spook them. When a rider is perched on the back of a scared horse, it can be a precarious situation. Horses are farsighted, so things up close are blurry. When a bicyclist comes around a blind corner and suddenly appears within 50 ft of the horse, the horse cannot readily identify what is heading towards it. Since the horse is a prey animal it is normal behavior for it to flinch and desire to flee. Obviously this is not good for any rider on its back.

Equestrians prefer voice alerts over bells and a greeting such as "Hi! Great weather today!" is appropriate coming

from in front or behind. Horses generally recognize the human voice as safe and a spoken salutation helps offset the potentially threatening appearance of a bike.

Horses are fidgety and susceptible to other horses' behavior. If a horse is halted on a narrow trail it may not necessarily stand still, and it may lose its footing causing it to attempt to save itself from falling down a slope. This in turn will agitate other nearby horses that interpret the situation as dangerous.

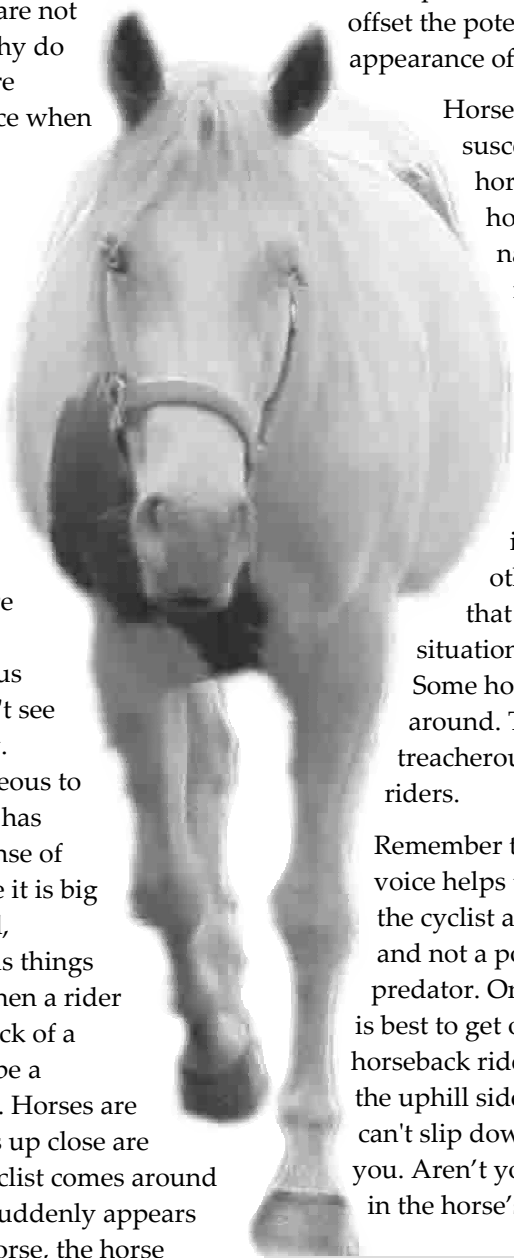
Some horses may try to turn around. This can be treacherous for the horseback riders.

Remember that the human voice helps the horse identify the cyclist as a friendly human and not a potential threat or predator. On tight single track it is best to get off your bike and let horseback riders pass. Get off on the uphill side so that the horse can't slip down on you or kick you. Aren't you glad you are not in the horse's shoes?

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.



Land Manager Directory

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

California Recreational Trails Committee
Ken McKowen, Trails Coordinator, PO Box 942896, Sacramento 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, 650-329-2423

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

Henry W. Coe State Park 9000 East Dunne Ave, Morgan Hill 95037. 408-779-2728 Gavilan Sector Supervising Ranger Mike Ferry mferry@parks.ca.gov; Coe Senior Ranger Barry Breckling barryb@coepark.org; www.coepark.parks.ca.gov

Monterey District California State Parks, Gavilan Sector; Henry W. Coe State Park.
P.O. Box 787; 19 Franklin Street; San Juan Bautista, CA 95045. 831-623-1659. Monterey District Superintendent C.L. Price

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District 330 Distel Circle, Los Altos 94022; 650-691-1200; mrosd@openspace.org, 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 x143; fax 408-358-3245; mark.frederick@mail.prk.co.santa-clara.ca.us, 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

Tragedy Draws Attention to Los Gatos Creek Trail

Members of ROMP, Western Wheelers, the Silicon Valley Bicycling Coalition and ACTC have recently organized to discuss the Los Gatos Creek Trail corridor between the village of Los Gatos and Bear Creek Road.

Recently, attention is focused on this area after the death of 65-year-old ACTC and Western Wheeler member Jim Mills while leading the popular Hills R Us ride. An accomplished cyclist, Jim had completed the Everest Challenge and fulfilled a dream by climbing Alpe d'Huez, Le Tourmalet and Mont Ventoux on a recent trip to France. Each year he participated in the Multiple Sclerosis Bike tour and was one of the top fundraisers.



One of Jim's weekly rituals was leading the popular Wednesday ride, which typically works its way from Los Altos up to Skyline. On August 4, the group headed south on Skyline to Old Santa Cruz Highway and Lexington Dam. Jim was having a particularly good day, as he had missed many previous rides acting as caregiver for his terminally ill wife. On this day he got a few hours away to ride his beloved Calfee.

Upon finding the Los Gatos trailhead gates locked at Alma Bridge Road, Jim led his group down Highway 17, the only paved alternative. The closure was not announced by the San Jose Water Company, which was working on the trail below. Ironically, public safety was the impetus they had closed the trail. The reason for Jim's crash is still in question, but eyewitnesses point to

bad pavement as the possible cause. Jim went over the guardrail and struck a fencepost, sustaining massive injuries. Although rescue crews arrived very quickly, it appears he died almost instantly. As a sad footnote, Jim's wife Carolyn died weeks later.

James Porter, President of Western Wheelers; Rebecca Lucky, Executive Director of Silicon Valley Biking Coalition, and Paul Nam began talking about safe passage for all cyclists through the very important Highway 17 corridor.

Realizing all cyclists, regardless of specific interests, needed to work together on this project, Paul Nam, President of ROMP,

promptly threw ROMP's hat into the ring.

There are a number of possible solutions identified by the collective cycling groups. San Jose Water

Company could give advance notice of trail closures on the Los Gatos Creek Trail corridor. The steep grade near the dam could be paved. The trail could be resurfaced with a finer material more suited to compaction than the current surface. We could petition CalTrans to remove obstacles from the shoulder of Highway 17. This includes pavement heaves and bumps and repositioning of the storm sewer grates. Periodic sweeping to remove glass and debris will also be requested. Lastly, funding sources for bike trail improvements in the Los Gatos area, including alternatives to the creek trail during periodic maintenance closures could be identified.

Nearly 2,000 members belong to the four organizations working to provide safe passage past Lexington Dam. This is a unique opportunity to work with other area clubs to achieve a common goal. In the coming months, you may be contacted to lend support to this cause by writing letters or emails to public officials. Please be generous with your time. Let public officials know that rider safety is important to us and should be important to them.

Romp Directory

PO Box 1723, Campbell, CA 95009-1723				408-380-2271 x2171	www.romp.org
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National Mtn Bike Patrol	Dave Wieland	408-371-2729	nmbp@romp.org		
Web Master	Josh Moore	408-420-7342	webmaster@romp.org		

Nisene Marks Litigation

This article consists of a summary of the situation regarding mountain bike access in the Forest of Nisene Marks.

The 10,000 acre Forest of Nisene Marks State Park has been shared with cyclists since 1989. The lovely redwood forest setting between Aptos and the Soquel Demonstration Forest became a State Park in 1963 by a generous 9,000 acre gift grant to the State. The remaining 1,000 acres were acquired piecemeal through the Sempervirens Fund and the Save the Redwoods League.

On March 11, 2001 the first public meeting to help create a new General Plan for the Park convened in the Soquel High School. Thus began a process lasting nearly 2 years to forge a management plan for Nisene Marks. Many ROMP members and cyclists attended the meetings and wrote letters. Cyclists outnumbered hikers by 3 to 1. In the end an equitable compromise was reached with the potential for a limited increase in mountain bike access to trails in the northwestern corner of the Park.

A small group of disgruntled hikers unwilling to share the trails with cyclists formed, calling themselves "Citizens for the Preservation of the Forest of Nisene Marks State Park" (Citizens4FNMSP), composed principally of two gentlemen, Sandy Henn and Rich Apple. They sued the State earlier this year through the law firm of Wittwer & Parkin LLP claiming that the General Plan was invalid based upon their interpretation of the original grant deed, and alleged violations of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and an insufficient Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

"The lawsuit addresses the following: State Parks' violation of the California Environment Quality Act (CEQA) - by deferring impacts analysis till after the development of a trail plan; a lack of biologic inventories to identify plants, animals and erosion-prone areas in need of special status protection; a lack of mitigation measures for conflicts associated with mountain bike use; failure to address damage incurred by illegal mountain bike use.

The lawsuit also addresses the State's violation of the terms of the Marks' grant deed and its "natural preserve" designation. State Parks has created a General Plan that ignores the deed's stated intent - to preserve the park for activities respectful of its natural surroundings such as "camping, nature study, and hiking." Instead, State Parks is proposing to manage the deeded portion of the park, not as a "natural preserve," but as a recreation area where trails will be accessed by mountain bikes. These are trails that have been open only to pedestrian traffic for more than 40 years." -www.richapple.com/jan2004letter.html

The Judge found these arguments compelling and decided against State Parks. Much of the decision may be attributed to Judge Hersher's willingness to equate mountain biking with horse back riding.

According to a letter I received from the Director of California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR, State Parks), Ruth Coleman, dated Nov. 23, 2004

"The Department of Parks and recreation has recognized mountain biking as a legitimate recreational activity at this particular State Park, as demonstrated by the recently approved General Plan. However, the Superior Court has concluded that the deed restrictions on this property prohibit mountain biking.

The next step in this process would be an appeal of that judgment and that would be our preference. However, in deciding that course of action, we must first analyze the legal strength of our position to determine the likelihood of a successful outcome."

All of which brings us up to date. We have delayed writing this article as long as possible so as to include any breaking news.

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The Aptos Creek trail, the fire road into SDF from Highland Ave, and trails in

Monthly Rides

Calendar

First Saturday 10:00 AM Easy "Cruzin' Camille" Ride (2:00) A/EASY/5-6/1000 Meet in the Fremont Older Prospect Road parking lot at 10:00AM. This is an easy ride, open to novices of all ages. The preserve entrance is on Prospect Road in Cupertino. Exit Highway 85 at DeAnza Blvd. (From northbound 85 turn left on DeAnza Blvd. and from southbound 85 turn right on DeAnza Blvd.) Travel on DeAnza (toward the mountains) about 0.5 miles. Turn right on Prospect Road. At the first stop sign, turn left across the railroad tracks to remain on Prospect. Follow Prospect for 1.3 miles, turning left after the Saratoga Country Club, until you reach the preserve parking lot. Parking for approximately 15 cars is available here. Claire (408) 255-3464 claire@cruzincamille.com

10:00 AM First Sunday Social Ride at Saratoga Gap (3:00) B/EASY/11/1500 Meet at 10am at Grizzly Flat on Skyline Blvd (inbetween Junction 9 and Page Mill Road). This is a social ride so there are plenty of breaks, and we wait for everyone. Bring a helmet, water and some power bars. After the ride we will go for lunch in Saratoga. Contact Information: Dave Tripier (408) 255-3464 tripier@aol.com

02:30 PM Arastradero Second Saturday Social (2:00) B/EASY/7/900 This friendly, introductory ride covers most major trails in the preserve, including some moderate hills, jumps, tight switchbacks and single track. More skilled riders are encouraged to join us, socialize and provide support. Directions and MapTake Oregon Expressway / Page Mill Rd south past hwy 280. Turn right on Arastradero, and right into the parking lot. Bring your helmet, a snack and water. Rain cancels. Josh Moore (408) 420 7342 josh_moore@comcast.net

ROMP 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

10:00 AM 2nd Sunday Ride at Soquel Demo Forest (4:00) C/INT/12-18/2500-3000 Meet at 10am at the entrance to SDF on Highland Way. From hwy 17, take the Summit Rd exit and head SE. 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 on SDF at 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 down. Rich Andrews 408-738-1384 randrews@arc.nasa.gov

10:00 AM 3rd Sunday Ride at ECdM (Skeggs) (3:00) C-D/DIFF/15/3000 -- C-D/16-18/3000-4000 The third Sunday ride is now changing to SDF! Meet at 10am at the entrance to SDF on Highland Way. From hwy 17, take the Summit Rd exit and head SE. 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. We are going to be lot's of fun with 2 loops of super action :) Location: SDF (Demo Forest) Contact Information: Dave Tripier (408) 255-3464 tripier@aol.com

Newsletter Mailing Party

This fun is repeated bi-monthly. 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.

05:00 PM 3rd Tuesday Alpine Road (3:00) This year round ride has a couple options on where to meet up. 1st chance is the California ave Caltrain station in Palo Alto @ 5:05 pm, meeting the Northbound#79 and the Southbound#66 trains @ 5:05 pm. From here we pedal through Stanford's "Professorville" on lightly travelled streets, over Old Page Mill rd, through Arastradero Preserve to The Portola Valley ranch . The 2nd chance to meet up occurs here @ 6:15, corner of Alpine rd. - Willowbrook in Portola Valley, please park on Willowbrook. The ride then meanders up Alpine rd, following El Corte De Madera creek , all the way to Page Mill rd x Skyline. This 3 hour ride requires the use of lights in the fall- winter months, loaner sets are available, and rear flashing lights are highly recommended. Please contact Jim beforehand for any equipment questions. This complete ride is for intermediate level riders, however, many of our participants show up and ride a portion of the distance just to stretch the legs after work. The main concept of this ride is FUN, any hammeheads are summarily ditched and left to prove something somewhere else Contact Information: Jim Sullivan 650-493-8774 ssulljm@juno.com

01:00 PM 4th Saturday Beginner's Clinic (3:00) A/Easy/6/800 On the 4th Saturday of each month, meet at 1pm at the Arastradero Preserve, at the main parking area on Arastradero Road. We'll cover the basics of mountain biking while riding a combination of fireroads and singletrack. Be sure to bring a helmet, water, and something to eat. Please RSVP to Jim at 650-493-8774 or ssulljm@juno.com. RSVP is a must, as the meeting spot at the Preserve can vary with class focus Contact Information: Jim 650-493-8774 ssulljm@juno.com

10:00 AM Fourth Sunday Ride to Skyline (4:00) C/35/4000 Meet at the corner of Stevens Canyon Rd and Mount Eden Rd at 10:00am for a nice long ride. The route will vary from month to month depending on interest. The general plan is to head up Table Mountain or Monte Bello and explore the many parks and trails off Skyline. Location: Corner of Mt. Eden and Stenvens Canyon rd Cupertino Contact Information: Julie Barott 650 814 8271 jbarott@equinix.com

10:00 AM ROMP Last Sunday @ Wilder Ranch (4:00) B-C/INT/16/2000' -- Wilder Ranch is 2 miles past the traffic light at Western Dr. on Highway 1 (No). We will meet in the parking lot near the restrooms. Leave the parking lot at 10:00. Lots of single track on your favorite trails: Old Cabin, Rodrigo, Twin Oaks, Zane Grey. Many regroupings and "do-overs". Bring water and a snack. Be prepared for the best views of Monterey Bay, great technical single track and faces you may not have seen for a while! Lunch in Santa Cruz after for those interested. —Michael & Jain Location: Wilder Ranch Hiway 1 (West of SC at 2 mi.) Santa Cruz CA Contact Information: Michael & Jain Light (831) 662-9744 malight@pacbell.net

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 MROSD also holds Trail Policy Committee meetings which develop and implement 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.

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 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.

Trail Work

Sunday, January 02

09:00 AM Wilder Ranch Trailwork (4:00) First Sunday Every Month

Saturday, January 08

09:00 AM Coe TAC Trailwork (4:00) Trailwork in Henry Coe State Park sponsored by the Trail Advisory Council. RSVP to Paul Nam is required. Location and times are subject to change. Generally meet at 9am in Hunting Hollow parking area. Duration can vary. Tools provided. Best to bring work gloves, long pants, and long sleeve shirt. Remember water. Location: Henry Coe State Park Morgan Hill CA Contact Information: Paul Nam vocinam@yahoo.com

09:00 AM Waterdog Park Trailwork (4:00) Waterdog Park Trailwork Tools provided. Long sleeve shirt, long pants, and work gloves are good to wear. Location: Waterdog Park Contact Information: Berry Stevens bt3mtbiker@earthlink.net

Saturday, January 22

09:00 AM Waterdog Park Trailwork (4:00) Waterdog Park Trailwork Tools provided. Best to wear long pants and long sleeve shirt. Bring work gloves. Tools provided. Location: Waterdog Park Contact Information: Berry Stevens bt3mtbiker@earthlink.net

09:00 AM Coe TAC Trailwork (4:00) Trailwork in Henry Coe State Park sponsored by the Trail Advisory Council. RSVP to Paul Nam is required. Location and times are subject to change. Generally meet at 9am in Hunting Hollow parking area. Duration can vary. Tools provided. Best to bring work gloves, long pants, and long sleeve shirt. Remember water. Location: Henry Coe State Park Morgan Hill CA Paul Nam vocinam@yahoo.com

Saturday, February 05

09:00 AM Waterdog Park Trailwork (4:00)

Contact Information:
Berry Stevens
bt3mtbiker@earthlink.net

Sunday, February 06

09:00 AM Wilder Ranch Trailwork (4:00) First Sunday Every Month

Saturday, February 12

09:00 AM Coe TAC Trailwork (4:00) Trailwork in Henry Coe State Park sponsored by the Trail

Advisory Council. RSVP to Paul Nam is required. Location and times are subject to change. Generally meet at 9am in Hunting Hollow parking area. Duration can vary. Tools provided. Best to bring work gloves, long pants, and long sleeve shirt. Remember water. There may be poison oak- be forewarned. Location: Henry Coe State Park Morgan Hill CA Contact Information: Paul Nam vocinam@yahoo.com

Saturday, February 19

09:00 AM Waterdog Park Trailwork (4:00) Waterdog Park Trailwork Location: Waterdog Park Morgan Hill CA Contact Information: Berry Stevens bt3mtbiker@earthlink.net

Saturday, February 26

09:00 AM Coe TAC Trailwork (4:00) Trailwork in Henry Coe State Park sponsored by the Trail Advisory Council. RSVP to Paul Nam is required. Location and times are subject to change. Generally meet at 9am in Hunting Hollow parking area. Volunteers will not be charged for parking. Duration can vary. Tools provided. Best to bring work gloves, long pants, and long sleeve shirt. Remember water. There may be poison oak- be forewarned. Location: Henry Coe State Park Morgan Hill CA Contact Information: Paul Nam vocinam@yahoo.com



(Continued from page 3)

as the Rock Garden, and this part of the hillside is very steep and strewn with rocks. With the Western Addition, we have been able to achieve this, and also build a cycling trail that bypasses of the Wall.

were more of a struggle. Two of the rocks we had to move weighed about a ton each, and one of them now shores up the downhill side of the trail about half way up the climb. Another much larger and heavier rock is still being worked on as of this writing. We are using an assortment of hand tools to cut the trail through it.

entire section of the Ridge Trail that is bypassed can be seen from some part of the ATV route, including the Rock Garden.

On November 28, Nigel led a crew of 13 volunteers to construct the cyclist bypass trail, a few hundred feet of technical climbing through the Tannoaks and over rocks. This trail is now ready to ride.

Our last part of the project is to clean up after the trail machine and do the finish work on the Western most part of the Western Addition, as well as continue to chip away at one big rock.

For more information on the work being done, as well as pictures from our workdays, check out trailworkers.com and click the Soquel Forest button.



The ATV bypass starts at the top of the Rock Garden, splits off to the left, and runs over a quarter mile down the ridge, over a saddle, crosses the Wall, and joins the Saw Pit trail a couple of hundred feet from the old Ridge Trail intersection. The



After a half a year of debating and considering other options, construction started on Fourth of July weekend in 2004. Bud and Emma McCrary brought their trail machine out to the Demo and spent four days cutting the ATV bypass with the help of Ed Orre of CDF, and ROMP members Nigel Ray, Patty Ciesla, Dave Wieland, and myself.

Most of the rocks we encountered were easily moved by the trail machine, but other

(Continued from page 2)

It is possible to turn technology on it's head to create a challenging experience. One can choose to ride on unsuspended single-speed bicycles. But this is not an option everyone considers desirable. For most, this suggestion is absurd.

For the local cyclist who seeks the type of trail design that today's fully suspended disc-braked bicycle is designed for there is practically no appropriate outlet. Should parks and open space agencies provide this opportunity? Yes.

The alternative is the status quo. Agencies strive to enforce regulations while tolerating a low level of illegal activity, and occasionally destroying or restoring discovered illegal trail construction. There are good reasons for both sides to stick with the status quo. Illegal riding cliques may enjoy the game of cat and mouse with authorities that adds zest to their thrills. Also the steep trails they create are de facto single-use trails that they don't have to share.



It is time to confront the issue. Bootleg trails are bad for everyone. If bikes are banned, then cyclists are outlaws.

Resource protection

can work in harmony with properly planned, executed and maintained construction. Secret stunt trails are made to serve the goals of recreation with minimal regard, if any, to environmental concerns.

The better alternative is to take a proactive lead and recognize the burgeoning need for more challenging trail experiences. Environmentally sustainable technical mountain bike trails, over-grade, with puncheons, ladders, and rock gardens, etc. are possible. Land management agencies can embrace the growing technical riding mountain bike community and eliminate the need for illegal trail construction by providing



conscientiously designed opportunities.

Success in the eradication of damaging bootleg trails hinges on providing equivalent legal experiences. Without reasonable outlet, covert trail builders will continue their activities. If land managers fail to face this truth they increase the likelihood that the very resources they vow to protect will be damaged. Likewise, advocacy groups like ROMP and IMBA must also face facts. Mountain bike advocacy groups must advocate the desirability of single-purpose trails as well as multi-use trails.

Furthermore, the establishment of token concession technical mountain bike trails is not enough to stem the tide of bootleg trails. As an example, if an agency developed one mile of legal free ride style trail in a 500 mile multi-unit trail system, over-use and impact to that trail and staging area would increase, and it would not be accessible to locals in other areas, possibly developing illegal trails regardless. Technical mountain bike trails must be a part of every properly managed park and preserve.

Hikers and horses occasionally enjoy single-purpose trails on public lands. Mountain bikers should be accorded the same privilege. Technical mountain biking is a legitimate and respectable activity. The elephant belongs in the forest where it can become healthy and beautiful. She just needs a habitat. All the people of the forest must apply tolerance and understanding to equitably share our limited resources. The onus is upon us, bike riders ourselves. We can hurt the forest that supports us, or we can develop a proper symbiotic niche in the web of life. Choose carefully.

However little has changed since the hearing of November 19th. We are still awaiting word from California Superior Court Judge Judy Hersher. The California Department of Parks and Recreation expects have the court order before Christmas. Upon receiving this, the State has 60 days in which to file for an appeal.

If the State decides to contest the decision, one of the key arguments may be to challenge the legality of the covenant deed restrictions (which precluded horses). According to David Baskin of the Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz (MBOSC):

"In 1982 the California legislature enacted a statutory scheme titled POWERS OF TERMINATION. By statute, all of the previously existing common law rights of reversion (such as the ones stated in the Nisene Marks deeds), were consolidated, re-named as Powers of Termination, and subject to the statutes for purposes of interpretation and enforcement. Of paramount significance in the Nisene Marks case is Civil Code Section 885.030, which provides that powers of termination expire 30 years after recording of the instrument which created the interest, unless extended by the recording of a proper notice, prior to the expiration of the power. No such notices of extension have been recorded by the Donors or their successor in interest, the Nature Conservancy. Thus the Powers of Termination in the 1963 and 1965 deeds expired without further action in 1993 and 1995 respectively, unless a proper notice of extension was recorded by the holder of the power."

According to Michael Kelley, a co-founder of IMBA:

"On appeal, the court generally deals with the record or facts as they are. You can't submit new evidence. The issue is usually whether the trial judge abused her discretion in making the decision. Instead, the appeal will doubtless concentrate on the incorrect ruling regarding the basic enforceability of the deed restriction. In our view, the deed restriction was no longer valid, thus the judge never should have interpreted it. "

Meantime mountain bikers should be eager to take steps to support the General Plan and a future with sustainable trail cycling in Nisene Marks. An important thing we can do is show our support by helping build a contingency fund through donations earmarked for IMBA's Nisene Marks Legal Defense Fund. To help fight the legal battle to keep trails open at Nisene Marks State Park Fox Racing Shox of Watsonville is raising money by selling "Free the Trail" T-shirts. Please help by buying a \$10 T-shirt - 100 percent of the proceeds go to IMBA and Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz. To buy a "Free the Trails" T-shirt check out www.foxracingshox.com/ftt

The Santa Cruz Cycling Club will hold a cyclocross race on Sunday, January 16, 2005, at the Watsonville fairgrounds. (For details on the web see: www.cyclocross.cx/) There will be a special team relay category at 12 noon. Four persons per team, \$40 entry per team, each rider does one lap. All proceeds from this category will go to the Nisene Marks Legal Defense Fund. ROMP will have to field at least a team or two. Currently ROMP hasn't organized anything yet, so if you are interested please contact us.

A descriptive article was published in the November 30th edition of the Santa Cruz sentinel on the issue which was followed by opinion letters to the editor on December 4th and 5th. There is not space to describe the content here, but we recommend this for reading, on the web at www.santacruzsentinel.com.

There has been some discussion about whether or not to stage a mass demonstration ride and gathering to draw attention to the issue and generate more allies. Popular opinion seems to oppose this idea because it may elicit a negative perception of mountain bikers. Events such as Critical Mass are unpredictable.

However, it continues to be a good idea to send your opinions to the Director of State Parks. Please do your part and get your friends to do the same. Otherwise we may reach the ultimate nadir of access in Nisene Marks and be banned from even riding on the Aptos Creek Rd to access the Soquel State Demonstration Forest. The situation is grim.

Other Cycling Organizations

Access 4 Bikes	access4bikes.com
PO Box 526, Pt. Reyes Station, CA 94956	
Bay Area Velo Girls	
650-347-9752	velogirls.com
Bicycle Trails Council of Marin (BTCM)	
PO Box 494, Fairfax CA 94978	
415-456-7512	btcmarin.org
Bicycle Trails Council of the East Bay (BTCEB)	
PO Box 9583, Berkeley CA 94709	
415-528-BIKE	btceastbay.org
Folsom Auburn Trail Riders Action Coalition	
916-663-4626	fatrac.org
International Mt. Biking Association (IMBA)	
PO Box 7578, Boulder CO 80306	
303-545-9011	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	mbosc.org
Northern California Mountain Biking Association (NorCaMBA)	
norcamba.org suefry@norcamba.org	
Sonoma County Trails Council (SCTC)	
sonomatrails.org/sctc/	
San Jose Inner City Outings (San Jose ICO)	
sierraclub.org/ico/sanjose/	
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition	
svbcbikes.org	
Western Wheelers Bicycle Club	
westernwheelers.org	
Women's Mt. Biking and Tea Soc (WoMBATS)	
wombats.org	

La Honda Creek OSP Master Plan

On December 1, 2000 bicycles were no longer welcome on trails in Foothills, La Honda Creek, Los Trancos, Picchetti Ranch, Pulgas Ridge, Teague Hill and Thornewood these open space preserves. The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District ordered the closures last July to preserve a peaceful experience on

some trails for hikers and horseback riders. The district will allow some exceptions to the closures

for sections of the Bay Area Ridge Trail, and for regional trails connecting urban areas to the Ridge Trail. Exceptions will be approved on a case-by-case basis. Currently MROSD is preparing a master plan for La Honda Creek, and now is the time to petition for regional trail access in this park.

Charles Jalgunas, Patty Ciesla, Josh Moore, Richard Andrews, Lauren Lockwood, and perhaps other ROMP members joined about 50 other members of the public and a dozen or so MROSD staff members at the second planning workshop on December 7, 2004. The meeting objective was to look at issues raised at the prior workshop in more detail. The issues are: Dog Access, Horse Access, Staging Areas, Grazing, Location of Sensitive resources, Red Barn Use/Preservation, White Barn Use/Preservation, and Log Cabin Use

Perhaps most interesting to this group was bike access. It was not identified as an Issue before the last meeting, meaning I don't think the District planned on discussing it. They have a Preserve wide ban on bikes that they are quite happy with and don't want to discuss it any further than they have to. It was a topic of many of the

breakout groups at the November meeting, however, particularly regarding including bike access in the Preserve. It seems a lot of people want to see bikes in La Honda Creek. The meeting's moderator, one of the consultants working on the Master Plan's creation, identified bikes as a

Concern, that clearly people wanted to talk about it, but not as an Issue, meaning it wasn't on the agenda. He

explained a bit about the history of the bike ban, the bogus (my term) public hearings that preceded it, and that bikes would not be in the Preserve any time soon, BUT that they would probably be in there at some point because the Bay Area Ridge Trail will go through La Honda Creek OSP and the Ridge Trail would most likely be Multi Use, planning vernacular for Hikers, Bikes, and Horses. The District's official statement is that bikes could be allowed someday on a regional trail.

We broke out into seven different groups again, and talked about specifics of the Issues, and then chose one spokesperson from each group to present a breakout group consensus to the large group. It was clear that a lot of people wanted to talk more about the Concern. One group wanted to see bikes in the Preserve, but only behind a fence so they couldn't get out to the areas they didn't belong, but most came back and said they preferred to see bikes on Regional Trails, in other words, trails that go into other preserves, open spaces, or areas. The most popular potential Regional Trail suggestion was to have a Multi Use trail that goes up from the bottom of

the Preserve to near the top, and hang a left to come out on Bear Gulch Road. This would give cyclists access to El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve from the town of La Honda, as well as the proposed Ridge Trail that may come from the Old La Honda Road area where it crosses Skyline. This could involve getting cyclists off 84 and Skyline, and perhaps out of their cars because they wouldn't have to drive as far to get to a place to ride, but the District isn't likely to swallow it willingly because it would involve including bike access in their Preserves, which they are loathe to do.

The consultants are going to take the information gathered at the December workshop and use it to put together an Alternatives Development, or set of potential Master Plan drafts, and present them at another workshop on February 15. The public will have a chance to comment on them at that workshop, and the consultants will then put together a Draft Master Plan due later in the Spring of 2005. The planners at MROSD are currently accepting input on the Master Plan, so put together a few well worded, relevant, respectful lines and send them to Matt Freeman at mfreeman@openspace.org We will not get a chance to vote on this, and no one will be counting letters or input, so please include only good ideas you think the District can use to make help them make good decisions. A Master Plan has a life span of about 20 years, so if we don't get something in there that allows bikes under some conditions, we will probably not get bikes in the Preserve for 20 years. If we can get them to say bikes are allowed on Regional Trails now, and then develop an adjoining regional trail in ECdM, Wunderlich, or Driscoll Ranch someday, we have a better chance of riding there before we die.

Want to ride in La Honda Creek OSP?

Write to: Matt Freeman

*Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
330 Distel Circle, Los Altos, California 94022
mfreeman@openspace.org*

(Continued from page 4)

When stretching, it is important to keep in mind a few common sense ideas. Never stretch without being warm. The rule of thumb is once you've broken a small sweat, you are ready to stretch. After a hot bath or shower will do the trick too. Breathe! Failing to breathe while stretching can leave you tighter than before you started. Find a mild stretch sensation, back off a little, and then hold. While you may feel discomfort, you should never experience pain. Your body will let you know how far to go. Hold each stretch for at least 15-20 seconds. It takes about 5-7 seconds for the neuro-relaxors in your muscles to kick in. Don't bounce. This can lead to micro tears in the muscles and eventual injury. Don't lock your joints. A muscle can not be fully stretched or contracted across a locked joint. Keep your spine as straight as possible to avoid stretching the ligaments in your spine and hips.

Keeping your muscles long and strong is the key to joint health and athletic performance. A sensible flexibility, or stretching program will not only enhance physical fitness, it can actually leave you with a more youthful body and help prevent injury on and off the bike.

Al Painter Jr., IEA, AFPA, AFAA is certified personal trainer specializing in sports specific functional training programs as well as postural restoration and the elimination of joint pain. Feel free to send any exercise related questions to: al@posturepros.net, or call him at 650-941-2779.

Beginners' Corner

By Anne Henmi

I hate shopping. You can't tell that when I go into a bike shop though— Ask my husband.

Since it's the end of season, I figured this would be a good time to evaluate some of my favorite shopping I tend to do at the end of the season (after work riding season).

The Necessities:

SPD Cleats: There's nothing I wear out faster than my SPD cleats. I walk in them, and that doesn't help.

Gloves: I tend to wear out my gloves faster than anything other than my SPD cleats. When you crash, you land on your hands (I try not to, but that's a different column). Your gloves also get rubbed on obstacles you try to avoid: rocks, trees, other cyclists.

Tires: If you've been riding all summer long, and riding a lot, you'll find that your bike will probably behave better with a nice set of new tires.

Tune-up: Definitely give your bike a new tune-up. Be nice to your bike, and it will be nice to you.

Stuff for the ride: While you're out shopping, it may not be a bad idea to restock on

CO2 cartridges, patches, tubes, and a bell for your handlebars.

The Niceties:

If you still have some cash burning in your palm or relatives who don't mind feeding your mountain bike habit, here are some things that would be nice to add to your list.

Jerseys and shorts: I don't usually wear out my jerseys by the end of the season, but sometimes I will every couple of years. Right now, my absolute favorite jerseys to ride in are the Voler club cuts (they actually fit me), and for shorts, I wear Terry cycling shorts. I don't expect you to necessarily buy these—they are just what work for me.

Hydration pack: This is one on my list this year. I have problems finding a pack I'm not going to overstuff that fits me right. If I can find something light enough that can accommodate my stuff, I'll definitely be picking up a new one this year.

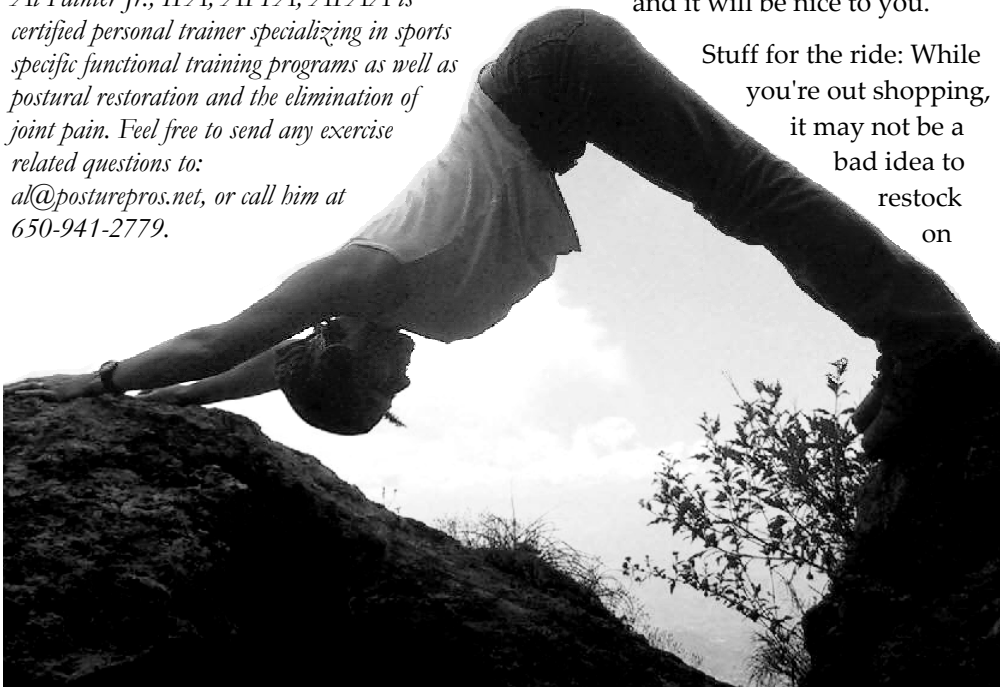
The indulgences:

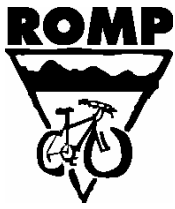
For those who have too much time to spend as well as a bit of money budgeted, obviously the sky's the limit.

Shocks: Front and rear. Try something different this year. There are plenty of new technologies out there if you have the money to spend to upgrade either your front or rear suspension.

Cranks: If you want to feel a difference when you pedal, there are plenty of new cranks on the market that promise and deliver stiffness.

Bike: The ultimate indulgence is a new bike. Just don't buy in the off season. You'll make yourself nuts. At least I did.





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calabazas.com



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