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The Shore Thing

THE *JERSEY SHORE TOURING SOCIETY*
KEEPING BIKE RIDING FUN SINCE 1981

Club Members Bill Anderson and Bryan Hrycyk share their enthusiasm for Mountain Biking

Off the Roads and Into the Woods!

As the weather starts to get chilly and the days are shorter, road riding is more of a challenge. By November, many of us road riders are relegated to riding on the trainer, which has to be one of the most boring things in life! Bryan Hrycyk finally convinced me to give mountain biking a try, and I'm glad he did. In this article, I'd like to try to convince some of you skeptical road riders that riding in the woods can be great fun, especially this time of year when road riding isn't so much fun.

I'm still primarily a road rider, but as the weather gets colder and the days shorter, road riding is more challenging. Mountain biking, on the other hand, is best in colder weather. Trails become firmer and easier to ride when they freeze, the ticks don't eat you alive, and the parks are less crowded than in warmer weather. Unlike road riding, a chilly winter wind doesn't have much of an effect when you're riding in the woods, rain is less of an issue since there isn't a loss of traction and visibility, and there aren't any cars to worry about. There are trees, of course, but you don't have to worry about them behav-

ing badly! The places we ride range from beautiful to spectacular, and riding after the occasional winter snow is a special treat. Check out these videos.

The JSTS MTB group is quite diverse, with some really good technical riders

who attack difficult terrain, and others who value control over speed (clearly just an excuse for riding slowly?). Everyone would be welcome at a club ride no matter what their ability level. When I first started MTB riding, the more experienced riders took time to show me the basics



of riding in the woods. John Gillis took even more time to show a couple of us rank beginners how to negotiate logs and roots. The club gives newcomers a great place to come and learn the basics.

We're blessed to have some really beautiful places to ride off-road. The JSTS MTB group rotates between four locations, three Monmouth county parks and one state park, and we travel to other interesting places occasionally, such as Minnewaska in the Catskills. The four locations we ride regularly offer a variety of terrain from easy to very challenging.

On the easy end, we have Tatum Park, which as a combination of level meadows and hilly but nontechnical (meaning no significant obstacles) single-track. The hilly sections have some beautiful mature stands

of chestnut oak, and we often see red-tail hawks and harriers out hunting for lunch. Only

a bit more technical than Tatum Park is Clayton Park. Clayton is mostly hilly with easy single track through beautiful forest and an occasional log to keep you awake. One step more difficult is Allaire Park, which has a wide variety of terrain. Allaire's main marked trails are fairly easy, but Allaire has many challenging unmarked sections of trail, in areas

"I'd like to try to convince some of you skeptical road riders that riding in the woods can be great fun"

with colorful names like "Hog Bog" and "Tiger Woods." It's easy to get lost at Allaire, so riding with a group really helps. Finally, the Queen park for MTB is Hartshorne. This is the most technical and most physically demanding park and deserves respect. There are many obstacles, and the hilly sections are long and steep, challenging your stamina on the way up and your brakes on the way down! Hartshorne offers superb views over the Shrewsbury and Navesink Rivers when the leaves are off the trees, and we often see large flocks of waterfowl wintering in the rivers.

If you are interested in giving MTB a try, then your first obstacle is finding a bike. The variety of mountain bikes is even larger than for road bikes, but generally

they fall into two categories based on their suspension: front only (called a hardtail) or front and rear (called a full suspension bike). Within each category, higher prices generally give longer suspension travel and lighter weight. A good place to start is with a hardtail, which is what I ride, and as your ability level improves, move up to the more capable full suspension bike. If you have an old hybrid or mountain bike, then a good set of knobby tires would be enough to get you started at a place like Tatum Park.

If you want to ride in the winter but don't get a thrill out of ice on the highways or numb fingers and toes, or if you are bored with your trainer, come join us in the woods!

~ Bill Anderson and Bryan Hrycyk



SMARTER RIDING

The Jersey Shore Touring Society



The Jersey Shore Touring Society Inc. is a 501(c)(7) tax exempt organization. We are a club whose primary focus is on social, rather than competitive bicycling. We have "leader led" as well as "route sheet" rides. On a leader-led ride, the group stays together, going only as fast as its slowest member unless there is an advertised minimum pace. On a route-sheet ride, riders can proceed at their own pace, or ride along with others of the same ability. The route sheet prevents getting lost in case of riders separating.

JSTS welcomes newcomers to our club rides and requires that each rider wear a helmet and complete a waiver available at the pre-ride sign-in. We have monthly meetings planned for the second Monday of each month, and we publish a monthly newsletter viewable at our web site (www.jsts.us). If you like the club, please join by paying the annual dues.



The Jersey Shore Touring Society
www.jsts.us

Solve this Puzzle and win some real prizes!

Ride Along, Sing Along — A Contest

When I'm riding through the countryside, I like to take in my surroundings. Often this stimulates a recollection of some song. I thought it would be fun to follow my wanderings and turn it into a little contest that can get you some fame and fortune. The fame is open to anyone, but the fortune requires you to be a club member. There will be a grand prize of a \$25 gift certificate to one of our member bike shops for the person that has the most correct answers. If there is a tie, then there would be a random drawing. Non-winners would be entered into a drawing of all other entries for one of 3 gift certificates of \$10 each to one of our member bike shops. One entry per person. Entries via email to me ckirlew@att.net by 12/10/2009. All entries will be responded to as a form of receipt. The drawing will be held at the Holiday party on 12/12/2009. You don't need to be present to win, but you will lose out on some of the fame and fun.

So, let's get started on this sojourn. Hmm, that just reminded me of a group that had an album titled *Seventh Sojourn*. (#1 name the group). Well that seems appropriate, for all our rides are a form of sojourn. On many of the rides, I look out into the fields and I'm reminded of a Bob Dylan song, *All the tired ___ in the Sun, How'm I supposed to get any riding done?* (#2 fill in the missing word).

As I'm writing this, it's raining again. We had a lot of rain this year, especially in June. This one was in my head a lot and now that the seasons have changed, it's there more than ever- *I want to ride my bicycle*. (#3 name the group) Since we're changing seasons, the rides often

go *Over river and through the woods* (#4 what kind of horse is pulling the sleigh?)



Since I seem to be on a weather theme, there was one winter ride where I came onto this open field. The wind was blowing hard and I really wanted some protection. The song from the *Rolling Stones* is really about war, but I still wanted that "protection". (#5 song title)

Some of us ride through Asbury Park on Tuesdays during the summer. How can I not think of a *Springsteen* song? One of them talks about someone that gets busted by the cops. (#6 who gets busted and #7 why).

Then there are the times when I am riding on a gorgeous day, the road is smooth, the sun is shining, there are no cars, everything is perfect. This song pops into my head and I just want to sing out loud!

*O Freunde, nicht diese Töne!
Sondern laßt uns angenehmere an-
stimmen,
und freudenvollere.
Freude! Freude!*

Fortunately for anyone that's around I don't sing and I certainly don't sing or speak German. So here's a rough translation:

*Oh friends, not these tones!
Rather, let us raise our voices in more
pleasing
And more joyful sounds!
Joy! Joy!*

(#8 Title of the complete work, two possible answers. Be careful, the common name is just for part of it.)

Of course near the end of a long ride, *Jackson Browne's Running on Empty* comes to mind. *"Looking back at the years gone by like so many _____"* (#9 fill in the blanks)

Finally, I debated about this one for awhile because I think I'm going to get some grief about it. But, what the heck. When I'm anxious to get riding again after a rest stop, these words come to me. The song is about motorcycles, but the thought is there. *"Get On Your Bikes and Ride!"* (#10 Title of the song)

~ Charlie Kirlew



In this seventh article in the series, Ed Marx tells the story of how he joined the club

JSTS Story Book

I have always enjoyed bicycling. It might have seemed the opposite when I bought my first 10-speed bike 36 years ago and promptly gave it away. It had the advertised number of gears, but was weighted down with a hefty frame. I found something much closer to my vision of a proper bike by going to a bike shop and buying a Raleigh Super Course fashioned out of Reynolds 531 alloy. That bike was fairly light for its time, and I enjoyed riding it except that



the saddle was a chunk of narrow, hard leather, hurting the haunches with every ride.

When I went cycling on the road back then I immediately got a taste of car hostility, with drivers blowing their horns for no apparent reason. It was either that, or they were trying to warn me I was setting the pavement on fire. But seriously, I did not see how I represented a threat to people in 2-ton rolling cocoons, and that is just as questionable now.

One season around that time I gave up automobiles altogether from April to September, and bicycled everywhere (to work, to visit friends, for groceries,

etc.). Not having a tandem bike I borrowed a car when it was time for a date.

Much as I had enjoyed cycling for the sense of silent self-propulsion and the fun of it, other priorities turned my Raleigh into a garage sculpture for far longer than it should have been (hindsight being exact).

Fast forwarding to 1998, I picked up a hybrid bike and regularly covered part of the original section of the Henry Hudson Trail as a light cardio ride. I also rode the D&R Canal Tow-path and some other rail trails for a good while.

Three years ago I decided to take my cycling to another level. I wanted to play harder, to burn off some stress after work. I went looking for a local bicycle club, and with an internet search found the JSTS web site. I figured on joining an upcoming scheduled JSTS ride. In the run-up to that event I increased my regular ride to 20+ miles a couple of times. All the same I had an ambition to go 35 miles on my first ride with the club astride my hybrid (the Raleigh needed work).

On July 4th 2006 I showed up for the club ride out of Monmouth Battlefield State Park (becoming a JSTS member in the process) and made a go of it – until I hit a wall (or ‘the Wall’) at mile 30, and went into “struggle mode” from there. Near the end there was a mechanical on Wemrock Road where my chain came off. I got going again and finished the ride with some help from Bob Spony.

For the remainder of that season I continued to come back for more JSTS rides; got a new road bike and pushed myself to go greater distances. Something I liked to do casually now became more of a fitness regimen – possibly the first time I really ever enjoyed doing



exercise.

In my second year with JSTS, after road riding all season, I went on my first club century ride. I had never really thought about going that distance, so it has been one of the transformative effects – riding many miles beyond what I had imagined. Add to that a return to the road-riding with which I really had lost my connection in the 30 years prior to joining JSTS.

Later that same year when the weather cooled down, I quit the road, borrowed a bike and went out with the mountain bikers to try that style of cycling. It is like being a kid again, and the parks are beautiful. There are challenges in MTB riding that are well worth the effort. Plus, for me it extended bicycling to a year-round activity, eluding some of the winter winds by using the woods as cover.

I have now had many occasions to ride, chat, picnic and party with my JSTS friends. Numerous club members I have met and observed have taught me a lot about cycling. When there are problems they are always generous with their help and advice. As things have gone along I have involved myself in club business as treasurer and web master. For the past 2 years that has entailed handling the JSTS funds, as well as behind-the-scenes work like securing the club’s IRS tax exempt status, filing annual reports, swapping NJ registered agents, co-managing a couple of picnics, and (in 2009) maintaining the JSTS web face.

I am still having a good ride of it.

~ Ed Marx



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