



Responsible Organized Mountain Pedalers

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# MOUNTAIN CYCLIST



LEADING THE PARTICIPATION OF MOUNTAIN CYCLISTS IN THE TRAIL COMMUNITY

JUNE 2008-AUGUST 2008

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### ROMP Swap Meet Is Huge Success!

By Josh Moore

ROMP's annual Swap Meet was a huge success. Our biggest fund raiser of the year was held on the last Sunday in April behind Cupertino Bikes. Here's a recap of the event.

As usual, I arrived at the meet a few minutes before 7 in the morning to find a handful of vendors already there, waiting to check in and locate their spaces which had been power washed and painted the night before by board member, Jim Sullivan. The day was breaking to blue skies, yet the morning fog had yet to lift from my head. Clumsily, I checked in the vendors and managed to unload the ROMP easy-up and some bike parts I had no use for. Shortly thereafter Linda Kahn and Jeff Lew, the life force behind the Swap Meet, showed up and assisted me with the easy-up. Not long after, the rest of the ROMP volunteers started to appear. We were quickly set up and began checking-in and unloading vendors as they arrived in a steady stream until the "doors opened" at 10:00 am.

Before the Swap Meet got under way, we honored the owner of Cupertino Bikes and long time supporter of ROMP, Vance Sprock. It was his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday and we celebrated with cake and a song. The cake and "I know Vance" bumper stickers (paid for by ROMP), were an immediate hit with both Vance and vendors who

begged for one of the "limited edition." By this time, the entry queue wound down the block reaching the corner of McClellan and De Anza Boulevard!

We had 70 plus vendors in attendance from many parts of the Bay Area and beyond. In addition to the regulars, there were new sellers who drove from as far away as Orange County to take part in the event. My favorite regular is the Silicon Valley Bicycle Exchange who sells bikes to raise money for tires and tubes used to fix up children's bike that go to the needy. Trips for Kids was there, too, selling clothes and parts to fund efforts to get more kids on bikes. Kathleen Meyer, former ROMP President and Coach for the Delmar High School Mountain Bike team managed to sell a few bikes before the Swap officially opened to offset the expense of transporting her team to races and practice.

The Swap Meet was not just about kids and bikes. The range of goods spanned commuter bikes, beaters, single speeds, vintage, road, cross country and even downhill. There was a little bit of everything and something for everyone.

Since VeloSwap in San Francisco and Trips for Kids are no longer holding annual events, the ROMP Swap Meet at Cupertino Bikes is the largest and least expensive for an event of it's size. If you didn't make it out this year, place the ROMP Swap Meet on your calendar for April 2009 and see what you're missing out on.

### ECDM South Leaf Trail Realignment

By Josh Moore

For more than a year, volunteers, Mid-peninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) staff, and the California Conservation Corps have worked to hand build a realignment of a section of the South Leaf Trail also known as Disneyland in El Corte de Madera Open Space Preserve (ECDM). The old alignment was a steep, rutted fire road that few cyclists had the strength and talent to



*The Connector at the junction with North Leaf. climb, and probably rode down it only by mistake This held true for myself. A reasonable amount of siltation is always visible at the bottom of the trail, and even more was ending up in El Corte de Madera Creek, interfering with fish*

# SOUTH LEAF TRAIL

Continued from page 1

habitat. The new alignment roughly follows a contour line, gaining approximately 300 feet over its 3000+ foot distance for an average grade of just 10%. The new alignment meanders through coastal redwoods undulating over the large roots and delicate Butano Sandstone bedrock. These curves expressed in all three dimensions give the trail great flow between five and ten miles per hour, and a reasonably technical challenge. In my opinion this trail is ideal in a heavily used multiuse preserve, and will gain character and challenge in the years to come.

There are number of special techniques used to build the trail that made it possible to put it in on such a steep side slope. The most obvious is a very low bridge with no rails called a puncheon. It serves to keep wheels, hooves and boots out of a swale thus preventing siltation into the headwaters of El Corte de Madera Creek. A little further up the trail is an example

of a small French drain where a spring flows out of the side of the hill. To build a French Drain, dirt is removed where the water is flowing, and rocks are put back in their place, then a layer of dirt is piled on top to provide a dirt surface. The space between the rocks allows the water to flow between them.



At least one rock retaining wall was built up in order to create enough trail width

on a steep side slope. In one spot you may see some black plastic. This material, called geocell, creates a honeycomb like structure you can fill with dirt. Geocell is used to build up the trail bed where the slope is too great to be sustainable over a short distance, and there is not enough rock to build a retaining wall.

El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve encompasses 2,817 acres in the upper headwaters of the San Gregorio Creek watershed. This watershed provides critical habitat for steelhead rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus*



*kisutch*). Steelhead are federally listed as a threatened species, and coho salmon are listed by state and federal agencies as endangered on California's Central Coast. These species have experienced dramatic population declines primarily due to habitat loss from streambed sedimentation associated with water diversions, road construction, mining, grazing, and timber harvest activities. Because of the Preserve's key location within the watershed, the extensive network of former logging roads that comprise many of its trails, and the incredible popularity of the Preserve among

hikers and mountain bikers, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District has worked in partnership with the National Marine Fisheries Service, California Department of Fish and Game, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board to prepare a comprehensive Watershed Protection Program to protect downstream fish habitat. (openspace.org)

The watershed protection program has systematically removed, realigned and redone the trails producing the most sedimentation. Examples of this include Crossover, Blue Blossom, Gordon Mill and Giant Salamander Trails. I recently discussed the Watershed Protection program with Meredith Manning, a planner for MROSD and we discussed the remaining areas of concern. Giant Salamander needs a new fiberglass bridge to go where the old culvert was. This is out for bid, and should be installed and the trail go where the old culvert was. This is out for bid and should be installed and the

## ROMP Membership Application, Renewal, Change of Address, and Donation Form

ROMP is a group of local, energetic mountain bikers who have discovered the need for an active representation for the mountain biking public, and for an organized, responsible attitude in the practices of off-road bicyclists. ROMP needs YOUR support.

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1. ACKNOWLEDGE, agree, and represent that I understand the nature of Bicycling Activities and that I am qualified, in good health, and in proper physical condition to participate in such Activity. I further acknowledge that the Activity will be conducted over public roads and facilities open to the public during the Activity and upon which the hazards of traveling are to be expected. I further agree and warrant that if at any time I believe conditions to be unsafe, I will immediately discontinue further participation in the Activity.
2. FULLY UNDERSTAND that:(a)BICYCLING ACTIVITIES INVOLVE RISKS AND DANGERS OF SERIOUS BODILY INJURY, INCLUDING PERMANENT DISABILITY, PARALYSIS, AND DEATH ("RISKS"); (b) these Risks and dangers may be caused by my own actions or inactions, the actions or inactions of others participating in the Activity, the condition in which the Activity takes place, or THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE "RELEASEES" NAMED BELOW; (c)there may be OTHER RISKS AND SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LOSSES either not known to me or not readily foreseeable at this time; and I FULLY ACCEPT AND ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS AND ALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOSSES, COSTS, AND DAMAGES I incur as a result of my participation or that of the minor in the Activity.
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(Release Signature of Applicant) (Release Signature(s) Of Additional Family Members 18 and Over)

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X\_\_\_\_\_X\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_

(Release Signature of Parent/Guardian) (Please print names and ages of minors)

Questions? For new member information, call Linda Wegner (408) 257-8284

**Send this form with check payable to:**

ROMP - Attention: Membership, PO Box 1723, Campbell CA 95009-1723

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to follow. Refrain from playing your mental what-if-the-worst-possible-thing-happens scenario (many of us have the t-shirt). In the heat of battle, find your calm inner self and concentrate on smooth execution. Technical riding demands focused attention. Be alert to the minute details of how your bike interacts with the trail. Feel how the front wheel tracks when you climb out of a rut. Notice the rear tire sliding to the side on off-camber slopes. These situations require quick repositioning of body weight.

With trails you ride frequently, create a mental map of the obstacles. Forget the sheep, before you drift off at night, ride your trail and focus on flowing over the obstacles. Knowing where the rocks and roots are positioned will help you determine optimal shift points to conserve your momentum.

Standard mountain bikes have a 3 x 9 drive train with 27 possible gear ratios. Plan to use two dozen of them frequently - maybe every 20 feet - if your trail has lots of grade changes. We know you've ridden across entire counties on your road bike while pushing the same gear. But, energy efficient mountain biking is about conserving momentum no matter how frequent the changes in grade. The transition

between hanging it out on a screaming downhill and inching around a tight switchback with your heart racing can happen in seconds. Be ready to deal with the extremes. Mountain bikers experience higher highs and the lower lows – the old thrill-of-victory, agony-of-defeat thing.

On trails with an extended flow, pay unwavering attention to grade reversals (uphill/downhill or downhill/uphill transitions). These are potential shift points. Before cresting a steep uphill, shift to a higher gear in anticipation of the downhill on the other side. Likewise, when you approach a steep uphill look ahead and pick out the cut backs where you will downshift. These are the natural shift points where chain tension eases for a few seconds and you can downshift the rear cluster if needed. When you encounter boulders and large tree roots, remember, anything less than axle height can be rolled. The quickest line is straight over the top rather than nursing the front wheel around.

The hardest lesson for new MTB riders to learn is moving their weight behind the saddle on steep downhill grades. This is an essential skill if you want to become a competent technical rider. Nothing drives the point home better than a spontaneous endo while negoti-

ating a steep downhill. This will foster an immediate appreciation for keeping your center of gravity low and toward the back of the bike. Get accustomed to standing on the pedals with your butt hanging over the rear wheel. This position will become your second home if you gravitate toward fast, boulder-studded downhills.

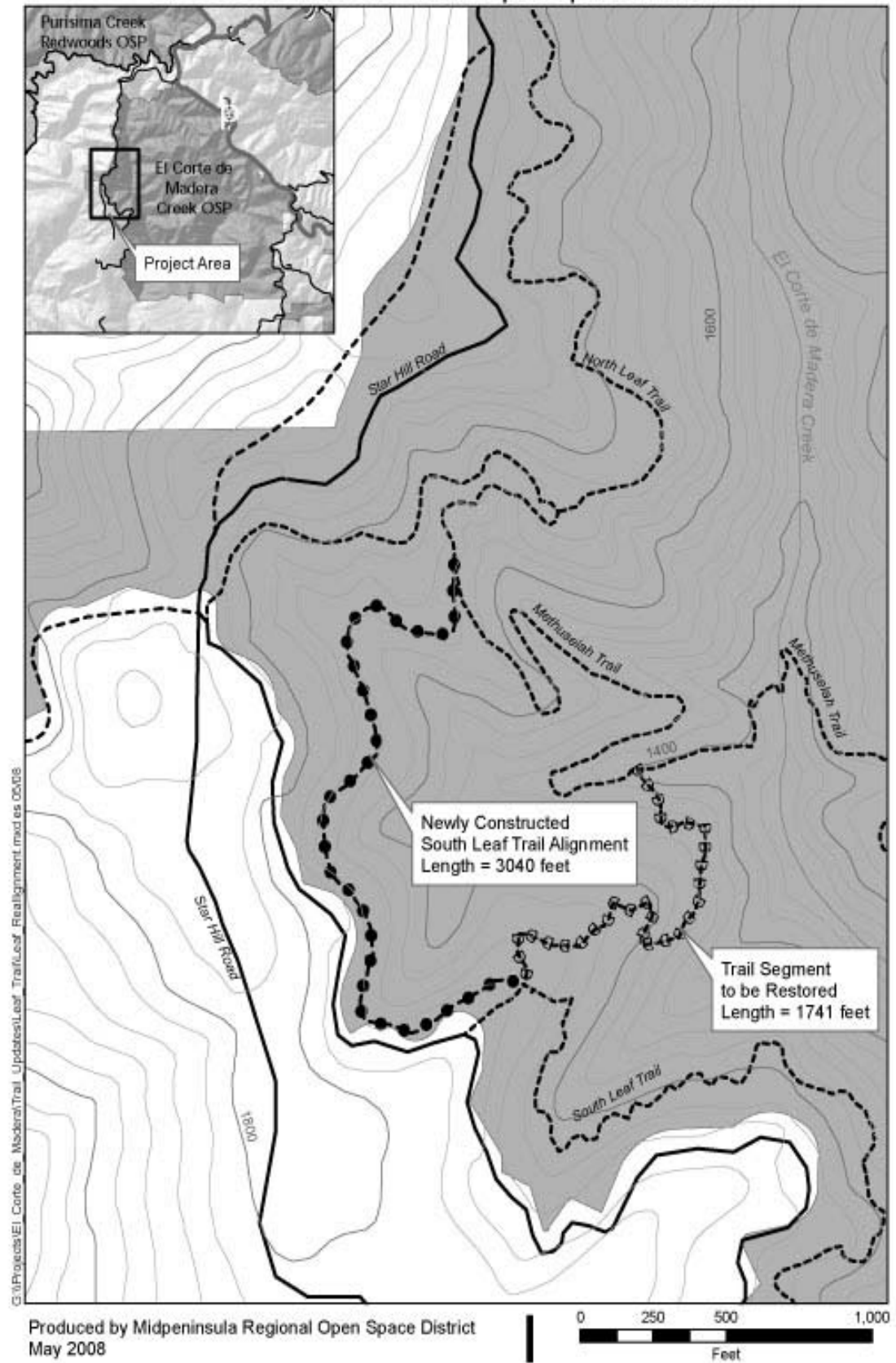
Despite the long hours you have spent in the saddle on your Colnago with the aero bars, consider the seat on your mountain bike a temporary resting place during aggressive riding. Stop in once in a while, but don't linger. When the terrain gets rough, you're better served to stand on the pedals and use the seat as a stabilizer between your thighs. Even though your body is raised, your weight is positioned on the pedals instead of the seat which results in a lower center of gravity.

Finally, don't become preoccupied with the minutiae a few feet beyond your front wheel. Chances are good your bike can handle it, even though your quads may be quaking and your mouth is parched. If you want to find the flow, keep your eyes glancing ahead fifty, a hundred feet, or more. Anticipate grade changes and shift points and practice lithe cat-like responses. The "zone" is only a paradigm shift away, grasshopper.

trail open in August of this year. Fir Trail from the top of Resolution down to Methuselah was identified as an issue, but because of the fact that it is on the nose of a ridge some distance from any water, remediation of this trail will probably not happen any time soon. The El Corte de Madera Creek fire road was also identified as having some problem areas towards the bottom, which may not be addressed until after more urgent needs in other preserves are taken care of. It sounds like most if not all of the heavy work is done in ECDM, and we should be able to look forward to years of fun, environmentally friendly riding.

We commend MROSD on their diligent, thorough approach and expertise in continuing to provide outstanding riding opportunities while preserving open space and protecting habitat.

## South Leaf Trail Realignment El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve



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### 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

### 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 408-257-8284 newsmailing@romp.org



# FEDERAL WILDERNESS & MOUNTAIN BIKING

## Part Two in a Series

By Ted Stroll

As ROMP members know, federal agency rules forbid you to ride your mountain bike in Wilderness. In this article, the second of a series, we'll go over some of the arguments about whether the rules are good policy.

Q. (From a post on the website of the Divide Horsemen's Association. This organization appears to operate in the Sierra foothills.) *The last thing a rider or hiker wants is a speeding bicycle coming down on them when they are seeking peace and quiet in a mountain park .... The Mt. Bicyclers think we are a very small user group and not entitled to the exclusive use of these trails. Remember, they too can use them—if they leave their bicycle home!*

A. We could, and at times we do. The question is why the law should require us always to walk or ride a horse.

The writer's question is not new. Nowadays I'm sure some ask: Why do you gays and lesbians want same-sex marriage? No one's stopping you from getting married. Just tie the knot with someone of the opposite sex! In 1935, I'm sure some asked: Why do you want to marry outside your own race? Of course, it should be illegal! Don't forget, you can always marry within your race, so there!

Until the United States Supreme Court held miscegenation laws unconstitutional in *Loving v. Virginia* (1967) 388 U.S. 1 (the plaintiff, Mildred Loving, died May 2, 2008, at age 68), the law did not care if people could not marry outside of their race. Courts were satisfied as long as people could marry within their race.

Condemning a contract that created a surrogate marriage between a black

woman ("or part negro and part Indian") and a white man, the South Carolina Supreme Court said in 1941 that "the parties really intended . . . to set at defiance a sound public policy which gives to every person of age and discretion, white or black, male or female, the right of marriage to another of the same race and of the opposite sex. This contract strikes at the sanctity of the home, the security of family relationships, the legitimate propagation of the race to which one belongs, and at moral standards that have been recognized and enforced, voluntarily and by compulsion of law, since the foundation of this republic." (*Grant v. Butt* (S.C. 1941) 17 S.E.2d 689, 692.)

*The last thing a rider or hiker wants is a speeding bicycle coming down on them when they are seeking peace and quiet in a mountain park . . .*

Note that the South Carolina Supreme Court even anticipated the current gay marriage debate. (Not that the court thought of the issue, I'm sure, but its opinion touches on it.)

Back to the point of the Divide Horsemen's Association writer. . . . The rejoinder I'd give is that mountain biking is a glorious activity that creates a wonderful way of life for its more passionate devotees—one that, in many respects, hiking and horseback-riding cannot come close to matching. It confers high degrees of physical fitness and motor coordination, mental and moral resolve, and appreciation for nature. The consensus of scientists is that it is environmentally benign.

(By Paul Nam.) *Why do pack trains of*

*horses, donkeys, and mules get access to the wilderness when they are consuming and sometimes ruining resources that endemic wildlife depend upon for survival, such as water, browse, foliage, seeds and fruit? And why are pack trains still allowed to camp near lakes and streams? Why are so many trails left in poor unmaintained condition by pack trains? And why is it seemingly okay for pack train drivers to cut switchbacks in our national parks? If one of the reasons for keeping bicycles out of Wilderness is because they might frighten and kill wildlife and other people, then all people should be kept out. That would solve that problem.*

Mountain biking is the kind of rugged, self-reliant, physically demanding travel Wilderness was set aside for. Pack stock travel can be anything but. To some extent federal Wilderness has become a playground for luxury pack outfitting operations that cater to the wealthy. A search on Google turns up commercial enterprises that operate in Wilderness. Here are some examples of the trips these enterprises offer or recently offered:

"Travel from yesteryear, luxury from today. A trusty horse will be your companion for the duration of your roving pack trip. . . . [¶] You'll sleep under the stars at the confluence of luxury and wilderness. All guests stay in spacious high-grade waterproof tents with feather beds and pillows. And as for dining, our experienced cooks turn a rain fly and propane into a buzzing professional kitchen that rivals most big-city restaurants. The results? Exquisite cuisine you'll remember almost better than the scenery." ("Luxury Montana Pack Trip in the Bob Marshall Wilderness," posted on the Internet in 1996, since deleted.)

bike, and made sure it was not a rattler. The snake slithered off, and I pushed my bike up the next steep hill.

Let us ride in good style, to observe and absorb the situation around us. Our attention could be completely riveted upon the fastest most efficient line, as if we were in a race. But we can challenge ourselves to consider more than theoretical traction limits, technological equipment evaluation, showing off, and narcissistic personal training goals.

We riders traverse the real world, where living things of various sizes can appear at any moment and move suddenly. Unlike static rocks and trees, animals present spontaneous challenges to reflexes and integrity.

It is never appropriate to handle, feed, or molest wild animals. True wilderness ethics know no boundaries.

An example of inappropriate animal handling is the capture of an alligator lizard for the thrill or the dare. It is likely to separate its tail from the body to create a diversion and escape. The boy who plays with the lizard is likely to say, "Well, the tail will grow back." as he lets the lizard go. But, what he doesn't realize is he has acted as a trail-side bandit and stolen all the saved up treasure the lizard ever had. The tail represents a store of food and water, maybe the difference between life and death in the difficult months ahead.

Most of the animals we see within the lands we ride in will, at some point during their lives, be on a trail. For this reason, most are at risk of being trampled by a wheel or a heel. Be mindful as you ride the trails. Don't be a heel; mind your wheel.

## TAHOE-AREA ACTIVITIES FOR SUMMER 2008!

By Linda George

This summer, several northern California bike groups including ROMP are having a Tahoe-area campout, trail work, and ride weekend, August 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>. The tentative schedule includes rides (easier and more challenging), a movie night, trail work on Saturday, and time to enjoy Donner Lake.



If you've ridden in the Tahoe area you know the scenery, fun trails, and mild summer weather. Rides, yes! But why trail work? These trails are the result of several nonprofit groups, working quietly in the background. There's no mountain bike advocacy group in the area; trail work is something we can do to support their efforts.

Here's a quick overview of three Tahoe-area trail organizations. All of them lead a variety of trail related events during the summer months.

The **Tahoe Rim Trail Association (TRTA)** planned and built the Tahoe Rim Trail, a majestic 165-mile single-track trail encircling Lake Tahoe in the mountains above the lake. It continues to maintain and improve the trail.

Fun to ride sections include the Page Meadows area, Tahoe Meadows southward, and Brockway to the Mt. Rose boundary. For more information including detailed maps, trail conditions, events, and membership info, see [www.tahoerimtrail.org](http://www.tahoerimtrail.org).

The **Truckee Donner Land Trust (TDLT)** works with open spaces near Truckee, north of Lake Tahoe near Interstate 80. They're currently building the Donner Lake Rim Trail, a 23-mile loop above Donner Lake. The newest segment of this trail ends near the Hole in the Ground trailhead northwest of Donner Lake. It has some challenging rocky, technical sections and serves as an excellent example of an interesting, sustainable multi-use trail. The club is also working to create a trail segment that parallels the Pacific Crest Trail west of Donner Lake so that cyclists have the option of riding the entire loop. For maps, events, and membership info, see [www.tdlandtrust.org](http://www.tdlandtrust.org).

The **Truckee Trails Foundation (TTF)** is a relatively new group that plans to build a multi-use trail system throughout the Truckee region. Early work has included bikeways and paths, but there is increasing focus on singletrack trails. Recommended trails include Sawtooth Ridge, a 10-mile loop with nice views of the Truckee River canyon towards Squaw Valley and Emigrant Trail a lower-elevation, fairly smooth track running north about 10 miles to Stampede Lake. It's especially good for novices and for aerobic workouts in spring or fall. For information about trails, events and membership, see [www.truckeetrails.org](http://www.truckeetrails.org). Trail work for the August weekend will be on the Donner Lake Rim Trail. For more info, contact me at [www.lodge.com](http://www.lodge.com)) or Josh Moore

# WILDLIFE ON THE TRAIL

By Paul Nam

The largest trail-user group is notably missing from all the regulations and trail signage. That group is wildlife. The famous triangular yield signs, where bikes and hikers yield to the horse, have nothing to say about whether a skunk does or does not have the right-of-way. Well, the skunk does have the right of way, and so do the other critters.

One time riding home in the late evening, I came upon a skunk family taking a bath in the deep summer dust (that becomes winters mud) as I rounded a corner. Before I knew what I was seeing, my fingers found the brakes, and I stopped well ahead of them, and waited for them to recognize my presence and finish their ablutions. It was a pleasant stop.

like Grizzly bears, already. Most animals we share trails with are smaller than us. Peers approaching our stature that we may encounter on the trails, such as deer and pigs, are usually quite agile and alert. But they can be caught unaware as well.

Pigs are notorious for having poor eyesight. Indeed, and sadly, many of them are practically blind from infections from foxtails and ticks. Pigs are famous for their sense of smell. Scents and sounds are keen in pigs. Once on a windy day, where the sound of the breeze was deafening, and was pushing against me as I rode the contouring Anza Trail in Coe, I rounded a corner and came face to face with a mud caked boar. He could neither hear, smell, nor see me, but he heard me skid when I panic stopped the brakes inches



Mountain bikers can surprise animals on or near the trail. Sometimes the animals detect something coming ahead of time, and sometimes they don't. Respect must be paid to those who make their home where the trails are.

People are larger in size when compared to most animals. Maybe that's only because we have ganged up and eliminated the other bigger species,

from his tusked head, and boy did he turn up the hill fast then! I suppose I'm lucky I sounded bigger than I am.

To get an idea of what it is like to have your life threatened by animals bigger than you are, just go out and ride a bike on the side of a busy road. If you are like me, and have been riding a bike for many years, you may have already been hit by cars. I have been struck three times. On each occasion, I

was riding to or from work. I can tell you it hurts, and once I thought I was going to die while it was happening. More to the point, animals are the commuters of the trails. They don't have a choice, in that if they are using the trail, it is because that is where they live. Consider them as you would prefer drivers to consider you when you are riding on the road. Show animals courtesy and respect.

Most of the critters are really much smaller than us. All riders should be proficient bunny-hoppers. We don't usually question the etymology of the term "bunny-hopping". It is clear that the origin and meaning is obvious, literal, and ambiguous. Does it mean to hop like a bunny, or does it mean to hop over a bunny? It means both. It is usually within most riders ability to jump like a rabbit over something about the size of a bunny. This technique is a practical way to avoid hurting small animals that we find on the trails like slugs, stink-bugs, ant-hills, snakes, lizards, and so on. You've heard of leaping-lizards, haven't you?

There is a wisdom about trails and roads. We know that it is unwise to play or take naps on the road, and impolite and unsafe to leave you and your bike laying in the middle of the trail while you take a rest, but animals don't know what a road or a trail is sometimes. Take for example the ordinary gopher snake. Do you think it is thinking about whether or not the nice open spot in the sun is a trail or not? Probably not. If it thinks at all, in a sense we can comprehend, it is probably seeking comfort.

On a recent morning we came upon a five foot long gopher snake laying across the trail, soaking up the sun in a big meadow. I stopped, got off the

"By virtue of the Wilderness Act of 1964 this area has been set aside as a place where the only possible means of transportation within are by foot or upon a horse. . . . [¶] . . . This is the land of many famous Mountain Men and many Indian tribes—an America past. But, unlike its predecessors, you'll enjoy the Wilderness in near luxury; clean, dry, spacious tents, warm soft sleeping bags, hearty and varied campfire cooking . . .

*Mountain biking is the kind of rugged, self-reliant, physically demanding travel Wilderness was set aside for. Pack stock travel can be anything but.*

." (Absaroka Ranch, "The Pack Trip," <http://www.absarokaranch.com/default.htm#pack>.)

I do not object to travel of this type, even in Wilderness. But it does seem to be a far cry from the rugged, self-reliant uses of wilderness Congress mandated in the Wilderness Act of 1964, namely, to provide "undeveloped Federal land . . . [containing] outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. . . ." (16 U.S.C. § 1131(c).)

Few things could benefit Wilderness more than to replace the current system of absolute rules and dogmatic views with an economic-type analysis of costs and benefits. If that methodology is someday undertaken, I am confident that we will be riding in federal Wilderness areas—not in every Wilderness and not on every trail in the ones that will allow it, but some trails in some Wildernesses. And society will be the better for it.

*To be continued*

# WATER WISDOM

By Valerie Spier

When the weather is hot, be more mindful of appropriate hydration. Over or under hydrating can impede your performance and cause serious health consequences. Large volumes of plain water can dilute your blood electrolyte levels resulting in over hydration. Besides drinking enough liquids, you may also need to replace electrolytes lost through sweat. Some individuals are "salty" sweaters and will lose significant amounts over a long ride. If you generally find your helmet, Camelback and clothes crystallized by a white residue, you are probably a salty sweater and will want to purposefully indulge (guilt-free) in salty snacks, foods and beverages to avoid hyponatremia.

Signs of dehydration may include:

- Muscle cramps
- Nausea or vomiting
- Headache, dizziness
- Confusion, disorientation
- Weakness, reduced performance
- Inability to concentrate
- Irrational behavior

Signs of hyponatremia (too little salt/sodium and too much water in bloodstream) include any of the following:

- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Headache, dizziness
- Confusion, lack of coordination
- Seizure & death can occur.

Note: signs of both dehydration and hyponatremia are similar. However, with dehydration, drinking water should make you feel better quickly while with over hydration you may feel worse.

**To Prevent Dehydration:**

The best way to figure out how much

water or sports beverage you need to consume is by tracking your sweat rate over various conditions and times. Weigh yourself (nude) just prior to exercising and again (nude) as soon as the activity is over. Note any difference. This is how you can estimate your individual sweat rate for this activity on this date. For each 1 lb. you are lighter, you needed 16 oz more fluids for exercise on that day and under those conditions. Adjust your fluid intake, the next time, by this amount.

Track what you need to stay in balance through the various seasons, humidity, altitude, intensity, duration, & specific activities. Aim to end no lighter than 99-98% starting body weight, which corresponds to 1-2% total body dehydration. For example: a person weighs 150 lbs X 0.99-0.98 =148.5-147 lbs, losing more than 1-2% can hurt your performance and your health. How much should a person be drinking? Drink 8-16 oz water or sports beverage an hour before you start and 8 oz (250 ml), or more, every 15-20 minutes for long exercise sessions. Increase or decrease this amount according to your individual sweat rate/loss.

**To Prevent Hyponatremia:**

Follow these tips if you will be exercising for more than 4 hrs in the heat.

1. Eat salty foods (or lightly salt food) the week prior to the endurance event
2. Stop drinking water during exercise if the stomach is sloshing
3. Consume a sodium-containing sports drink or snacks (pretzels, baked chips, stoned-wheat crackers, breakfast cereal (Cheerios), during extended exercise in the heat

Valerie Spier, MPH, RD, CDE  
Registered Dietitian, ACSM Health  
Fitness Instructor

# AN ADVOCATE'S EYE VIEW OF THE SEA OTTER CLASSIC

By Josh Moore, ROMP President

Recognized as the unofficial opener to North American Cycle racing, The Sea Otter Classic (SOC) is about a lot more than just racing. In addition to the large exposition of manufacturers, demo bikes, clothiers, journalists, clubs, and food vendors, SOC is a large supporter of advo-

clung Association have come to benefit from this and other events. This year, I volunteered for the Mountain Bike Magazine Off-Road Tour where participants could donate additional money to promote advocacy in California.

For the last four years, California mountain bike advocates have gathered to cele-

bration changes and outlines a process that must be followed including appeals to senior park management in Sacramento. Trails in Marin, the East Bay and Santa Cruz County have had trail use designation change requests to allow mountain biking. While there is no precedent, park managers have decided that if more than one trail in a park has a trail

use designation change request, a trails plan for the whole park must be done. Furthermore, a trails plan will not be done without a Park General Plan. From a planning and bureaucratic perspective, this makes perfect sense. From a mountain biking perspective this is unfortunate if you want to get more trails open to bikes, because the majority of all state parks have no general plan.

Currently, trails in Marin County are under review. Dave Gould, State Parks Superintendent for the Marin Sector, discussed how this process is taking place concerning the four trails requested in Marin. The trails review process will set a precedent

that will probably be followed state wide. We need to be sure to show our support in the coming months because the next trails to be reviewed will be just over the hill in Santa Cruz County. Also, ROMP plans on making one trail use designation change in two different State Parks in our area in the immediate future.

The next topic, "Share the Trails Program" in Marin County, was presented

cacy in California. My first experience at SOC was a number of years ago, volunteering at the Dual Slalom as a course marshal. In return for a few hours of standing in the sun (it did not rain that day) and a lunch, ROMP received a small contribution for my service. For at least a decade, Michael and Jain Light organized this important fundraiser for ROMP. While ROMP no longer participates in the Dual Slalom, Team Wrong Way and Monterey Off-Road Cy-

brate accomplishments around the state at the annual Sea Otter Summit. I estimate about 50 people attended this year's summit, and we covered a lot of ground.

The meeting started with Steve Musilami, State Parks Trail Manager, leading a discussion of the new policy used to change trail use designations within California State Parks. This policy, written by Tom Ward, now IMBA CA policy advisor, allows the public to request trail des-



*Continued from page 7*

and trails repair of your mt bike. Fix a flat, adjust your derailleur, straighten a wheel, and anything else bike related that will get you back on the trail.

Location: Arastradero OSP Parking lot Arastradero Rd Palo Alto CA

Contact Information: Jim Sullivan 650-493-8774 ssulljm@juno.com

## TRAIL WORK

### **Wilder Ranch Trailwork**

Sunday, June 01 2008 , Sunday, July 06 2008 , Sunday, August 03 2008 , Sunday, September 07 2008

**09:00 AM (4:00)** First Sunday Every Month. See trailworkers.com for more information.

### **Santa Clara County Parks Monthly Trail Days**

Saturday, June 07 2008 , Saturday, July 05 2008 , Saturday, August 02 2008

**09:00 AM (4:00)** Monthly Trail Days - 1st Saturday of each month, 9am-1pm Come on out and help repair, restore, or rebuild our County Park Trails. These Trail Days will take place at a different County Park each month. No experience needed. Tools, gloves, & refreshments provided. Please wear long pants, long sleeves, and closed toed shoes. Contact with poison oak is always a concern, please take appropriate precautions, bring a change of clothes if necessary.

Contact Information: Santa Clara County Parks (408) 355-2254

### **Trail Restoration Project @ ECDM**

Saturday, June 07 2008, Saturday, July 12 2008

**09:30 AM (5:00)** Things to bring/wear: sturdy shoes (no sandals or open-toed shoes), work gloves, layered clothing (long pants, long-sleeved shirt, jacket, etc., bag lunch and water bottle, day pack/fanny pack to carry gear, gear appropriate to that day's weather conditions (i.e., hat or visor, sunscreen, rain gear, etc.) and lunch. Please contact Paul McKowan to RSVP  
Contact Information: Paul McKowan

volunteer@openspace.org [http://www.openspace.org/volunteer/outdoor\\_service\\_projects.asp](http://www.openspace.org/volunteer/outdoor_service_projects.asp)

### **Santa Clara County Parks Monthly Volunteer Projects**

Saturday, June 21 2008 , Saturday, July 19 2008 , Saturday, August 16 2008, Saturday, September 06 2008

**09:00 AM (3:00)** Monthly Volunteer Projects - 3rd Saturday of each month, 9am-noon

Help us tackle all types of projects ranging from painting and invasive plant removal to litter pickups at locations that desperately need it! These projects will take place at a different County Park each month. Tools, supplies, and refreshments will be provided. Contact Information: Santa Clara County Parks (408) 355-2254

## LAND MEETINGS

### **Santa Clara County Parks Commission Meeting**

Wednesday, June 04 2008 , Wednesday, July 02 2008 , Wednesday, August 06 2008 , Wednesday, September 03 2008

**06:30 PM (2:00)** Santa Clara County Parks Commission Monthly Meeting - to view the agenda, actual start time (can vary), & meeting location, click the web link to the right, scroll to the bottom of the page, click on the Agenda link and look for the corresponding meeting agenda.

### **San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Commission**

Thursday, June 05 2008 , Thursday, July 03 2008 , Thursday, August 07 2008 , Thursday, September 04 2008

**02:30 PM San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting (2:00)** The San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Commission is responsible for establishing policies to guide the work of the San Mateo Parks and Recreation Division. This includes issues of parkland use management such as master plans, acquisitions, and development. Additional meetings may

be set by the Commission as needs arise. Meetings are held publicly and are conducted by a quorum of at least three of the Commissioners.

Location: Board of Supervisors Chambers, Hall of Justice 400 County Center Redwood City CA 94063

### **MROSD Meeting**

Second and Fourth Wednesdays, June 11 2008 , June 25 2008 , July 09 2008, July 23 2008 , August 13 2008 , August 27 2008 , September 10 2008

**07:30 PM (0:00)** MROSD 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.

Check with MROSD for any last minute changes.

Location: MROSD District Offices 330 Distel Circle (off El Camino Real north of Rengstorff) Los Altos

### **Open Space Authority BOD meeting**

Thursday, June 12 2008 , Thursday, June 26 2008 , Thursday, July 10 2008 , Thursday, July 24 2008 , Thursday, August 14 2008 , Thursday, August 28 2008 , Thursday, September 11 2008

**06:30 PM (2:00)** Santa Clara County Open Space Authority Board of Directors meeting.

Location: Board Room Suite 200 6830 Via del Oro San Jose 95119

### **Bay Area Ridge Trail County Committee**

Tuesday, July 22 2008

**07:00 PM Bay Area Ridge Trail County Committee Meeting (0:00)** Quarterly Meeting of the Bay Area Ridge Trail County Committee. Usually pretty informal. Contact Josh if you would like to help the Ridge Trail!

Location: United Way Building 1922 The Alameda San Jose  
Contact Information: Josh Moore president@romp.org <http://www.ridgetrail.org/about/committees.cfm>



## 12 Things IMBA CA Did for Mountain Biking in 2007

**Secured significant Congressional funding for Paradise Ridge Trail System in California's King Range (Lost Coast):** When completed, this will be an epic, 40+ mile trail system in the redwoods that will attract mountain bikers from in and out of state. Work has started and 8 miles of trail are finished.

**Instrumental in creating the first of its kind Common Ground, Trail User Caucus at the State Trails Conference.** Mountain bikers, equestrians and hikers worked together to find ways to make the trail experience better for all. Work is ongoing to improve relationships between trail users.

**Held third annual IMBA California Advocacy Summit at Sea Otter in Monterey.** Summit brought together mountain bikers, bike clubs and industry representatives to showcase accomplishments and identify future initiatives.

**Cleared the way for more trail access in California State Parks.** Assisting local bike clubs in requests for more bike access on existing trails. Major breakthroughs are expected in state parks in Marin, Sonoma, Santa Cruz, Humboldt and Alameda counties.

**Prevented bike ban in Annadel State Park.** Brought together Sonoma County bike clubs, mountain bikers, bike industry reps and state park officials to solve the growing problem of unauthorized trails. Officials threatened a bike ban, but other more positive solutions were agreed upon. The Park's many miles of quality single track remain open to bikes.

**Established IMBA Bike Patrol for Marin County public lands.** First ever patrol in Marin will soon begin their patrol schedule in Marin State

Parks and branch out with patrol agreements in other land manager's jurisdictions.

**Conducted "Share the Trails" education contacts at Marin County state parks.** Ongoing program to improve trail user relations by making all trail users aware of the need to follow the "Rules Of The Trail".

**Held meetings in the Governor's office on issues of Federal Wilderness impact to bikers and the need for more bike trails on state lands.** IMBA California, accompanied by bike industry leaders, advocated for the needs of millions of California mountain bikers with Administration officials.

**Represented interests of mountain bikers in Washington DC on Wilderness legislation.** Met with Congressional and Senate staff on how proposed legislation may impact mountain biking opportunities in the state and discussed solutions.

**Testified at the State Recreational Trail Committee for mountain biking interests.** Successful in having the Committee officially adopt IMBA's publication "Managing Mountain Biking" as a guide for improving the trail experience for all users and for reducing trail conflict.

**Successfully appealed CA Forest Service Plans.** IMBA California succeeded in blocking the closure of hundreds of miles of user built trails in the 4 Southern California Forests.

**Influenced State Parks to hold a seminar on increasing mountain biking opportunities in parks.** The seminar was conducted at the annual State Parks Superintendent's meeting with positive results for the biking community

## IMBA CA Goals for 2008

**Improve relationships with other trail users.** Establish joint trail user assessment teams to review trail issues and safety inspection teams to review safety issues and accidents. Collaborate on multi-use trail proposals. Create safety guidelines for multi-use trails. Joint support of open space and land preservation initiatives and increased trail opportunities.

**Increase the advocacy strength of the California mountain bike community.** Hold two IMBA CA Summits— one in N Cal (Sea Otter) and one in S Cal

**Increase trail access for bikes in California State Parks.** Continue to work with State Parks on existing trail proposals in 10 state park units. Assist local clubs in developing new trail access proposals in key state park units.

**Establish sustainable funding model for IMBA California.** Create and participate in at least two fundraising events. Increase industry support for IMBA CA. Implement a revenue model for funding from affiliate bike clubs.

**Protect interests of mountain bikers in proposed Wilderness legislation.** Mobilize local/regional mountain bike communities to provide input on impact of proposed legislation on MTB opportunities. Establish ongoing relationships with Senate and Congressional staff assigned to work on Wilderness legislation. Negotiate for biking opportunities. Establish and maintain relationship with California Wilderness Coalition. Establish formal positions on proposed legislation.

**Protect existing mountain bike trails on Forest lands.** Continue to assist local clubs in the process of including user-built trails as part of the official Forest system trails. Educate mountain bike advocates on the Forest's new Mountain Bike Management Strategy.

by Tom Boss of Access4Bikes, a not for profit political organization. Their purpose is to lobby for, and promote candidates for public office that have a pro mountain bike stance. The primary focus of this campaign will be to educate mountain bikers, emphasizing the importance of changing our habits in an effort to gain more acceptance of mountain bikers on our public lands. The campaign has many components, including information stations, signage, workshops, group rides and a web site (sharethetrail.org). They have had a reasonable amount of success and very positive responses from land managers. I hope to be able to recruit some volunteers to help out with some information stations at El Corte de Madera OSP this summer. If you are interested, please contact me.

sponsorship of his position. While it seems that this is fairly secure, clubs, bike shops and individuals need to continue and increase support for his activities. We are lucky to have such a well connected person in Sacramento.

Ryan Shutz, who led the IMBA Club Care Visit last year at ECDM and Alice's Restaurant in Woodside, gave a similar pitch. He presented a grand scheme for uniting IMBA and local clubs into chapters, similar in model to the Sierra Club. The clubs would serve as the grass roots portion of the organization that could still capitalize on economies of scale, handling fulfillment, membership renewals, calls to action, and hopefully reaching enough members to have paid full time staff even at the local level. Such collaboration has already begun with the Southern Off-road Bicycling Association, SORBA, a regional advocacy organization made up of smaller,

Haagen-Smit, IMBA Representative for the Tahoe area mentioned that there were a large number of small BLM parcels that the BLM were thinking about liquidating. The BLM won't be able to do that if there are trails on them, so there is an effort to identify ones we are interested in and protect them by lobbying or getting trails built. I don't believe there are any in our area. Finally Nat And Rachel Lopes of Hillride progression group presented their successes in building a community around a new mountain bike park in Fresno California, the Woodward Mountain Bike Park. This park was designed and built for mountain bikes and developing bike skills over a variety of terrain. The Air DH Trail boasts 40 progressive table top jumps in row. The Fish Loop Short Track XC is a one mile single track time trial course. The North Shore trail features over a 1/4 mile of technical balance lines. Additional features include The World Cup Observed Trials Rock Garden, Pump Track and the South Shore Drop pro-



Tom Ward, the IMBA CA policy advisor, presented a long list of accomplishments of IMBA CA last year, and suggested some goals for the coming year (see page 12). One of the challenges IMBA faces is the heavy weighting of corporate

local clubs. With the unfortunate demise of NorCAMBA, ROMP leadership has taken a wait-and-see view of this development because the value proposition is not entirely clear. The last two areas of discussion had much more to do with trails than with politics and policy. Jim

gression. The park opened May 10. See [woodwardmtbpark.com](http://woodwardmtbpark.com) for more information. I was very excited to see the scope and way in which liability was addressed in this project and hope to work more with local city parks to get something comparable built in the area.



## MEETINGS

### IMBA World Summit

Wednesday, June 18-21, 2008  
Mountain biking enthusiasts from around the globe will gather in Park City, Utah, June 18-21 for the 2008 IMBA World Summit.

IMBA Summits bring mountain biking advocates, land managers, ski resort professionals, trail builders, park and urban planners, tourism officials and the bike industry together for collaboration, planning, and celebration.

Location: Park City Marriot Park City Utah. Fee: \$375

### ROMP Business Meeting

Monday, June 23 2008, Monday, July 28 2008, Monday, August 25  
**07:00 PM (2:00)** Fourth Monday of every month meeting except December. We will be meeting at Kapp's Pizza Bar & Grill. This is where we talk about what ROMP is planning to do. Also, to speak to the leadership of ROMP, please contact the president and we will put you on the agenda. Outside talks & presentations welcome. Location: Kapp's Pizza Bar & Grill 191 Castro St Mountain View CA 94041 Contact Info: Josh Moore 408-420-7342 president@romp.org http://www.kappspizza.com

## RIDES

### Fremont Older after work

Every Thursday, June - September  
**06:00 PM (2:00)** C/INT/10mi/2000' Weekly after work rides are back! But moved to Thursdays. Meet at the main Stevens Creek Co Park parking lot off Stevens Canyon Rd 1 mile south of Stevens Creek Bl or 2 miles south of I280 in Cupertino. Take Foothill exit off I280 and head south. Be ready to ride at 6pm. Ride length depends on available day-

light. We often go someplace afterwards for food, if interested, bring \$\$\$. The parking lot charges but there is street parking in nearby neighborhood—ride to start. For info, Glenn or Linda at 408-257-8284.

### ROMP MBOSC at Soquel Demo Forest

Sunday, June 08 2008; Sunday, July 13 2008; Sunday, August 10 2008  
**09:30 AM (4:00)** C/INT/12-18/2500-3000 This is the ever popular joint MBOSC ROMP Second Sunday Demonstration Forest Ride. Both clubs meet at the green bridge at 9:30 AM. Wheels roll by 10:00 AM, up Buzzard's Lagoon to Santa Rosalia Ridge. Consensus decides route down the mountain. From hwy 17, take the Summit Rd exit head SE. Go 5 1/2 miles to first stop sign, turn right and then bear left onto Highland Way. Go another few miles to road block. Park there & ride last mile downhill to the green bridge on the right. Contact : Josh Moore 408-420-7342 mtbikes@gmail.com

### Arastradero 2nd Saturday Social and Skills Session

Saturday, June 14 2008; Saturday, July 12 2008; Saturday, August 09 2008  
**02:30 PM (2:00)** B/EASY/7/900 This friendly, introductory ride covers major trails in the preserve. Route varies month to month depending on interest. Everyone welcome--beginning riders can treat this as a skills clinic, working on descents and corners. Intermediates can give tips, swap lies, and work on hang time during dirt jump session/snack break mid-ride. Take Oregon Expressway/Page Mill Rd south past Hwy 280. Turn right on Arastradero and right into parking lot. Bring helmet, snack & water. Rain cancels. Location: Arastradero Open Space Preserve Parking lot near Gate A Arastradero Rd Palo Alto CA. Contact Info: John H jharlander88@yahoo.com

### 3rd Sunday Ride at ECdM

Sunday, June 15 2008; Sunday July 20 2008; Sunday, August 17 2008

### 10:00 AM (3:00) B-C/INT/10-15/2000-3000

Meet at Skeggs point at 9:30 for a 10:00 AM start. Routes vary depending on trail conditions, closures, and whims. This is a no drop ride starting at top of the hill and then down, so climbing at the end. Bring helmet, water & snack. Lunch after at Alice's restaurant. Location: El Cortede madera OSP Skeggs pt, Skyline Blvd Woodside CA Contact Information: Josh Moore 408 420 7342 mtbikes@gmail.com http://www.openspace.org/preserves/pr\_madera.asp

### 3rd Tuesday Alpine Road

Tuesday, June 17 2008; Tuesday, July 15 2008; Tuesday, August 19 2008  
**04:30 PM (3:00)** This year round ride has options on where to meet up. First chance meets the #262 southbound@ 4:33 pm, + #169 northbound also @4:33 at the california ave caltrain station. RSVP a must if you plan on attending this ride, as meeting places vary depending on weather. From here we pedal thru Stanford's "Professorville" streets, over Old Page Mill rd, through Arastradero Preserve to Portola Valley ranch. 2nd chance to meet up occurs here @ 6:15, corner of Alpine rd. & Willow-brook in Portola Valley, park on Willowbrook. The ride climbs Alpine rd, following ECDM creek, to Page Mill rd x Skyline. This 3 hr ride requires lights in fall-winter months, loaners available, rear flashing lights highly recommended. Ride is for intermediate riders.. Location: California Ave Caltrain station in Palo Alto Contact Info: Jim Sullivan 650-493-8774 ssulljm@juno.com

### 3rd Saturday Social & Scenery Ride

Saturday, June 21 2008; Saturday, July 19 2008; Saturday, August 16  
**10:30 AM (2:00)** B/EASY/10/800-1000 Enjoy a ride for experienced beginners and intermediates who want to go

# RIDING THE SULTAN 29ER

I went with Chris King hubs and asked for a standard 135 mm rear end quick release. Somehow, I ended up with Fun Bolts in back. I decided to try them out and have found they are the perfect complement to the thru axle fork. The bike is stiff, very point & shoot, and handles with precision.

I bought three tires to try out when I was spec'ing the parts, a 29 x 2.3-inch Specialized Resolution, a 29 x 2.1-inch WTB MotoRaptor and a 29 x 2.0-inch Specialized Captain Control. I started with the MotoRaptor up front and the Captain Control in the rear and found they rolled very well and hooked up in most conditions. We got some rain after I'd ridden them a few times and I did a ride over a rough, muddy trail. The Captain Control lost

*I've come to know the bike and the differences wheel size makes . . . how they benefit me . . .*

traction in those conditions, so I went with the Resolution up front and moved the MotoRaptor to the rear. That made the Sultan a "bigger" bike and more capable of dealing with soft, loose, muddy or really rough conditions. A good Downieville combo.

Once the trails dried out, I realized this tire combination did not roll or climb as well. The Resolution was about 100 grams heavier than the Captain Control and I could definitely feel the difference. I've gone back to the original set up and I'm very happy with it for summer condi-

tions. With tires inflated to maximum pressure, the Sultan rolls on pavement nearly as well as a road bike!

For wheels I chose Chris King Hubs laced to Mavic 719 rims built up by Charles. The only other wheel set up I considered was the Mavic CrossMax 29r. I'm sure that would have been a

good choice too, but not as easily serviced and lacking the potential for long term reliability inherent with the Chris King/Mavic/hand built option.

The rest of the parts spec is not 29er specific, but there are some choices worth mentioning. They XT 11-34 cassette has pins on the back side that prevent the chain from dropping into the spokes & chewing them up. I like this feature a lot, though, I have yet to need it. The new, '08, Shimano XT brakes are excellent. They are a radial disc brakedesign, as are most these

days, with consistent and reliable stopping ability.

I'm a big fan of SRAM XO rear derail-

leurs and gripshift and chose to go with them to my complete satisfaction. Though I originally spec'd a Thomson seatpost, I did order a Gravity Dropper and only recently installed it. I really like it. The company will custom build one with any drop combination you desire. Their customer service is first rate; my Gravity Dropper shipped the same day I ordered it. I asked for a 1-inch + 4-inch drop. Currently, I find the 4-inch drop a bit much since I can't pedal very well that low. I think I'd prefer a 1-inch + 3-inch, but Charles suggests I'll get used to it and prefer it in time.

I'm completely sold on the 29er concept; the advantages either balance out my shortcomings or work with my riding style to improve my game in a couple of ways. The Sultan 29er is easily the most versatile bike I've ever ridden; it does many things well. If I could only have one bike . . .





# RIDING THE SULTAN 29ER

By Berry T. Stevens

I've been riding the Sultan for over two months now, regularly for the last month. I've come to know the bike, and the differences the wheel size makes and have learned to appreciate those differences and how they benefit me given the way I ride. Overall, I really love the bike and am quite happy with the various choices of components, to say nothing of my complete satisfaction with the Sultan and with Turner in general.

First, the 29er qualities and how they work for me: I have a poor sense of balance and the added gyroscopic effect of the larger wheel makes me more stable. I don't climb well, but I've been told I climb noticeably better on the Sultan. Recently, on a familiar long, moderate grade fire road climb the distance seemed shorter and easier plus it took less time. I didn't clock it, but I'm sure it was close to a personal best. Just tonight, I cleaned a steep at Water Dog that I hadn't even come close to before on my Enduro.

Jarett at Turner explained how the geometry of a 29er gives you better leverage for moderate climbs. I had assumed the slightly higher gearing (34t rear cog won't yield as many gear inches with a 29r as with a 26r) would limit my ability to clean steep. Apparently this is not the case. Another area in which a 29er excels is on pavement; you wind up those larger

wheels & cover ground much more easily than on a 26er. A 29er is a great choice for anyone who rides pavement from the house to the dirt and then back again. 29ers also handle G-outs with ease. As I don't climb well, I try to use momentum as much as possible to get up short climbs following a descent. The larger



wheels make this technique work better than with 26er wheels. It's well known that the larger wheels make log-overs and rock gardens easier to manage; this has been my experience, too.

The momentum bonus of the larger wheel manifests itself in many ways. Being new

to 29ers, it's hard to separate the Turner factor from the 29er characteristics, but there's no doubt the choice of frame is key to my satisfaction with the bike and it's handling.

Second, here are a few comments on the component choices I've made and how they're working out: The single most critical choice for any 29er is the fork. With the longer axle-to-crown dimension, 29er forks are inherently more flexy. Buying a stiff fork is critical to getting a good handling bike.

I decided to go with a Manitou Minute and a thru axle; the latter being the vital aspect of the decision. Thru axles make a fork stiffer yielding more precise handling.

At this point, I'll never buy a suspension fork for any bike that does not have a thru axle. Fox makes an F 29 that would also have been a good choice due to its stiff chassis. I spoke with a customer tonight though, who

put one on a hard tail 29er and felt it was not sufficiently rigid; he could feel it give over rough ground. At 6'2" and roughly 225 lbs, I suspect size was also a factor. A smaller, lighter rider would likely be fine on the Fox, though any rider would benefit from the Manitou.

# CALENDAR

slower. Meet at 10:30 am to ride, socialize, enjoy the scenery, and work on your biking skills at a slow to moderate pace with frequent breaks for 2.0 hours or more. Riders choose from Russian Ridge, Coal Creek, Monte Bello, and Skyline preserves, including moderate steeps, single tracks, and fire roads. Explore and learn new trails in a supportive group. Bring helmet, water, sunscreen, snack. Rain cancels. Location (\*\*new parking/ start location\*\*): Meet in the Vista Point parking area on Skyline Blvd/ Highway 35 located 1.1 miles north of its intersection with Page Mill Road (right turn from Page Mill onto Skyline for 1.1 miles) and directly across from the Mid-Peninsula Open Space Russian Ridge Preserve. Contact: Rodney Johnson (650) 326-7665 or rodney@stanford.edu  
Directions: Take I 280 to Page Mill Rd south (in Palo Alto) going up into the hills, continue on Page Mill Rd 25+ minutes (watching out for road bicyclists) until stop sign at intersection with Skyline Blvd/ Highway 35 (near Russian Ridge Preserve), turn right, continue 1.1 miles and park on right in Vista Point lot. (Do NOT park in lot for the Russian Ridge Preserve.

## MTB-101

Sunday, June 22 2008; Sunday, July 27 2008; Sunday, August 24 2008  
10:00 AM (4:00) B/Beg-INT/10/1500  
Meet at 10:00 AM, Fremont Older / Prospect Rd. parking lot. Bring your MTB in good mechanical condition, helmet, water and fuel. Be prepared for a 400' climb on fire roads during the first mile. No time limit, no one left behind. Decent will be on a sweeping Single Track loop to the first bail-out point. Those willing can continue riding. There are several bail-out points along the way.

We will practice basic MTB skills and trail etiquette. Beginners welcome.  
Location: Fremont Older OSP Prospect Rd. parking lot Saratoga CA  
Contact Information: Rich Andrews 408.393.1959 richard.a.andrews@nasa.gov

## 4th Saturday Beginner's Clinic

Saturday, June 28 2008; Saturday, July 26 2008, Saturday, August 23 2008  
01:00 PM (3:00) 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. Bring a helmet, water, and a snack. 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. Location: Arastradero Preserve Arastradero Road Palo Alto CA  
Contact Information: Jim Sullivan 650-493-8774 ssulljm@juno.com

## Donner Lake Rim Trail Epic

Friday, August 08-10 2008  
This is a great opportunity to ride and work on the new Donner Lake Rim Trail with other clubs and ride with the locals. The plan is to camp at Donner Lake for 3 days and have a FUN ride/work weekend in the sierras with 5 other nor-cal mountain bike clubs including BTCEB, MBOSC, FATRAC and BONC. We will be working on the Donner Lake Rim Trail, and we will ride Hole in the Ground and at least one other epic section of trail.  
Location: Donner Memorial State Park Donner Lake CA  
Contact Information: Josh Moore 408 420 7342 mtbikes@gmail.com

## SOCIAL EVENTS

**Bike Repair for the Community**  
Saturday, June 14 2008; Saturday, July 12 2008; Saturday, August 09 2008  
10:00 AM (4:00) Learn to repair bikes and contribute to the community. Volunteers work on donated bikes, with

the help and guidance of skilled mechanics. Tools and stands are available, but bring your own if possible. The bikes are then given away to needy children and adults regularly through various help organizations. No Event in December. Event starts at 9:00 during daylight savings time. Location: Behind BTN Automotive 2566 Leghorn Ave, between Rengstorff and San Antonio Mountain View CA  
Contact Information: Dave Fork fork@park.com

## Ales and Trails Celebration

Saturday, June 28 2008  
01:00 AM (0:00) Saturday, June 28, will mark the fifth annual Ales and Trails event. Join us at China Camp State Park in San Rafael, CA, for a great day of singletrack riding and summer celebration. All proceeds benefit IMBA California's efforts and initiatives. The 2008 event includes:  
Café IMBA :: Bike Demos :: Bike Tune-ups :: Skills Instruction :: Skills Progression Course :: Guided Rides :: Gourmet BBQ :: Beer and Root Beer Garden! :: Live Music :: Silent Auction :: Photo Contest :: Kids Fun Ride :: Local Hero Awards :: Pro Rider Skills Demo  
Stay tuned to the IMBA California home page for more details. To become a Sponsor, please contact: info@alesandtrails.net

## Basic Fixit Class

Saturday, June 28 2008; Saturday, July 26 2008; Saturday, August 23 2008  
12:00 PM (1:00) The fixit clinic is for current romp members only, membership forms available at clinic for easy sign up. Beginner ride at 1:00 is open to the general public. RSVP is a must due to max class size limit. This hands on fixit class will go over the basic needs for preventative maintenance  
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# MTB HANDLING PARAMETERS

By David Milburn

## Frame Geometry

One of the most intriguing aspects of mountain biking is the handling characteristics of bikes designed for various disciplines. Cross country designs are light and responsive with quick steering. If you're riding an all day epic, this is a good choice. All-mountain bikes are designed for versatility. Their suspension designs accommodate a broad range of terrain and riding styles. If you like big air, soaring over tabletops and doubles, and working on rhythm, freeride bikes are the way to go. For lift-assisted gravity riding on steep terrain, downhill bikes are built to stand the abuse.

While the handling characteristics of any bike are largely determined by frame design, geometry, and component choices, a familiarity with underlying handling parameters will help you determine the bike most well suited to your riding style. Or, if you feel at odds with your existing ride, a review of the fundamentals may help sort things out—does the problem lie within you or your bike?

As any experienced rider knows, frame geometry is the cornerstone of bike handling characteristics. The feel of your bike is largely determined by the head angle. Cross-country designs typically have head angles of 69 to 71 degrees; all-mountain designs have angles of 67 to 69 degrees; leaving freeride and downhill bikes with 67

degrees or less (design overlap is common). The steeper head angle of a cross-country bike allows for cornering prowess and maneuverability. The rider can respond quickly to abrupt changes in grade and direction. By contrast, the relaxed head angle of an all-mountain bike slows down the steering response in favor of greater stability, particularly, when making rapid descents.

In simple terms, a steeper head angle makes the bike easier to steer and a more slack head angle makes the bike harder



to steer. The trade off is stability when the bike is tracking in a straight line. A steeper head angle makes the front wheel more prone to wander when climbing steep uphills. At the same time,

on downhill grades quick steering makes it easy for the rider to over-correct and veer from the desired line.

If you're accustomed to riding a cross-country bike, the first thing you notice when you through a leg over an all-mountain or freeride design is the increased effort required to turn the front wheel. It's as if the wheel wants to fall to the left or right when steering is initiated. Conversely, when an all-mountain or freeride bike is traveling in a straight line, there is greater resistance to side-to-side steering fluctuations. This provides greater stability when the trail turns gnarly and boulders loom ahead.

## Trail and Offset

Underlying the difference in head angle between frames designed for various disciplines are the measurements trail and offset (also called "rake"). The distance between the centerline of the fork stanchions and the middle of the contact patch where the front wheel meets the ground is called "trail." On mountain bikes it measures roughly 2.5 inches to 4.5 inches. Steeper head angles result in less trail while slack head angles create more.

When a specific frame and fork combination has too little trail, the rider finds it challenging to steer out of ruts and the front wheel is easily

deflected off obstacles such as tree roots and rocks. The bike feels twitchy and unstable. Frequent steering inputs are needed to maintain balance. If there is too much trail, forward mo-

# RIDING THE SULTAN 29ER

mentum disposes the bike to continue moving in a straight line rather than veering right or left. Greater steering effort is required to change direction.

Offset (rake) refers to the distance between the steering axis of the front fork and an imaginary center line passing through the junction of the top tube and head tube and running through the front axle. The function of offset is to improve bike handling by reducing the amount of trail. Too much trail results in a bike that is difficult to steer.

Standard offset for mountain bikes is 39 mm measured from the centerline of the steering axis to the center of the front axle. Due to larger diameter tires, 29ers require 43 to 46 mm of offset to provide steering responsiveness similar to that of 26ers. A larger wheel diameter creates more distance between steering axis and contact patch resulting in greater trail. This must be compensated by increasing the amount of offset.

On road bikes the curve in front fork blades was once a good visual indicator of offset. Aside from optimizing the amount of trail, the curve provided a rudimentary suspension affect. With the advent of carbon fiber forks and their ability to absorb road vibration, offset can now be introduced at the fork crown with straight blades running to the wheel axle.

Because mountain bikes use suspension forks with straight sliders in place of fork blades, offset (rake) is introduced by positioning the dropouts at an angle to the stanchions. Measurement is calculated by adding the distance from steering axis to centerline of the fork stanchions plus distance from fork stanchions to centerline of the front axle.

Another factor that affects steering sensitivity is handlebar width. When the bars are too wide, steering inputs are exaggerated and the rider tends to over-

steer. When the bars are too narrow, steering inputs are slowed down and greater effort is needed to compensate for left or right deviations. These traits explain why cross-country riders prefer narrow bars that complement the steeper head angles and more responsive steering of their bikes while freeride/downhill riders prefer wider bars that amplify steering inputs and compensate for the tendency of their bikes to propel straight ahead.

## Steering Dynamics

To change the direction of forward travel and initiate a turn, it is necessary to lean the bike in order to balance inertial force with gravitational force. However, before steering into a turn the rider must momentarily steer in the opposite direction. This action, referred to as countersteering, moves the wheels out from directly beneath the center of mass resulting in a lean in the intended direction.

As the lean approaches the desired angle, the front wheel must be steered in the direction of the turn. The amount of steering input required is dependent upon the forward speed of the bike, the radius of the turn, and the need to maintain the lean angle. As the turn progresses, the radius can only be altered by a corresponding change in lean angle. This requires countersteering out of the turn to increase lean and decrease radius, then into the turn to decrease lean and increase radius. To exit the turn, the bike must again be countersteered by momentarily steering more into the turn to decrease the radius and increase inertial forces in order to decrease the angle of lean.

While countersteering is usually initiated by rider input applied directly to the handlebars, it can also be created by shifting the rider's weight. When the rider leans to the right, the bike compensates for the weight shift by leaning to the left to conserve angular momentum. This causes the combined center of mass

to remain in the same vertical plan. The left side lean of the bike will cause it to steer to the left, thereby initiating a right hand turn. This action duplicates that of the rider countersteering to the left by applying an input to the handlebars.

Most of the braking force applied to a mountain bike is generated at the front wheel. As riders know from experience, strong braking force applied to the front wheel frequently requires them to shift their weight rearward behind the saddle. This counteracts the forward momentum that results in an endo (ejecting over the handlebars) if the rider does not react with sufficient speed. Bikes with longer wheelbases are less prone to this phenomena. Riders who participate in freeride and downhill events often reduce their seat height to lower their center of gravity and curtail the need for extended riding behind the saddle. With their raised handlebars and lower seat height, freeride and downhill bikes appear uncomfortable on level ground, but on steep descents the rider's position becomes level as the bike angles down.

## Novice MTB Riders

If you're a road cyclist who has recently taken up mountain biking you're probably starting to realize there's more to this sport than meets the eye. Mountain biking requires strength and finesse emanating from a calm, focused mind. Here are a few suggestions to help ease your transition and reduce the amount of "air time" you've been logging.

The first rule of mountain biking is when the trail gets hairy keep your eye on the line you want our bike to travel. Ignore the yawning canyon beyond the next switchback. Where your eyes wander, your bike is sure

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