

Four bridges 2004
An observation
The fisher Report
By Greg” Bulldog “Fisher

If you have read any of my reports of the past, they tell a story of mean and sometimes women in funny clothes and head gear riding funny looking bicycles. The story tells where they went and what happened during the ride. This is sometimes funny, informational and down right scary.

Rituals

A bike ride wouldn't be a bike without pre ride and post ride rituals. One ritual that gets me is the check the air in the tire, pump the tire up whether it needs it or not. Everyone has a floor pump to pump the tire up. It is kind of like a preflight check. To top off the fuel, in biking you top off the tires. The other is spinning the front wheel. Almost all road bikes are transported via a bike rack, either on the top of the vehicle or in the bed of a pickup. This requires removal of the front wheel to secure the bike on the rack. When you get bike down, you have to put the wheel back on check to make sure nothing is rubbing. Most of the time nothing rubs but you spin the wheel anyway. There are folks who transport the bike without removing the front wheel. They don't have to spin the wheel. Would you call them excessive if they did? If you didn't spin the wheel would it rub? I guess they would have something to do if they didn't spin the wheel. It couldn't be much; wheel spinning doesn't take but a few seconds. When we started our ride, it must start on time, it is undetermined if ever ends on time. I will say another word about the tires. I never see anyone check or inflate their tires after a ride.

Weather and Clothing

The riding clothing this time of year is interesting. When it gets cold, you have to plan what you are going to wear in order to be comfortable on the ride. I always bring a duffle bag in the winter to either put on more or take some clothes off. This is usually determined just before the ride. It is also determined not by the weather but peer pressure. “You are not wearing gloves on a day like today”. “I certainly wouldn't wear a sweat shirt out there today”. “You are not wearing a tee shirt are you?” “I think arm warmers are silly or you are going to burn up in that and you are going to freeze”. I have found from personal experience that length of time you ride and high temperature for the day and the wind determines what I wear on a ride. Today it started out cool and then warmed up. Cycling specific clothing is light and warm and can removed and stuffed in the back pocket of your jersey. Of coarse you may look like you have dead squirrels in the pockets of your jersey. The weather today was windy all day and in our face. There isn't much you can do about Headwind except turn around go the other way. Today the wind was in our face no matter which way we turned. It was enough to give you a wind burn facial. In really cold windy riding, a wind vest is a must to keep the cold wind off the chestiest area. The old school boys use newspaper under the jersey. The only problem is getting the printers ink off after a ride. One more tip, if you pass a cow pasture and see a cow pie, stop and get some and smear some on your lips. This prevents chapping because you won't lick your lips.

Ride Bys

It is a given on a bike ride you are riding by something or someone. We always try to speak or wave. Popping wheelies are not legal on a road bike when you ride by. Today we rode into several little towns and rode by a bunch of people and things. Sometimes I get the feeling I am an alien and just landed in a corn field. We have our space suits on and decide to go into town. You would think if we had a space ship that could travel several solar systems in a manor of minutes would get on bikes and ride into town. What does this fellow think, mowing his lawn and slinging grass on the road for us to run over? Does he think it like putting out the red carpet for us? On this ride you cross a bridge on a toll road. According to the toll booth people you are not allowed to ride by the toll booth. We are considered vehicles on the road, so we are expected to pay the 75 cent toll charge. Some of the folks think that is bunch of, let us say hooey! Some on the ride today choose to ride by the toll booth. Some of the rest of us are willing to pay the toll, were instructed by the attendant to ride on by. We always ride by dogs on this ride and every ride. I wonder what they think when we ride by; protect, give chase, bark, or sit and wait for better chase material.

Rest Stops

Unless you are training for an iron man competition, you need to stop every 25 miles or so when doing a long ride. I relish the rest stop. It gives us a chance to check the local fare and the locals, most of the time it is a store or gas station. We always have to lean the bike against the building. These bikes have no kick stands, at least not any more. I recently did a century ride where a fellow had an old steel bike with a kick stand. It really stood out and up. I bet if they made of carbon fiber and Lance had one everyone would have one. There is a lot of information out as what you are supposed to eat and drink on a ride. Some folks are very religious about their diet and some are not. Some Folks eat power bars and drink power aid. Some eat pretzels or potato chips, candy bars, ham sandwiches, hamburgers, ice cream sandwiches and suck down a diet cola. I will stop here in my food discussion as I am feeling a little woozy. We would always hope these stores have a washroom so we can potty but if they don't, we have the great outdoors. When you get old like me you don't stop for to long or you will get stiff and it makes it tough when you get back on the bike, at least for a few miles. So there you have it , Bulldog's observation on this ride and pretty much the way it is on most other rides. The locations are different and the people are different. That is what makes bike riding fun and intresting.