• PLUS
• Una’Benters Manifesto
• 1998 Easy Racer Tour Easy SS test
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See the new “Jump” Compact
### Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The 1998 Easy Racer Tour Easy SS LWB Recumbent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Performance: Hey, How Are Those Things on Hills?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Commuter Test: The 90-Speed Quetzal/Peugeot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Linear Built It! Riding the Linear Compact Mk. III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>SuperGuide: All About Long Wheelbase ‘Bents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Believe What They Say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>SuperGuide Ratings/Specs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>The Una’Benter Manifesto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Departments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Editorial License</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>’Bent Mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>’Bent News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>The Notebook of an Unreasonable Man: Joe and the Joetator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>’Bent Rider Group Listing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>’Bent Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Classified Ads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Marketplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Tail Section: Glossary, RCN Print Schedule and info</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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RCN#45 Cover


Photo by Easy Racers

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Contributors

Robert J. Bryant • Tony Licuanan
Joseph Kochanowski
Mark Colliton • Martin Krieg
Kent Peterson • Zach Kaplan
Connie McAyeal

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Photo courtesy of Rosemary Burbank—Angletech Stratus GL63 on tour
LWB—The King of the ‘Bent Hill

No twitchy toys in this group—these are serious bikes

I'm still on information-overload from the last issue of RCN. This whole buyers' guide thing is a bit odd. So here's why! Most of the recumbents sold in the USA are Compact style: ReBike, BikeE, Rans Tailwind and Vision Metro. By my best guesses, this could be 75% of the market. Our Jan/Feb '98 Compact BC issue had just one page of Compact specs—13 models (a 'benter's dozen...). So then the SWB enthusiast custom-spec guys get ahold of stock bikes, swap a few parts and generate 40, count them—"40" different SWB models. SWB hype at its finest.

Now we come to the LWB category—just 21 models (even with the Angletech fleet). Most of the LWB manufacturers have been around for years: Rans, Easy Racers, Linear, Ryan and others—all tried and true.

All of these guys predare my entry into the world of recumbents. I'm a newbie compared to Randy Schlitter (Rans) and Gardner Martin (Easy Racers) and Dick Ryan (Ryan) who welded Avatar frames back in the early 80's. Many of these models are supremely dialed-in milestone bikes with thousands of owner miles, perfected designs (though tweaked and updated when need be), near bullet-proof frames, and full triangulation with TIG welded CroMo or aluminum frames. LWB 'bents were once the mainstay of the 'bent world when there was no such thing as a Compact, and SWB were considered twitchy toys unable to carry a load except for the heavy load on the 16” front wheel... remember the Hyper Cycle...

The LWB 'bent is a timeless design capable of anything. In the LWB design spectrum, we have the Ryan Vanguard USS tourer; the folding Linear; and the legendary Easy Racers: the touring Tour Easy or the barn burning Gold Rush Replica. Nowadays the LWB are often nearly shunned as heavy (slow?) bikes in favor of ultra-light SWB bikes with roadie-wannabe components.

The new breed of 'bent mfr.' proclaims that light weight and suspension are the keys to speedy 'bentdom. I have to tell you, I think a lot of riders are missing the boat here. Two of the most notable performance gurus in the 'bent world are Gardner Martin of Easy Racers and Steve Delaire of Rotator (who builds GRR frames in his spare time). Both builds have speed records. Both build LWB performance machines that are capable of blowing the doors off of most SWB and Compact bikes, regardless of weight or brand of skinny tires.

LWB bikes are more user-friendly, have lower seat heights, lower bottom bracket heights (pedals), less constrained drive trains, wider-range gearing and they take fairings easier. Even with a Super Zzipper or body stocking, just about anyone can easily manage a LWB at speed.

I've tested light SWB bikes against the Gold Rush on my test course—and they are not even close. The GRR is faster by 8 minutes (over 22.4 miles) and 3 mph in overall speed with an average speed of 21 mph! Road-ready, with my spares and adequate nourishment, this bike is a porker by wedgie-weight standards—and it doesn't even matter.

The SWB hype is prevalent in the 'bent world and is getting worse. SWB manufacturers more often sell through dealers, and there are many wedgie-salesmen willing to convince you that the a light-weight, often twitchy SWB is right for you...based on their wedgie-master training. I don't mean to come down so hard on the SWB, all I ask is that you get recumbent educated. Not all 'bents are created equal. Whether you're going to ride around the globe or do a fast double century, consider a LWB—the bike that this industry was built on. And I still have a SWB and love it too. End of Rant.

Viva Recumbency
Bob Bryant.
BENT-KOPELLI & PINK PLASTIC LAWN FLAMINGOS
I am the 'bent rider/silversmith who created the Kokopelli recumbent jewelry (I hope your wife, Marilyn, is enjoying hers). I have some new items in the designs stage—tie tacs, label pin, belt buckle and I am definitely open to ideas from the 'bent community. Enclosed is a recent photo of me and a friend on my Haluzak Leprechaun. Even PPF (Pink Plastic Flamingos) prefer the comfort and fun of recumbents. Fred, the PPF was visiting me for a few weeks. I connect with Fred via a terrific web site, "On Stagnant Pond"—www.ospsitecrafters.com/homepond.html, dedicated to the enjoyment of Pink Plastic Lawn Flamingos.

We all know that recumbent riders dare to be different. So, host a PPF and enjoy the reaction of folks as you visit places like Biosphere or Tombstone, with a Pink Plastic Flamingo tucked under your arm!

Regards,
Peg Francisco

RCN—TABLOID STYLE? PRINT THIS IF YOU DARE!
If wedge saddles can depress 'performance' then 'bent seats may restrict ability when off the machine.

The cause is pinning the sciatic nerve between the point of the pelvis (ischial tuberosity) and the seat base.

After a 30 mile trip, I could hardly walk and my doctor diagnosed it as Sciatica—cycling not recommended.

Your misrepresentation of Fred Teeman's comment about wedges and self torture did not impress and savor of tabloid style presentation. So there! He is the only person, apart from Mike Burrows, that I have encountered in the media from Giant and his comments seemed quite reasonable—but you may be aware of a hidden agenda unknown to readers.

Hugh Haines
Sunderland, England

PS: I attack every editor within striking distance—without fear or favor.

Hugh, I'm not that kind of doc, but I can tell you that some bikes, mainly those with very closed riding positions and/or upright seat angles have the potential to do the same to me. Other very high-BB models cause problems with toe numbness. Every-BODY is different. As for Mr. Teeman of Giant, I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't take advantage of that situation. The timing was right, and Mr. Teeman's letter was reproduced almost entirely (minor editing for space). Much of the situation was tongue-in-cheek and no disrespect was meant toward Mr. Teeman or Giant. So there! As for your comments on tabloid style, RCN is, after all, printed in the USA. Wouldn't you expect less? We do have a sense of humor...—Bob, RCN

RANS SEAT HOOPLA?
My new Tour Easy arrived a month ago. I set aside my Trek 2100 for good. Despite all of the hoopla about the Rans seat, I still think its for young butts with skeletal figures. The Tour Easy seat is what I used to wish for when I rode my Trek. Gardner Martin even customized the seat a bit to my specs. He made it wider, deeper and eliminated the slope (foam seat horn) at the front. I now have the kind of comfort that makes me want to ride all day. My speeds have also risen by 10% over my Trek 2100 and about 30% faster into a headwind. I don't find the weight difference between the two significant in terms of locomotion. But face it, the Tour Easy is unwieldy and burdensome to lift and carry when necessary. I can at last ride without the pain of saddle discomfort. I have RCN to thank for that.

Cordially,
Bernie Rosen

TURNER RIDER SPEAKS OUT
I ride a Turner recumbent. I bought it after testing a Rans Rocket, a Vision and one other big name bike. I found the Turner to be more comfortable and more stable than any of the others, especially the Vision. As you said in the closing part of your review, it is basically a good bike.

Your review of the Turner was fairly accurate, but written in a tough style. I felt that you paid more attention to some small...
faults than you did to the bottom line that the bike was sound. Unfortunately, Milton felt that he had to offer a response. As a result of your review and letters from readers which you have printed, your pages reflect a spirit of ridicule and elitism which serves no good purpose.

Milton Turner has been fair, informative, and accommodating to me. He is a gentleman who does not deserve to be the target that he has become in your pages. Please put this behind you and concentrate on the positive development of healthy industry that supports you.

Fred C. Moor
Livingston, TX

Fred, Thanks for writing. I do feel bad about the Turner situation. Unfortunately, I cannot always be a nice guy. When a bike needs criticism, I owe it to the people who pay to read RCN to criticize the bike. If the manufacturer takes it personally, offers no feedback, response or solution, the style becomes tough. If we/RCN are treated in this way, we can only imagine that reader/customers may get it worse. The positive result from a situation like this is that Turner may improve his bikes and the way in which he resolves problems. If this happens, then we/RCN have done our jobs. If you had a good experience with Milton Turner, then maybe things have improved.

There is no elitism that I know of. At one time Turner provided SWB frame-kits at affordable prices. With his leap into the higher price range, competing with Rans, Vision, Lightning, etc., the Turner bikes need to be critiqued with the competition in mind. Unfortunately, the T-Lite doesn’t cut it. My experiences with Turner bikes and the way that Turner resolves problems goes back to 1990. I once spent over 50 hours setting up a Turner LB 90 to only finally return it back to Turner.

We have not heard from Turner Enterprises since the post-road test message. He did not complete our ‘98 Buyers’ Guide info, nor does he subscribe to RCN at this time. I’ve said it before, and I’ll say it again. I would retest the Turner, Lightning Stealth or any other bike that has received a poor RCN review at any time in which the manufacturer sees fit. Though we cannot justifiably buying another Turner test bike, as we did for the original review.—Bob, RCN

CREAKY BIKEE
I called the BikeE folks yesterday regarding the creaky suspension on my new All Around Air Tech. Paul Atwood told me it was most likely the swing arm pivot clamp which is inside the main beam. It is snagged down to the beam with two button head screws accessible from the bottom of the bike. One quick tweak was all it took. In some cases a little spray lube aimed at the clamp (through the cable access hole) will help quiet any noise caused by slight movement. There, you are now a BikeE technoid.

Rick Pope
Oregon Human Power

VIRILE ‘BENT RIDER
Regarding your ongoing series on penile numbness. I’ve been wondering how it is that us recumbent guys find the seats on upright bicycles to be so uncomfortable, yet the upright riders still have not switched en masse to recumbents. These’s only one answer I can think of—male recumbent riders are simply far better endowed. Tell the girls to spread the word.

Do I have to sign this?
Somewhere in Florida

Have you received your RCN#44 yet?

All active subscriber issues should have arrived by this time. If yours has not—give us a call today. The postal service occasionally misplaces a bulk mail issue or two. Call 253/631-5728 if you’ve had a problem. Now would be the perfect time to upgrade to a deluxe first class mail subscription. Send your deluxe renewal + $1 per outstanding issue to RCN.

The Hostel Shoppe
of Stevens Point, WI has a new FULL COLOR 16-page RECUMBENT CATALOG—and it’s FREE. It has advice, pics of BikeE, Vision, Easy Racer, Rans, Comfort Cycle, tandems and 3-1/2 pages of recumbent accessories. The catalog also has a Midwest Recumbent Rally entry form (May 30-31, 1998). To get your copy, give the Hostel Shoppe a call at 1-800-233-4340, M-F 10am-7pm and Sat 10am-5pm (central time). Or email at info@hostelshoppe.com and be sure to tell them you read about it in RCN!

WHITE GOLD!
There is a new limited edition of Gardner Martin’s world famous Easy Racer Gold Rush Replica now available. The White Gold comes standard with a Super Zipper fairing, some special options and powdercoat paint with a clearcoat. This limited edition bike is available only through The Sharper Image Catalog 1-800-344-4444.
**'Bent Bits**

- **Kingcycle Demise!**
The British Kingcycle SWB is no longer in production. Low Racers and Wasp models will be available on a limited custom order basis only.

- **hpri Racing News**
The hpri has just unveiled their first quarterly newsletter with a race schedule, rules, deciMach Prize info and a race schedule. These are the folks who seem to have taken over HPV racing in the USA and who will be racing HPV's in the Indianapolis Motor Speedway later this season. The annual subscription/membership rate is $20 to WISIL HPVers/hpri, 260 S. Channing #1, Elgin, IL 60120-6619

- **LINEAR STUFF**
Steve Hansel from Linear called to say that his company will be introducing a new welded non-folding version of the popular LWB model. The first batch of Linear Compact Mk III above-seat steering models are now available. For more information, contact your favorite Linear dealer or call Tel. 319/252-1637.

**'Bent Mail....**

**GLISS VIBRATION?**
I loved your article on Slumgullion tour in RCN#42. I just received a Rans Gliss from Angletech and find the bike a joy except for a bit of vibration when spinning in the small chainring. The vibration comes from the upper idler, which becomes heavily loaded when on the small chainring due to the angle of the chain over the roller. The uneven nature of the chain causes vibration proportional to the loading.

I was wondering if any Gliss riders have complained about this. I have a Tour Easy which has brought me 6k miles in the last 2 years and perhaps I am spoiled, but I think a $2000 bike should be free of unnecessary vibration. Am I too critical? Do you know anything about a possible fix?

Love your magazine
Carl Bredberg
Carl, I have noticed chain/idler drag noise on our similar Rans Tailwind. It oddly comes in the large cassette cog in the middle chainring.

Here are some things you may want to try:
—Put a strip of inner tube or a series of O-rings in the idler groove and let the chain run them to quiet idler noise.
—Experiment with chain/idler/no idle
Special thanks to the Rans owners on the intern HPV list on this one.—Bob, RCN

**THE TERRIBLE TRUTH ABOUT 'BENTS**
I have been riding a recumbent (BikeE) for about five months now and I have noticed one big problem with it and I was wondering if any of you have noticed it too.

My biggest qualm is how slow I now am going up hills. I never flew up hills on my upright bike, but now on my BikeE I crawl at an even lower speed (3-5 mph on my BikeE versus maybe 5-7 on my upright). I went out for a club ride two weeks ago and I had to drop out because I couldn't possibly keep up with the group. Usually, I would be leading the pack on my upright.

Many people say that the reason I am slow is obvious; I have not developed my "recumbent muscles" yet. Well, I wonder, because I've been riding quite bit this Winter and past Fall and I haven't noticed any great improvement in my speed going up hills. My best guess is that after much riding, I will be able to increase my speed going up hills somewhat, but even so, I will still be significantly slower on a recumbent than I would be on my upright bike.

I have also heard the argument made (in RCN) that we recumbent riders make up for our slowness on the hills with the flats. I wonder about that statement too, because on the club ride I went on, the "speed advantage" my recumbent had on the flats and downhill was not even close to being enough to make up for my extensive time losses going up hills. So much so that I had to abandon the ride.

Yes, not all recumbents are created equal and I imagine that some recumbents (especially lightweight SWBs) don't suffer from this problem (as much), but I am nevertheless surprised that a bike as well liked as the BikeE is (RCN gave it endless accolades in a recent issue) would suffer from such a serious limitation. Is this 'terrible truth' true, are many (most?) recumbents significantly slower going up the hills than their upright brethren?

Andrew Waldorf
andy16@interport.net

Andrew, recumbent hill climbing is an odd science. Since we cannot climb out of the saddle, our performance depends primarily on rider conditioning. Nothing increases your climbing performance better than pedaling up steep hills.

A few weeks ago my response to you may have been, "buy a faster bike." This past weekend I was again reminded of just how important rider training is. RCN's Kent Peterson led us on a ride from Issaquah toward Fall City and Preston, Washington, in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains. Kent has been training for the "Camomball" a ride from Seattle to Spokane. Kent looks for hills to climb. His training route goes up Snoqualmie Pass on the race route (to 3000' elevation). Since he chooses not to own a car, Kent pedals to most of our NW rides.

On this day Kent rode, "William Burroughs," a SWB built from two mixte wedge frames, lots of recycled stuff, put together with JB Weld, hardware store clamps with absolutely no welding or brazing (RCN#47 article). The bike has limited gearing and weighs in "over 40-pounds." Kent has less bucks into this bike that I have into my riding shoes. I'm chasing right behind Kent all day on my Easy Racer Gold Rush, but I couldn't catch him. Luckily for me, Kent left his (actually, his wife Christine's) homebuilt Tour Easy at home. Kent can ride fast and climb well on any 'bent.

All else being equal, I find the performance oriented recumbents, with an acceptable weight, correct weight distribution for the rider size and a stiff frame climb best. Unfortunately, some Letters Continued on page 53
BikeE Again Leads Market by Introducing a Quality Recumbent Bicycle for $650!

While sales have slowed in the overall bicycle industry over the past five years, the recumbent market, and BikeE in particular, have experienced significant growth. BikeE Corporation has doubled its sales for each of the past three years, and quadrupled sales from 1997 to 1998. Moreland attributes the growth to an increased number of riders looking for comfort, fun and efficiency. "Cyclists are smarter than ever before, and are realizing there is an alternative to the conventional bent-over bikes," he said. "We believe that the BikeE better meets the needs of 80 percent of people riding bikes -- it’s great for every kind of riding, from touring to off-road."

BikeE’s proprietary products combine comfort and efficiency to provide fun, fast and easy-to-ride bicycles that avoid the discomfort to hands, wrists, shoulders and backside associated with traditional bikes. The unique design won BikeE a coveted "Editor’s Choice" award from Bicycling Magazine in 1997 -- the first time an alternative bike has ever received the award. The BikeE is sold through over 450 independent bicycle retailers in North America and is distributed in Japan, Germany, Austria, Denmark and Switzerland.

BikeE Corporation, based in Corvallis, Oregon, is the leading manufacturer of recumbent bicycles, producing bikes that are both fun and comfortable to ride. These bicycles put the rider in an upright position on a padded, contoured seat with back support. BikeE’s proven cantilever frame design and Air Tech line of suspension bikes set the standard for comfort, control and performance in the growing market for recumbent bicycles.

For more information, contact BikeE at 1-800-231-3136 or www.bikee.com.
A Free ‘Bent

- SOME LUCKY RCN READER WILL WIN A NEW 1998 BikeE AIR TECH RECUMBENT IN JULY

In a special promotional deal with the BikeE Corporation, RCN will GIVE AWAY absolutely FREE—one new 1998 BikeE Air Tech All Arounder 21-speed bike shipped within North America. The customer will need to pay their local dealer for set-up as the bike comes in a box.

RULES: You must have an active RCN subscription that runs through and including RCN#50 at the time of the drawing the first week of July 1998. THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS!

If you would like a chance to WIN a BikeE—Renew Today and WIN!

ABOVE: If you haven’t read our rave review of this bike in RCN#43, order a copy today. Many of you must have read it, as BikeE Air Tech sales are through the roof!

ABOVE RIGHT: John Charlton and his 12c Cent ‘Bent. Read all about it in RCN #47!

1999 RCN Buyers’ Guide Query

We are in the process of planning our 1999 print schedule. We are considering the following options for next year:

1. Same as 1998 with segmented Buyers’ Guides (SWB, LWB...) 2. 1996 format: 4 RCN regular issues and a huge double (+2) issue Buyers’ Guide (6 total issues).

3. 6 RCN issues with a new larger separate Buyers’ Guide as a subscription option.

We would like your feedback. Leave us a voice mail at 253/630-7200 “#” or email DrRecumbnt@aol.com

RCN Goes After the Establishment in the RCN#47 “Homebrew issue”

We want your homebuilder stories, tips, and secrets to share with other RCN! If your homebuilder article (complete with text and a few pictures) gets chosen as one of the two best—we have PRIZES that include bike parts from Haluzak, 4 People Movers Fairing Video’s, a $50 People Movers Gift Certificate, one two-year and two one-year deluxe subscriptions to RCN. Winners will be chosen for the best homebuilder article, tips, plans or contribution.

Watch for our upcoming issue:
- Dumpster Diving for Bike Parts.
- Learn secrets from the pro’s.
- Cheap and easy ways to get ‘bent!
- Building a ‘bent from a BMX bike.
- The truth revealed on industry hype (hoax?) of index shifting!
- The truth revealed about pricey parts!

get your ‘bent off the roof!

Stop climbing, lifting and reaching for your bikes!
Mount the DraftMaster into a standard two-inch hitch receiver and carry up to five bikes with a stable fork mount system.

The standard DraftMaster will accommodate SWB bikes. Add the compact mount to carry CLWB up to 56” or a tandem rail to carry LWB bikes up to 75”.

The DraftMaster even pivots away for easy access to rear cargo doors and easy LWB bike mounting.

So reach for the phone and stop reaching for your bikes.
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RCN

'Bent News

ONE “PHAT” RIDE

The “Seven-40-Seven” Cruiser

Welcome to the next generation of bicycle trends for the new millennium! This outrageous semi-recumbent cruiser’s patented design was created for the rider who has his mind geared for comfort. Rott Industries introduces the ”Seven 40 Seven.”

Our cruiser offers the ergonomically correct seating position that places the rider behind the cranks. The bars are fully adjustable to extend the rider’s arms to a comfortably raised position. The forks are made of chromed CroMo fork blades. Our deluxe “First Class” model features Rott Alloy forks, a 53-T. polished Rott Power Disc Crank, a Nexus 7 hub, Ritchey Moby Bite tires and a fully sprung Lepper leather seat for $999. Other models from $599.

Contact: Rott Industries, Tel. 888/768-8123 or People Movers at 714/633-3663.

NEW ’98 RANS BROCHURE AVAILABLE NOW!

Rans has a new 10-panel brochure that lists specs of all bikes as well as beautiful side-view photos of each bike. To get a brochure see your local Rans dealer, or write to: Rans, 4600 Hwy 183 Alt., Hays, KS, 67601. Tel. 785-625-6346. Email: bikes@rans.com

Web: http://www.rans.com

CHECK OUT THE NEW RANS WEB SITE

It is finally up and running at: http://www.rans.com

RANS CONTACT INFO UPDATE

In RCN#44 we had an incorrect phone number listing for Rans. They have also had an area-code change. The correct phone number for the Rans Company is: Tel. 785/625-6346 and Fax 785/625-2795.
So you want a comfortable bicycle, but you don’t want to sacrifice speed, and you also want to do your first century—or ride across the USA. Well have I got the bike for you. One other added bonus, it’s built by the company that builds the fastest production bicycle in the world (Gold Rush Replica). It’s funny how some things never change. This statement is as true today as in 1991 when it was first printed in RCN.

The bicycle industry, and even the new recumbent industry seems to be driven by what is the newest, latest, greatest product in our planned obsolescence consumer driven market. The Easy Racer Tour Easy has become an industry standard. It was the best in ’91—the recumbent by which all others were judged—and it’s even better today. Our 1998 Tour Easy shows more refinement, yet still retains the timeless quality and durability that is legendary to Easy Racers. They have also inspired an industry of “compact” builders, many of whose bikes look just like mini-Easy Racers.

For the most part, Easy Racers’ owner, Gardner Martin, has kept his focus on LWB ASS high performance touring machines which are quite possibly the best overall recumbent designed in the world today. This bike exudes recumbent passion. Gardner Martin is the man chief designer, hyp race team leader and the spokesman of speed, recumbent that is. The Gold Rush Replica is still the fastest ‘bent we’ve ever tested, and a fully fairied Gold Rush (Old Gold) rests in the Smithsonian for winning the DuPont Prize, racing to just over 65 mph with Fast Freddy Markham at the helm.

Easy Racers has more race victories and speed records than any other recumbent manufacturer. Many bikes can be fast, but the next time a manufacturer braggs about performance, ask about their race team, speed records and race victories.

Tesons. Most people who’ve tried will agree to the superior stability, handling and performance possible with an Easy Racer LWB. Forget any roadie platitudes about featherweight bikes being fast. Almost any rider will be faster on an Easy Racer LWB with a Super Zzipper fairing.

Our test bike is a 1998 Tour Easy SS with the SRAM GripShift “Attack” 24-speed upgrade and a Super Zzipper fairing. The SS has skinny tires and is the performance oriented Tour Easy. The EX comes with fat tires, lower gears and is the touring model.

“Easy Racers existence as a company predates most every recumbent dealer”

THE EASY RACER EXPERIENCE

Historically, Easy Racers is not a brand that is displayed at the dealer trade shows, or through as many dealers as other brands. Some dealers may have a difficult time with this. Easy Racers’ existence as a company predates most every recumbent dealer in the world.

Easy Racers has spent more than 20 years selling bikes directly to the customer. They are experts at doing this. The bikes are fully set up and bench tested prior to shipment to the customer. My feeling is that every recumbent worthy of the $2000+ price tag should be prepped this way. What this means to the customer is an effortless assembly. The derailiers and brakes are set up and adjusted and the fork is installed. The customer needs to insert the handlebar stem, check the handlebar adjustment, install the quick-release wheels, mount the Zzipper fairing and put air in the tires, and you’re off. The possibility of a problem is very small. Easy Racers has no equal in the way bikes are pre-assembled and packed for easy direct customer (or dealer) setup.
An Easy Racer test ride can often be a religious experience. When a customer calls Easy Racers there is an excellent chance of talking to Gardner Martin. He is cordial, patient and makes the ordering process fun. He instills confidence in recumbents and his product and makes every customer feel special—something that isn’t happening with many of the new corporate bent guys. There is no elitist attitude, arrogance or engineering superiority complex. Gardner is an ex-motorcycle racer, builder and hvr racer. He builds and flies airplanes and he’s known all over town for his cool laid back chopper-like bikes, black hot rod Studebaker and ex-chicken coop shop behind the feed store just outside of Watsonville, in Freedom, California.

Consistency also plays a big part in the way Easy Racers does business. Attention to detail seems to be job #1. Over the years, we’ve had the opportunity to assemble several dozen Tour Easys and Gold Rush Replicas. In all of these bikes not one single nut or bolt was missing and there have been very few problems, mostly minor nitpicks. In fact, it’s sometimes the other way around; you find unexpected extras, such as replacement tubes, water bottles, assembly tools and even a rearview mirror inside the shipping box.

■ DESIGN PERFECTION
It’s tough to explain to people just how good this bike is compared to the newest, latest, greatest whiz-bang models. The SWB and Compacts get a lot of press because the basic LWB was dialed in long before the other designs were ever even prototyped. Gardner Martin tweaks his LWB fleet every year to refine and make them better. He watches trends and the recumbent world more than most. He also pays attention to the often mundane, very political HPV racing groups and their ups and downs. If an Easy Racer homebuilder rides through town, Gardner will try out his bike. He’s even been known to make changes to the production bikes based on these rides.

The trick to the design is a low center of gravity, just high enough for safe riding in traffic, a finely tuned (stable) handling, a stiff triangulated (in all the right places) frame topped off with an attractive Harley-esque look, matched with an uncommon durability and manufacturer service level.

■ FRAMESET
The Tour Easy frameset is legendary. It’s stiff, strong and about as high quality as a bike frame can be. The frames are TIG welded in the Easy Racers’ shop of Aerospace grade 4130 CroMo tubing. The frames have braze-ons for racks (no lower rear fender mount), fenders and a pump.

The Easy Racer welded aluminum handlebars are stiff, narrow and tough with an aerodynamic wrist bend to keep your body tucked in tight. This indeed works, however, the hand position is not as ergonomic as the Rans or Rotator flat (with a slight bend) ASS bars for broad shouldered riders. The bars have a cross stabilizer tube and dual water bottle cage braze-ons. The welds and workmanship are nearly flawless and I’ve never seen an untrue frame.

Easy Racers’ seat slides to adjust on a plate mounted on the frame. There are two 11mm bolts underneath that hold the seat on a track and the seat struts mounted off the back of the seat anchor it to the rear.
The Cool Back's composite base is the same as the standard '98 Cobra seat. At first, it feels like the base is more contoured (and more comfy), though the difference is that the rider can scoot rearward and center more on the seat. This benefits larger riders, and those like me with previous broken tailbones (SWB crash 2 years ago). For smaller riders, the seat base can be mounted closer to the back on request. The Cool Back comes in two sizes, (sized by rider weight) and can be custom fit to the riders' size, so don't be bashful when you order.

The Cool Back's base is 15" wide x 11" long, the back is 22.5" tall (mesh=20" tall) x 15.75" wide. With the Cobra base, the seat slides to adjust and the seat plate bolts to the frame in the same fashion as the Cobra.

The standard Cobra seat still performs the best, though not by much. The Cool Back is a very close second. Between the two, choose one that is the most comfortable, not by the performance. The new seat will be especially useful for long distance tourists, larger riders, or those in warmer parts of the country (who sweat more). The seat is beautifully done and an excellent option.

■ EASY RACER—RANS SEAT

The Rans Easy Racer seat sits up a few inches higher on an adapter plate and will accept taller riders easier (higher/farther back). The Rans seat works well on the Tour Easy, though not as well as on the Rans higher bottom bracket LWB/SWB models.

What I like about the Rans seat is how it cups my rear end like two outstretched hands, one on each cheek, distributing the pressure equally and better than either of the two Easy Racers seats.

The foam base quality is superior on the Cobra and Cool Back seats. Out of the three seats, I've chosen the Easy Racer Cool Back for my test bike, primarily because I like the low height, increased comfort and added performance. I plan to do more experimentation between the Rans and Easy Racer Cool Back seats this season.

■ COMPONENTS

If you are shopping for a recumbent by cross referencing parts and looking for the best component group, you may be in for a let down. Gardner Martin has always specified an interesting array of slightly retro parts, seemingly unaffected by the industry whiz bang component trend of the day. With a few exceptions, what we thought was a lackluster parts mix has turned out to be a tried and true and works surprisingly well, offering an easy shifting, posi-

(Left to right) Double Gold Rush, Old Gold Rush (Smithsonian bike) and Gold Rush Le Tour built for the Tour deFrance Invitational. (Left to right) Luke, Gardner, Fast Freddy and Establin.

stays. Frames come in four sizes designated by rider height and x-seam: small, medium, medium-large and tall. The bike will fit riders 5'2" to 6'4" with wheelbases that stretch from 63"-69". Easy Racer rider fit and dial in is no brainer. What can take weeks on some bikes can be accomplished in twenty minutes on an Easy Racer.

The Easy Racer paint is a very nice and durable powdercoat in Candy Red, Blue or Jet Black. This paint allows the bikes to resist wear better than a wet spray.

■ SEAT—A 'BENT ON COMFORT

Easy Racers now offers three different seats for their Tour Easy and Gold Rush models. The seats are as follows:

- **Cobra**—Composite shell/foam/Lycra
- **Cool Back**—Stainless steel frame/ mesh back/comp. base/foam/Lycra.
- **RANS** Easy Racer model.

Let's start by saying that the Easy Racer Cobra seat is the best design and finest quality foam covered shell seat made. This seat continues to evolve and get better with each update. The shell is a hand laid fiberglass/composite mix. The hand layered foam is glued and contoured on the shell. A thin Lycra cover goes over the seat. The design is simple and elegant.

The Cobra shell seat offers by far the best performance of any seat in the US market. The Easy Racer riding position is one of the keys to this performance. It makes pushing into the seat for power an incredible experience. I feel more aggressive on the Cobra seat than others and my test course times demonstrate this.

This aggressive, upright and fairly closed (hy LBW standards) riding position does have a drawback that you'll find on most low BB LWB ASS seats. For some riders (often XL sized), the position puts more weight on your rear end which may lead to "reclining butt" after a few hours. The seat recline is slightly adjustable, though limited by the distance between rider and controls and thus not as adjustable.

This will not be an issue for all riders. Riders in the small-medium build or former upright roadies riders, the Easy Racer "Cobra" seat is perfect.

■ EASY RACER—COOL BACK SEAT

The new mesh Easy Mesh Folding Cool Back seat folds, is lighter, and sits several inches lower than the Rans seat, though is the same height as the Cobra seat.

The Cool Back has a tubular T-304 stainless steel frame with two cross supports (prototype pictured/production is on cover). The seat frame is polished to an near chrome finish, won't rust and doesn't need any maintenance. The mesh is either zipped or wrapped around with a Kevelar cord. The seat reclines is adjustable using Easy Racers seat support braces.

Easy Racers uses the highest quality seat base material in the business with three differing density layers of foam sandwiched together. The top layer is Swiss AirRex foam with gel-like properties. The layers are contoured and glued to the seat base, making for a base of unequalled quality.
tive braking dependable and quiet ride. The components that we don’t like have optional upgrades or are easily changeable. A frameset (seat, fork, h’bars, brake calipers and front wheel) is available for those who want to build up something special.

## SHIFTING
The Tour Easy comes stock with a Deore XT rear derailleur which is probably the best rear derailleur made and certainly the best one you’d ever need on a recumbent. The front derailleur is a Sachs 5000 with an upgraded clamp and bolt. We’ve had problems with this derailleur on other models, however, not on our Tour Easy.

The stock shifters are GripShift SRT 4.0 (SRT 400 replacement). These are lackluster at best and not an RCN favorite. In my opinion, they are not acceptable for long distance touring. Our test model had a 24-speed upgrade with GripShift “Attack” (X-Ray replacement) which is a better shifter. Some Tour Easy’s are being shipped with Sachs Twist shifters, which are better than the SRT 4.0’s. Shimano Rapidfires are an available option and would be my choice.

The new thicker walled aluminum Easy Rider handlebars prohibit the use of the very durable Shimano Bar-Con bar end shifters that worked so well on Easy Rider bikes for so many years. We did find out that Angletech makes the modification and offers Bar-Cons as an option.

## GEARING
One of the many beauties of this machine is the ultra wide range gearing that is possible without the use of expensive, heavy and potentially power robbing internal geared hubs or oversized mega-teeth chainrings. The Easy Rider center chain idler takes in more than 3" of chain and

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**The Chaise-3**

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**COMFORT Cycle**

...built with your seat in mind.
allows easy free-flowing extreme gearing. Our Tour Easy came equipped with a 26/42/52 crankset and an 11-30 cassette for a gear-inch range of 23-127. The EX touring model has a lower-gear 24-36 crankset for a gear range of 62-135. This lower range will be better for most riders. No recumbent bike made will handle wide-range gearing as easily or as well as an Easy Racer.

By first impression, the Shimano Exage LX triple crankset looks like a retro parts special sale crank. However, if you look closely, you will notice that it’s an exact model of a full size (non-microdrive) Deore LX from a few years ago. Zach Kaplan brought it to my attention that this crank has a narrow Q-factor as well as a full size non-microdrive MTB bolt pattern, so you can easily swap chainrings to suit your riding. The only visible difference is that the Exage LX has a grey matte plastic coating versus a polished finish. This is okay as bikes that are really ridden get scratched up anyway.

**BRakes**

Easy Racers bikes generally have excellent braking, modulation and control. Our Tour Easy was no exception. Our SS is outfitted with a Shimano Deore LX cantilever in the rear and a Taiwanese dual pivot (Shimano 105 style) sidepull on the front (EX has dual LX cantis)’. Easy Racers sets up the brakes perfectly and adds aftermarket Kool Stop pads. The result is braking that any ‘boutique manufacturer would be envious of. Our only criticism of the braking system comes in the Tektro lever which work fine, they just are a bit generic for this thoroughbred. The brake levers are modified to accept the fairing mounts.

**WHEELS**

Easy Racers is very serious about the quality of wheels that go on the Tour Easy, they are top quality, built in-house, by hand with stainless steel spokes and Sun CR18 rims. Our test bike had a radial laced 20 x 1-1/8” wheel with an IRC Roadlite EX 100 psi tire. Easy Racers continues to use the taller 45mm 20” wheel and IRC tire on the SS performance model. The EX has a Haro 406mm 155. The rear wheel is a 700c x 28 with a Cycle Pro 100 psi Kevlar bead tire. A fatter 700c x 32 is available on the EX.

The choice of a 700c rear wheel is highly preferred by Gardner Martin. He believes that smaller drive wheels offer sluggish performance, a limited high gear and the drivetrain parts wear quicker. A 26” rear wheel on the Tour Easy would require a 56T chainring to equal the same high gear possible currently with a 52T.

Many riders are initially concerned about the IRC Roadlite front tire. This is one application where the IRC 45mm works very well. I like to ride with fat tires on my SWB bikes, but am always drawn back to a 700c x 28/451 20” combo on my Easy Racer. In years of testing Easy Racer bikes, I’ve only had a few flat tires and always ridden with an IRC Roadlite EX. This tire works well as the front end has less load than any SWB (60% back/40% front weight distribution). The weight distribution is exceptional for a LWB as well. I still would recommend fat tires for commuters, and tourists, as the IRC Roadlite EX has no business on a touring bike. For weekend warriors, the SS spec is perfect.

On the Internet HPV list, some have noted that the 700c/451mm spec is dated and due for a change. Zach Kaplan offers 559mm/26” rear wheel conversions. The fact remains that racers and a lot of other high performance cyclists use the 700c. There is a great range of perfected tires in many shapes and sizes. The 20” 451mm is another story. The 406mm wheel is emerging as the recumbent favorite. For those who must have an 59 with a 406mm wheel, the EX fork (with cantilever studs) and a 406 wheel will fit right on.

**EASY OPTIONS**

Some of our other favorite Easy Racer options are the Carbon Fiber front fenders and the dual water bottle cages on the handlebars. The fender appears delicate, though it’s the best 20” fender made—available in 406 and 451mm 20” sizes. The dual cages are good if you don’t want to use a hydration system, though the water bottles can drip on your legs when mounted here. Hydration systems easily hang off the back of the Rans or Easy Racers mesh back seat. I use a combination of the stock straps and zip ties. They would easily mount in front of the handlebars, behind the fairing.

A standard Blackburn rear rack is an option on the Tour Easy. It is recommended that you order the rack with the bike to get the Easy Racers special mounting hardware. Front racks are also a possibility although there are no low-rider braze-ons. Mounting of front racks is not addressed by Easy Racers, so owners are left to their own clever resources. There are rear rack/fender bosses built into the dropouts, but there are none on the front. Here I would recommend the tiny Blackburn “C” clamps for fender/front rack mounting. The Tour Easy comes with a pump peg on the top tube of the frame. HED and Aerospoke composite wheels are available options.

**Zippers & Stuff**

LWB ASS bikes are the easiest to adapt accessories to. Our favorite Easy Racer option is the Zzip Design Super Zzipper fairing. The fairing is a must and good for 5% (Ron Bobb/fully course)-10% gain and possibly up to 20% in ideal conditions on a flat course. The fairing was designed for the Tour Easy at the design’s inception, not as an afterthought. The mounts are simple—four plastic bolt/wing nuts. The lower mounts are aluminum clamps that bolt onto the lower fork. The upper mounts are two aluminum pieces that connect the fairing to the Tektro brake levers. The fairing can be removed in less than a minute and rolled up and placed in its shipping box. Zzip Designs sells T-bracket mounts.
that mount to the handlebar (allowing any brake lever), but requires a Super Zzipper with specific upper mounting holes.

A smaller, less effective Zzipper covers just the handlebars and is the best choice for loaded tourers and your only choice if you ever plan to use a front rack.

The Gold Rush Replica Body Stocking is available for the Tour Easy. It is best to order this with your bike, as the Zzipper bubble is thicker, wider and uses different mounts. These are specially ordered and take a few months to get.

**THE RIDE**

"Born to be wild!" This is the tune that plays in my head every time I climb on board the Tour Easy. This bike even looks fast standing still. The upright handlebar steering is a confidence builder. The Tour Easy is among the easiest of all recumbents to learn to ride, within a matter of a few minutes almost anyone can be cruising in comfort.

The low-slung Tour Easy design feels fast from the moment you climb aboard. Acceleration is excellent, but the best aspect of the Tour Easy is the rider-friendly ergonomics with the ASS, low and natural leg position. The low pedals make stops, starts and traffic lights easier to handle. The stability the Tour Easy offers while zooming down the road is unequalled.

On our 22.4 mile Kent-Black Diamond test loop, the Killer hill is the true high speed stability test. The fast downhill is capable of speeds of 30-40 mph, though very few bikes can handle the off-camber left turn at the bottom combined with sand and gravel over the road. Some SWB and trikes are so downright scary going down this thing that I don't feel comfortable pedaling. The Tour Easy goes through this better than any other RDN test bike.

The steel Tour Easy frame is quieter than the Gold Rush as the steel resonates differently than aluminum. Also the cheap nylon (derailleurs) pulleys in the chain idler are noticeably quieter than the cartridge sealed ones on the Gold Rush. The handling is remarkably more positive and controlled than any other compact, SWB or LWB. The Tour Easy goes through corners like it's on rails.

**PERFORMANCE**

Let's start by saying that 80% of riders will get a benefit from an Easy Racer. And yes, the GRR is faster than the Tour Easy (est. 10%, more on this in our upcoming GRR test). And yes, the fairing really helps. And yes, the body sock helps even more. The Tour Easy went through our test loop with an average time of 75 minutes with a Super Zzipper (18 mph average speed) and 79 minutes unaired (17 mph average speed). The bike is slower than our GRR Black Gold which holds our test course record at 63 minutes (21.5 mph average speed) fairest. The Tour Easy feels noticeably faster on the flats and downhill than just about any other recumbent.

Uphills are another matter. The Tour Easy is a decent climber, but it's possible for these bikes to edge into the mid-30 pound range with a rack, fairing, spares, lock, etc. The all takes its toll up a steep hill. On rolling hills, your flatlander momentum can help you out. On steep, gravelly low climbs you need to muscle your way up. The low BB/pedal position with your feet close to the ground makes climbing easy.
and worry free. I sometimes get a feeling that I’m going to fall over on low speed “clipped-in” SWB climbs (especially if the bike is tall). Tour Easy climbing performance is comparable with SWB models once you master the art of ultra-low speed climbing balance. The bike is so long that you can make switch-back turns to help you in your low speed balance. You must develop a new technique. I swayed my handlebars left to right quickly, the front wheel actually moves, but the bike continues to track straight. This technique actually works, though takes some practice.

PROBLEMS WITH A PERFECT BIKE?
Our 1998 test Tour Easy had a few glitches that we had not dealt with on past Easy Racer test bikes. The most annoying was the kickstand which is standard equipment. The stand is too long, which makes the bike hard to upright, thus making it easy to knock over. The problem is that the first time your bike falls over, you could dent your Super Zzipper fairing (I’ve done it several times), and the first dent hurts. Gardner said that they grind the kickstand base to fit, and ours just needed to be ground down more.

Our Super Zzipper fairing arrived with two quarter sized stretched mark flaws in the bubble. This is the first time we’ve had a flaw Zzipper. Gardner says 1 in 30 are flawed and 1 in 100 people complain. Easy Racers would replace the fairing had we requested it. The Super Zzipper is by far the best option for this bike and this is the best application for the Super Zzipper.

Our rear wheel went out of true within the first 75 miles. Luckily for us, Joe “Road Warrior” Kochanowski fixed it on the spot, though this would have been an unwanted annoyance for a novice rider, as the rim was rubbing up against the brake pad. Wheels generally need touching up during break-in, though this was a bit premature and could have ruined the ride.

We had a difficult time with this Tour Easy’s index shifting (the first time ever on an Easy Racer). The problem has to do with the Shimano derailleur’s spring’s compatibility with the Grip Shift, the 11-tooth small cog and the rainy grit and grime of NW winter riding. Solutions include cleaning and lubing the rear derailleur cable housing, adding a SRAM Bass Worm, Rollamajig or a heavy duty spring. A Shimano Rapid Fire 24-speed option is available. We are planning an article on modern index shifting in RCN#47, the “Homebrew” issue.

Another all-weather complaint we had was the lack of a lower rear fender braze-on. This is even more necessary now that the Tour Easy is offered with the optional Easy Racers Cool Back seat. We had to bridge a lower mount with zip ties, which did work okay, though was of character on our $2000 test bike. Easy Racers is looking into a rear fender solution. Riders will get more road dust with the mesh back seat and fenders are a good idea if you ride in the rain or on dusty roads.

CONCLUSION
The Easy Racer Tour Easy is the recumbent against which all others are judged and has been for years. New owners can expect the best service, preassembly and a world

EASY RACER REVIVAL

In our NW group the Tour Easy is the new hot bike. The SWB trend seems to be cooling off, at least locally. I have a Black Gold long term test bike, RCN’s Marilyn wants a new Gold Rush White Gold. Robert, an Alaska Airlines pilot, has a Tour Easy. John has a vintage TE and GRF, we have another new pair of Tour Easy’s from Wendell and his wife. Many NW riders are on Easy Racer missions, an Easy Racer revival if you will. Tony Liciannan picked up a used TE really cheap. Then Kent Peterson showed everyone his custom homebuilt light and low TE that he proceeded to comandeer and start training with it for Cannonball (Seattle-Spokane). Kent said that his SWB with tall and nose fairings “took too much attention over 30 mph.” He then mentioned the winter road sand and gusty winds, and wind from Semi-trucks on Snoqualmie pass where he has been training. “The Tour Easy is far more stable at speed,” says Kent. Both Tony and Kent have found a performance boost over their SWB and low bikes on the Tour Easy and are working on their own. Cindy Liciannan (Tony’s wife) is getting Tony’s Tour Easy. The Easy Racer bikes have become very popular locally and we don’t even have a local dealer in our county.

The fact of the matter is that no other manufacturer has been able to duplicate the very intuitive, stable, yet responsive handling of an Easy Racer LWB bike. Many have tried, and nobody is close.
class recumbent bicycle—one that will last for years to come. They don't just say that; they know it. Easy Racers undoubtedly have more owner ridden miles than any other recumbent model or manufacturer and the bikes are more dependable with long lasting durability.

The drawbacks to the Easy Racer bikes are their size, they are long and more difficult to haul around. The benefits are many, but included is a guarantee that you won't be R & D'ing the product for Easy Racers. These bikes were perfected years ago and become more fine tuned as the seasons go by. The updates have always been retrofittable and will make your classic Easy Racer even more desirable. The design is timeless, classic and Easy Racers are in demand and have the best resale of any recumbent, though expect a long wait after you place your order.

Right: The Easy Racer Cool Back (mesh) prototype seat. The seat now has an upper cross support and zip-ties are used to lace the seat.
Upper Center: This is the Easy Racer Rans seat mounting plate.
Lower Center: We were not excited about what we had to do to fasten a rear fender with the bridged zip-ties.
like to climb. The longer, the steeper, the better I like it. No, I’m not into masochism, it’s just that in order to ride around hilly Santa Cruz County, where I live, you have to be able to climb to go anywhere. When I first started riding recumbents, I found hills to be formidable barriers that left me sucking big air, while watching wedgies disappear. Since that time, I have learned to get over the hills almost as fast as the wedgies so that downhill advantage is not wasted.

WHAT IS POSSIBLE?

Let’s take a realistic and candid look at how well you can expect to climb on your ‘bent. With practice and training, you will be able to keep up with fit wedgie riders on a 140 mile day with 5000 vertical feet or less of climbing. They will probably out climb you by 10% on long hills. You can generally make this up on downhillds, flats, and into headwinds—if you have a fast recumbent. The truth is that many recumbents are slower than wedgies. On steep uphills (more than 10%) it can be very difficult to keep the wedgies in sight. It’s best to save a little gas and catch them later.

On rollers (small to medium climbs mixed with descents and short flats) a thoughtfully set up ‘bent will show truly awesome performance. You must remember that you are riding a recumbent bicycle, with dramatically different riding and coating characteristics. It is important to ascend and descend at your own speed and pace. If you ride in a pace line with wedgie bikes, you will find yourself working like a ‘Trojan’ to keep up on hills and riding your brakes on the downhill. If you ride a recumbent pace it is quite within the realm of possibilities to arrive mid-pack or better on a 140 mile 5000 foot day.

CLIMBING TECHNIQUES

Do we spin small gears or do we push big gears? For as long as I can remember the advice given to new ‘bent riders has been to ‘spin up the hills.’ This may be the easiest way, but it’s not the fastest way. Obviously, big gears pushed hard and fast will get you uphill fast. Since even the strongest of us ‘bent drivers can’t push big gears all day long, the pragmatic answer to the question is...push big gears as long as you can, then take Granny for a ride and spin. Be sure to listen to your body, knees, ankles and hip joints. Big gears are incredibly hard on unconditioned joints.

There is another part of this equation as well. ‘Bents generate much more momentum/speed than wedgies, but they lose it fast too. Since you can’t stand on the pedals and use your body weight, conserving that forward motion can save you a lot of grunting and groaning. Get your ‘bent moving fast and push hard to keep it moving fast. Equip your ‘bent with big gears (135 or more gear inches) and learn to pedal (fast) downhill in order to fly up the next hill.

One thing that helps to push these big gears is an efficient riding position. This usually means a fairly closed riding position with the seat back as upright as comfortable (for you). This allows you to push against the seat back with a great deal of force. Lean forward to push the pedals, but be sure to be upright enough to fill your lungs completely when you breathe. If you use a fairing (Zzipper type), which you should, the fairing should be at least shoulder height so that the airstream misses your shoulders. I find the Easy Racer Gold Rush Replica to be an ideal bike in this regard as it is easy to set up this way, though there are other similar LW or ASS machines.

Lastly, it is important to know when to back off. If the road goes up over a long 10% grade, the wedgies will drop you. Look at your heart rate monitor, back off and live to fight (or catch up) another day.
EQUIPMENT

I have not had the opportunity, time or the inclination to do exhaustive scientific research on equipment, but I can tell you what seems to work best for me. Bear in mind that these recommendations are based on experience and common sense, though there is an element of subjectivity too. I’ve heard that Lon Haldeman’s (two-time solo RAAM winner, etc.) priorities for equipment selection are:

1. Comfort
2. Durability
3. Weight

Mine are about the same, with aerodynamics playing a part as well. It is really difficult to push hard or even keep going if you hurt. Make sure everything is comfortable and fits right. Make sure your equipment is strong. When something breaks out on the road, it can take a long time to get rolling again. Many would argue that weight should rank number 1 or 2, but I agree with Lon. You can’t get up a hill fast, slow or otherwise, with a broken 150 gram pedal or potato chipped 850 gram racing wheel. Weight is important, but your equipment has to be strong enough to go the distance. My own choice is LWB (long wheelbase) for comfort on rough roads, and because it is fast. It has to have ASS (above seat steering) so I can hang water bottle cages and computer mounts easily. It should have a comfortable seat. I prefer non-mesh so I can push hard against the seat back. On my Gold Rush Replica, everything is stock except the pedals and gearing. I use Shimano SPD’s (clipless) with the rotational cleats. In front I’ve swapped the stock chainrings for a 24/40/56 T. setup and in back an 11-28 cassette cluster. This gives me a 23-135 gear-inch range. If I feel the need to go faster, I switch to a lighter more aero set of wheels. That’s it...no titanium anything.

TRAINING

This is one area of astonishment to me. We have all seen it, out of shape ‘bent riders who will ride miles out of their way to avoid climbing. As my friend Don Gray is fond of saying, “Recumbents don’t climb, riders do.” In order for a ‘bent to be a fast climber, the rider needs to learn to climb hills fast. I am convinced that the only way to learn to climb is to climb hills. Get out and do it, learn to love the climb, you can become a pretty fast climber simply by always choosing the hilly routes. Try to get up every hill in your middle chainring to build strength. When you are too tired to push the 40 T., drop down to your granny ring and practice that nice smooth spin. Think circles... Speed work helps a lot too. Try to do interval and wind-spring training one or two days per week. Get a heart rate monitor (HRM) and mount it on your handlebars where you can see it. Get a book about working out with a HRM, learn your zones and pay close attention to it while you are riding your bike. I prefer simple HRM’s that just give your heart rate. I really don’t want some silly alarm beeping to alert the wedgie rider that I’m racing.

Ron Bobb on his Easy Racer Gold Rush Replica Black Gold

when I’m off the scale into the heart attack zone. I’m told that specific weight training helps too. I haven’t tried it yet, but I plan to. Also, don’t forget to make a point of scheduling adequate recovery time after tough workout days. Learn to recognize the signs of over-training and take time off when you spot them.

So, how are those things on hills? In my opinion, pretty damn good. With the right recumbent, lots of practice and training you can learn to keep the wedgies in sight on ascents and catch and pass them on any other kind of road. ☐

PERFORMANCE TEST: Tour Easy Vs. Gold Rush Replica

27.5 miles: Average of two runs on each bike, 1800’ vertical climbing
No granny climbing, lowest gear used was a 40/28 36.6 gear inches
Bike had 70 oz. full camelback, pump, tools and spares.
Rider wore a heart monitor and maintained 140-145 beats per minute, 77-80% of max heart rate.

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<td>17 mph average</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.15 mph average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRR</td>
<td>16.2 mph average</td>
<td>TOUR EASY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference with fairing</td>
<td>.8 mph, or about 5%</td>
<td>.55 mph, or about 4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ron Bobb’s tests are on a course with more climbing, thus the overall speeds are lower than on the RCN test course.
**THE 90-SPEED PEUGEOT QUETZAL**

**Quetzal** (kretch-ahl) n., A Central American bird (Pharomachrus mocino) that has brilliant bronze-green and red plumage and, in the male, long flowing tail feathers.

**By Tony Licuanan**

TONYSCAT@webtv.net

"My simple rule of recumbent comfort is as follows: Go out for a two hour ride and see if your butt hurts. If it hurts, try another bike. If a seat is uncomfortable around a parking lot, the odds are that it will hurt you even more after two hours. I detest poorly designed recumbent seats. Really, why bother? An uncomfortable recumbent seat can really shoot down an otherwise great design."

—Bob Bryant, RCN

It truly is exciting when a mainstream bicycle company not only is interested in recumbents, but actually gets into recumbency. Is this what we are waiting for? The Huffy-RecBike deal actually made some noise in the recumbent world. Still, one can not help but think, now that Peugeot is IN, maybe Trek or Cannondale will be coming in the next year or two?

**CUTE**

While at the stoplight in downtown Seattle, I overheard a lady on the street say, "Cute..."

I thought she was talking about me but she quickly followed it with, "bike..." motioning to the Quetzal as I rode by. Indeed, this recumbent is a good looking bike—but a "babe-magnet,"...wishful thinking on my part! The burgundy color paint on this commuter test bike is quite attractive and first class quality. A large Quetzal bird graphic is emblazoned on the back of the seat. The monobeam frame is clean and simple. The triangulation of the stays offers added strength, and the frame flexes little.

**RIDER ERGONOMICS**

The rider's view of the road is fantastic. The Quetzal has a very upright seating position and a more closed pedal angle than we are accustomed to seeing in a LWB. The position is a bit extreme for an entry level bike. The huge and wide USP bars are within perfect reach and tilt up or down for rider preference. It easily accepts a side/rearview mirror, unlike most additional bar-end attachments that you may need to retro-fit on other USS systems.

**TOTAL COMFORT!!**

This is what the ad says in big bold letters followed by, "If you're in search of total comfort, you should take a look at Quetzal..." Hmmm... Comfort on a recumbent starts with a good seat. The Quetzal's seat has been designed by an ergonomics specialist. The seat height is just 17 inches off of the ground and has two air bladders in the back and base of this sling/mesh design. These seem to do little to enhance the comfort. I found blowing into these plastic tubes quite annoying—and the benefit negligible given the upright seat angle that creates the problem in the first place. The seats on my other recumbents give me perfect comfort without having to blow into tubes.

After 4 weeks of riding the Quetzal, nothing had changed and the seat base was still a little hard on me, especially on rides longer than 10 miles. I'm no ergonomics specialist seat designer but let me tell you, my rear end let me know all about it. I've learned quite a lot about seat comfort throughout my own recumbent evolution and the most important thing, in my opinion, is the seat. One might consider the question, does a bad recumbent seat = bad recumbent? The Peugeot seat could use some help, or at least a recline adjustment to take some weight off your rear end or fear the dreaded recumbent butt. Whether this very upright seat will work for you depends solely on the individual rider. Many riders do enjoy upright seat (back) angles and others don't.

ATP Vision, BikeE and especially Rans, continue the never ending quest to better their seats and it shows. Linear has improved theirs quite nicely too. Easy Racers has a new mesh back seat back—and the excellent Rans seat is optional. The Quetzal seat doesn't cut it when compared to these seats.

**COMPONENTS**

I was quite pleasantly surprised by the performance of the 90-speed mid-drive drivetrain. There is one shifter for the front derailleur, another shifter for the rear derailleur and a third for the mid-drive. It seems like it would be difficult to learn to
shift, but I was buzzing through all 90 after a few hours. The entry level Shimano drivetrain worked great throughout the test. Even Bob Bryant said that the Quetzal’s mid-drive seemed quite dependable. The 90-speed C-90 has an approximate gear range of 23-117.

The Quetzal has cantilever brakes on both front and rear wheels. It stops well and that’s all I need on any bike. Cornering fast while on the brakes is predictable on dry surfaces though caution is advised in the rain as the front-end can get loose on you.

The Quetzal has a custom tire set in a 20” x 1.5" (406) and 16 x 1.5” (305) matching 90-110 psi combo. The tires are a nylon all around variety almost semi-knob. The tires are wide enough for the real-life rough commute, while at the same time, have a raised center ridge for better rolling resistance. These unique tires have a raised ridge with little letter “Q”s,” embedded on the tread.

**PERFORMANCE**

Cruising on this bike with the ammo that you need, (90 speed) is COOOOL! They even have a 105 speed model, (imagine that!). The largest gear range for total comfort! I didn’t think that I would get used to it as fast as I did.

In my opinion, the Quetzal is not a very fast bike. I’ve been testing this bike for a fair amount of weeks now and can surely say that my commute time is longer. This is most likely because the bike is heavy—42 pounds (with fenders). It also could be the very wide under-seat-steering and upright seating position that make me catch all the wind on my chest.

On one of our NW hilly rides, I came back dead last. Maybe I needed to change the tire pressure, so I pumped it up from 75psi to 110. This only made the ride harsher and less comfortable. The overall speed stayed the same. Riding over railroad tracks, bumps and potholes should be avoided. I took my Vision Metro out for the same commute a day or two later for comparison and thought I was flying. This might not be a fair comparison since my Metro is Zzipper-faired like a Tour Easy. (BTW, my unfaired ’97 Tailwind is as fast as my Metro on the same commute.

Quetzal claims their riding position adds to the bike’s performance, though I found that it reduced the time I could spend in the saddle.

The Quetzal has a unique 1:2 steering geometry, so that when you move the handlebar 15 degrees, the front wheel will move 30 degrees. This along with the upright head tube angle and ultra-wide USS bars, made for some initially quick low-speed handling that did take some getting used to.

---

**About ‘Bent Mid-Drives**

- They add weight & complexity
- They add friction to the drivetrain
- They are not intuitive to use (at least initially)
- They generally have way too many gears
- They do not subscribe to KISS (keep it simple, stupid) theory
- Bike shops don’t like to work on them
- Dealers don’t seem to like to sell them
- Require more (specialized) maintenance
- Don’t always work as good as they are supposed too.

In saying all of this, there is still room in the market for extreme mid-drive bikes like the Rotors, where they are a perfectly acceptable application, look cool and work reasonably well. A not so great application is the Peugeot, in which the system works fine, it’s just not really acceptable for entry level riders who may be drawn to the bike and the weight of the bike far outweighs any possible performance gain.

---

May/June 1998
PERFORMANCE MODS
At our local rides, we had many discussions on what it would take to transform the Quetzal into a performance machine. It already has a great set of 110 psi tires specifically designed for this recumbent. The Quetzal may fit inside a full or partial fairing, though it would be very wide due to the USS.

The possibility of converting to a 20” front wheel was discussed, though would dramatically change the intended design characteristics and handling of the Quetzal. The switch to a 20” front wheel setup would most likely improve performance, offer better tire dependability as well as raise the bottom bracket. The biggest benefit to raising the bottom bracket would be to knock the seat recline angle back a bit to distribute the pressure to the hiney better and make it more comfortable.

As a streamliner, this bike could really go! With 2 cog set (freewheels) mid-drive, it would be easy for anybody to custom tailor their need for that perfect gear set up. Heck if 90-gears isn’t enough, switch to a Sachs 3x7 (270 gears) or add a Schumfl Mountain Drive crank...(180 speeds, or 540 speeds with a 3x7)—I dare you.

BONUS ROUND
The Quetzal’s best advantage over other recumbents is its ability to convert to a trike. There’s actually a tricycle rear-end that bolts on making this quite the affordable trike. You don’t have to buy a different recumbent for different kinds of terrain or weather. On a snowy day, a trike would always out perform any bike. But, on a real bad snowy day, a “Triplet-Grand-Hazelnut-Latte,” would always out perform anything. (Sorry...I live in Seattle).

Best of all Quetzal’s price point is $930 and the bike has excellent availability from the builder, Peugeot of Canada.

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By Martin Krieg '79 Trans Am Vet

Linear built it!

In 1986, I crossed the US on a state-of-the-art under the seat steered (USS) long wheel base recumbent made by Via Cycles of Houston, Texas. Built by an ex-race car driver named Mark Hajek, this bike offered the best ride I could find anywhere at the time (it still rides like a dream and yet Via sadly is no longer in business). A LWB gave me the kind of comfort I would need for the many thousands of miles that ride ultimately required of me.

On the open road, the Via had no equal. This was just before, of course, the long distance king, the Ryan, became available on the West Coast. When my speaking and media work took me into the cities and towns which became more and more frequent the further my ride took me east, I longed for something more nimble, in and amongst the cars and the trucks and buses of the more urban riding I found myself doing. And as the increased traffic also brought tighter quarters for me and my bike, I also longed for something more compact as I logged my bike and up and down the elevators and stairs of TV stations, business offices and hotel rooms. With those memories in mind, I was ecstatic when BikeE started the compact explosion back in 1993. I assumed that the only way a traffic-congestion worthy recumbent could ever be made was with the handlebars at chest level.

Even though I love the BikeE's I have been riding for the last four years, I have always longed for the unmatched comfort of the USS design especially when my destination is greater than five miles away. This is so because five miles out on an above the seatter means five miles back and if I don't stop, my body always reminds, however gently, that I held my arms in front of me the whole way. I've noticed this small annoyance on any of the above the seat steered bents I've ever tested (which is most), whether Compact, SWB or LWB. I feel that the ASS design is important for introducing as many people as possible to the recumbent. In time, however, as these new Bent Heads advance in experience, they will gain enough confidence in their own sense of surrender (required on a bent) to eventually want the ultimate in comfort, the USS design.

So when, in late 1996, Linear teamed up with the folks from Wheel & Sprocket in Hales Corner, Wisconsin, to build what sounded like my dream bike, I had to try it. In my imagination, the crowds of well wishers returned to cheer me on as I took it down the road for the first time. And yet as I kept riding, something else was different about the Linear experience.

The seat, ah the seat! It totally enveloped me. It begged me to relax. On the Via seat, all that I have to lean against is the heavy Cordura canvas-like fabric that is slung between two bars. On that design, my butt keeps, ever so gradually, sliding forward. As a result, I find myself conscious of my constant need to slide my rear section backwards to just stay on the bike. On the Linear, however, not only do I not have to keep sliding backward to stay on board, but its seat even supports my lower back (it has a special lumbar support). And the generous foam pad upon which I sit acts like a shock absorber to eliminate any disturbance that the road may have to offer. Kowabunga!!

But the extremely comfortable seat on the Linear is not all. On the USS bents of my past I also couldn't use the handlebars to lock my body in place whenever the need for speed arose. Most USS manufacturers, whether SWB or LWB, do not encourage this practice. Steve Hansel, at Linear however, has assured me repeatedly that I can yank on the bars all I want. I have found that by using my arms to clamp myself into the bike whether on the above
The author, Martin Krieg, on his Linear Compact Mk. III. Martin has written a book, "Awake Again" and has a web site at http://www.BikeRoute.com where you can find info on recumbents, Martin's Bicycle Greenway, his upcoming 'bent TransAm in 2000, and it's the home for the Alliance for a Paving Moratorium—photo by Kurt Eller

...
an ASS don’t want to acknowledge the fact that I’ve found a better way to do it on two wheels. So instead of being a threat to how those along the way think a person should ride a bike, the Linear totally disarms anyone tempted to question the seriousness of my efforts.

The curiosity factor also surprises me. I’m not sure if it’s just that it’s the latest greatest bent in this section of the woods, but it does seem to elicit more attention than any bent I have ridden around here. The Bike E, initially drew the crowds when I first started riding it down here in Santa Cruz, and it still gets a fair amount of attention, but the Linear also seems to draw in the more discerning onlooker.

With regard to this last thought, recumbents must just be reaching the critical point of mass acceptance. This must be so, because serious cyclists, for example, seemed to stay as far away from my USS state of the art, at the time, Via Cycles recumbent as they could. On the Linear, however, I hear ‘cool bike’ and ‘whoa’ from cyclists and non-cyclists, serious or non, almost every time I take it out. Wherever I leave it parked, I can often expect to return to one or a few people studying its lines as I happily brace myself for the inevitable plethora of questions.

I also like the way it works my body. It seems to be reawakening the muscles that made my 1986 crossing possible as I am told my legs look nearly as ‘buffed’ as they looked back then. Somehow this stands to reason, as the USS design directly resembles the leg pressing position found in most workout facilities.

While I like the better workout the Linear gets me, it’s the most comfortable bent I’ve experienced, it exceeds my expectations in its on the road performance, especially around town, and it seems to increase my popularity factor, etc. I still needed that bike I could go up and down stairs with and get in and out of the elevators and doorways of congested urban America. Well, the more I spend time with the Linear, the more ways I find that my dream really has come true.

The first place I began was finding its sweet spot. I found that if I grabbed hold of the bike in front of the seat on the bracket that holds it on to the frame that I could carry the bike with one hand wherever I wanted to take it. In this way the heavier back end doesn’t come up first making it impossible to carry the bike.

I also needed a way to do flat turns and move the bike about without having to dismount. I figured that one out too. If when you grab on to the handlebars to lift your Linear Compact over a curb, up to a porch landing or to change direction with a full 360, you also twist backwards on them (you can also arch your bike while holding firmly on the grips), the front end will lift high enough for you to make this happen as well. The more weight you have on the back end, the harder you will have to twist, but with practice, I found these all to be easily accomplished tasks.

Having experienced the one machine which satisfies all of my requirements for the ultimate recumbent, I look forward to watching as Linear leads the charge in this next new wave of recumbent design popularity. I am excited for all the people that will soon get the opportunity to experience this true magic carpet ride. Thank you Linear and thank you Wheel & Sprocket for this most awesome breakthrough machine. Wow! ☺

---

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LWB are the most versatile recumbent models. They are designed to tour, yet they can be used for any purpose. LWB models can be equally at home on a fast century as they would be crossing the great plains on a solo tour. Some models are nearly unbeatable performers. The Gold Rush racer now rests in the Smithsonian for winning the DuPont Prize and breaking 65 mph with Fast Freddy Markham at the helm. They are extremely stable even at downright scary speeds! The bikes are a joy to own and ride and many are the classics of the recumbent world. They are proven and dialed—trouble free for thousands of miles—Easy Racer, Ryan Vanguard, Rans Stratus and others. The only real drawback is the size of the bike—which is not an issue until you attempt to mount one on a car rack. It can be done, but it takes careful planning—like you would for a tandem.

LWB recumbents can be used for fitness, touring, commuting and recreational riding. They take far less attention to the road, thus their primary designation as Ultimate touring bikes. Tourists can use rear racks, front racks, handlebar or seat bags and tow trailers with most models (check with your manufacturer/dealer for recommended cargo carrying methods).

LWB (Long Wheelbase) 60”-71”+. LWB models have the front wheel ahead of the crankset. They are very smooth, stable, fast and inspire confidence in first-time riders. There is no heel interference with the LWB and the drivetrains are relatively straightforward. For some, they are less maneuverable than their SWB relatives but generally more stable at speed. LWB recumbents are usually outfitted with the more standard 26” or 700c rear wheels and 20” BMX size front wheels, though you will still find a few with 16” front wheels.

Some of the negative features of a LWB can be tight maneuvering on a busy city street or narrow bike trail. The LWB bikes are usually heavier than SWB models, although there are some exceptions.

In the LWB lineup you will find dedicated touring bikes with fat tires and ASS or USS. There are also high performance machines such as the legendary Gold Rush Replica and the hot rod Rotator Pursuit/Interceptor, so don't get the idea long bikes are lame. In fact, most LWB builders, LWB riders and now RCN's Zach Kaplan will argue that the SWB machines ARE NOT better climbers. And they are quick to point out the quick handling of the SWB. We have found that LWB performance models are absolutely the most stable at speed.

**LWB HANDLING**

The best handling comes from LWB ASS bikes that have a bit of tiller effect such as the Easy Racer and Rans Stratus. The Rans Gliss style steering has less tiller, but can also feels a bit light in the front end as you speed upwards of 30 mph.

USS models must use a steering linkage. This adds weight and complexity. The steering rod is something that should be checked every time you ride. If it fails—you could lose your steering. LWB USS bikes have a smooth, easy, neutral and unique auto-pilot feel to them.

**LWB PERFORMANCE**

Look for models designed with performance in mind like those from Easy Racer, Rans and Rotator. These more aggressive designs are generally ASS models, though they can offer equal comfort for touring or commuting as well. USS bikes are more passive, less aerodynamic and designed for comfortable touring, not necessarily speed. Fairings can help compensate for the increased frontal area of the USS.

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speed benefit. The King of the hill performance-wise is the Easy Racer Gold Rush Replica. This bike is fast and stable—for nearly any rider. Add a Super Zzipper or a body stocking and you might as well change your name to Fast Freddy, or Fast Steve, or Fast Tony, Fast Kent, or Fast Matt. The trick to the Gold Rush Replica is that it does not require training, a test or really any advanced skills. For those on a budget, a coroplast tail box can add up to 10% (Kent Peterson says 1.5 mph) which could be as much as a front fairing. Super Zzipper front fairings are available for most LWB ASS and USS models. Rans has a prototype for the Gliss/Tailwind Zzipper.

■ LWB WHEELS
Skinny tires work better on LWB models than on SBW due to the weight distribution and lighter front wheel loading, however, this is not an overwhelming endorsement. They are best for light riders who ride on smooth pavement. Consider both your weight and where you ride before you go with skinny/high pressure tires. LWB with skinny tires get fewer flat tires than on a SWB. This is, again, most likely due to the lighter load on the front end. Fat tires are still better for real world use and can perform nearly as well with a proper tire choice. They will also improve rider comfort and safety.

The 406mm BMX sized front wheel is the standard, though some performance oriented designs use the skinnier, taller 451mm. There are really only two tires available for this rim, the IRC Roadlite EX 1-1/8" and the Primo Comet 1-3/8". The Roadlite is a tire I'd never run with on a SBW, but works great on the front end of a Gold Rush Replica. Gardner Martin says if they'd build a 30" rear wheel, he'd use it.

LWB models come equipped mainly with 20" front wheels. 20" is the standard, offering better handling, tire durability, tire choice and stability. 16" front wheels work best for shorter riders, though expect quicker handling, less performance and shorter tire life.

■ LWB DRIVETRAINS
They work better than their SWB counterparts. You don't need idlers (as much), nor do LWB require the steeper chain angles. Some models don't have idlers and the chains flop around a bit, such as the Linear LWB. A little known option is a chain idler that hangs off the 1-beam frame. The Ryan skate wheel works well and picks up the slack. The Easy Racer spring loaded idler looks similar to a rear derailleur cage which allows for super-wide gearing given the nearly 4" of chain that it idles.

■ LWB FRAMES
A fully triangulated frame is the best, second would be a frame with an excellent warranty. Fully triangulated LWB frames are plentiful as the classic designs are all LWB machines: Easy Racer Tour Easy, Rans Stratus and Ryan Vanguard. Monotube frames are acceptable though you can count on more flex than their SWB counterparts. A flexible frame will rob power and make the bike less controllable at speed.

■ LWB SEATS
Most of the popular LWB seats are very good. We have rated the Rans tops in SWB. The seat works excellent on Compacts and LWB too, though the seat won't recline as far, especially on the Stratus. The Rans seat is known for its ergonomic mesh back and base that works great for long ride comfort.

Easy Racers offers the best composite shell/foam/cover seat made, though compared to mesh-type seats, the seat-base comfort is lacking after a few hours, though offers fantastic performance. For '98, Easy Racers has unveiled their own "Cool Back" mesh back/composite-base seat that is now optional on all models. This is the best seat we've ever tried on an Easy Racer. It will work especially well for tall(ish) riders and those in warmer climates (see test). Vision's seat on the LWB is extremely comfortable. The LWB Vision has wonderful 0-pressure point comfort that works especially well due to the and back (adjustable) seat recline and higher bottom bracket of this LWB. This often overlooked model is affordable, available and is a great ride.

Ryan's seat is a full sling/mesh that is laid way back in one of the most-riding positions known to 'bent kind. The seat is very breathable and comfy, however, be forewarned about the seat horn that props up the forward edge of the seat mesh on the base. I've been blowing my horn off about it for years and Dick says I'm in a small minority of riders who notice this.

The one drawback to the mesh base is what can best be described as "squeezed cheeks." When our rear end sinks into the mesh hammock—it pinches our cheeks.

Ride many LWB bikes and give them a fair shake. Even though they are a bit more difficult to track down, a LWB USS tourer or LWB ASS performance machine can offer advantages that a SWB or Compact just cannot come close too.

■ Easy to ride and learn
■ Feet flat on the ground at stops
■ Smooth comfortable ride
■ Low center of gravity
■ Smooth predictable handling
■ Fit in tight spaces/car racks
■ Perfected designs
■ Best wheel & tire choices

■ LWB monotube frames FLEX
■ Heavier
■ Hill climbing may suffer
■ Difficult low speed handling (length)
■ Difficult to store
■ Difficult to transport
■ Most popular models difficult to test ride (sold mfr. direct only)

LWB ASS or USS?

UNDERSEAT STEERING—The handlebars are placed underneath the seat and are connected to the front fork with a steering rod or directly to the fork. When considering performance, underseat steering is less aerodynamic than most ASS, but can be more comfortable for long rides. Underseat steering can also be harder for novices to learn; however, after a short time, the balance becomes second nature. In saying this, I've never felt as direct a connection with my USS bike as I do with ASS. This equates to my performance as well. I am more aggressive with ASS, and less so with USS. USS riders have a more difficult time navigating through bike trail dividers and in traffic due to the bar width.

Handlebar reach can be an issue for some riders on some models. A few manufacturers have bar-end extensions which work to resolve this problem. Bar-end shifters help. The best way to determine if you are an underseat rider is to determine whether you are a passive (touring) or aggressive (high performance) cyclist.

ABOVE-SEAT STEERING—This has been the standard bicycle steering method for over 100 years. It looks more "normal" and acceptable (if that's possible). ASS is more aerodynamic and all of the serious performance machines use it. ASS offers better control, is easier to learn to ride with and control ergonomics are near perfect. You can easily mount accessories that are more difficult to mount on USS bikes.

Riders will get accustomed to ASS quicker than underseat steering. The major benefit to this setup is that it needs no special parts such as steering rods, rod-beamings, and cables. SWB models with ASS offer ergonomic controls placed close to your body and the best models have strut recline adjustment. A 30-degree bend in your arm/forearm with ASS bars just clearing your knees and the bars back as far as you feel comfortable ("begging Hamster" position). Be aware that some SWB models have roomy cockpits while others (wheelbases less than 41") may seem claustrophobic and tight.
LWB MACHINES

The LWB recumbents are, for the most part, seasoned and dialed-in machines that have been in production for many years with all of the bugs worked out and yearly refinements to make them even better.

The LWB fleet differs dramatically and crosses the spectrum of bike types:

The veteran performance LWB builder is Easy Racers with their Gold Rush Replica (fastest 'bent we've tested). Easy Racers has race records too. Easy Racers are among the most consistently great recumbents we have the pleasure of testing.

RANS achieving critical acclaim for their SWB bikes, has been a builder of the popular LWB "Stratus" ASS since 1974.

The veteran LWB USS touring manufacturer is Dick Ryan with his Vanguard.

Rotator is a smaller, performance specialty builder of ultra-low and unique LWB high-performance bikes with HPV racing and solar electric victories.

The only true folding 'bent is the LWB aluminum Linear.

Vision builds a SWB with a LWB option—and now with dual suspension. Vision's are easy to find in dealers across the USA and the bikes are modular.

Infinity is a name that has been around for years in affordable aluminum LWB USS. Now marketed by "Doc" at Bike Emporium in Scottsdale, Arizona.

A LWB newcomer Human Powered Machines offers an updated Gary Hale "Runner" (ancient history) rebadged as the "Roadster," a dual 26" Easy racer wannabe, well kind of. We're jazzed about this one!

The ReBike 2600, what more could you ask for in an entry level bike for $459.

The new kid on the block is Peugeot/Quetzal, though European Peugeot did introduce a recumbent over 50 years ago.

Easy Racers, Inc.

What can we say. Others have tried to get to this position of product refinement and respect in the industry and no others have made it (a few are close). The Tour Easy and Gold Rush Replica are two of the most well revered recumbents in the history of recumbent bicycles. They are fast, stable, handle great, reliable for thousands of miles and besides all that the chopper-like look is very cool.

The LWB bikes are nearly bulletproof, offer three different seats to please nearly every rider and who can argue with the Easy Racer performance.

Easy Racers bumped the Tour Easy price up $200 this year though the bike is still a pretty good bargain. An exclusive new upscale model called the "White Gold" will be available at a premium price through the Sharper Image Catalog. Also new for '98 is the Easy Racers mesh back touring seat which is fantastic and the most comfy Easy Racer seat yet!

The coolest thing about the Gold Rush Replica (and often the Tour Easy) is that most new owners will see an immediate performance increase. This unequaled performance and reliability does not come at the price of tricky handling or a company with an attitude. Gardner Martin and crew builds some of the finest 'bents on the planet. Look for a Gold Rush Replica test forthcoming.

Delivery Time—12 weeks.

Road Tests: RCN#21 GRR; RCN#28 EZ1; RCN#35 EZ1 vs. BikeE; RCN#45 Tour Easy.

Human Powered Machines

Jan Vander Tuin's HPM is associated with Eugene Bicycle Works (EBW) and the Center for Appropriate Transportation (CAT), which is HPM's retail outlet. At CAT Jan is just as involved with teaching the Eugene area teenagers how to work on bikes, as he is building his own bikes.

Jan reports that he is working on a new updated version of the Gary Hale designed, Hale Runner (ancient history), a dual 26" wheeled LWB/ASS, now called the "Roadster." This is a Tour Easy-like model with a sling/mesh (Ryan/HPM trike-like seat) for under $1200. We're very excited about this recumbent and have ordered a test bike. Jan is toying with the idea of building a Hale Triple that looks a bit like a Tour Easy tandem. Jan custom builds recumbents and can turn your sketch into a bike.

Infinity

Ace Tool, Infinity and the loyal fans of the square tube aluminum bike take heed. The bike is still being built and is available from "Doc" and the gang at Bike Emporium, Scottsdale, AZ's recumbent specialist.

Not much has changed over the years since we've reviewed it (RCN#22). The frame is the same square-tube structural, non-heat-treated aluminum and the seat is the same aluminum-framed, mesh back/base seat that has no seat stays. Everything

May/June 1998
is still built in Mooresville, Indiana by Ace Tool, though sold through Bike Emporium.

The USS is controlled very simply by dual aircraft cables between the fork and bars. The fittings are pretty generic and require monitoring of the cable tighteners.

The drivetrain of the Infinity has been freshened up, though is still a bit dated, and the price has increased to $1199.

**Road Tests:** RCN#22

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**Linear**

Linear recumbent bicycles are very similar in spec/build, whether it be SWB, Compact or LWB. The LWB is the flagship of the line. It has been refined over the past several years to be a very dialed machine. The 26" rear wheel with 20"/406mm wheel combo is the best ever. The braking is still just adequate with the BMX calipers. The drivetrain is a 21-speed based upon a Sachs 3x7. Add a front derailleur post (optional) and you can have a 63-spd. Linear. The component spec has always been fair, and changes frequently due to component availability. We did hear that many '98 bikes are going out as 21-speeds with front derailleurs due to a Sachs 3x7 shortage at Linear.

The LWB has a high back seat with an optional lumbar bend (we like the straight back) and adjustable seat stays (recommended). The Linear LWB folds at the rear stays and the front head tube. A frame bag is available to make storage a breeze. Without a bag to put the folded bike in, the sharp edges, and hinges sometimes bite back. This is currently the most compactable LWB for Linear. Linear has been in the business of building LWB 'bents for many years.

**Delivery Time:** 4 weeks.

**Road Tests:** RCN#45 (this issue), RCN#5 & 24 Linear LWB; RCN#40 Compact.

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**Peugeot**

The Peugeot/Quetzal line of LWB recumbents are very unique. They have a monobeam frame of CrMo or aluminum and a 20'/16" wheel combo. The drivetrains are mid-drives, meaning the bike has two rear derailleurs (one on the rear wheel and one amidships) along with a front derailleur. There are three shifters to click through the 90-105 gears.

The bars are wide USS with built-in extensions with the controls facing open-end up. There are three shifters, and the coordinating of all the gears, derailleurs and shifters takes some patience. The mid-drive works pretty well, though we'd rather see a Sachs 3x7. The 90-105 speeds is overkill and unnecessary on this bike.

The Peugeot seat is extremely upright in position and has little adjustment. The seat can be pretty comfy, especially with full pressure in the back/base air bags, however, the upright seat angle and closed position (loading your hiney) make the dreaded "recumbent butt" a distinct possibility. Our NW testers all noticed this.

The quality of the Peugeot is surprisingly good, though the design is odd, almost as though they were not aware of other recumbents. Procycle Canada/Peugeot is not the same Peugeot that built your college 10-spd. This is a Canadian company that builds medium range bikes, among them—the Quetzal recumbent.

The C-90 (90-spd.) and C-105 (105-spd.) are the CrMo models that have sliding bottom brackets. These bikes work well, though the CrMo frames make the bike heavy (40+ pounds). The aluminum T-105 is their aluminum flagship. This bike has a telescoping frame and a cut-and-set steering rod (you have one chance to get it right). It's very personal bike that offers no rider adjustment once set up.

The Peugeot's offer a unique 90-105 speed drivetrain that works as follows: 6 or 7 speeds (at the rear wheel shifted by rear derailleur) x 3 (triple crank) x 5 (mid-drive shifted by a rear derailleur). It works and shifts surprisingly well, but for such a recreational bike, a 3x7 hub would have been a better choice—lighter, simpler and much easier to use.

Dealing with the Peugeot has not as easy as it should be. There is a USA sales office and a few dealers, but for our purposes, getting through to the right people in the Canadian office has been difficult. The CrMo LWB models are a good value, though have yet to become very popular with enthusiasts.

**Delivery Time:** Available now.

**Road Tests:** RCN#45

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**Rans**

Rans is building the most modern LWB designs in the recumbent world. The Gliss is the LWB with rear suspension and a unique frame design that gets the bottom bracket higher than the traditional LWB (Stratus), and the seat just slightly higher than that—making for near perfect ergonomics for the rider. The CrMo stays come out to the bottom bracket, but do not connect to the head tube—the bike is not 100% triangulated. This brief gap in the frame triangulation along with the built in flex of the T-bar allows for some passive suspension up front. The cushion of the Cane Creek AD5 Shock (same as the Vivo and BikeE) is world class. Riders like the LWB ASS feel. The downside to the modern Griss is that the bike gets a bit light in the front end during fast downhill speeds. The classic Stratus or Easy Racers still have the upper hand in fast handling. However, the Gliss has them all beat for overall ride comfort.

The Stratus is a fantastic LWB ASS recumbent. It's about $200 cheaper than a Tour Easy, has a wet-spray paint job, and ESP components and the Rans seat is stock, not a costly option. The problem is that the...
Stratus is rare for '98. The fully triangulated "X" frame in three frame sizes has the perfect mix of comfort and stiffness that equates to a very smooth ride. The 26/20" wheel combo is ideal. The only thing better is Angletech's wide-range touring Nultegra version.

The Rans Tailwind with a wheelbase of 60.5" just edges into the LWB category. We found this out as the Compact BG was about to go to press. The Tailwind is like a 'bent without a design category. As a Compact, it's the best handling and most serious bike of the bunch. As a LWB, it's compact, handles great, ten inches shorter than the Gliss, yet it feels sporty. The Tailwind was as fast as an unfaired Tour Easy, Rocket, Vivo, Haluzak Hybrid Race and others on our test loop—making it nearly a perfect 'bent at $995. The Gliss and Tailwind are both one-size-fits-all frames that work best for riders in the mid-upper 5' height range for optimum weight distribution.

T-bars are finding their way onto Stratus through some dealers. A T-bar Zipper is on its way, though, as in the future, some dealers have made their own mounts (Angle Lake Cycle in Seattle Tel. 206/828-7457).

The Rans bikes are so well revered by enthusiasts that demand has far out-weighed availability. Rans is feverishly working to ramp up. For now, call dealers.

**Delivery Time**—14+ weeks, call dealers.

**Road Tests:** RCN#12 Stratus; RCN#23 V-Rex; RCN#25 V-Rex; RCN#39 Stratus is sold out. An article reprint $3; RCN#37 (Rocket); RCN#42 V-Rex Slunguillian & Rans Tailwind; RCN#44 V-Rex.

### ReBike

How can you go wrong with a 'bent that costs just $329? The original Compact ReBike 606 6-speed is the best bargain in the 'bent biz. The LWB model is the 2600, similar to the 606, but it has a 26" rear wheel and 18-speeds. The good news is that ReBikes look cool because they are painted bright colors, have a John Deere-type seat base with padded backrest. All that chrome shines up nice. ReBikes are readily available, too. The bad news is that the chrome and steel is heavy and the bikes weigh in the mid 40-pound range.

The 2600 has a better gearing range, though we still like the 606 and 818 models that have 20" drive wheels. This is the original ReBike design.

ReBikes are now built in Ohio, USA by Huffy. You can order from a dealer or the ReBike website. You can even hire a mechanic to come out and set up your ReBike. ReBike is quite possibly the largest recumbent manufacturer in the world, with a speculation of sales in the thousands. Unfortunately, ReBike hasn't seem interested in an RCN test since 1993.

If beach, bike-trail cruising or around the neighborhood are for you, the ReBike is awesome just the way it is, though don't expect to keep up with the local club riders or do a ride across the USA on one.

**Road Tests:** RCN#15 (1993).

### Rotator

Steve Delaire of Rotator Bicycles fabricates the LWB Rotator Pursuit frame along side the Lightning Stealth and Rotator Tiger SWB frames. The Pursuit is Steve's pride and joy. It's what he rides and the technology that he believes in. For 1998, the Pursuit frame has been updated and refined. The mainframe braze joint/bend just ahead of the bottom bracket has been removed and the main tube is now one piece. The bottom bracket is now brazed below the main tube. Delaire has also tweaked the fork/steering geometry to tame the dramatic wheel flop/tiller steering.

The drivetrain is the same Sachs setup with a mid-drive. It shifts pretty well,
though most owners should consider learning to work on the bikes themselves.

The Pursuit is a neat bike and Delaire breaks all of the LWB design rules and does it his way. The '98 bikes have improved since our last test and are looking good.

The Rotator's are not for the faint of heart. These are cutting edge low and extreme performance bikes (though Steve's mom rides one). The bikes have a raw, gutsy racing heritage and Rotator's have a design all their own. We would like to see some component tweaks for this very cool and low performance machine and we're dying to test the updated bikes.

- Road Tests: RCN#34 Lightning Stealth; RCN#37 Pursuit (reprint only).

Ryan Recumbents

Dick Ryan is the "Godfather" of modern recumbency. Dick and son Karl build the bikes out of their Boston shop. The LWB Vanguard is a LWB kinetic work of art. Dick has very high standards, which makes the Vanguard a dialed and trouble free machine ready to circumnavigate the globe.

Ryan and company have slightly repo-
positioned the bottom bracket so that anyone can ride their standard frame (no need for an XL size option). Don't get your hopes up about a more modern Vanguard, as the difference is barely noticeable to the human eye. Dick is a retro kind of guy and builds his bikes with what he knows will work— and won't fail you when crossing the fields of grain, anywhere, midwest, USA.

The component specs are very nice with this 105/XT drivetrain shifted by retro Ultegra bar-con bar-end shifters mounted on stock handlebar extensions. The 26"/20" wheel combo is about as bullet proof as you'll ever need. One upgrade that is notable is the use of Shimano Deore LX V-brakes. Dick said he'd have put XT's on, but they don't work as well on his bike.

The Ryan seat is very relaxed and reclined. It is a full sling/mesh, though as a seat-horn to hold the mesh taut to the front of the seat. This does bother some riders. It takes some time to get acclimated to the very open riding position.

Bicycling Magazine didn't find the Vanguard very fast, but speed is relative. I don't feel like Fast Freddy riding one, however, there's a guy named Don Houten who used to ride solo on a Ryan tandem and ride circles around everyone.

The Ryan is a true touring masterpiece and the finest LWB USS built in N. America. Delivery Time—4 weeks.

- Road Tests: RCN#29; RCN#32(DuPlex)

**Vision**

Vision offers LWB versions of the R40 and 42. This bike is the transformer of the 'bent world. It can be a LWB, SWB, ASS, USS, hardtail or rear suspension with 16" or 20" front wheels (LWB doesn't need front susp.). The LWB is actually an option to the SWB, though is sold as distinct LWB model as well. The SWB boom is replaced by the LWB boom and the frame telescopes to adjust for rider size. A set screw locks in the setting, though there is a slight sight adjustment to align the two frame sections.

Both the R-40 and 42 utilize the 2" HiTen mainframe. The R42 LWB doesn't get the SWB's aluminum boom. We love the new Shimano spec which works great. The Rapidfire is the perfect choice for Visions.

The Vision seat likes to be ridden reclined. The seat has a seat-horn, but when reclined (key to all day comfort), you don't feel it. We finally had the chance to try the '98 models and have upgraded the seat comfort rating on SWB/LWB models.

The remote rod/linkage steering has been updated for '98 offering a casual,
relaxed handling feel. A slick new redesigned ASS option is now available. The Vision LWB Vision's ASS steering feel is much like that of other SWB bikes and operates via a rod linkage. Updates include a lower stem bolt for better crotch clearance, an adjustable riser, and stem clamp for your choice of bars. The recline is adjustable and the fold-forward feature has a quick release to set the lock down pressure (some riders don’t like a free floating fold forward feature). In most cases, the new Vision ASS will be a more upright angle, as the stem is closer to the body on Vision bikes. The ASS unit is made of a steel stem/riser and aluminum bars/handlebar stem on top. The unit is stiffer, tougher and more adjustable than other ASS units we've tested.

We recently visited the Vision factory and were very impressed with what we saw. Bikes are built as ordered, they can turn bikes around relatively quickly (faster than many other mfr.'s) and the new in-house powdercoat system is up and running, and Vision now buys parts directly from Shimano. The past quality control issues seem to be gone. The '98 Vision models we have seen are looking very nice. The LWB Vision "BU" and "BT" are smooth, stable and easy handling sweet riding bikes. They are the best kept secret in the Vision line. Expect more coverage forthcoming.

Delivery Time 4+ weeks.
• Road Tests: RCN#21 (R-40); RCN#45 (R-45); RCN#34 (tandem); RCN#43 (Metro).

■ Custom Spec
Angletech custom spec's LWB recumbents from Rans and Easy Racers. These models can be even better than the stock bikes. I'm very impressed with the Ultegra concept by mating Shimano Ultegra with Nexeave

Megarange. This stuff is perfect for 'bents!

Heed this warning: do not go too crazy with custom spec. Stick with parts that you can find somebody local to work on or fix yourself. Custom spec is not easy in these days where component incompatibility reigns supreme. A lot of times you don’t know what will work until you try it.

■ Compact Comparison
As the Compact recumbent comes of age, we find that many of the manufacturers are extending the wheelbases to increase stability and add performance. This year, Rans Tailwind and Linear's Compact/EvoGlide both had their wheelbases extended. Vision’s Metro and Easy Racers EZ-1 have an XL frame option. BikeE will build custom frames as long as you want. As you are comparing LWB data, keep your RCN#43 close at hand for Compact comparisons.

■ General 'Bent Info
For more general information see the '97 RCN Buyers' Guide RCN#38, RCN#43 and RCN#44, the first in a series of '98 Guides.

The information included in this buyers' guide are correct to the best of our knowledge. We/RCN sent out BG Questionnaires to known manufacturers, in order that they be included in our '98 guides.

Missing Manufacturers: Maxam is noticeably absent this year. This maker of inexpensive LWB bikes has had a rollercoaster history and we don’t know what is going on or where they have gone.

■ RCN Ratings
RCN offers the only Recumbent Bicycle Buyers' Guide in the world today. RCN also rates the bikes—which is unlike almost any other buyers' guide on the planet! You won't find reformatted brochure material in RCN—we tell it like it is. Bicycles are built up, ridden, rated, and critiqued. We can only conclude that manufacturers who do not submit test bikes are afraid to compete with the best in recumbency.

We use a potential five star system with the following SuperGuide ratings:

★★ Poor/needs work
★★ Fair/edging toward Good
★★★ Good and better median
★★★★ Very good—superior
★★★★★ Excellent—the best.

The overall Rating is not an average. Ratings can vary by design, price and how it works. (Ratings start on page 43.)

Watch for RCN#46, the Tandem/Trike SuperGuide coming in July/August '98 and RCN#47, the homebrew issue following.
Believe What They Say....

Recumbents:
First it was curiosity.
Then the research started.
Then I had to have a subscription to RCN! Then the questions:
Could I ride on of those recumbent bicycles? They look so different. They do look comfortable.
I wonder if I could balance one of them.
Then the courage: Try to find one and take a test ride.

- FIRST RIDE
December, 1994—Portland, Oregon
My local bike shop, Coventry Cycles, is now selling recumbents. “May I try that BikeE?”
“Sure.” Fear sets in. Will I crash? Will I weave all over the road? Will I be able to get it to go? The tension mounts. The excitement builds. I put my foot on the pedals, push-off and I’m off.
What a thrill! I had no trouble at all. The starting was quick and stable, balancing was no more difficult than a wedgie. I turned around in the road—no problem. I stopped it on a dime and then all I had to do was put my feet down. I couldn’t stop grinning. I hadn’t had this much fun since I was six years old and took off by myself on my very first bicycle.

After about 15 minutes of pure joy, I took the BikeE back into the bike shop and handed over my Visa card. I did not hesitate, nor did I have to go home and think about it. I knew this bike was more fun to ride than any other bike I’d ever ridden.

Little did I know that the BikeE would create problems for me. The problem? Everyone wanted to ride my BikeE and I was stuck riding their wedgies while they rode my BikeE! Especially my granddaughter! After two years of this, I bought BikeE #2.

- WEDGIE FEVER
Slowly but surely my wedgies were being left at home. As I rode the recumbent more and my body became more accustomed to it. Yes, riding a recumbent requires the use of muscles you didn’t even know you had and you need to work up to longer and more intense rides, but never is it as bad as the sore neck, hands, shoulders and rear-end on a wedgie.

All habits began to die this last summer when I rode the BikeE on a 40-mile ride and I realized I didn’t even get off the bike when we stopped to rest. When we did stop, I wasn’t shaking my hands, walking around in circles trying to get the blood flow normal through my body again.

I can ride distances, I can climb hills and at the end of the day I still feel happy, not grumpy because some part of my body is screaming in pain.

- THE NEXT STEP—EASY RACER
Should I take the next step by moving up to a higher performance recumbent?
I had seen a Tour Easy on an MS150 ride a couple of years back and I’d never forgotten it. I had kept wondering, “Can I believe all the hype, advertising and ads about the Easy Racer bikes?” I kept seeing the name Gardner Martin throughout RCN. Could he be for real?

I called Easy Racers and to my surprise, Gardner Martin himself answered the phone! I asked every question I could think of and he answered them all and acted like he had nothing more important to do in the world than talk to me. I had a few concerns:

1. Should I buy a bike based on what someone was telling me?
2. I wasn’t able to ride the bike.
3. Maybe Gardner Martin is just a sales person who wants to sell his product and he’s exaggerating?

- MAY 1997—PORTLAND, OREGON
Again, I found myself in the Coventry showroom. There right in front of my eyes
LWB PERFORMANCE SUPERIORITY!

by Zach Kaplan

I took the Easy Racer Gold Rush Replica (GRR) with body stocking for a 78 km ride up and around Mt. Tam yesterday with an upright riding friend. He prides himself on his climbing ability. This was my first climbing test of the bike against a strong upright rider. While he wasn’t in peak shape yesterday I found I had to slow down for him on the climbs. He appeared to be really struggling climbing out of the saddle while I felt absolutely great. No lactic acid build up in the legs like with the high bottom bracket (BB) bikes.

I think it is fairly clear now the GRR is the fastest climbing recumbent I have ridden and that is with the full body stocking package and mudguards. I was frequently seeing speeds of 20 km/h on the climbs which I seldom top 15 km/h climbing on a high BB bike. My spin feels smoother with the low BB, more like the natural pedaling dynamics of a road bike vs. doing bench presses. When I went to my cycling podiatrist (who answers medical questions in Bicycling magazine) for a bike fitting the other day he remarked this bike was a much better configuration than the previous recumbents I had brought in for fittings. He explained how blood circulation and lactic acid removal is better with a low BB.

The bike climbs great and amazingly I have had zero rear end pain on it. I thought I’d get it with the upright seat back but for some unexplainable reason don’t. Could it be because I pressed the seat back into its most laid back position and have a 559mm rear wheel laying things back further? I did once get pain on a TE seat but it was fairly upright and a different type of foam.

Coming down the mountain was a blast. It was quite gusty yet the bike didn’t get blown around much. I would have been blown off the road descending at those speeds on an F-40. The inherent stability of the LWB was also much appreciated on the descent. I had to wait up several times for my roadie friend. At the bottom of one descent I remarked, “This is the ultimate recumbent for Marin County, fast for a recumbent on the climbs, a reasonable speed advantage on the flats and downhill but not so aerodynamic that crosswinds and brake heating become problems.”

I am now constantly switching back and forth between SWB and LWB, each have their advantages for different types of riding. The truth of the matter is when you want to go fast on an easy to ride bike with no leaning curve the GRR is the way to go. F-40s and low racers can be faster but have various tricky aspects and much longer learning curves. They are not as versatile to ride.

The token LWB in the fleet is becoming my favorite bike. I look forward to the new Rans Limbo when it comes out......

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- Call or write for our '98 Experimenter Kit brochure • PO Box 14, Davenport, CA 95017 • Fax: 408/425-1167
Easy Racer Tour Easy SS/EX
- Seat Comfort: *******
- Ride Smoothness: ******
- Handling: ******
- Performance: ******
- Frame/Build-Finish Quality: ******
- Components: ******
- Braking: ******
- Chain Management: ******
- Value for Money: ******
- Overall Rating: ******
- Suggested Use:
  - HD Touring/Commuting
  - Sport Touring
- Notes: This is quite possibly the most durable and time-proven recumbent built today. It's fast, stable and ready to transAmerica right out of the box. The components are a bit retro, though for the most part durable (see GRR for seat info).
- Test Bike Problems: We did have a few minor problems with this Tour Easy. The rear wheel came out of true at 75 miles (slight wobble). While testing it in the NW rainy season, the index shifting quality deteriorated. The Grip Shifters just didn't want to drop into the 11-1 cog and made for some headaches. We improved the bar-ends.
- M.S.R.P.: $1795

Easy Racer Gold Rush
- Seat Comfort: ******
- Ride Smoothness: ******
- Handling: ******
- Performance: ******
- Frame/Build-Finish Quality: ******
- Components: ******
- Braking: ******
- Chain Management: ******
- Value for Money: ******
- Overall Rating: ******
- Suggested Use:
  - High Performance
  - HD touring/commuting
- Notes: You will have arrived when you ride a Gold Rush Replica. It's the finest, fastest, most stable and best looking 'bent we've tested. It also receives the RCN highest rating in '95. The Easy Racer Cool Back seat is the best choice, though the Rans base comfort still has a slight edge. The Cobra performs slightly better, though is less comfy.
- Test Bike Problems: There have been no problems to speak of on our last three GRR test bikes. The '96 component upgrade to the 105 crank is excellent. Gardner, please take the Tektro brake covers off of this gorgeous bike.
- M.S.R.P.: $2995

Linear LWB/folding
- Seat Comfort: ******
- Ride Smoothness: ******
- Handling: ******
- Performance: ******
- Frame/Build-Finish Quality: ******
- Components: ******
- Braking: ******
- Chain Management: ******
- Value for Money: ******
- Overall Rating: ******
- Suggested Use:
  - Rec.
  - LT touring/commuting
  - Sport Touring
- Notes: The Linear LWB is a refined, comfortable bike. It's been in production for years and is proven durable. The 3x7 26/20 is best. A new non-folding version is on the way (no squawks). The lumbar seat is a bit odd, though straight seat stools are available, as is an adjustable seat recline option.
- Test Bike Problems: The Linear is a very dependable bike. The folders often squeak and need careful attention to the joints (clean & lightly grease & set O.R.'s properly). We've had no problems with any Linear bikes. The component specs are spotty and change often...so ask.
- M.S.R.P.: $1350

Linear Cpt Mk. III/Evo.
- Seat Comfort: ******
- Ride Smoothness: ******
- Handling: ******
- Performance: ******
- Frame/Build-Finish Quality: ******
- Components: ******
- Braking: ******
- Chain Management: ******
- Value for Money: ******
- Overall Rating: ******
- Suggested Use:
  - Cruiser
  - Recreational
  - LT touring/commuting
- Notes: The Linear Compact is another compact model (along with the Rans Tailwind) that just barely squeezes into the LWB listing. The Linear Compact comes in three wheelbases, one being a 60", which officially makes it an LWB. We're glad to see Linear and Wheel refine this design. A stretching of the wheelbase is the best thing that could have happened to this bike.
- Test Bike Problems: We had virtually no component, set-up, dial-in or road test problems with any of our three test bikes. We expect an ASS version soon.
- M.S.R.P.: $1099/$1399 Wheel EvoGlide

Peugeot/Quetzal C-90
- Seat Comfort: ******
- Ride Smoothness: ******
- Handling: ******
- Performance: ******
- Frame/Build-Finish Quality: ******
- Components: ******
- Braking: ******
- Chain Management: ******
- Value for Money: ******
- Overall Rating: ******
- Suggested Use:
  - Rec. LT touring/commuting
- Notes: The Peugeot is a good value, but an odd bike. It rides nice, though is very heavy and felt sluggish in most conditions. All of our test riders complained about the upright seat angle (heavily loads the rider's rear-end-recumbent butt) and the bike feels small. The CroMo Peugeot's are preferred over the limited rider adjustments on the high-end aluminum models.
- Test Bike Problems: Our test bike was completely trouble free given the 90-speed drivetrain. The shifting is not intuitive and takes some getting used to, though works well.
- M.S.R.P.: $995

Rans Gliss
- Seat Comfort: ******
- Ride Smoothness: ******
- Handling: ******
- Performance: ******
- Frame/Build-Finish Quality: ******
- Components: ******
- Braking: ******
- Chain Management: ******
- Value for Money: ******
- Overall Rating: ******
- Suggested Use:
  - Rec.
  - Sport Touring
  - LT touring/commuting
- Notes: This is the modern LWB ASS with rear suspension, ESP drivetrain and Magura hydraulic brakes. At low-medium speeds the bike handles beautifully with near perfect ergonomics (BB/pedals lower than seat). The Gliss has a low gear range.
- Test Bike Problems: The three Rans test bikes have been very dependable. Gliss #2 is commuted in Portland and Auburn. Gliss index adjustments have been a minor annoyance. The Gliss front end tends to feel light on fast downhills and the Reba flex. The upper chain idler is also noisier than on other models.
- M.S.R.P.: $1950

May/June 1998
Rans Stratus
- **SEAT COMFORT:** 4/5
- **RIDE SMOOTHNESS:** 4/5
- **HANDLING:** 4/5
- **PERFORMANCE:** 4/5
- **FRAME/BUILD-FINISH QUALITY:** 4/5
- **COMPONENTS:** 4/5
- **BRAKING:** 4/5
- **CHAIN MANAGEMENT:** 4/5
- **VALUE FOR MONEY:** 4/5
- **OVERALL RATING:** 4/5
- **SUGGESTED USE:** Rec. / LT touring / HD commuting
- **NOTES:** The Stratus was edged out for Best LWB by the Tour Easy. Within days Easy Racers raised their prices. The Stratus has a more comfortable seat, nice, better Components, and is less expensive. The Tour Easy still has slightly better handling, handbars and fairing options.

**TEST BIKE PROBLEMS:** Our Rans Stratus test bike was absolutely perfect. It was delivered for the 1997 Seattle Bike Expo, demo'd and ridden by a lot of people. The Stratus is a proven, and dialled classic 'bent design that only gets better with age. We're hoping that Rans does a 25th Anniversary Stratus next year. Oh, and you gotta like purple.
- **M.S.R.P.:** $1675.00

Rans Tailwind
- **SEAT COMFORT:** 4/5
- **RIDE SMOOTHNESS:** 4/5
- **HANDLING:** 4/5
- **PERFORMANCE:** 4/5
- **FRAME/BUILD-FINISH QUALITY:** 4/5
- **COMPONENTS:** 4/5
- **BRAKING:** 4/5
- **CHAIN MANAGEMENT:** 4/5
- **VALUE FOR MONEY:** 4/5
- **OVERALL RATING:** 4/5
- **SUGGESTED USE:** Rec. / LT touring / HD commuting / Sport touring
- **NOTES:** The Tailwind is on the ladder bike of this list. You get so much for your money that it puts other LWB machines to shame. Officially a LWB at 60.5” wheelbase, this bike is as light and fast as nearly any LWB in these listings. In fact, the Tailwind did quite well on our test loop coming in with the same speed as the best Tour Easy.

**TEST BIKE PROBLEMS:** We've had three Tailwind test bikes. We've had one ESP index adjusting wood and one bike needed a cantilever brake adjustment. The handbars noticeably flex on this model (Rans Gliss/Tailwind "T" bar).
- **M.S.R.P.:** $995

Ryan Vanguard
- **SEAT COMFORT:** 3/5
- **RIDE SMOOTHNESS:** 4/5
- **HANDLING:** 4/5
- **PERFORMANCE:** 4/5
- **FRAME/BUILD-FINISH QUALITY:** 4/5
- **COMPONENTS:** 4/5
- **BRAKING:** 4/5
- **CHAIN MANAGEMENT:** 4/5
- **VALUE FOR MONEY:** 4/5
- **OVERALL RATING:** 4/5
- **SUGGESTED USE:** Rec. / LT touring / HD commuting / Sport touring
- **NOTES:** The Vanguard is the twisty, and best LWB on the market. The US touring bike made from one of the most respected component manufacturers. The bike hasn't changed much, aside from component updates. Dick & Karl Ryan build them right.

**TEST BIKE PROBLEMS:** Our biggest complaint about the Vanguard is the fat handlebar. We've been replaced with a slimmer one. It should be reassembled or shipped on a pallet or full size box 100% set up. The medallion front brake has been replaced by an LX V-brake. Be forewarned about the Vanguard seat horn.
- **M.S.R.P.:** $1850

Rotator Pursuit
- **SEAT COMFORT:** 3/5
- **RIDE SMOOTHNESS:** 3/5
- **HANDLING:** 3/5
- **PERFORMANCE:** 3/5
- **FRAME/BUILD-FINISH QUALITY:** 3/5
- **COMPONENTS:** 3/5
- **BRAKING:** 3/5
- **CHAIN MANAGEMENT:** 3/5
- **VALUE FOR MONEY:** 3/5
- **OVERALL RATING:** 3/5
- **SUGGESTED USE:** Rec. / Sport / LT touring / HD commuting
- **NOTES:** The Pursuit is a high performance, low LWB for the cutting edge cyclist. Low speed starts are difficult and there is tire/seat flop. The bike is fast, very cool and the high performance bargain.

**TEST BIKE PROBLEMS:** We highly suggest perspective owners read our RCN#87 test. The mid-drive shifting very good, though not for everyone. Component spec is somewhat vague. Our '96 '97 test bikes/fairings had some rough edges. The Rotator bikes are not as refined as other more mainstream bikes, though Delaire is brilliant and the new bikes have improved a lot.
- **M.S.R.P.:** $1900

Vision R40 LWB
- **SEAT COMFORT:** 3/5
- **RIDE SMOOTHNESS:** 3/5
- **HANDLING:** 3/5
- **PERFORMANCE:** 3/5
- **FRAME/BUILD-FINISH QUALITY:** 3/5
- **COMPONENTS:** 3/5
- **BRAKING:** 3/5
- **CHAIN MANAGEMENT:** 3/5
- **VALUE FOR MONEY:** 3/5
- **OVERALL RATING:** 3/5
- **SUGGESTED USE:** Rec. / Sport / LT touring / HD commuting
- **NOTES:** The Vision R40 has the same durable monobloc frame as the R42. This model is available with or without rear suspension with US, redesigned ASS, 16” or 20” front wheels. Vision seat can recline way back, and the bike enjoys a very comfortable riding position (or a closed, upright position). The new Vision head badge is very cool, Seattle-style. Vision quality/QC is on the upswing.

**LATE UPDATE:** We were finally able to try some '98 Vision models. Updated ratings are across the board for the R40/42 RSB/LWB hard-tail models. 44/45 ratings are improved as well.
- **M.S.R.P.:** $1175-1475 (rear susp. optional)

Vision R42 LWB
- **SEAT COMFORT:** 3/5
- **RIDE SMOOTHNESS:** 3/5
- **HANDLING:** 3/5
- **PERFORMANCE:** 3/5
- **FRAME/BUILD-FINISH QUALITY:** 3/5
- **COMPONENTS:** 3/5
- **BRAKING:** 3/5
- **CHAIN MANAGEMENT:** 3/5
- **VALUE FOR MONEY:** 3/5
- **OVERALL RATING:** 3/5
- **SUGGESTED USE:** Rec. / Sport / LT touring / HD commuting / Performance
- **NOTES:** The Vision R42 LWB has a really laid back comfort position, higher B & C for an excellent Shimano drivetrain with Rapid Fire. The ASS has been redesigned and works great. The bike handles very nicely and is a great option for those who find the RSB/LWB handling too intense. The R42 does not get the SWB’s alum, boom. The rear suspension is an option and very plush riding, though not recommended for tall/low sized riders. Vision work best for medium height/build riders.

**TEST BIKE PROBLEMS:** We had no problems with our R42 LWB test bike.
- **M.S.R.P.:** $1620-2070 (rear susp. optional)
# LWB 'Bent Listings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE &amp; DIMENSION</th>
<th>FRAME &amp; SEAT</th>
<th>COMPONENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easy Racer Tour Easy EX</td>
<td>LWB ASS &lt;br&gt; WB-95 (med.) &lt;br&gt; SH-20.5” &lt;br&gt; BBHT-13” &lt;br&gt; WT-30 &lt;br&gt; WT DIST-60% (BK)/(40% &lt;br&gt; Colors: Red or black powdercoat &lt;br&gt; Gear Inches: 21-114</td>
<td>Frame: TiGr CroMo steel mainframe, custom CroMo fork, alum. bars/stem &lt;br&gt; Seat: Composite shell, Lycca covered foam (Opt. Cool Back or Rams seats) &lt;br&gt; Sizes: Four sizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy Racer Tour Easy SS</td>
<td>LWB ASS &lt;br&gt; WB-66 (med.) &lt;br&gt; SH-20.5” &lt;br&gt; BBHT-13” &lt;br&gt; WT-29 &lt;br&gt; WT DIST-60% (BK)/(40%</td>
<td>Frame: TiGr CroMo steel mainframe, custom CroMo fork, alum. bars/stem &lt;br&gt; Seat: Composite shell, Lycca covered foam (Opt. Cool Back or Rams seats) &lt;br&gt; Sizes: Four sizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy Racer Gold Rush Replica</td>
<td>LWB ASS &lt;br&gt; WB-66 (med.) &lt;br&gt; SH-20.5” &lt;br&gt; BBHT-13” &lt;br&gt; WT-25 &lt;br&gt; WT DIST-60% (BK)/(40%</td>
<td>Frame: TiGr welded heat treated 6061 &lt;br&gt; T6 Heat, alum. bars/steam, CroMo fork &lt;br&gt; Seat: Composite shell, Lycca covered foam (Opt. Cool Back or Rams seats) &lt;br&gt; Sizes: Four sizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy Racer/ AngleTech GRR GL3</td>
<td>LWB ASS (SS or EX avail.) &lt;br&gt; WB-66 (med.) &lt;br&gt; SH-20.5” &lt;br&gt; BBHT-13” &lt;br&gt; WT-28 &lt;br&gt; WT DIST-60% (BK)/(40%</td>
<td>Frame: TiGr welded heat treated 6061 &lt;br&gt; T6 Heat, alum. bars/steam, CroMo fork &lt;br&gt; Seat: Composite with cutaway base (Optional Easy Racer seats) &lt;br&gt; Sizes: Four sizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Powered Machines Roadster</td>
<td>LWB USS or ASS &lt;br&gt; WB-61 &lt;br&gt; SH-25” &lt;br&gt; BBHT-12”</td>
<td>Frame: TiGr welded heat treated 6061 &lt;br&gt; T6 Heat, alum. bars/steam, CroMo fork &lt;br&gt; Seat: Composite with cutaway base (Optional Easy Racer seats) &lt;br&gt; Sizes: Four sizes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RANS Stratus**<br> Tel. 785/625-6346<br> bikes@rans.com<br> http://www.rans.com<br> $1675.00

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE &amp; DIMENSION</th>
<th>FRAME &amp; SEAT</th>
<th>COMPONENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easy Racer/ AngleTech GRR SHO</td>
<td>LWB USS or ASS &lt;br&gt; WB-66 (med.) &lt;br&gt; SH-20.5” &lt;br&gt; BBHT-13”</td>
<td>Frame: TiGr framed fork &lt;br&gt; Seat: Alum. frame/ Nylon (gloss) mesh &lt;br&gt; Sizes: 58”-6’4”&lt;br&gt; Frame: TiGr framed fork &lt;br&gt; Seat: Alum. frame/ mesh back &lt;br&gt; Sizes: Two sizes (411”-62”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Infinity Alpha (Bike Emporium)**<br> Tel. 1-800-Dr BIKE 1<br> Culver@primenet.com<br> $199.00

**Linear LWB**<br> Tel. 319/252-1637<br> http://www.Bikeroute.com/Linear/<br> Linear.html<br> $1950.00

**Peugeot/Quetzal C-90**<br> Tel. 1-888-763-8025<br> http://www.quezal.ca<br> webmaster@quetzal.ca<br> $993 (incl. duty, shipping & setup)

**Peugeot/Quetzal C-105**<br> Tel. 1-888-763-8025<br> http://www.quezal.ca<br> webmaster@quetzal.ca<br> $1099 (incl. duty, shipping & setup)

**Peugeot/Quetzal T-105**<br> Tel. 1-888-763-8025<br> http://www.quezal.ca<br> webmaster@quetzal.ca<br> $1795 (incl. duty, shipping & setup)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>LWB 'Bent Listings</strong></th>
<th><strong>TYPE &amp; DIMENSION</strong></th>
<th><strong>FRAME &amp; SEAT</strong></th>
<th><strong>COMPONENTS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RANS Tailwind</strong></td>
<td>Compact ASS</td>
<td>Frame: CroMo mainframe, CroMo fork, alum. T-bar/stem.</td>
<td>Drivetrain: GripShift ESP 5.0/7.0 24-sp., SunTour X-1 36/46/58, Sachs chain, Ritchey Logic HS, Shim. CS21 BB, Alivio Cant brakes/levers, 20” x 1.35” w/Primo Comets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel. 765/626-6346</td>
<td>WB-69.5 SH-22.25 BBHT- 19”</td>
<td>Seat: mesh back, comp. base, nylon covered foam seat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:bikes@ranc.com">bikes@ranc.com</a></td>
<td>WT-32 WT DIST- N.A.</td>
<td>Sizes: 3” one-size-fits-most</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.ranc.com">http://www.ranc.com</a></td>
<td>Colors: Mystic Violet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$999.99</td>
<td>Gear Inches: 20-104</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RANS/AngleTech Tailwind GL63</strong></td>
<td>Compact ASS</td>
<td>Frame: CroMo mainframe, CroMo fork, alum. T-bar/stem.</td>
<td>Drivetrain: GripShift ESP 9.0 SL, Sachs 3x7 63-sp., Ritchey triple 38/50/61 crank, ST XG Pro HS, Phil BB, Sachs chain, Magura HS24, 20” x 1.5” (406) F/W Tioga ST Comp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel. 765/677-7475</td>
<td>WB-69.5 SH-22.25 BBHT- 19”</td>
<td>Seat: Rans ventilated mesh back, comp. base, nylon covered foam seat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:Anglezoo@aol.com">Anglezoo@aol.com</a></td>
<td>WT-32 WT DIST- N.A.</td>
<td>Sizes: 3”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.angletechcycles.com">http://www.angletechcycles.com</a></td>
<td>Colors: Mystic Violet</td>
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<tr>
<td>$2399.99</td>
<td>Gear Inches: 20-104</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RANS/AngleTech Stratus SHO</strong></td>
<td>LWB ASS</td>
<td>Frame: CroMo mainframe, CroMo fork, alum. C-bar (T-bar opt.)</td>
<td>Drivetrain: GripShift ESP 9.0 SL, Ultralite BB, Sachs PC91 drilled chain, ControlTech V-brakes, Phil/Rol/Hed Wills, 550c Conti GP RT, Conti GP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel. 765/677-7475</td>
<td>WB-67.75 SH-22.25 BBHT- 14”</td>
<td>Seat: Rans ventilated mesh back, comp. base, nylon covered foam seat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:Anglezoo@aol.com">Anglezoo@aol.com</a></td>
<td>WT-32 WT DIST- N.A.</td>
<td>Sizes: 3”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.angletechcycles.com">http://www.angletechcycles.com</a></td>
<td>Colors: Mystic Violet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1999.99</td>
<td>Gear Inches: 22-120</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel. 765/677-7475</td>
<td>WB-67.75 SH-22.25 BBHT- 14”</td>
<td>Swing-arm, Cane Creek ACS5 rear susp. shock, CroMo fork, alum. T-bar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:Anglezoo@aol.com">Anglezoo@aol.com</a></td>
<td>WT-32 WT DIST- N.A.</td>
<td>Seat: Rans ventilated mesh back, comp. base, nylon covered foam seat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.angletechcycles.com">http://www.angletechcycles.com</a></td>
<td>Colors: Pococino Green</td>
<td>Sizes: One-size fits most</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1999.99</td>
<td>Gear Inches: 22-116</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RANS/AngleTech Gliss GL63</strong></td>
<td>LWB ASS</td>
<td>Frame: HiTen mainframe &amp; fork, steel bar/stem, steel</td>
<td>Drivetrain: SRAM Grip Shift 9.0/900 24-sp., Shimano 105 59, Campagnolo Mirage 42/56/63, Sachs chain, Ritchey HS, Magura HS11 brakes &amp; levers, Shimano/Sun 20” x 1.25” with Primo Comets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel. 765/677-7475</td>
<td>WB-67 SH-23” BBHT- 18.75”</td>
<td>Seat: nylon covered foam back rest, padded saddle with adjustable saddle tilt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:Anglezoo@aol.com">Anglezoo@aol.com</a></td>
<td>WT-31 WT DIST- N.A.</td>
<td>Sizes: One-size fits most</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.angletechcycles.com">http://www.angletechcycles.com</a></td>
<td>Colors: Pococino Green</td>
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<tr>
<td>$2499.99</td>
<td>Gear Inches: 20-104</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ReBike 2600</strong></td>
<td>LWB ASS</td>
<td>Frame: CroMo mainframe, croMo fork,</td>
<td>Drivetrain: Shimano 18-sp., thumbshifter, steel triple crank 28/40/48, KMC chain, APSE cantilever brakes, 26” x 1.25” bolt on RW, 16” x 1.75” bolt on FW w/Wha Fong tires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel. 1-888-ReBike (732-4531)</td>
<td>WB-53” SH-24” BBHT- 19”</td>
<td>Swing-arm, Cane Creek ACS5 rear susp. shock, CroMo fork, alum. T-bar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.rebike.com">http://www.rebike.com</a></td>
<td>WT-48/45.5 WT DIST- N.A.</td>
<td>Seat: Rans ventilated mesh back, comp. base, nylon covered foam seat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$459</td>
<td>Colors: Red, Green, Blue &amp; Black powdercoat</td>
<td>Sizes: One-size fits most</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rotator Pursuit</strong></td>
<td>LWB ASS</td>
<td>Frame: CroMo mainframe, CroMo fork,</td>
<td>Drivetrain: Sachs/Sachs twist shift 35-sp. with mid-drive, Sachs cantilever brakes, 26” x 1.25” wheel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel. 707/653-4203</td>
<td>WB-65” SH-15” BBHT- N.A.</td>
<td>Seat: CroMo frame, vented nylon mesh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:rotator@netzero.com">rotator@netzero.com</a></td>
<td>WT-30 WT DIST- N.A. (slide seat)</td>
<td>Sizes: One-size fits most</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.hpv.org">http://www.hpv.org</a></td>
<td>Colors: Powdercoat red</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1500</td>
<td>Gear Inches: (set) 25-120</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel. 761/979-0072</td>
<td>WB-65” SH-15” BBHT- 15”</td>
<td>Seat: Alum. frame, vented nylon mesh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.ryancycles.com">http://www.ryancycles.com</a></td>
<td>WT-30 WT DIST- 60% (BK)/40% (RD)</td>
<td>Sizes: One-size-fits-most</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:ryan@ryanbikes.com">ryan@ryanbikes.com</a></td>
<td>Colors: Powdercoat red or black</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1850</td>
<td>Gear Inches: (set) 25-120</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vision VR40</strong></td>
<td>LWB UASS (ASS, SWB, Susp. optional)</td>
<td>Frame: 2” DOM steel TiG mainframe (Opt. Cane Creek Air rear susp.)</td>
<td>Drivetrain: Shimano RSX/STX Rapidfire 21-sp., Shimano Exage 28/38/48, Shimano BB, HS-YST St., KMC chain, Dia Compe VC-2 cantilever, brakes, RSX/Alloy 26” RW/16” (349) or 20” (406) FW, Vision Primo Comets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel. 206/467-0231</td>
<td>WB-63” (rigid) SH-19.5” BBHT- 20/2”</td>
<td>CroMo fork (Opt. suspension fork)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:ATPvision@aol.com">ATPvision@aol.com</a></td>
<td>WT-31.5-36.35</td>
<td>Seat: Alum. frame, nylon mesh, foam pad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1175-1475</td>
<td>Gear Inches: 26-114</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vision VR42</strong></td>
<td>LWB UASS (ASS, SWB, Susp. optional)</td>
<td>Frame: 2” DOM steel TiG mainframe</td>
<td>Drivetrain: Shimano RX100/STX Rapidfire 24-sp., Shimano RX100 30/42/52, Shimano BB, HS-YST alloy, KMC SSSO chain, Dia Compe VC-27 cantilever, brakes, RX100/20” RW/16” (349) or 20” (406) FW, Vision Primo Comets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel. 206/467-0231</td>
<td>WB-63” (rigid) SH-19.5” BBHT- 20/2”</td>
<td>CroMo fork (Opt. suspension fork)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:ATPvision@aol.com">ATPvision@aol.com</a></td>
<td>WT-39.34.25</td>
<td>Seat: Alum. frame, nylon mesh, foam pad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1620-2070</td>
<td>Gear Inches: 25-123</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Notebook of an Unreasonable Man

By Kent Peterson

peterson@halcyon.com

Joe and the Joetator

“My God, what is that thing?”

This reaction comes almost involuntarily to the lips of anyone who sees the bike that we’ve dubbed “Joetator.” Yes, we explain, it’s a bicycle. 12 feet long, one hundred pounds, but still a bicycle. Somehow, I hadn’t thought it would turn out this way. It began, like many a misadventure, as a simple plan. I’d seen the beautiful flowing lines of the Rotator Pursuit in Recumbent Cyclist News and I’d read Bob Bryant’s glowing review. “Oh, yes,” I thought, “it will be mine.” The problem, as usual, was saving up enough money to purchase this sleek antelope of the asphalt. My money was mostly getting channeled into such frivolities as food, a roof over my head, shoes for the kids and other such nonsense. My pursuit of the Rotator was shaping up to be a multi-year ride.

My buddy Joe Kochanowski had the answer. “I’ll build you a bike,” he said. Now you have to understand that Joe is a genius. An absolute, certifiable genius, like Thomas Edison or the guy who came up with the idea of a TV show called “Xena: Warrior Princess.” But Joe’s medium isn’t electricity or TV programming. Joe sculpts in steel and he builds bikes. Sure, most of his bikes are massive, scary looking things but most people only catch glimpses of these bikes as Joe pilots them at speeds more often associated with the oval race track at Indy than the pot-holed streets of Seattle.

I began to warm to this idea. “Yeah, Joe’s version of a Rotator... we’ll call it the Joetator. It’ll be great!” My thoughts continued on. “Yep,” I told myself, “when you’re friends with Michelangelo, you don’t put in ceiling tile.” Joe actually owns a Rotator Super Seven, one of the legendary Rotator racers.

Of course, Joe has extensively modified his Rotator and he rode it fully faired in last year’s Seattle to Portland ride. One of the thousands of people he passed was heard to mutter, “He’s got a motor in there.” No, it’s just Joe but Joe is enough. So Joe would take his knowledge of the Rotator, mix it up with some of his street smarts and build a super bike.

talking money with Joe is like talking about Harrier jets with an Amish farmer

We talked a little bit about money but talking money with Joe is like talking about Harrier jets with an Amish farmer. He may be vaguely aware that such things exist, but they really don’t enter his day to day thinking. “I’ll build it, you ride it and if you like it and use it, pay me whatever.”

Great, Joe has just invented the first shareware bicycle. Well, at least on paper anyway. And that was step one. Get a big piece of paper. Actually it was a chunk of an old cardboard box Joe scavenged out of the trash. Joe scavenges everything.

When I first met Joe, I wondered if he was homeless. I later learned that he lives in a house just north of Boeing Field, just south of Seattle, in the industrial district. His house is packed with bike parts and tools. And when I say packed, I mean packed. It looks like the Tour deFrance crashed into an exploding oil rig and landed in his basement. There are bikes, metal tubes, lathes, cut-off saws, wrenches, old fairings, airplane drop tanks, oxygen cylinders, small to medium caliber weapons, pedals, cranks, large vises, micro calipers, air compressors, and enough miscellaneous hardware to build two stealth bombers with enough left over to make a small chemical refinery and an espresso machine. But we were starting simple. A big line drawn on the cardboard where the main body tube would go. Here’s where
the bottom bracket goes, the wheels wind up here, the seat goes here... "How long are your arms?" Joe asks. "Huh," I reply as I distractedly try to calculate the scrap value of the metal in the room. I'm beginning to think Joe's net worth may be somewhere in the Bill Gates neighborhood. "Your arms... HOW LONG ARE THEY?" Joe grabs my arm and a tape measure, "I have to figure out where the steering goes and I want to make sure you can touch the ground. You don't want to unclip at a light, you'll just put your hand down." Joe takes a couple of readings, makes a few marks on the cardboard, and is on to the next problem.

Joe is good at solving problems, but he works at his own schedule. Despite the presence of enough hardware to start the economies of several Balkan republics, Joe would continually comb swap meets, surplus stores and industrial dumpsters to find just the right part. This went on for months. I managed to spend some time with my wife and sons and get enough real work done to get a handle on that whole food/shelter/clothing thing.

My recumbent fever had not lessened at all. I home-brewed a couple of SWB bikes of my own (yeah, I'll get around to doing an article about that someday!) and somewhere along the line I bought Bob Bryant's ex-test Rocket. I got very used to seeing my lovely wife's eyes roll heavenward and her head shake in disbelief as I explained my need for yet another bike. But for some inexplicable reason she loves me very much and I now have this fleet of, well, let's call them "unusual" bicycles.

But Joe kept working. I'd get calls and questions and reports from the lab. "The Pursuit has tilt steering," Joe would say, "you don't want that. I'm going with side sticks, OK?" "Sure, Joe. Build it the way you'd want it." After all, I figured, Joe knows at least a thousand times more about this than I do.

"You want rear suspension?" Joe would lose points on Jeopardy because he didn't phrase this in the form of a question. Joe had bolted the period onto the end of that sentence and then TIG welded it to be extra secure. "I want rear suspension." I echoed like the Imperial Storm Trooper in Star Wars saying, "These aren't the droids we're looking for." "This is winding up heavier than a Pursuit, but weight doesn't matter once you're rolling..."

"Weight doesn't matter once you're rolling," I thought, "but how do I get this thing rolling?" It's a few months later and I'm at Joe's. I'm settled into a rollable Joetator. It's um... an experience. "You'll feel more secure once I get the rollcage done," Joe assures me. "Rollcage?" I think for an instant but as I survey the pounds of tubes and cables and metal bits that could become awkwardly pokey in a crash I think, "you know, a rollcage is a pretty good idea!" Joe push-starts me down his street. The Joetator has semi-conventional controls connected in unconventional ways to a custom drivetrain and brakes that are looking a little overwhelmed by the rest of the bike.

I'm a bit overwhelmed by the bike. OK, OK, I'm terrified. But I'm rolling. In a straight line with a deathgrip on the side sticks. "You can heave on those as much as you want," Joe says, referring to the steering sticks, "You can't break 'em!" "No," I'm thinking, "nothing in this bike is breakable with the exception of me..." But Joe has wrapped me in various pads for my test flight and even without the rollcage this bike has an "inside." I'm inside and the outside world is just something I run over. The Joetator is picking up momentum. I do a little course correction with the sticks but when I attempt my first turn, I crash. It's very uneventful. It's like the bike is some kind of big, stubborn hippo. I wanted to turn, it wanted to lay down. It won. "I'll take some getting used to," Joe assures me.

"It'll take some getting used to," I assure him. But I get up and get the bike rolling again under my own power. Ride... crash... ride... crash... ride... crash... commute... I'm getting the hang of this... crash... ride... this ain't so bad... ride... ride... I get so I can navigate the industrial-sized streets of Joe's neighborhood. I ride back to his place and crash in his driveway. "Hm, you need more practice," Joe discusses final tweaks and plans for the rollcage/ fairing frame. "It's just a little more work..."

Six weeks later I took delivery of the Joetator Part of the reason for the delay was working out the logistics of delivery. You don't just strap a twelve foot long bike to the roof rack of a VW Jetta and go. No, this is a deliberate process.

There was no way I was ready to pilot the Joetator the twenty-something miles from Joe's industrial neighborhood in south Seattle to my house in the suburban foothills of the Washington Cascades. And Joe wasn't volunteering to ride the beast up to my burbclave either. Maybe that climb along the north edge of Cougar Mountain was making him pause. Maybe it was just his basic distrust of neighborhoods where coffee shops outnumber machine shops.

Our pal Tony Licuanan solved this problem. Tony has a van. And it's not one of those delicate shuttle-a-few-kids-to-littleleague minivans either. No, this is a VAN, an old Ford built like gas still cost twenty-five cents a gallon and designed on the theory that vans are used for bringing eight burly guys and all their gear up to construction sites in the Alaskan wilderness.

So Joe, Tony and Steve Nash managed to coax the Joetator into the van. It was a tight fit. When they showed up at my house one Saturday morning, the Joetator was squeezed in diagonally with its tail flush with the left rear door and its nose draped over the passenger side front bucket.

Steve had ridden all the way over with his head poked up between the fairing frame tubes. He looked like Hannibal Lector being escorted to the maximum security ward. The combined efforts of Joe, Tony, my friend Kevin Coughlin, and myself were applied to the problem of extracting the Joetator from the van without heading Steve. I'm happy to report we were successful. I stood there looking at my new bike. It didn't have a skin over the fairing frame (that was my finishing job) but it was basically done. It was my bike now. I actually own another bike built by Joe, I've seen various bikes he's built and I'd seen the Joetator in various stages of its construction. You would think that this would have prepared me. You would be wrong.

You remember how you saw the first "Alien" movie and it was pretty scary and then you saw the second movie with the bunch of Aliens and they were scary but then near the end of the second movie you saw the Alien queen and you went "Oh My God!"? "Oh My God!," I said. "Yeah, it turned out great, didn't it?" Joe said. "Wow, it's... ummm... big." I stammered. "Yay," Joe flipped up the canopy. The Joetator looks like a cross between a beached whale and a wingless fighter plane. The fairing/rollcage makes it a bit tricky to get into, but I manage. Yeah, it's like I remember but it seems so big. The feeling is like a mirror image of the feeling you get when you visit your old elementary school and realize how tiny the desks are. We all have places to go and things to do so I'm spared having to do too many minutes of my ride-crash... ride... dance in front of an audience. Later, it's early evening and I'm alone with the bike. I approach it with caution, which is what Joe himself recommends. "You can't let a bike like this go to your head. Just because you can run over animals and smash into cars and come out unscathed doesn't mean you should do stuff like that." Right, I
really shouldn’t do stuff like that. But the bike is big. Really big. I realize that I’d always seen it in on the wide streets of Joe’s neighborhood. In my neighborhood, it’s a monster loose in the village. Kids who regularly yell out “Cool bike, Mister!” as I whiz by on my Rocket now cower in terror and hide behind their mother’s skirts as I lumber up to an intersection. I feel like I should file a flight plan every time I want to go for a ride.

On the first night I own the Joetator, I pull a muscle in my back as I try to jockey it into my carport. “I thought these bikes were supposed to be GOOD for your back,” my lovely wife quips. She is not one of the Joetator’s biggest fans.

I never get used to the bulldozer steering of the side sticks. It’s an odd combination of sluggishness that suddenly becomes a fierce over-steer. I try to explain this to Joe. “The steering sucks!” I explain. Joe presses me for details. “Sucks how? Too slow, too fast, what?” “Yeah!” I say, “that’s it. It’s too slow and too fast. At the same time! Can you change it?” “Nah, I’ll build you a new bike.” That’s one of the problems with Joe, once he gets a new idea, he wants to build a new bike which explains his continuously expanding fleet.

But I’ve learned more about myself, too. The Joetator isn’t a bad bike. It’s a great bike... but not for me. I like bikes to be little, fast, cute, zip-around bikes. Joe likes vehicles. Big, fast, frightening ones that are bikes, too, but a different kind of bike than what I ride.

A few weeks later it’s the Seattle Bike Expo. The whole RCN gang is there: Bob, Tony, Steve, Joe and me. My pal Mike Ewing had taken the ends off a really big trailer to help me get the Joetator down to the Expo. It’s being shown off along with various other bikes including my latest toy, a tiny SWB low racer built by John Williams, raced at Yreka, California in the ’92 IPFW event, retired, and then rebuilt and customized by Tony Licuanan and now dubbed Pillow Bike (more on this later).

I have no intention of bringing the Joetator back home with me. I have to work up the nerve to tell Joe. I find him at the swap meet. I’m just getting ready to launch into my “It’s not the bike for me” speech when Joe says, “Would you mind giving up the Joetator? Tony’s got this buddy who’d really like it. You know, it’s not your kind of bike anyway, you’re more of a SWB guy.” Like I said before, Joe is a genius.

A month or so later I met Richard Lanier. We started talking bikes and then Richard starts describing his latest bike. “Joe built it. It’s amazing, about twelve feet long...” “You’ve got the Joetator!” I interrupt, “How do you like it?” “Well,” he says, “it’s really something. I’ve got to change the steering, though... it really sucks.”

Joe Kochanowski (right), Richard Lanier (left) and Grant A. Arnold (back) hold up the Joetator. Richard is now the proud owner of the bike.—Cindy Licuanan

Check out Kent’s cool web site at: http://www.halcyon.com/peterson/bentkent.html. The unofficial site for the NW Low Down and Laid Back Recumbent Riders. See NW riders Bob Bryant and Steve Nash ride a well-known ’bent trike on two wheels.

May/June 1998 49
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GREENSPEED RECUMBENTS
Blatant Opinion

Una‘Benter Manifesto

By Joseph Kochanowski

A person’s strength comes from within oneself and not from one’s car....

My primary transportation for the past several years has been a recumbent streamliner. A bike like this, with at least a roof and a windshield, lets me wear basically the same attire all year round no matter what the temperature and weather. I don’t need rain clothes or sunscreen and I don’t dress like an Eskimo in the winter.

It’s been my experience that all the world’s scientific proof and broken speed records will not convince anybody to ride a recumbent. To achieve this you have to show people that recumbents WORK! This means having a real vehicle that they can see being ridden day after day, season after season, in various weather conditions over a long span of time. By riding my streamliner I am a living testament to the practicality of the recumbent streamliner as a vehicle for daily transportation.

Many experts in the field of automobile design and industry, cycling gurus and bicycle advocates have told me that streamliners will never see popularity. I don’t agree. Whenever I ride a fast streamliner like the Moby, Rotator Super Seven or a famed Tour Easy with side panels, people are interested. The faster it goes, the more interested they become. However, most people are unaware of streamliners and have never seen one. Conventional cycling is seldom seen on TV, in movies or in the general pop culture and awareness of streamliners is almost zero. But when people see my streamliner riding around on the street—they remember the bike—and they remember me.

Currently there is no mass-produced state of the art streamliner that any ordinary person could buy and safely use for transportation. I have concluded that since THE WORLD HAS FAILED to produce one in the past 50 years, I have to build the thing myself. I just cannot wait for the likes of Trek, Schwinn, the Japanese, the Europeans or Tim Brummer to include all the specifications I need in one package.

SAFETY... A good Streamliner has a top speed of at least 50 mph on flat and/or rolling terrain and cruises all day at 35. It is stable on slick roads and self-centering in crosswinds. The most important feature would be the "CRASH PROTECTION." A good sales promotion would show one being run over by a truck with very little injury or none to the rider. A head-on collision into a solid object (like a brick wall with a crash test test dummy) at 15 mph with no injury should be possible. A cargo capacity for such things as lawn mowers, a full set of golf clubs or a 24-foot extension ladder would be helpful. All this would be in a package that fits into the back of a pick-up truck and weighs about 60 pounds. This is what I need to escape the evil empire of the automobile.

My current machines are about 100 lbs, after installing all the usual equipment (lights, spare parts, tools) and I sometimes carry a 50-pound cargo of groceries. When someone asks, "How do you ride a 150 lb bike?", I answer, "Real men ride heavy bikes." A heavy bike also turns any short ride into a major workout. This helps keep me in shape. I don’t need the latest yuppie, inomercial exerciser. Most car drivers are so weak that they need motors to move themselves around.

MOTIVATION... Money and ecology don’t motivate me. I am going to tell you why I must ride a recumbent streamliner. First of all, I would rather fly, but I am not permitted since the FAA does not like anybody to take off and land on their own driveways or the local supermarket parking lot. Now, I am forced to use the government roadways.

Automobile innovation has been a dead end for the past 50 years. The research...
desperately needed is from the vast untapped potential of the human body. A Human Powered Vehicle is the most technologically advanced machine on earth. I seek to improve the human machine. A person’s strength comes from inside oneself and not from one’s car.

My foundation of good streamliner building is bargain hunting. The difference can be finding NOMEX honeycomb for 50 cents a pound at the “Lazy B Ranch” (Boeing Surplus) or using plain old corrugated cardboard. I scavenge and recycle old bike parts, go to swap meets, recycle bikes and braze my own frames. I collect materials like titanium, polycarbonate, honeycomb, fiberglass, stainless steel, cardboard, and other high-tech stuff to create a bicycle, which gives me the confidence to solve any problem. I AM IMMUNE to adversity.

CHALLENGE...is a good thing. But the only real challenge in driving an automobile is to earn enough cash to pay for it. A Human Powered Vehicle puts it all to the rider’s mind, spirit and body. There’s something to gain even for those riders who only ride for exercise or to go to work. The benefits go beyond fitness. Commuting is paramount. This challenges my mind, riding day after day, year after year. The most useful skill that I’ve learned is the development of my sixth sense. Riding a streamliner helps to develop confidence in my skills. A properly tuned mind (conscious or subconscious) can sense in advance when red lights occur, when cars appear around turns and where “mineshaft” potholes are located. Therefore an HPV commuter becomes immune to adversity, since danger stares you right in the face at all times. A good HPV rider understands that courtesy is the fuel that keeps our transportation system running smooth.

The words “self-confidence” are a reason to those who have sold their souls and freedom in exchange for the vehicles the BIG CAR COMPANIES and BIG GOVERNMENT command them to use. I live on less money than many yuppies spend on their cars. One local rider told me his two cars cost him over $1,000 per month when all expenses are paid. We are turning into a nation of people who no longer improve ourselves. I do not need someone else to tell me that I am too weak to transport myself anywhere I wish to go, under my own power and untailed.

The typical government roads are made for large, heavy, fast car-free cars. I know riders of frail lightweight bicycles that only ride on smooth, low traffic roads and bike paths. I choose not to surrender the roads to cars but to build and ride a rugged, fast machine that is designed for the real world and not some smooth-paved, skinny-tire racer wannabe fantasy.

ROAD RAGE...Since my unique vehicle attracts a lot of attention, I must always set a good example in traffic. If a motorist follows me and wants to go faster, I will not get in their way. Road rage is a fight over the poorly designed government roadways. There is nothing to gain for any winner in the dispute. Any motorist who wants these crummy roads that bad can have them. In the capitalist world inventors like Edison, Ford and Bell have earned the respect of everyone. I try to earn the same respect from motorists by building and riding an HPV that can compete with cars. I am either treated with inventor respect or I am so funny that nobody wants to fight a comedian. I ride thru the valley of the shadow of death. I fear no evil because I’m riding the meanest, most frightening, menacing vehicle in that valley.

NATURAL HIGH...Riding a streamliner is a way of getting a natural high. I am against drug use, alcohol and/or cigarettes. People can drive an automobile wasted or drunk, that could cause their own death or the death of others. Cars are far more dangerous than bikes. You cannot do this with Human Powered Vehicles. If you cannot balance yourself, you get nowhere. And if you get killed by trying, then you deserve it for you are responsible for your own actions...your own life.

TAKE ACTION!...I am not here to change the world or the opinion of others. I am here only to improve myself. I am not afraid to take on the challenge. I have been mostly alone in this quest and am not willing to say, “Let someone else take care of it.”
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RCN Letters Cont'd from page 8
Compacts and riders combos don't meet this criteria. Moral to this story: Find hills to climb and climb them...and climb again. --Bob, RCN

DISHONEST, DEVIANT 'BENT RIDERS
Thank you for the "So You Want To Build

A Recumbent" publicity in RCN#42. If readers would like to purchase our booklet, write to: Steve Donaldson, Secretary British Human Power Club, 15 Station Road, Aberdeen, Scotland AB21 7BA. Please include $7 US dollars in cash, £Sterling, Eurocheques, Canadian Postal Orders, postal orders in £ are fine, but US Postal Orders and personal checks are a big no no!

Enclosed is a section from one of my dictionaries which shows that we may share a language across the Atlantic but not it's usage: Bent: dishonest, illicit. Sexually deviant. Note sure you want to project an image of dishonesty and deviancy.

Best wishes and keep up the good work.
Steve Donaldson

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May/June 1998
ALABAMA—North Georgia: First Sat./month, 9am. Hokes Bluff, City Hall. Call Dave Tel. 205/492-3454 or burgess@cybtyme.com
CALIFORNIA—Watsonville: 3rd Sat./month @ 9:30am Easy Racers Tel. 408/722-9797.
CALIFORNIA—LA area: 3rd Sun., 10am at Burton W. Chace Park, Mindanao Way, Marina Del Rey, CA. Chris Broome, Tel. 310/823-2464, cbroome@usa.com.
CALIFORNIA—Orange County: 2nd Sat./month ride to the beach. Meets at People Movers Call Jim Tel. 714/633-3663.
CALIFORNIA—Palm Alto: Call Alvin Chin Tel. 650/571-5147 or chin_alvin@hotmail.com.
CALIFORNIA—San Francisco BARC (Bay Area Recumbent Cyclists) 1st Sat./month, 10am @ Mill Valley Plaza in downtown Mill Valley. Any weather. Zach Kaplan Tel. 415/381-5723 or zakkaplan@earthlink.net.
CALIFORNIA—San Diego: Last Sat./month from the Mission Bay Vis. Ctr. Bill Volk Tel. 619/824-8323, bill Volk@lightspan.net
CALIFORNIA—Sacramento: Recumbent Riders of Sacramento. Rides along the Am. River Pkwy. Gary Tel. 916/601-8312, Dave @ 916/463-4435 SacBent@aol.com
CALIFORNIA—San Dimas: EZRiders (~30 mi. E of LA) Most Sat. 20-50 ml. (workouts) Sun. 10 - 20 ml.(social) odonnell@xsls.xerox.com or & ischeetz@cybtyme.com
CONNECTICUT: Recumbent Yankee Pedalers meet 2nd Sun. @ 9am. Dave Tipping Tel. 203/484-2937, nz1j@juno.com
FLORIDA—FOOLS CROW CYCLES, LASERR. (Tallahassee): Call Ed Deaton @ 904/224-4767, edde@freenet.tih.fl.us
IDAHO—HAILEY (Sun Valley area): Bob or Reggie Tel. 208/788-5433.
ILLINOIS—Chicago: WISIL Len Brunakula, 260 S. Channing, Apt. #1, Elgin, IL 60120-6619.
ILLINOIS—Chicago: Fast Eddie Gin Tel. 773/237-5984.
ILLINOIS—Champaign/Bloomington: Tom Smith Tel. 217/351-7305, tsmith@s.pych. uiuc.edu for info.
KENTUCKY—Bent group forming. Mike Reilly Tel. 502/491-0328, mreilly@bellsouth.net
MASSACHUSETTS—North Shore: Riders wanted! Contact: Bob Hicks Tel. 508/774-0906.
MICHIGAN: Michigan HPV Michael Eliasohn Tel. 616/982-4058.
MICHIGAN: Wolver-bents (S.E. area); Meets Sat. @ Willow Metropark Pool shelter, Mar.-Nov. 9am. Bob Krzewinski, 706 Dwight St., Ypsilanti, MI 48198, Tel. 313/487-9058, BobMch@compuserve.com. http://Recumbents.com/Wolverbents/
NEW MEXICO—Albuquerque: Ride one Sunday morning per month. Contact Hester at Absolutely Recumbent Tel. 505/345-7736.
NEW JERSEY—Metro Area Recumbent Society (MARS) 3rd Sunday from the George Washington bridge (NJ side) Contact John Tetz, Tel. 973/584-6481; E-Mail: jtetz@aol.com.
NEW YORK—Rochester: RARE (Rochester Area Recumbent Enthusiasts) Hank Walck Tel. 716/265-4267; Michael Brison Tel. 716/461-5084; Dave Larson Tel. 716/235-4116.
OREGON HPV ASSOC.: Ride contact: Jeff Wills Tel. 503/254-3736, jwills@ pacific.net OHPV, PO Box 614, Beaverton, OR 97075
TN/NW GA/N. AL—Chattanooga: Easy Chair Rec. Bikes Tel. 423/886-1499, easychairbikes@att.net
TEXAS—Houston: Ride 2nd Sun. @ Katy HS. Contact Pat @ 281-347-3627 for start time.
UTAH—Riverdale: Comfortable Crotch Club Brett Rodgers Tel. 801/399-2447.
WASHINGTON—Seattle/King County: NW Low Down & Laid Back ‘Bent Riders: Weekly rides, email for calendar update. Bob Tel. 253/631-5728, DrRecumbent@aol.com
WASHINGTON—Spokane: Meet 2nd Sat. 9:30am @ SIRTI parking lot east of Fairfield Inn, Jeramiah & Karen EZRIDER CycLES Tel. 509/752-4249 jmginn@famrc.org
WASHINGTON—Vancouver: Meet on the 3rd Sat., 9am from the Old Holland Bakery, Gale Simpson Tel. 360/801-1947.
WASHINGTON—SE: WRTW2* Two Wheelers, Recumbent Riding Trombone Teachers of Walla Walla. VonBreno@bmi.net
WASHINGTON DC AREA: W.H.I.R.L. Every Sat., 8am (9am winter) @ Viers Mill Rec Center. http://www.recumbents.com/whirl
WISCONSIN—Madison: Recumbent Brigade. Last Sat. 9am@ State St, corner of the Capitol. May-Sept. mfox@lse.wisc.edu
DO YOU WANT TO START A GROUP? Send us a listing similar to those you see here; keep us updated and on your mailing list.

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Recumbent Cyclist News #45
• 1998 RECUMBENT EVENTS CALENDAR •

- WHIRL BIG RIDE
  May 16, 1998
  Tel. 703-314-3044 www.recumbents.com

- MIDWEST BENT ROUND-UP
  May 23, 1998
  Hales Corner, WI
  Wheel & Sprocket Tel. 414/529-6600

- HPV Development Series
  May 9 & 24, 1998
  San Diego, CA (SD Velodrome)
  Bill Volk Tel. 619/624-8323, bvolk@inetworld.net

- MIDWEST RECUMBENT RALLY
  May 30-31, 1998
  Stevens Point, WI
  Hostel Shoppe Tel. 715/341-BIKE

- MICHIGAN HPV RALLY
  June 6, 1998
  Waterford, MI
  SASE TO Michael Eliasohn, 2708 Lake Shore Dr., Apt. 307, St. Joseph, MI 49085. Tel. 616/682-4058

- CRATERS OF THE MOON BENT TOUR
  June 6-7, 1998
  Sun Valley, Idaho
  Bob Cummins, True Wheel 209/789-5433 Call to reserve a spot. 120 m!. great food, scenery & friends.

- hpz HPV RACE SERIES-WATERFORD
  June 8
  Waterford, MI (Sportsman Center)
  Gary Hill, 220 Vill-Egde Dr., Granville, OH, 43023.
  garihill@nextek.com www.recumbents.com

- hpz HPV RACE SERIES-Delta College
  June 7
  Bay City, MI (Delta College)
  See hpz contact info or Michigan HPV Rally above

- HPV DEVELOPMENT SERIES
  June 13, 1998
  San Diego, CA
  Bill Volk Tel. 619/624-8323, bvolk@inetworld.net

- BOSTON RECUMBENT RALLY
  June 13, 1998, 9am
  At the half-shell on the esplanade
  Contact George Reynolds Tel. 617/332-7327.

- EASTERN CANADA RECUMBENT RIDE
  June 21, 1998
  Wolfville Nova Scotia, Canada.
  Kevin & Denise Baker, 120 Capri Dr., Porters Lake
  NS, Canada. scooter.baker@ns.sympatico.ca

- SLUMGULLIAN TOUR
  June 25-29, 1998
  Angletours Tel. 719/687-7475

- WORLD SPEED CHAMPIONSHIPS
  June 24-27, 1998
  Indianapolis, IN
  See hpz contact info

- hpz HPV RACE SERIES-NORTHBROOK
  July 18, 1998
  Northbrook, IL (Northbrook Velodrome)
  See hpz contact info for updates

- RECUMBENT ROUNDPUP
  July 12, 1998
  Ogden, Iowa
  1-800-245-2981 www.thobikebar.com

- BIKE CULTURE WEEK
  July 18-25, 1998
  York, England
  See Bike Culture Magazine

- CYCLEFEST '98
  July 29-Aug. 3
  Lancaster, England
  John Bradshaw Tel. 010 441524 32878. Fax 010 44
  1524 847472. J.Bradshaw@UCM.ac.uk

- 5th ANNUAL 'BENT EVENT
  August '98 date to be announced
  Mt. Airy, MD
  Mt. Airy Recumbents Tel. 301/831-1515.
  Email: Abike@aol.com

- hpz HPV RACE SERIES-ELKO
  August 8-9, 1998
  Elko, MN (Truck Driver Training Facility)
  See hpz contact info

- hpz HPV RACE SERIES-KENOSHA
  August 29, 1998
  Kenosha, WI (Kenosha Velodrome Night Racing)
  See hpz contact info

- hpz HPV RACE SERIES-ELKO
  August 30, 1998
  Burlington, WI (Auto Test Facility)
  See hpz contact info

- HPV Development Series
  Sept. 12, 1998
  San Diego, CA (SD Velodrome)
  Bill Volk Tel. 619/624-8323, bvolk@inetworld.net

- PEOPLE MOVER'S BENT BASH
  September 5th, 1998
  Orange, California
  People Movers Tel. 714/633-3663

- CENTRAL ILLINOIS BIKE RIDE
  September 5 & 6, 1998
  Contact: McLean County Wheelmen, Box 947,
  Bloomington, Illinois 61702 or Jerball@adcom

- INTERBIKE TRADE SHOW
  September 11-14, 1998
  Sands Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV
  Tel. 714/376-6161

- hpz HPV RACE SERIES-OHIO
  October 1998
  Columbus, Ohio
  See hpz contact info

- hpz HPV RACE SERIES-FLORIDA
  November 1998
  Tallahassee, FL
  See hpz contact info

- RACE CONTACTS:
  -hpz HPV RACE Contact Info: Gary Hill, 220
  Vill-Egde Dr., Granville, OH, 43023.
  garihill@nextek.com www.recumbents.com

  -San Diego Velodrome: Bill Volk Tel. 619/824-9323, bvolk@inetworld.net

- RIDER GROUP CONTACTS:
  -See RCN rider-group listings. These are usually
  enthusiast groups with volunteer leaders. Make
  it a point to stay in contact with them as many of
  the groups meet weekly and ride in local organized
  recumbent rides.

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May/June 1998
World Speed Championships for Human Power
Indianapolis, Indiana  June 24-27, 1998

Indianapolis Raceway Park
June 24
1 Hour Time Trial - .62 mile oval
30 min. Road Race - 1.2 mile track
.125 mile drag race - NHRA track

Indianapolis 500 Speedway
June 25
.deciMach 200 Meter Sprints
WSC 200 Meter Sprints
.deciMach 200 Meter Sprints

Indianapolis Speedrome
June 26
200 Meter Sprints
1000 Meter Pursuits
Last Man Out Races

Indianapolis Waterfront Plaza
June 27
100 Meter Water Sprints
1,000 Meter Water Circuit
Bollard Pull

Human Powered RaceAmerica

HPRA is a national hpv racing group dedicated to providing the best locations and events for all participants. Through our system of racing classes and our 12 race (17 races for 1998) series, we promote speed, technological evolution, and most importantly fun! Come race with us at the WSC and see what other forward thinking HPVers are up to. Carbon fiber, full suspension, front wheel drive, fully faired streamliners, unfaired street cruisers... you name it and you will see it at the WSC.

.deciMach Human Powered Speed Dash

The .deciMach is the new land speed prize for HPV's. Designed to promote new efforts at pushing the upper envelope of human powered vehicles, a prize of $18,000 is offered for the first HPV to break one tenth the speed of sound, 75 miles per hour. Annual prizes of $1,000, $500, and $250 will be offered for the best speeds at each years event.

Further Information: large self addressed envelope to:  
e-mail garriehill@nextek.com  
web page www.recumbents.com  
Garrie L. Hill
220 Vill-Edge Drive
Granville, OH 43023
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FREE FLITE BICYCLES has added recumbents from Rans, Vision and BikeE to our large inventory of HPV's. We have a wide selection of parts and accessories as well as Atlanta's premier service department. Speak with Free Flite's resident bent-head at (770) 422-5237, or see us on the web freeflite.com (GA/45)

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USED 'BENTS
FOR SALE: 1996 Double Vision Recipient tandem. Very good condition, with IPS and several other upgrades. $3,100. For more information please call 970/223-8521 or email jimitchell@webaccess.net. (CO/45)
FOR SALE: 1997 EASY RACER TOUR EASY SS. medium, red, Super Zippier, rear rack, dual WB cages, computer, <1000 miles, one-year old. Chuck Tasca, Tel. 206/765-1711. (ID) Email chinuckach@diml.net $1400. Seattle delivery too. (46)
FOR SALE: LEMLE LIGHTNING CYCLE TAILWIND LWB USS. steel, emerald green inner paint, sliding mesh seat, Shimano 21-spd., thumbshifters, 28-451 20" ft. wheel, 700c x 24 r. Many innovative features, many extra included. < 2 years old. Fits 5'2"-6' tall, $1000 firm incl shipping. Shar Tel. 954/370-4804 or email sharleenhard@mail.car.com (FL/46)
FOR SALE: RANS V-REX: 24/20, Sachs 3x7, Magura, brakes, lights, computer, metallic green, fenders, high-back seat. Frog Speedplay pedals, excellent condition. $1400 firm Tel. 250/584-4454 (CAN/46)

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RECYCLE CLASSIFIED ADS

DEALERS

FOR SALE: 1995 ATP VISION SWB VR40A SWB, Teal, LWB conversion, 16" and 20" front wheels and forks, underseat steering, seat bag, lightly used. Owner 6' tall 75 years old switching to EZ1. $825 Bill Myers Tel. 518/873-7376 (45)

FOR SALE: 1997 RANS STRATUS LWB, custom metallic red paint, 3x76-speed, upgraded chain, crank, fenders, new seat tubes, English, Avid cantilevers, Angletech truck, upgraded bottom bracket, 37" frame, <400 miles, Exc Cond $1499 + SH Tel. (days) 703/866-5038; evenings 703/756-1217 (45)

FOR SALE: '96 RYAN VANGUARD, black, 24/42/ 52 crankset, Lovely machine, but need a SWB. Perfect condition. Will deliver within 700 miles $1100. Tel 435/649-9613. PO Box 161, Park City, UT 84060 (UT/46)

FOR SALE: LIGHTNING P-38 XT, med. frame, blue, 700C/16", 250 miles, 1-year old, computer, 21-speeds, coroplast body. Tel. 609/399-4795 (NJ/45)

PARTS
ALENAX DRIVE SYSTEM. This drive uses a linear motion similar to a stair stepping machine. These cost $125 wholesale. We are now selling them for only $40 (plus $10 shipping). The kits contain all unique parts including a hub that drives on both sides. Call 970/224-3013 with your credit card number or send certified funds to Bike Works, 1725 S. College Ave., Fort Collins, CO 80525 (47)

FOR SALE: VISION ZZIPFER FAIRING & mounts, brand new with 30 miles. Paid $400, sell for $250. Tel. 203/393-3680 (45)

FOR SALE: SPEEDPLAY X-2 ROAD PEDALS Like new (10 miles) $110 postpaid. Lee 253/841-3526 (WA/47)

TOUR PARTNERS
RIDING FROM COSTA RICA TO COLORADO
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CD/VIDEO

May/June 1998 57
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USED 'BENTS
FOR SALE: '96 LIGHTNING P-38, only 2000 miles, XL frame. Comes with Super Zippier fairing and seat bag. $2500 new, asking $1500. Would like to sell it in the Seattle area is possible. Call Ray 206/632-1078 (WA/46)

FOR SALE: EASY RACER GOLD RUSH REPLICA, LWB ASS, polished frame, medium Super Zippier, composite front fender, XTR shifter, XTR rear derailleur, XTR cogset, XTR Rapidfire, wireless computer, 24-speed 2-WB eng, 2200 miles, rack, excellent condition, $2650 + shipping. John Pezza @ mel2000.com, John Tel. 425/774-1700 (WA/46)

FOR SALE: EUROPEAN RECUMBENTS
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FOR SALE: ‘98 BikeE RoadE Air Tech 21-sp., black, new barely ridden, Aero rims, Air shock, includes new Dia Compe shock pump $1100. New BikeE Zippier $350; BikeE seat bag $60; Two accessory mounts $25 each. Tel. 619/452-3839 (CA/46)

FOR SALE: '95 Lightning Stealth, brand new upgrades include Shimano STX rear derailleur, new chain and GripShift. Excellent $595 Tel. 508/785-1931 (MA/46)

FOR SALE: '97 ATP DOUBLE VISION TANDEM recumbent, IPS (independent pedaling system) under 500 miles. Excellent condition $3,000 + shipping. Scott Henry Tel. 720/658-3309 or oldtimeportraits@ dewis.com (46)

FOR SALE: '98 Rans Roadster, 42" frame, above-seat steering, Gold with red custom Rans-type handlebar bag/after, VG condition. Fits riders 5’3” to 6’, great entry-level recumbent. A dream to ride! $950. Tel. 904/692-2375 (FL/46)
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May/June 1998
TAIL SECTION

NEWS YOU DON'T WANT TO LOSE

▲ RCN 1998 SCHEDULE
For 1998, we WILL NOT have a traditional buyers' guide as in years past, but instead a new RCN SUPERGUIDE! With the idea of bringing more current up-to-date coverage, larger, more attractive regular RCN issues and in favor of subscription growth, we have opted out of the yearly buyers' guide format. Instead, we will have part of the buyers' guide in each RCN issue that we publish throughout the year. Along with the SuperGuide, there will be all of your favorite regular features in each and every newly expanded RCN issue. If you want to get your RCN issues faster, please consider upgrading to deluxe.

✔ RCN #43 Jan/Feb '98 Compact (CLWB) Buyers' Guide / 98 Editors Choice Awards and How To Buy A Recumbent Bicycle
✔ RCN #44 March/Apr '98 SWB Buyers' Guide
✔ RCN #45 May/June '98 LWB Buyers' Guide / Recumbent Seat Shootout
✔ RCN #46 July/Aug '98 Tandem/Trike Buyers' Guide / Accessory Guide
✔ RCN #47 Sept/Oct '98 Homebuilder Special/SuperGuide Update
✔ RCN #48 Nov/Dec '98 1999 Season Preview

▲ CHANGE OF ADDRESS
If you move, don't forget to send in your new address! RCN mails in bulk, and the post office DOES NOT forward bulk mail. If you don't send in your new address, we won't be able to find you!

▲ CREDIT CARD ORDERS
We do not accept credit cards, though our agent, People Movers does. Give them a call at Tel. 714/633-3663.

▲ AD RATES
Give us a call and we'll happily mail our commercial ad rates.

▲ MISSED ISSUES
We do everything possible to ensure that you get RCN delivered six times per year. Sometimes the USPS misplaces them. If you missed an issue, give us a call at 253/630-7200.

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ABOVE-SEAT STEERING (ASS): Handlebars above the seat. Knee or frame-attached steering. A standard bicycle type steering similar to that of a hot rod/ Stingray type bicycle of the 60s.
ALUMINUM: AL or Alum. A lightweight durable, tarnish resistant material.
BAR-ENDS: Handlebar extensions most often used on USS bikes to bring the controls closer to the rider.
BOTTOM BRACKET: BB pedal axle & bearings, sometimes called boom-bracket.
BRAZING: A frame joint is created by flowing brass around the tubing junctions. Builders then either file/ sand the joints smooth or leave them natural.
CARBON-FIBER: A high tech, high strength composite material that is black in color.
C.G.: Center of gravity.
CHAIN-IDLER: A modified skateboard wheel, derailleur pulley or custom-made wheel that carries the chain slack on SWB and some LWB models.
COMPACT: CLWB or MWB recumbent.
COROPLAST: Plasticized cardboard that works great for homebuilt recumbent faiings.
CLWB: Compact Long Wheelbase 47°-54°.
CroMo: Chrome-moly steel.
DELTA: Two-wheels in the rear trike design.
DOM: Drawn-over-molded. This is a type of higher quality Hiten steel.
FWD: Front Wheel Drive
GEAR INCHES: Formula used to determine range of gears: front chaining divided by rear cog multiplied by drive wheel dia.
GRIP SHIFT: A trademark of the SFW Corp. A brand of twist-grip shifter.
Hiten Steel: High tension or mild steel.
HPV: Human Powered Vehicle.
INDIRECT STEERING: Underseat steering via a rod linkage that connects the handlebar to the fork.
KEYLAR: A high strength, bulletproof composite material that is gold in color.
LWB: Long wheelbase 60°-71°+ (crankset low and behind front wheel).
LOW-RACER: A SWB recumbent built as low as possible for HPV racing (may exceed our wheelbase range for a SWB).
MAGURA: A high quality, strong German hydraulic caliper brake.
MID-DRIVE: A mid-ship mounted, wide-ratio, two-chain drive freewheel shifted by a rear derailleur.
MTB: Mountain bike.
MWB: The same as CLWB. Formerly used to describe long SWB bikes.
NEXUS: Shimano's internal 4-speed hubs.
PEDESTAL STEER: Pedal-induced steering input that makes the bike more difficult to track straight. This generally happens on SWB models with wheelbases of less than 39" or a very laid back head tube angle.
RWS: Rear-Wheel Steering.
SWB: Short Wheelbase 33°-47° (crankset high and in anagoo or front wheel).
TRQ WELDING: Tungsten-Inert-Gas; a proven no-lug process common with MTB's.
SACHS 3 X 7: This is the Sachs internally geared three speed with 7-spd. freewheel (21 speed total).
STEERING ROD: The steel or aluminum rod that connects the fork to the bars.
STEERING STRUT-RIser: An ASS extension that rises from the stem or head tube to raise the bars over the legs.
TADPOLE: Two-wheel in the front trike design.
UNDERSEAT STEERING (USS): Steering via handlebars beneath the seat.
V-BRAKE: A new and strong style of cantilever brake the has high arms in a "V" formation.
X-SEAM: A measurement used for recumbent fitting. This measurement simulates the distance between the seat back/base cut to the farthest reach of the pedal stroke.
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May/June 1998 61
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