

Spokesperson

Newsletter of the Ottawa Bicycle Club – Founded 1882



January-February 2005

Welcome to the 2005 Cycling Season



Renewal Time:

This is the last newsletter you will get with your 2004 membership regardless of when you joined the Club last year. A 2005 membership application is enclosed.

If you want to get the March newsletter with all the program details, you need to renew now.

Calling all Writers and Photographers:

This month we have 3 articles written by our members. (*Editor's note: Thank you Trevor, Sandy and Sally*). We welcome all articles and photographs about your cycling adventures.

In this Issue

The President's Message.....	3	Annual Good Friday Time Trial	8
Upcoming Touring Events.....	4	2005 Paris-Roubaix.....	8
Rideau Lakes Cycle Tour 2005	4	2005 Racing Events Plan	8
2005 OBC New York Intrepids.....	4	New Club Jersey.....	10
Spring to Virginia.....	4	It's Barely Bicycle News.....	10
Spring in North Carolina.....	5	Announcements	11
Vermont.....	5	Calling all Teen Riders	11
Summer's End Tour	5	Volunteers Wanted To Assemble Bicycles.....	11
Day Tours & Events.....	6	Club Socials.....	12
2005 Touring News and Start Dates:	6	2004 Awards Banquet Photos.....	13
2004 Racing Results	6	Written by OBC Cyclists.....	14
Randonneuring	6	Tackling the Trail!	14
Racing	7	Finding Fausto in Amalfi	16
2005 Racing Season	7	Rocky Mountain 1200 km Odyssey.....	18
New Year's Day Time Trial.....	7	Highlights: Minutes Dec OBC Board Meeting	20
2005 Open Time Trial Season.....	7	Classy Ads	20
Wanted: New Open Time Trial Coordinator.....	7	Bike Shop Discounts	23
Schedule of Racing Events.....	7		



**Written by OBC Cyclists
(Not only can we cycle but we can also write)**

Tackling the Trail!

by Sally Datars

The Cabot Trail is inarguably a scenic wonder made all the more magnificent when you experience it on a bicycle. Better yet, on a bicycle sans panniers. One fun and inexpensive way to do this is by signing up with Atlantic Canada Cycling, a one-man tour company run by Gary Conrad. Gary works very hard to see that all the cyclists in the tour have a great time at the lowest possible cost. The big advantage of this tour is having your belongings carted to and from your overnight stops. For \$125 you can't ask for much more; but in fact, you get three meals among the other perks.

Anne Patton organized this trip for Gunter Hauschildt, Lucy Cole, herself and yours truly. Bruce Young and his brother Greg joined the four of us in Baddeck. Over the Labour Day long weekend, we rode the Cabot Trail counterclockwise from Baddeck to Ingonish, Ingonish to Cheticamp, Cheticamp to Baddeck. What follows is my personal account of the adventure.

Day One: Crescendo: Baddeck to Ingonish

We begin the first leg of the trip in 12 degrees and pouring rain. At breakfast Gunter comments how the weather reminds him of Rideau Lakes 2000, a memorable day of pouring rain and cold temperatures. We try not to hit him. We all wear pretty much everything we brought in the way of warm clothing. Relinquishing vanity, I wear the shower cap provided in our room at the Inverary Inn Friday night. Gunter bought a box of freezer bags and we all wore a pair on our feet. The first few hours are cold, wet, but fast and rolling. Trees obscured whatever view might have been beyond them. Stopping wasn't an option. We are constantly amazed at the lack of preparedness we see in other riders, some wearing shorts, others short sleeves too. Then there were those who have rented mountain bikes or there is the older gentleman on his bike-Friday

who fares remarkably well up the steeper pitches.

As the day begins to clear three hours into the ride, the landscape opens up and the coastline comes into view. In fact, you can hear the waves crashing before you can even see the ocean. The road reaching up Smokey Mountain looms before us. The road winds up the mountainside at a fairly steady 10 percent grade for 2.1 km. After that effort, we are rewarded by a long but gradual descent around the other side of the mountain down into Ingonish Bay. After 11 more km, we arrive at the Seabreeze Motel, our home for the night. The sun shines brightly for a couple of hours, enough to dry our clothes and shoes for the next day's ride. Most cyclists on this tour are camping at a nearby Provincial Park but those who "motel it" get equal if not superior service from Gary and his crew. We are taxed to and from the campsite for our evening meal and our luggage is delivered and picked up the next morning in a timely manner. As an added bonus, Gary makes the trip back to our motel after dinner to fix Lucy's rear dropouts which got bent during the flight, rendering her top two cogs unusable, causing her to have to walk up some hills and even worse, for the first time accept a sag, which she has begged the group to keep a secret. Tomorrow she will have the use of all her gears, and she will need it. Gary has outdone himself.

Day Two: Climax: Ingonish to Cheticamp

Heading into Neil's Harbour just off the beaten path that is the Cabot Trail, the road is hillier and much windier than the previous day. After a very brief shower (two minutes?) the sun is shining and we are enjoying the improved conditions and the boundless ocean view. We don't know it yet, but the highlight of the trip awaits: the descent from French Mountain along the Gulf of St. Lawrence. But we have a long day ahead of us, due in part to the frequent stops for picture taking. I have seized Lucy's digital camera for the day and I am out of control. My passion for photography has been re-





awakened by the visual feast that is Cape Breton. North Mountain is our first big climb of the day. Green valleys drop below the road to the left and mountains rise above us to the right. The road winds around the mountainside and there are many opportunities to pull off the road and look at the view. A gusty headwind makes the climb more challenging and the grade increases from 8 to 12 per cent over 4 km. There are several cyclists walking. The temperature peaks at 20 C but once at the top, and the hard work done, we need to put our jackets back on. Mackenzie Mountain is less daunting but there is a bull moose loping along the woods' edge and if you are not from moose country, this is worth stopping for. At the top, more panoramic views of the ocean unfold before you beyond the canopy of Balsam fir. The trees are strangely stunted due to the shallow, rocky soils.



Lucy Cole near French Mountain

Next up: the view from French Mountain. Lucy and I sacrifice a speedy descent for the sake of capturing the highlands and gulf coast on film. This section of road affords some of the most spectacular scenery anywhere. It must be seen to be appreciated and no better way than on a bike. Unfortunately the whales are too small to discern but the tourists in the parking area at Cap Rouge are excited nevertheless. The road continues to undulate until at long last we reach our humble lodgings nestled in the lush, green mountains -the Parkview Motel.

This evening we are close enough to walk to the campsite. It's been a long day and there isn't much time to shower before going for dinner. The weather is superb: cold but clear with no chance of rain. The food is good and ample: spaghetti, two kinds of sauces, salad and various decadent squares for dessert. After we eat, Gary hands out our tour souvenir t-shirts. This year's colour is orange. We feel we are getting more than our money's worth. The dinners at camp give us delicate-types the opportunity to mingle with the other riders, few of whom we ever see out on the road. They are all good

sorts and we have lots of laughs. Many are from Ontario; some from Virginia and as far as Australia. We get to know a few and occasionally see familiar faces in restaurants at breakfast and lunch but while we are riding, it feels a bit like we are out there alone.

Day Three, dénouement:

The morning begins chilly (7C) but warms up rapidly while we are at breakfast, which means removing some layers before departure. I have lost my energy of the previous days and the headwind steals my enthusiasm. Cheticamp is a harbour town with a quiet bay to our right. The mountains become hills and the views are lovely but not on a par with Sunday's. Both the traffic and the roads are much worse. Nevertheless, the flatter terrain allows us all to ride together as a group. Lucy is cheered when Gunter becomes her domestique. (Lucy's note: Usually a domestique is there to support the strongest member of the team, but in this case Gunter is definitely helping the weakest member. My bike is all fixed – but my legs could use a little help). The day is marred, albeit briefly, by a crazed motorist who tries to cause Gunter and Lucy to crash into the back of his truck. Fortunately he is unsuccessful. We continue to ride along the coast for miles. Pretty. Once the ocean disappears from view, it is still lovely, hilly countryside spotted with lakes, ponds and rivers. There is one climb today, thanks to a detour that helps us avoid the main highway: Hunter Mountain. 2 kilometers at 8-10 per cent. The descent is long and straight and therefore fast. It was a great way to end the trip, almost. For the last 10 km, we ride the main highway into Baddeck with the wind at our backs. How ironic: For ninety-five per cent of the trail we fought headwinds. Some say, the clockwise direction is better. Surely the winds would be more favourable, but I enjoyed the views and the climbs the way we did them.



French Mountain approaching the Gulf Coast

For more information go to: <http://www.atl-canadacycling.com/>

