

# Summer Newsletter

July 2021

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## 24 Hours of Booty

Rick, the club VP, is organizing another great 24HOB. The club has two options.

The first is the Charlotte event on the famous "Booty Loop". This is a fun and impactful event, with a \$400 fundraising minimum.

The second is our local event in Rock Hill. This is our "unlooped" event, taking place at St. John's Methodist Church in downtown Rock Hill. There is no fundraising minimum for this event.

The 24HOB is a wonderful event for a great cause. You can find more information on the ride and read some of the success stories at the 24 HOB website, <https://www.24foundation.org/>.

What impact does the 24 HOB make? One benefactor, Sylvia, can vouch for the support the



# ROCK HILL BICYCLE CLUB

Rock Hill, South Carolina

## The President's Corner

It's summertime! So many great opportunities for riding our bikes together and engaging in a cycling community that is thrilled to be riding together again on and off the roads in a post Covid world. Our Monday Night Ride time has moved to 6:30 and is a great way to kick the week off!

Our new Youth Cycling Program Director, Bob Reppert, is focused on bringing opportunities with the RHBC to the youth of our area. Reach out to Bob if you have any questions or youth that are interested. He brings so much talent to this arena.

Time trials are underway, and Tim O'Donnell and his team are doing a great job leading this effort. More info and results can be found on our website under the Rides tab.

RHBC was an event sponsor for the May USAC Sanctioned Track races at the Rock Hill Velodrome which was full of Friday night excitement but was rained out on Saturday. The next USAC race is July 24, 2021. These races are fun to watch, so if you have not been to one, give it a try.

Track Certification classes are underway monthly.

Stay hydrated, focus on health, and follow the rules of the road for safe cycling this summer. Anything you would like to bring to my attention? please reach out to me at [President@rockhillbicycleclub.com](mailto:President@rockhillbicycleclub.com).

24 Foundation gives. She is a metastatic breast cancer survivor, and thanks to the dedication of the 24 Foundations, she discovered renewed fullness to her mind, body, and spirit. She found hope during the pandemic, thanks to services shifting to online. When you register or donate to the 24 Hours of Booty, you give survivors the same gift of hope and healing.

## Wednesday Crit Course Derbys

These have been such a big hit that Steve is going to extend the races. The following dates have been added: July 7 and 21, August 4 and 18, and the final night September 1.

## Advocacy Update



The RHBC was honored to donate \$1000 to the Anne Springs Close Greenway to help build a skills track for youth mountain bikers. Youth cyclists are the future, and this is one step in our endeavor to promote activities and partner with others to get kids on bikes.

## Member Highlight: Marshall Nord

In June, Marshall participated in the Race Across the West, a 930-mile race from Oceanside CA to Durango CO. The route passes over mountain ranges and through deserts, with temperatures reaching 118 degrees. With a six-person support crew working with him, Marshall finished 4<sup>th</sup> in his age group in 3 days, 16 hours, and 32 minutes. That is quite the ride. Congratulations Marshall.



## Follow Us

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## Did You Know?

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The 2021 Fall Harvest ride will be held Saturday, October 16. Some of the changes: The long route will stretch out to 66 miles and avoid hwy 5; we hope to add a third option, a 45-mile route. Details will be finalized soon, so stay tuned for updates.

## From the Competition Director

Principles and Practices of riding in a PELETON

By Coach Steve Lehman

There are few things in cycling more gratifying or more productive than a group of riders (peloton) organized and riding for the common good. Assuming all riders being equal, it stands to reason that several cyclists riding together and sharing the work at the front will outperform the individual rider. This is not always the case. If a group of riders do not work together properly, they are likely to work harder, become frustrated and lose focus of the goal, peloton integrity. The irritation of riding in an unorganized rabble has been the undoing of many a fine rider caught in it, and the benefit of the rider who has broken away. Personally, over the years I have posted many individual breakaway victories simply because the chasing peloton could not get organized. Here are a few principles, definitions, descriptions, and observations that I hope you find helpful in understanding the dynamic of and proper behavior in the peloton.

**Trust and Predictability** - These are the basic tenets for riding a bicycle, especially when riding with other cyclists. Your riding skills must elicit trust from other riders and to get that trust you must be predictable. You should ride a straight and predictable line, make no erratic moves, never overlap wheels and be completely attentive to the ebb and flow of those around you. You should look at nothing but see everything. Use your peripheral vision and keep your head up. Do not stare at the wheel in front of you or the back of the rider's head. If you have a focal point, it should be in front of the rider in front of you, much as you do when you are driving a car. Never brake abruptly in the front or middle of a group of riders. This can (will) cause the following rider to run into either you or your bike and if they manage to avoid you, they may veer into a rider or riders next to them. Either way abrupt braking can cause catastrophic crash/injury. If you must stop first indicate so, move to the outside (right or left) of the group and adjust your speed, gradually. Likewise, do not jump to fill a gap, because it will create a gap behind you and affect the rhythm of the group. If you must slow, feather your brakes, and continue pedaling (like riding the brakes in your car). Eat or drink when you are at the back of the group or rotating to the rear in the recovery line.

**The Proper Hand Position** – There are two things you should consider about proper hand placement on the handlebars, your safety, and the safety of those who follow you. First, let us consider your own personal safety. You should be able to ride in all hand positions, on the “drops” (the lowest part of a handlebar, most aero), the “hoods” (with hands on the brake/shift lever hoods, not as aero as the drops) and the “tops” (the part of the handlebar that is between the stem and the brake

levers, and least aero, but comfortable). If you are riding aerobars, time trial or triathlon bars you should be familiar and practiced with all positions, but never ride in the extreme aero position when riding in a group. You are too far from the brakes and cannot react quickly to the typical ebb and flow of a peloton. This is the same precaution a rider should take about riding on the “tops” in a group of riders. The tops and the extreme aero positions are extremely dangerous when riding on another rider’s wheel. I had a teammate and friend, Alex, who was a seasoned racer, but was caught on the tops when the rider in front of him hit the brakes to avoid a rabbit. My friend hit that rider’s rear wheel and catapulted into a ditch. Upon contact he heard a sickening snap in his neck and never felt anything from his shoulders down for the next twenty years of his life. Never take a chance regarding proper hand position on the handlebars.

**Slip Streaming or Riding on the Wheel** - This is the basic principle of and reason for riding in a group of cyclists. Following in another rider’s slip stream or draft allows you to achieve the same speed as the leading rider with less work. This is simply due to the fact that you do not have to punch the hole in the air or wind. That is, you have less wind resistance than the rider in front of you.

**Single Paceline** - This is the most common formation of a smaller, sub-group of riders who are working at the front or are off the front of the peloton. It may look like a double paceline because riders appear to be riding two abreast at times, but it is quite different. In the single paceline the riders are actually not two abreast, but two columns. One column, let’s say the riders in the column on the right (shoulder of the road), are advancing (moving forward), while the riders on the left are recovering (moving back). As the rider moves forward in the advancing line they will eventually arrive at the front of the group. The rider will then do their “turn” at the front (maybe 5 - 10 seconds) breaking the wind for the group following. At the end of their turn, they will swing over to the left in a gradual and predictable manner to the recovery line (column) to start their drift back until they are the last rider, then swing over once again to the advancing line. Done properly the single paceline looks, from above, like a revolving oblong.

**Double Paceline** - This is the most common formation when riding in a large group of riders. In this formation you ride two abreast. In traffic the group should be as close to the right shoulder of the road as is safe. Riders should also be riding in a tight formation, close to the rider next to them and wheel-to-wheel slightly staggered, dependent upon the direction of the wind. The riders in the front should be taking the wind head on and riders behind sheltered, so the stagger would be away from the wind or following riders being somewhat on the lee side of the rider in front of them. This is referred to as riding in an echelon. At a reasonable interval, possibly on the minute or so, the riders at the front will peel off to either side, the left rider moves left, and the right rider moves right to allow the next two riders to advance to the front through the opening they have created. Thus, the next two riders are now the

nose of the formation, while the previous two leaders drop to the rear of the group.

**Half-Wheeling** - Ever been on a ride when it is a gorgeous day, a “smell the roses” kind of day, no wind, no need to hammer, but the guy next to you is riding just ahead of you? No matter how you try to stay abreast the rider remains just a half wheel or half bike length ahead. Well, he or she has placed you in what is known as “Half-Wheel Hell”. Are they just trying to show you and the trailing pack how strong they are or are they intentionally trying to humiliate you? Either way, it is not cool.

Half-wheeling is a semi-aggressive act of riding just ahead of the rider next to you. The object of the half-wheeler, whether intentional or not, is to maintain this dominant position, show how strong they are and make their partner (in a two-by-two formation) work (hurt). In most cases (unless you are intentionally trying to disrupt the peloton for, let’s say, a teammate who is up the road in a breakaway, this is inappropriate and not cool. The main purpose of a peloton is to protect the riders behind the lead riders while, through rotation, sharing the workload at the front. Any unnecessary undulation in effort or pushing of the pace will jeopardize the integrity of the peloton. Half-wheeling will eventually lead to either the partner being dropped, the partner trying to match the advance, or the partner getting angry and attacking the half-wheeling offender. Any of these responses to half-wheeling will effectively jeopardize the integrity of the peloton.

I can honestly say I cannot recall being half-wheeled by a top amateur or professional rider. Half-heelers are generally riders who are inexperienced in the etiquette of group riding.

So, how should you respond to half-wheeling? Just ask him or her to stop half-wheeling. Any other response could have a disruptive and negative effect on the peloton. If this does not work, then swing off the front, drift back and find another partner. Sooner or later the half-wheeler will realize half-wheeling is not cool.

**Pushing The Pace** Let’s say you are in the paceline of a peloton, or in a breakaway, or in a chase group and you want to increase the pace of the group. There is a right way and a wrong way. The wrong way is to pull through with a dramatic increase in speed. This action will open a gap between you and the rider on your wheel. This rider will be forced to increase their speed to match yours or ride unprotected into the wind in the wide gap you opened. He will now spend a much longer time fighting the wind than necessary. Your acceleration will not only increase the following rider’s workload, but will reduce their recovery time, as well. This will reduce their, and probably your, effectiveness in working for the group or peloton.

Steve, of Steve Lehman Tours-Coaching, is the Competition Director of the Rock Hill Bicycle Club.

## From the Youth Cycling Director

First, I would like to thank the Rock Hill Bike Club for recognizing the USAC and other cycling programs aimed at getting kids at any age on bikes and making it not only fun, but a lifetime sport. This sounds like it's a big undertaking on this initiative, but it's really not. It simply starts with talking to people. You see kids in your neighborhood always riding bikes...right? You've seen "that kid" on the bike that's just a bit too small or a bit too big, right? Why not start a conversation with him/her about that bike? When they are tired and walking the bike back (never did this as a kid and still don't) Simply, say to the kid, "how far did you ride today?" or "Have you ever thought of racing bikes or just learning how to make it more fun?" or even..."do you know where the velodrome is?" If you have kids or are approaching them in a "non stalker" kind of way, 99% of the time if the kids know you, they'll stop and talk to you. The first step is that simple...just start a conversation about bikes. You don't have to use the prompts I gave, but something to help get them interested in what Rock Hill Bike Club and I would like to start to see and that's more youth on bikes.

### **How can you help**

Did you know that many youth in the Rock Hill, Fort Mill and Charlotte areas don't even know anything about what's available to them as far as bike riding goes? Many parents aren't cyclists and if not well marketed or advertised, the great resources we have...well, are simply overlooked. This is what myself, my wife and RHBC are going to change and we need your help to do it.

Here are some key points the club needs to help develop our youth program:

- We need youth bike donations...all sizes, makes and models. Note: If you'd ride it..it's good enough. If it needs a little work (i.e. new brakes, tires or tubes) we'll still take it! What we really need at this moment is:
  - 4 road Bikes - we have youth (tweens and teens) that have reached out to RHBC members about joining us on a Monday Night Ride. This is a great way to increase their interest and get younger riders on this great course.
  - Spare Equipment - have a front wheel you're not using? Don't know what to do with that saddle that's been in the garage for years? This is a sample of the type of equipment needed. Got stuff and have questions? Great - email me at robert.reppert@gmail.com and I'll let you know if your donation is what we're looking for.
  - Youth ages 6-10 interested in programs and Youth ages 11-18 interested in programs we will run.

When do I want to get started? Asap, with some Wednesday night activities at the criterium course parking lot, keep your eyes out for posts on the Rock Hill Bike Club group site for updates. Right now, much of my concentration is focused on Track Nationals, July 15-21. I have 3 juniors I will be coaching at this event, and they are, Benjamin McCall, Anontio Kutas, and Mia Bareth. This is the first time at the National level for all these young athletes. I'm hoping to make this a great experience for them and their training and hard work makes them very competitive in Trexlertown, PA. If any of them should come home with a medal, it is just the icing on the cake.

**Future concerns:**

If you have youth that already knows how to ride without training wheels...great. If between the ages of 6-10 yrs old, I would like to develop a "RHBC Pee-Wee Peddler Program" that teaches this age group essential bike handling skills on a set course in the Velodrome parking lot and then simple skills at the bottom of the track to get them "use to riding" the embanked track. This would be an 8-10 week course that would lead them into another level program once "graduated" in their skills. Pee-Wee Peddlers would also teach them very basic bike mechanic skills like pumping up their own tires and how to check the air pressure in them.

I would like to start this program in September of this year as an after school program or simply on a Saturday morning from 10-12. If we can focus on these two aspects right now, and get out there talking up programs and finding kids who love riding bikes and want to learn more about the bike they have and how it can grow with them, keep them coming back for other programs, this is the goal and main focus of the youth program development.

Outside of the above future program, I am working on developing programs over the fall/winter for both road and track cycling that the kids will be riding at least 3 days a week for either.

I'm hopeful this summer, the RHBC will host a "Let's Ride Camp" but USAC hasn't provided the needed information yet for this newsletter, but that doesn't mean that we can't think of our own camp, again, I will post to the facebook page once I have more details. Here's a link to what USAC is offering in their camps, <https://usacycling.org/lets-ride-camps>, It is a fun program which is much like the BRL program in Trexlertown PA that is still going strong today. This program has a waiting list there and I'd like to spark the same kind of interest in our youth here.

I understand none of this will happen overnight, but with your help and dedication, we can get the programs and ideas evolved into a fruition,

and make the RHBC a place for juniors, just as it has for the majority of you reading this.

My wife, Heidi, is also looking to begin a Women's Track Clinic (as she once developed when employed there) that is only for women to get certified on the track over several weeks. She'd like to begin this in October or when the track stops certifying riders for the year, so that it doesn't conflict with City of Rock Hill Velodrome scheduled times. Is your wife/girlfriend/female friend (whatever you call her) interested in riding but not on the road? This program is for her. It's not meant to attract women who are track racers, the program is designed simply to promote women riders on the track, develop a fitness/riding program that works for everyone and get certified as well to ride as you please once you completed the 6 week program. The important part is to get women's butts on bikes and make it a fun, enjoyable experience that they have the confidence to ride anytime that fits her schedule, after she's completed the program.

Live long, ride on and prosper!  
Bob Reppert