



**Save the Date!**

**44<sup>th</sup> Annual Brandywine Bike Tour  
Sunday, August 25, 2019**

*Nancy Moyer*

Covered bridges,\* cute towns, crazy big vistas! Cycle all-paved, low-traffic roads on this fully supported Tour of lush, rolling Chester County horse farm country. Our longer routes will meander into Amish farm areas of Lancaster County and visit our iconic Slumbering Groundhog rest stop. Five rest stops in all will serve a varied menu including bagels, hoagies, pizza, vegan/vegetarian options, and much more.

What sets the Brandywine Bike Tour apart from others is the beauty and challenge of each route due to rolling/hilly terrain. So sign up today and let your training begin for this very special Tour of a

magnificent landscape. Delaware Valley Bicycle Club is pleased to offer five gorgeous routes, all of which are new/improved this year (except the already wonderful 24-mile route):

- 24 miles – Roll past horse farms everywhere Approx 1,300 ft climb
- 50 miles – Our “easiest” 50 in years, with more flat roads than ever; enough hills that you’ll take notice. Approx 2,600 ft climb
- 67 miles – Whoa. Hills. Approx 3,300 ft climb
- 82 miles – O.M.G. Hills Approx 5,000 ft climb
- 100 miles – Most bodacious hill challenge. Approx 6,000 ft climb



Two riders enjoy the scenery at the 2018 BWT

## **DVBC Ride Report**

### **Le Tour De Raz 2019**

*Emil Skobeloff*

The skies were gray and the wind was blowing. But, 4 hardcore riders mounted their trusty steeds at 320 Produce in Swarthmore. (Why do I hear strains of The Good, The Bad and the Ugly?) Dave H., Chuck C. and Gino B. and I headed south to ride along the Chester Creek, which, full from the recent rains, looked more like the Chester River. Knowlton Road provided a prolonged climb as we rode towards Concord Road. They didn't believe me when I said I chose to ride sweep. 😊

A few deep breaths and a very long traffic light provided sufficient recuperation. And, off we went to pick up Andy M, who perfectly timed our arrival at Concord and Convent Rds. All I could think was, "Oh great! One more great climber to kick my B- butt." But, the 4 of them were very gracious in their willingness to make me feel adequate in their A- presence.

We pedaled over the rollers of Foulk Road to Zebley Road and Marsh Road. Dave H. kept checking in with me about my route intentions so he could get in a few more zealous pedal strokes as we headed south, crossing Rt. 202 to Rockland Road by Nemours Children's Hospital.

Rockland Road is usually a mix of rollers that also provide some energy saving downhill. But, fierce winds out of the west negated any advantage I may have hoped for. At the base of Rockland, we turned a sharp left and another sharp left and mustered our energies for a brief 20% steep, but, short climb, and less challenging (think 5-6% grade) climbs and rollers through the bucolic fields and woods of Greenville, DE., benefitting from the long anticipated arrival of sunshine and blue skies.

At last, we came to Rt. 52 and PureBread Deli for a satisfying lunch. Realizing the worst climbs were behind us we felt inspired for the return ride into and through Wilmington and Governor Printz Blvd. But, the winds shifted and the anticipated tail winds we thought we had earned were not to be. The final 14 miles were leg busters.

Andy bid farewell at Chichester Road. And, the remaining quartet soldiered on to 320 Produce, hot showers, a cold IPA for me, and a berth in front of the big screen in the man cave for playoff football, hot wings and Pico de Gallo, and the Eagles' nail biter victory over Da Bears!

My stats (including a round trip ride to and from 320 Produce) were: 45.6 miles, (43.0 for the actual ride) 13.2 mph, 2181 calories, 2,106 feet of climbing and 2:26 of riding time. Average temperature, as promised, was 50 degrees.

I think we all had a great time. See you next time for another adventure.

## **Gear Lab**

### **My Booties Are Better Than Your Booties – Our Favorite Winter Riding Gear**

*Nancy Moyer*

It's another cold, wind-swept day in the Delaware Valley. What are DVBC'ers to do when they can't resist the temptation to get out and ride? Fortunately, we live in an era when winter riding gear can be quite effective at keeping you warm without drenching you in sweat. Ideally you want to ride without getting overheated and having to remove layers. But it seems that never happens, so it's nice to have pockets where you can put things. Otherwise you will have to remember the location of that rock on the side of the road where you left your leg warmers.

In talking with fellow DVBC winter riders, it seems everybody has something they love that makes winter riding almost pleasurable. Here are some suggestions if you want to join the frozen wheel brigade:

Mark K. says lobster claw gloves are a must. I just bought myself a pair and have to agree. However, Sabine C. takes the minimalist approach and simply recommends handwarmers. On Amazon you can buy a whole box of individually wrapped 7-hour hand warmers for about \$28. As the temperature plummets I'm pretty sure Sabine's suggestion is the way to go. Ed W. swears by his ear band – cold ears are a bummer. An ear band is great for 50-degree days, but as it starts to slip down into the 40's or below, you might want something more heavy-duty. Taylor S. sports a skullcap he got at Performance. It is 86% polyester and 14% spandex and has extensions to cover his ears. This fits nicely under the helmet; some over-the-helmet covers may leave you looking like a UFO. Club President Rich A. will not be caught riding without his winter cycling shoes. They are insulated and impermeable. The rest of us wrestle with getting booties over our riding shoes. Emil S. raves about his Bontrager fleece-lined booties because they keep his tootsies warm, thank you very much. Yes, he really did say that. Marian V. sings the praises of toe covers inside her shoes. They fit over the toes like a sleeve. Then you can layer on booties or whatever else you need to keep your feet warm. She assures us our toes won't get sweaty with all the layers. Kathleen M's favorite piece of winter gear is her signature wool neck buff. It keeps her face warm when needed and she can also pull it over her head for even more warmth. Very versatile.

As for me, it's all about keeping my core warm. I like wearing a wool, long-sleeve cycling jersey under a wind-stopper jacket. I sometimes

get tearful missing my down-filled ski jacket from past winter seasons, but have to concede that having a real thermal cycling jacket is better fit-for-purpose. This listing of winter gear is not exhaustive – is there something you consider indispensable? Sorry, plane tickets to Florida do not count. Happy winter cycling!



Sabine examines an embarrassed Taylor's layering approach

## **DVBC Around The World**

### **Küthai Climb – October 2018**

*Taylor Sproul*

Last fall, I rode in Innsbruck, Austria right after the UCI World Championships were held there. After two days of pleasant weather (in the mid-50s and sunny) spectating the pro races, I rented a bike the next day despite temperatures in the high-30s and pouring rain. I wanted to try my hand at a proper alpine HC climb. A few miles west of Innsbruck there is the forbidding Küthai climb. It's a mountain pass above the Inn Valley that reaches 6,617 ft of elevation. The climb itself gains 4,760 ft of elevation in 15.5 miles at 6% average grade, passing through the towns of Sellrain, Gries im Sellrain, and St Sigmund on the way to the ski resort at the summit of Küthai.

I picked up my rental bike in Innsbruck, to the surprise of the staff who offered to reschedule me for a day with better weather. Undaunted by my total lack of proper cold/wet cycling attire (rain wasn't forecasted when I packed), I declined. Within the first 7 kilometers, my chamois was soaked with cold water, as were the hiking boots I was wearing. Each pedal stroke squeezed cold water in between my toes. After about 10 miles of riding a flat bike path through farmland along the river, I hit the base of the climb in Kematen. The gradient wasn't too steep, but the climb was relentless. I passed through a short tunnel, which gave me a respite from the rain but made me acutely aware of my lack of lights or reflectors. Sellrain passed uneventfully. At Gries im Sellrain, I stopped for a few minutes for a futile attempt to wring the water out of my socks and shoes. However, I was feeling good – I was almost halfway up! Shortly afterwards, I encountered the first (but not the last!) true test – the Kreuzlehn segment, 1 kilometer at 13% average grade.

According to Strava, Emanuel Buchmann climbed it at 7.4mph, Steven Kruijswijk 7.0 mph, Wilco Kelderman and George Bennett 6.9 mph. I managed a drastically less impressive 3.8 mph (good for 1,886<sup>th</sup> place!), content with the fact that I managed to make it up without stopping.

The victorious feeling after Kreuzlehn was short-lived. As I rolled into St Sigmund, the temperature dipped below freezing, and the rain turned into snow. Foolishly, I kept going. Towards the end, the snow was blowing hard in my face and accumulating on my sunglasses and helmet. There were two more longer poorly-lit tunnels. I



finally emerged onto the summit nearly 3 hours after beginning the climb. I was greeted with a landscape like Silent Hill: grey, foggy, lifeless. I shouldn't have been surprised that a ski resort was a ghost town in October, but that was merely the latest in a long string of questionable decisions that had led to this point. I found one convenience store that was open, and purchased some cookies. It took a few minutes for my fingers to defrost enough to tear open the packaging. I stood there trying to warm up, the snow on my helmet



gradually melting. Finally, I figured I wasn't going to get any warmer and I knew I had to get back to Innsbruck by dark, so I left.

Open up Bicycling magazine and you'll see pristine Alpine descents with perfect pavement, sunny skies, and beautiful hairpin turns, with fit guys in immaculate kit riding \$10,000 bikes down them at 50mph.



Unfortunately, this was not my reality. The road was wet with accumulated snow or running water in places. There were unlit tunnels and a notable lack of guard rails. On the way up, I was cold, but exerting myself enough to stay warm. On the way down, there's no pedaling to keep you warm. Just numb fingers slipping off of wet brake levers, my waterlogged fingerless summer gloves worse than useless. To my disappointment, every restaurant I passed was closed between lunch and dinner, and there was no place to warm up and get something to eat. I finally hit the bottom in the early (or perhaps intermediate) stages of hypothermia, celebrating with a stop in a grocery store for a pretzel. Only 10 miles of flat road left! Unfortunately, I only make it 3 before a piece of glass punctures my rear tire. Luckily, I had insisted that the guys at the shop give me a spare tube and a pump, so I managed a very slow tire change with cold fingers. With that fixed, I pedaled the final stretch into Innsbruck and crossed the same finish line where Valverde won his World Champion stripes 24 hours prior. There was no rainbow jersey for me,

but there was a hot plate of traditional Tyrolean Käsespätzle at the wonderful Theresien Brau restaurant in downtown Innsbruck.

Overall, I highly recommend the Innsbruck area as a cycling destination. Just make sure you go when the weather is nice!

## **Pro Cycling Spotlight**

*Taylor Sproul*

January's Pro Cyclist of the Month goes to Sarah Gigante of Australia. She races for the Roxsolt Attaquer team. The 18-year-old competed in the 2019 Australian National Road Race Championships earlier this month. She had previously won last year's Under-19 Australian National Road Race



Photo Credit: Wikipedia  
20180922\_UCI\_Road\_World\_Championships\_Innsbruck\_Sarah\_Gigante\_850\_6551.jpg

Championship. This year, she won the overall Elite Women's championship. After spending the day in the breakaway, she attacked on the penultimate lap of the circuit race (9 laps of a 11.6km circuit with a climb of Mount Buninyong on each lap) and no one was able to catch her. She won solo with a 50 second gap to 2<sup>nd</sup> place Amanda Spratt (Mitchelton-Scott). She will wear the green-and-gold Australian National Champion jersey for the rest of the 2019 season. Now she can add the coveted 'DVBC Newsletter Pro Cyclist of the Month – January 2019' to her already-impressive *palmares*.

# BONKERS

by Bob LaDrew



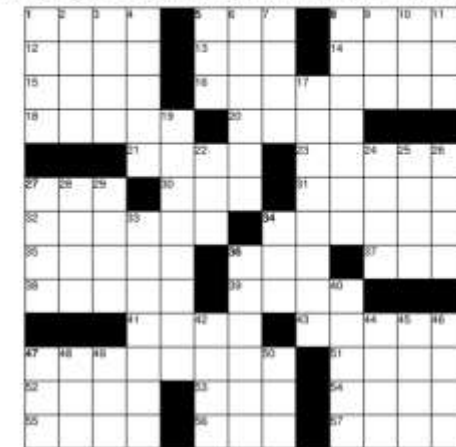
## State of the Bicycling Union

by Bob LaDrew

In this January frozen tundra maybe a biking crossword puzzle will help get you through your winter doldrums.

### ACROSS

1. Kind of bike brake
5. Govt. loan maker
8. City messenger's ride
12. Common perfume base
13. Wriggly zapper
14. Paved riding surface
15. Trifling
16. Sudden flats
18. Super hit
20. Come face-to-face
21. Finish line
23. \_\_\_ apso
27. NYC bus letters
30. Sch. near Chas. River
31. Like pot, in many states
32. Lance Armstrong home
34. Race climax
35. Wicker fishing basket
36. Rate of progress in Eur.
37. Cyclocomputer mode, briefly
38. Pass a statute
39. Work text over
41. Semi warning
43. Brands of some pedals
47. Davis and Taylor
51. Extremely frank
52. Gambling city on I-80
53. Org. overseeing air traffic
54. Actress Turner
55. \_\_\_ up (confesses)
56. \_\_\_-cone
57. Hard toil



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2. Juicy bit of news
3. Actress \_\_\_ Gilbert
4. Top of the hill
5. Mo. of UAE pro tour
6. Essential rider protection
7. Stuff in lotions
8. Andy Schleck, to Frank
9. Poker pot note
10. Kit \_\_\_ bar
11. Bradley and Asner
17. How Paul Sherwen often started a reply to his partner
19. US rider who got 8-year ban
22. Your own personal number
24. Money exchange fee
25. How to get rust off your steel frame
26. Palo \_\_\_
27. Mugger spray
28. Rotate the handlebars
29. Out in the yacht
33. Synth-heavy music genres
34. A kind of pedal
36. Chris Froome, by birth
40. Things to carry on ride
42. Riders in commissaire's cars
44. October gift, perhaps
45. Casino ball game
46. Unseen obstacle
47. Paid rider
48. Use an axe
49. Guesthouse relative
50. Paulo precader

### DOWN

1. Boulder and Aswan

## **Thoughts from the Editor**

*Taylor Sproul*

Thanks for reading the newsletter!

If you would like to contribute an article or photo to the newsletter, or if you have any other feedback, please contact Taylor via the DVBC website. Have you gone on a fantastic ride recently, or travelled somewhere awesome for a ride? If so, please consider submitting a [Ride Report](#) or a [DVBC Around the World](#) story to the editor.