

MONTHLY MEANDERS

Volume XXI No.11

The Wheeling Wheelmen

November, 1991

Safety Corner

by Dick Sorenson

BICYCLE SAFETY PET PEEVES

I'm sure each of you have your own personal pet peeves regarding the behavior and antics of some of your fellow cyclists as well as with many of the man-made obstacles tossed across our otherwise smooth path. It's those little things that gnaw at you and aggravate you during an otherwise enjoyable ride. Here are mine, selected from a personal list of hundreds, from a purely arbitrary standpoint, that are concerned with safety.

Riders who perpetuate the "toy bike syndrome." These are difficult to describe but are readily identifiable; "You'll know one when you see one": It's usually someone riding on the wrong side of the street, weaving or wobbling, semi-inflated tires, handlebars turned backwards, with no concept of safety or consideration. Of course, no helmet or any semblance of being a "pro."

People who smoke cigarettes while bicycling. (There's something paradoxical about it).

Riders who ignore the

"Jack..."

On Thursday Oct.19 we lost a member of our club, Jack Pohlenz. Jack killed by a car while he was riding his bicycle, something everyone of us shudders to think of.

Jack took up biking in early 1970. He did a lot of serious riding and a lot of miles with the Wheeling wheelmen. Jack didn't ride much with the club in his later years. He was no longer comfortable riding in large groups. Jack was part of the T.N.T gang (Tuesday and Thursday morning ride groups). I affectionately call this group my "Old Men". They're mostly all over the age of 70, but everyone of them could drop me in a minute. They allow me to ride with them. This is where I met Jack two years ago.

Jack was born January 21, 1918. He grew up during the depression. He left home at 16 and later worked his way through college, at the University of Colorado, and received a degree in Chemistry. He married at age 24, returned to school at M.I.T., received his Doctorate in chemical engineering and then went on to teach chemical engineering at M.I.T., and moved to the

Chicago area in 1950. Jack traveled a great deal, to Germany and Japan, with his job a Universal Oil Products in Des Plaines, where he was a chemical engineer in the research and development department until he retired. Jack has 3 children, Candy, Peter, and Sue, and 1 grandchild, Michelle.

Those are the statistics, but there was so much more about Jack that made him so special that made him the terrific person he was. He was probably the smartest, most intelligent person I knew. He never stopped going to school or learning. He was a scholar. At the age of 73, he was still getting another degree in electrical engineering. If there was something he wanted to learn he delved into the subject with a passion until he knew everything about that subject.

Jack was unassuming, soft-spoken, and quiet. He understood everything, yet never bragged. So very few people knew these things about Jack. You had to know Jack a long time or had to ride with him a lot to know what a special person he was.

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The Wheeling Wheelmen board of directors

President	Al Berman	541-9248
Vice President(s)	Carol/Woyteck	392-0530
Treasurer	Justin Himel	998-1326
Membership	Lisa Gerhold	803-3998
Safety	Dick Sorenson	593-7945
Newsletter	Craig Jorgensen	356-0692
Bike Books	Roy Erikson	381-5128
(All 708 area code)		

Club ride and information: (312)989-7373

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Safety Corner cont'.

"Rules of the Road". They disregard basic common sense safety rules, endangering themselves and giving us all a bad name.

Obnoxious, rude, discourteous bike riders. They're indiscriminate: They offend both drivers and other cyclists as well.

Bicyclists who endanger their young children. I hate to see cyclists carrying babies in back packs and other such paraphernalia, with no protection whatsoever for the child in case of an accident.

Casual family groups riding on the left side... or both sides of the street, the parents oblivious to basic safety rules and passing that ignorance onto their children.

Police that don't enforce bike traffic laws, even the most flagrant violations, until an inevitable accident happens.

Riders who pedal along with their helmets resting on the rear carrier, dangling from the handlebar or laid back behind their neck.

Skid Lid wearers. Yes, it is a helmet, But Is not ANSI standard and, under certain conditions, tests have shown they can actually increase the severity of a blow to the wearer's head.

Tourists with aero bars. Aero bars can create an unstable situation, especially on turns and are of minimal use for "tourers" and casual riders. (See Craig's article in the September issue)

Kids on bikes at night. Sometimes they are pure KAMIKAZE.

Subteen and teen bicyclists who ride too fast and too reckless on sidewalks, intimidating seniors and small children.

Wrong way, obnoxious

bike messengers who give us all a bad reputation.

Suburban sprawl and the heavy traffic and congestion it spawns. It's gobbling up the good rural roads at an accelerating pace. Remember when Cuba Road was quiet and relatively untravelled?

Loose dogs.

Left turns on busy highways.

Traffic signals that are activated by car mass, rather than timed. After waiting a few minutes for a red light that doesn't change, it's always tempting to ride through.

Timid drivers who tailgate bicyclists, unsure of when to pass, especially on hills. Worse yet, are those aggressive drivers who whiz by within two inches of your left elbow.

Yes, we all have sensitivity to certain quirks in our fellow man. Some are common to all of us. Others, many strike a cord to only a few or just an individual. If you have others, not mentioned in this article, please send them to me for a future Safety Corner.

NEWSLETTER INFO

1]. Your articles, stories, comments, etc. are welcome. Please send to Craig Jorgensen, 25625 Columbia Bay Drive, Lake Villa, IL 60046.

2]. The deadline is the 10th of the month preceding [e.g. May 10th for June newsletter]

3]. All submissions must be typed [double-spaced] to be considered for publication.

4] Ads will be run free for one month, for club members only. We do not sell advertising space, or provide mailing service.

5]. If you change your address: Call Lisa Gerhold 708.803-3998.

Gearing Up

Compiled by Craig Jorgensen

You may have noticed the box containing "Newsletter Info" in this month's paper. While this box is pretty much self-explanatory, we might as well go over the specifics.

Item one: Don't send stuff to the P.O. box, because it will take twice as long to reach me, and might not be able to be included in that month's newsletter.

Item two: The deadline. Very important. The deadline is and always was (at least since I've been editor) The TENTH of the month preceding the month that the copy will go in. In other words, June 10th deadline for July newsletter, etc. If that seems early, you have to understand that the finished newsletter mechanicals MUST be at the printers by the 20th of the month. Now that leaves me only about ten days to put this thing together every month, and that may seem like a lot of time, but I work a full time job, play part time in a band, go to school two nights a week, try to maintain a semblance of a social life, and oh, yeah... I like to ride my bicycle sometimes too. Anyway, it usually takes the printers about three days to run the job, and then the finished newsletters are picked up by Pat Marshall, who stuffs and addresses the envelopes. After she gets done, the Post Office needs three to five days to get your copy of "Monthly Meanders" to you. So if your newsletter is late, it's probably because someone gave me something late, and screwed up the whole process. Therefore, I'm going to be very firm about the deadline from now on. If I don't have your article on the

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"Jack"... from page 1

Jack was the epitome of a "classic" old world gentleman. Not only in his appearance, but in the way he lived, the way he treated people, the way he treated me, Jack may have been soft spoken, but he had his opinions and stood by them.

Jack was a perfectionist, and he was meticulous in the way he kept himself, his house his bike, his hobbies, his life. I can't remember a time when there was ever a speck or dirt on his bike, or that it didn't work mechanically to perfection. And if you were riding with him and he saw something on your bike that needed repair or adjusting, he was the first one to help. I remember walking out of a grocery store to see Jack and several of my "Old Men" working on my bike. Jack knew I was having trouble shifting, so there he was, not only adjusting the derailleur, but then showing me how to , so I would learn.

Riding with Jack was fun. There wasn't a subject we couldn't talk about that he did know of, so our conversations were always interesting and the rides went fast. Once when we were riding out of Binnie Woods on our Tuesday morning 50 mile ride, a strong head wind kicked up. Another rider and myself were having a difficult time keeping up and keeping going. All of a sudden, there was Jack riding in front of us to block the wind, and pace us. He did it in such a way that I didn't realize he was helping us, He came back as though he was just going to ride with us. it wasn't until we got back that I realized what he had done, but you see, it was the gentleman in him, when he helped you he did it in such a way that you didn't know it.

Jack was a very private person. I never knew he liked poetry and especially Shakespeare. But I did know he liked to repair watches (especially old pocket watches) he liked woodworking, was a gourmet cook, collected and liked old wines. Jack's daughter, Candy, told me that when they were small children, Sunday dinners had to be special. Out came the good china, crystal and linen tablecloths. Jack would buy a imported wine, which had to be toasted, discussed and experienced. Jack wanted to instil in his children the desire to learn, to experience, to be thinkers who were self-sufficient, and independent. I'm told by his children that Jack was a good Dad. And I bet he was.

I respected, admired and loved Jack. I miss him dearly, as do the rest of the T.N.T. gang, as will everyone who knew him. He certainly left an imprint on a lot of us. He'll not be forgotten. Good-bye Jack, you were much loved.

--Sandy Holzrichter



Wheeling Wheelmen

FOR SALE

18" Men's Schwinn Varsity. Excellent commuter bike. With bolt-on wheels, perfect for train station. Good condition. \$40 or best offer. Call Wayne Segedie at 631-1471

Please make sure if you are planning on attending the awards banquet, that you have your check sent in by the 1st of November.

Gearing up from page 2

tenth, It probably won't be published.

Item three: All submissions (other than short want-ads, etc.) MUST be typed!

I cannot and will not try to read your illegible scrawl! And listen, I'll be the first one to acknowledge it, but I'll never secure the nickname "Lightning" in regards to my typing competence. In order to save time I'm going to start using a hand held scanner to enter text. Hand written copy, in addition to increasing the error potential, makes it impossible for me to do that. Hand written documents will go directly to the bottom of the pile, and will most likely end up in the can, man.

Item four: Want ads are for the use of club members only, that's why they're free. We don't sell advertising space, and we don't provide mailing service either.

Item five: I don't control the membership list, Lisa does that (till next year anyway), so if you move or whatever just give her a call. (Some people have asked, but I don't keep any extra copies of newsletter on hand, sorry.)

Whew! I feel better now that I got that off my chest!

If you are a computer geek like I am, and have a modem, try calling the "Bicycle Bulletin Board", 619.720-1830, 2400 baud, no parity, 8-1. They have all kinds of cycling news available.

That's all for now
...OUF DA!

SAFETY CONCERNS FOR THE HARMON HUNDRED

It's a great ride, well organized, with excellent food, a terrific well planned route with the event orchestrated by a Hardworking cadre of volunteers. Truly, it's a big league, world class invitational. However, I Have rather serious concerns about lapses in safety precaution.

On September 8th, Ardie and I drove the sag wagon route between the Glacial Park and Woodstock rest stops. We encountered the usual number of bike breakdowns and tire problems. However, about mid-morning we heard, by word-of-mouth, of a serious accident at Burgett and Seaman Roads, near Hebron. We drove there to find a lone cyclist had spilled making a left turn at the intersection. The intersection was heavily graveled. He had a deep gash on one knee and a badly bruised shoulder. Naturally, we suspected the shoulder problem was a fractured collarbone. Ardie wrapped his knee, we loaded his bike on the roof rack and we headed for the Woodstock Hospital. One problem, we didn't know where the hospital was and just presumed it was on Route 47. Wrong: We ended up stopping randomly at a house to ask directions. Thank God we weren't dealing with a more serious situation.

This incident and others that occurred that day brought several safety problems--- not to mention, potential liability Problems, to light.

As a safety precaution, the gravel at that intersection should have been swept up. At the very least, a warning sign should have been posted to warn "left turn, heavy gravel" for oncoming riders.

Additionally, most other clubs would have had a person stationed there to warn riders.

As sag wagon drivers, we had no knowledge of where hospitals were

located. This should be basic information provided us.

We were asked to bring along a First Aid kit. I'm sure each sag carried their own version; each was probably of questionable use or dated. We should have been provided with a specific type of first aid kit equipped for the injuries we would likely encounter. Further, it would have been a good idea to conduct some type of training session on first aid for the sag drivers. Nothing extensive, mind you, but enough to get by and not get into trouble. The drivers should be able to identify heat-related problems, and hypothermia (cold weather problems) and hyperthermia (heat illness).

The club needs some type of Communication system for sag drivers and rest stop volunteers. Our only means of communication was to find a phone and call the Wauconda Orchards, asking them to find someone from the Wheeling Club. It was embarrassing! In this day of cellular phones, pagers, beepers, CB's and the like we don't have anything to oversee the activities of 1800 riders of widely varying riding skills and ages who are out all day over four different routes. I can only think of how lucky we've been to date. The communication equipment could also be used on selected club-rides.

We must require that helmets be worn by all riders. This is really basic. The only riders we lose with this rule will be the one we don't want in the first place. After all, if they don't respect themselves,

they certainly don't respect other riders.

We need to change our attitude regarding riders who have overextended themselves, have bonked, hit the wall, and are simply exhausted. The attitude has been that these people are unworthy of sagging back because they're "second-class," after all, they faced the challenge and were defeated. But these people are exhausted--- do we want them biking back, 30 to 40 miles in that condition? Why not rent a van for the day for the purpose of hauling those riders back to the start? I think that being exhausted is a legitimate reason to quit pedaling. To force someone back on the bike because there's no alternative means of transportation raises serious safety issues.

The Harmon 100 should have a safety oversight advisor. Such a person could look "over the shoulders" of each working committee from a safety standpoint, to be certain that safety factors are not overlooked in the planing and implementation to minimize risk.

My points are, for safety's sake, that it's time we plow back some of the money into the Harmon Hundred ride. It would be an investment in safety. We've been lucky so far, but that streak could abruptly run out. Let's make safety our primary concern on future rides.

By the way, the injured rider had cut his knee down to the bone requiring 10 stitches. His collarbone was okay. He figured that he'd be ready for another century ride by early October.

-- Dick Sorenson