



ChainLinks



The newsletter of the Cycling Advocates' Network (NZ)

Oct-Nov 2003



Bike for sale

A friend of mine is selling his bike for only \$50. It's only been used on the road before so it's pretty much in near-new condition. The paintwork on the bike frame is brilliant. Here's a picture, so let me know if you're interested...



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In this issue

Final creakings from this Chair	3
CAN Cycle-Friendly Awards finalists announced	4
A fanfare from our Treasurer	4
What the CAN committee has been up to	5
CAN Communications Survey Results	5
Bill's Supporters Hit the Streets	6
Patience is a virtue	6
"Trend need not be Destiny"....	7
Cycle news from Whangarei	7
Cycle Action Auckland's 'Cunning Rides'	8
Welcome to the Manukau City Vets	9
Cycling Strategy for the Kapiti Coast	9
Cycle Aware Wellington News	10
Transit NZ Cycling Champion Profile #2 - Simon Underwood	11
Ministry of Cycling	13
Course - Fundamentals Of Planning & Design For Cycling	14
Hot News from Transit	15
Cycling News from around New Zealand	15
New Research Confirms More Cycling is Safer Cycling	17
Connecting Cycling Conference - update	17
No Bikes Please, We're Tories	18
Second-hand bike Issue Resolved for Consumers	19
Letters to the Editor	19
A Coloured Perception of Cyclists	21
Quotable Quotes	23
A Pedestrian Way of Travelling...	25
New Bike in Town	27
Lean Back and Pedal... an Introduction to the Culty	29
Join CAN Now	31

Final creakings from this Chair

As you will have seen from the last *ChainLinks*, CAN will have a new Chairperson after the coming AGM. I am stepping down after four years - not because I don't enjoy the job, but because I believe that a change of personnel every so often helps to build a strong organisation which is open to new ideas and people.

It also offers a good excuse to look back, remember what has changed, and celebrate any progress that has been made. That is quite an overwhelming task!

If someone had told me four years ago that we would now be awaiting the release of a national *Walking & Cycling Strategy*, that there would be a dedicated Walking & Cycling Fund, that we would have a cycle-friendly employer resource promoted by a government agency, that the health benefits of cycling would be officially valued, and that it would be Government policy to 'promote cycling and walking', I think I would have smiled sadly and tried not to dampen their enthusiasm.

During that time, CAN has grown to be an enormously valuable organisation that can pull together the experience and knowledge of people from all parts of New Zealand (and other parts of the world too), and that can provide a substantial voice for cyclists when issues are being debated. So congratulations to all CANners for that!

Of course there is a heap more to do, and the more I look at information from overseas, the more I realise how much better things could be. One day I will be able to bike to work without being tooted at or squeezed past by drivers who don't think I should be 'in their way'. And the Prime Minister will normally travel by bike from her residence to Parliament (hey, it's all downhill) and back (ahh, yes - not much of a hill). And people won't assume that I "must be really fit" because I ride a bike (I'm not - cycling is too easy!)

So, my best wishes to the new Chairperson, and my deepest thanks to everyone for their enthusiasm and hard work. I've enjoyed being a part of it, and I'll be staying around to celebrate the next few revolutions.

Jane Dawson



CAN Cycle-Friendly Awards finalists announced

The results from the judges are now in, and we can confirm that the finalists for the inaugural CAN Cycle-Friendly Awards are (in no particular order) as follows:

Best cycle facility project:

- Christchurch City Council (Colombo St cycle lanes)
- Porirua City Council (Ara Harakeke Pathway)
- Christchurch City Council (Living Streets Programme)



Best cycling promotion:

- Waimakariri District Council ('Don't burst the bubble' campaign)
- Bike Wise (National Bike Wise Week 2003)
- Christchurch City Council ('Lighten Up' campaign)

Cycle-friendly commitment by business:

- Ground Effect (various initiatives)
- Sierra Cafe (cycle racks for patrons)
- Cycle Surgery (child cycling skills programme)

Cycle-friendly commitment by public organisation:

- Environment Canterbury (model cycling strategy)
- SPARC (Cycle Friendly Employer resources)
- Christchurch City Council (cycling strategy implementation)

The final prize winners in each category will be announced at the NZ Cycling Conference dinner on October 10th. Be there!

A big thank you to everyone who submitted nominations for the Awards, and to the judging panel (Jane Dawson (CAN), Glen Koorey (CAN), Richard Lindsay (SPARC) and Tony Smith (BIANZ)). 🚲

A fanfare from our Treasurer

CAN treasurer Andrew Couper writes: "After a participating in a saga of Nordic proportions since just after the CAN-Do in April, I am pleased to announce that CAN has now officially qualified for an exemption from income tax in terms of Section CB 4 (1) (c) of the Income Tax Act 1994 as an amateur game or sport promoter.

We are not seen as benefitting the public but rather as an advocate and lobbyist for changes on behalf of the cycling fraternity, working to influence the opinion of the public and the decisions of the relevant government & local authorities."

Many thanks for your persistence, Andrew! 🚲

What the CAN committee has been up to

collated by Jane Dawson

Here's a quick summary of the main items dealt with by the CAN committee on its email group since the last issue of *ChainLinks*, in no particular order:

- submission to Transit NZ on the *Cycling Design Guide*
- input to the formation of BikeNZ
- setting policy for CAN involvement in national working groups (including remuneration)
- helping with conference organisation
- sorting out CAN's 'tax exempt' status with IRD (finally!)
- organising the CAN Do and AGM
- encouraging and assisting member groups to attend the conference
- setting up the inaugural 'CAN awards', finding judges, designing trophies
- participating in the LTSA working groups on *Safe Routes* and the *Cycle Route and Network Planning Guide*
- feeding material to the webmaster to keep the website up-to-date
- promoting the 'Cycling Design Workshops'
- responding to requests for information from members, others in NZ and a few overseas people
- trying to source funding for a series of 'myth-busting' posters for promotional use
- submission to Transfund on the Simplified Procedures for Assessing Walking Projects
- participation in the BikeWise committee (Health Sponsorship Council) and working to try and secure funding for its continuation
- work on an application for a TV3 programme on cycling
- assisting with promotion of the BikeWise Business Bike Battle 2004 (part of Bike Week)
- organising the contributions to and production of this *ChainLinks* 🚲

CAN Communications Survey Results

A big thanks to everyone who have completed the CAN communications survey distributed with the last issue of our *ChainLinks* magazine. Your responses will be very valuable in helping to refine *ChainLinks*, the CAN website and e.CAN. Analysis of the survey results is being carried out now, and will be summarized in an upcoming issue of *ChainLinks*.

In the meantime, we're pleased to announce the lucky winners of the prize draw for five \$20 book vouchers:

- Jeremy Dunningham, Napier
- Monica Dance, Wellington
- Peter Wehrmann, Christchurch
- Gavin Tisch, Christchurch
- Catherine Bremner, Whangarei

Congratulations - your prizes are in the mail! 🚲

Bill's Supporters Hit the Streets

Nelson Mail, August 30, 2003

Nelsonians burnt rubber yesterday in support of a new bill currently before Parliament- bicycle and shoe rubber, that is.

Cyclists and walkers took to the streets to support the Land Transport Management Bill, as part of nationwide Critical Mass rides organised by the Green Light Campaign. Campaign coordinator Laura Beck said the intentions of the bill included environment and public health protection, promoting cycling and walking, and more funding for public transport.

Green MP Mike Ward joined in the Nelson ride, saying the bill was the most important piece of legislation before Parliament this term.

“Born-again cyclist” Victoria Davis, from Golden Bay, donned a fat suit for the occasion, to point out the health benefits of cycling. “Not only do cycle lanes allow people to ride bikes, reducing congestion and pollution, cycling gives us a free way to keep fit.” 🚲



CAN member Victoria Davis forming a critical mass in Nelson with Mike Ward.

Patience is a virtue

We are expecting the draft *NZ Walking & Cycling Strategy* to be released for consultation shortly - hopefully before the Cycling Conference! When it is released, we will want to move quickly to get feedback from members into the CAN submission.

It would help us to write a strong submission (and also, we expect, help the Ministry of Transport in their processing of submissions) if CAN members could send their comments to us for inclusion in the main CAN submission, though of course anyone is free to make their own submission

We expect the Strategy will be a high level document, but having examples of the issues that you face in the real world are really useful for illustrating the need for (or not!) particular ‘big picture’ policies.

We will keep you posted through your local groups, but keep an eye on the Ministry website (www.transport.govt.nz) where we expect the Strategy will be posted when it is released. If you don't have internet access or a local group, and want to be kept informed, let us know and we will contact you when anything happens. 🚲

“Trend need not be Destiny”

Victoria Davis, Golden Bay

If New Zealand does not address its obesity/ diabetes trends, its shocking pollution trends, and its transport dilemmas, we know they will continue to deteriorate.

On the front page of the Diabetes information booklet is a cyclist, as cycling is seen to be a readily accessible form of good exercise, a key ingredient in good health. Our Ministry of Health should be pushing for extensive, safe cycle lanes.

Part of the new tourism international marketing image is... yes, another photo of cyclists; ah, the beautiful outdoors of New Zealand...it is great to encourage these environmentally-friendly travellers here. The Ministry of Tourism should be strongly supporting the development of extensive, safe cycle lanes. If New Zealand could offer a safe cycling network they would save millions in promotions, as cycling travellers would flock here.

The traffic congestion, parking and pollution side of the transport dilemmas can take a big step out of the pit with more people on bikes.

So why aren't they all working together, including LTSA, EECA, and local councils, for this mutually beneficial need for cycle lanes? A Christchurch city councillor questioned the need for more cycle lanes as there wasn't a perceivable change in cycling, however we must embrace the concept of safe cycling as a safe means of transport with patience, as for years we have been giving our fat children more reason to sit in front a TV than on their bikes, and we need to reverse that trend.

Our beloved, late Alan Fricker said, “Trend need not be destiny”. Safe cycling is an environmental, social, health, recreation, tourism and transport issue. We need a co-operative vision to emerge from the Cycling Conference, that challenges the trend for bigger, faster roads, and addresses the wide-ranging mutual benefits that we would all enjoy as a result of increased safe cycling in New Zealand. 🚲

Cycle news from Whangarei

Paul Doherty

Great news for Whangarei! The Whangarei District Council has listened to a number of submissions regarding cycling and have agreed to develop a cycling strategy.

A steering group met on the 11 September to establish a framework for the strategy. News of a cycling strategy has been well received, particularly by the “Coalition of the Wheeling” - a multi-agency group established to coordinate cycling activities for Kidsafe Week.

“This is really great news. It is so important that we have on-going and sustainable projects to get more people cycling, especially school kids. We are delighted that our Kidsafe Week coalition has been able to assist,” a spokesperson from the Coalition said.

A recent survey of intermediate and high schools showed around 4% of children cycling. The major exception is Whangarei Girls’ High School - 1325 students and three bikes in the bike shed (and that was on a fine day!) Student car parking is an increasing problem and the WDC are planning a \$100,000 scheme to accommodate them. Maybe the cycling strategy will come up with some more cost-effective solutions.

It is good news indeed for Whangarei, a relatively compact city with some very real transport needs. More cycling can only help include people. More cycling also sits nicely with Whangarei District Council’s mission, “Creating the Ultimate Living Environment”. 🚲

Cycle Action Auckland’s Cunning Rides

Mark Bracey, CAA

It’s 10 am in the Auckland CBD on the last Sunday of the month. A group of cyclists is starting to gather outside Adventure Cycles in Customs St. Eventually they roll out, off towards the next meeting point. What started out a few years ago as a social ride for a handful of cycling advocates has now become a whole lot more.

‘Elvis in Henderson’, ‘Winery Wobble’, ‘Urban Orbit’, ‘The Eastern Passage’- these are not headlines from a Sunday newspaper but a small sample of the many monthly Cunning Rides that have been enjoyed by Cycle Action Auckland members. The rides aim to introduce participants not only to each other, but also to lesser-known back-ways for getting around town, and interesting spots tucked away in the corners of the city. Not to mention the odd café...

It’s now lunchtime, and this month the cyclists wind their way round the Panmure Basin, eyeing up a suitable place for a picnic. En route to the basin they’ve made their way through quiet back streets, parks, schools and across railway overbridges. However, exercise, a suntan, and good conversation are not the only things this group of cyclists is interested in. The route taken on each ride is recorded and added to a database of safe and pleasant rides throughout the city. This provides a useful catalogue of routes for everyday use, which could also easily be developed into ‘official’ cycle routes - as well as highlighting the problem areas where no useable routes exist.

For more info on Cunning Rides and how you could set them up in your area, contact CAA’s Cunning Rides coordinator, Mark Bracey (email: braceym@clear.net.nz). 🚲

Welcome to the Manukau City Vets

by Leonard N. Bloksberg

Auckland's Manukau City Veterans Cycle Club (MCVCC) has experienced enormous growth over the years to a point where there are now 248 members. To accommodate all of the riders, and not cause too much 'inconvenience' for other road users, the club has more than 12 ride groups leaving every weekend. Each group caters for different abilities covering a range of distances and speeds. The range includes a recreational ride, usually about 35km, with an average speed of 20-22 km/h, up to training rides over 100 km long, with an average speed of 30+ km/h.

There are several things that make MCVCC special, accounting for the club's rapid growth and popularity. The club has a strict code of conduct, demanding courtesy to both cyclists and other road users, with a strong focus on safety. Club rules require that we look out for each other; no one gets left behind. Experienced riders mentor newcomers, and overall there is a great camaraderie amongst the club.

The club has run fund-raisers for charities, including local schools, and has worked with regional councils to help raise the standard of safe riding for cyclists, and improve the image of cyclists on the road.

This is a vets club, with a focus on continuing to ride for life. Some members are ex-pro racers, others rank novices. Some younger people ride with the club because they like our style, and we have members in their 70s and 80s who ride with us on a regular basis. Most of our members are mature, accomplished professionals, doctors, lawyers, scientists, businesspersons, etc.

Check us out on the web at www.cycleclub.co.nz, or join us for a ride. 🚴


Cycling Strategy for the Kapiti Coast

Kapiti Cycling Inc.

Well, yes, although it is a cycling sub-strategy encased within the broad Cycling, Walking and Bridleway Strategy (CWB Strategy).

Ms Sherilyn Hinton, Policy Planner emphasized in her presentation to the Elected Council that the CWB Strategy was entirely a community product. Representatives for horse riders, walkers, cyclists and the disabled worked in and out of monthly meetings and workshops over 10 months to produce the broad strategy and the three sub-strategies. Council representation included Ms Hinton as the leader of the project and two elected councillors plus a representative from a consulting engineering firm. 75% of the funding for the project came from the Transfund Cycling and Walking Fund. As community delegates we did not mind giving our labour for free for such a good purpose. In respect of this being a community effort it is probably unique, as many councils have engaged consultants to produce their cycling

strategies. Consultants Leon Kiel and Linda Kerkmeester as part of this project carried out a Strategic Land Acquisition Mapping Project. The vision for this linked project was to create a Kapiti Open Space Network: “ A system of public open spaces of representative landscape types linked by a network of pathways, closely associated with natural landforms and waterways, with routes separated from the road system wherever possible.” Large aerial maps were produced and put on view for Kapiti Coast residents.

Throughout the process Ms Hinton was an invaluable resource of information. She was able to gather all the threads together and present a very workable strategy to council. The CWB strategy is now out for public consultation and can be obtained from the Kapiti Coast District Council, 128 Rimu Road, Paraparaumu or on the website: www.kcdc.govt.nz and from your local service centre. Submissions on the strategy must be made by Friday 31 October 2003 by writing to the address above or by emailing submissions@kcdc.govt.nz. 

Cycle Aware Wellington News

CAW now has its own website (at www.caw.org.nz). It contains news, links, contact and meeting details, and copies of Windy Wheels, our newsletter. Designed by Patrick Morgan, it’s hosted by the Kennett Bros (thanks, youse jokers).

Although Wellington City Council (WCC) made a pathetic financial commitment to cycling infrastructure in their last Annual Plan, a new area-based approach to road safety they’ve recently adopted should have real benefits for cyclists. Big gains will come from speed reduction (40km/h) and traffic calming in residential areas, and from more Safe Routes to School projects. We’re concerned, however, about the potential for more problems on arterials, unless measures are taken to improve safety for cyclists to counteract greater motor vehicle volumes.

Cycle safety projects we’ll be helping WCC with include our third training workshop for traffic police and a training workshop for driver instructors. We hear that Greater Wellington will be running a “don’t burst my bubble” promotional campaign (following on from similar campaigns in Waimakariri and Nelson).

CAW’s whizzo resident cycling instructor, Marilyn Northcotte, recently organised a couple of extremely successful bike maintenance courses, tutored by Simon Kennett. The demand for them seems to be insatiable.



Marilyn Northcotte, centre, gets the high five from two cycling students.


Marilyn continues to do great work as the regional co-ordinator for Kiwi Cycling and is also tutoring at two adult cycling skills courses being run later in the year.

Greater Wellington, our regional council, recently put out a cycling strategy for public consultation. It can be viewed at www.wrc.govt.nz/pub/view_doc.cfm?id=577 - submissions close on 20 October. WCC have put in a bid for Transfund money to develop a cycling strategy - CAW hopes a strategy will bring more cohesion to WCC's currently haphazard approach to cycling infrastructure, and tackle the tough issue of on-street parking.

Our Transit cycling champion (featured in the last issue of *ChainLinks*) has just issued a draft walking and cycling programme for 2004-07. It contains some longstanding items on our wish list, some of which could usefully be brought forward.

CAW's free bike maintenance checks (aka Dr Bike) will be operating at events in November, including the Family Wheel Day in Wellington on 2 November (a Kidsafe Week activity) and a ride in the Wairarapa later in the month.

Meanwhile, planning has started for Bike To Work Day 2004. WCC has allocated \$10,000 for the event this financial year, enabling us to pay for a co-ordinator for the first time. We hope that extra promotion will increase numbers past the 400-450 it's been at for the past three years. We're particularly keen to attract new cyclists. Hutt City ran a successful BTWD event in 2003 - we hope to be able to support them better next year.

Cycle Aware Wellington, tel 04-385 2557,
caw_wgtn@hotmail.com, www.caw.org.nz 

Transit NZ Cycling Champion Profile #2- Simon Underwood

by Ewan Kingston, Spokes Dunedin

Simon Underwood, Transit NZ Dunedin Office
tel: 03 477 8527, simon.underwood@transit.govt.nz

Simon Underwood thought his cycling days were behind him when he took up the role of Cycling Champion. However, in the last 12-18 months he has been "getting out on the peninsula," doing some recreational cycling. "I enjoy the physical side of it. Cycling on the hills around Dunedin is brilliant," he says.

Simon Underwood's role is Traffic and Safety Engineer for Transit's Dunedin regional office, which looks after the State highways in Otago and Southland (south of Haast Pass and the Waitaki river). He tells me his portfolio concerns the safety of all road users, including cyclists, so when the cycling champion role was created he was a natural candidate for the position.

He has worked with SPOKES, the Dunedin branch of CAN, on the city's one-way pair cycle lane issues and says he has had 'some' unsolicited input from cyclists. "Would you appreciate more?" I ask him.

"Yes, certainly, as long as they relate to the highways," noting that the other routes are managed by the local authority (i.e. Dunedin City Council).

He is realistic in that not every project Transit undertakes can have cyclists' interests at heart. "Cyclists are certainly a consideration in all urban projects, and to a lesser extent in rural work; although in rural areas, what we do for motorists often helps cyclists out as well, such as sealed shoulder widening and bridge widening." He also mentions that in rural areas, the priority for seal widening is on the higher volume routes, such as State Highway 1 between Waipara (north of Christchurch) and Milton (south of Dunedin). On many of the inland routes, traffic volumes are lighter and the economic and environmental costs in building wider roads become significantly higher.

I asked him about specific projects he has been involved with.

"In Dunedin, about two years ago, we put in cycle lanes on the one-way pair from the Gardens corner (at the start of North-East Valley) down to Frederick St (towards the city centre). Three months ago we extended these further south another couple of blocks to St Andrew St. We did that to provide a more logical link up with the harbour cycleway. This summer we will extend the northbound cycle lane further, by commencing it sooner; taking advantage of programmed resurfacing to do this."

"Elsewhere in the city, there is State Highway 88 (out to Port Chalmers) which is an ongoing concern for us. It's still not a nice highway to cycle and that fact is appreciated." It's a highway where we have made some progress, but as it has a lot of issues, it's one we're going to just have to keep chipping away at. The key area is between the city (Logan Park) and Ravensbourne. We went through and in-filled the gutters, as before there was quite a steep lip at the seal edge, we've moved kerbs, retaining walls and power poles to remove pinch points. At one stage we installed those red raised reflective markers in the interests of motorists, but they were terrible for cyclists, so they were also removed.

He is positive about the work that has been made possible recently with the government allocation of \$3 million per year for cycling projects. "It may not sound like much, but there is a lot that can be done with that money." Right now, we are applying for funds to undertake investigations of further improvement works along SH88; two years ago, our ability to seek funds specific to cycling/walking projects wasn't there.

How does he see Transit's role changing with regard to cyclists if the Land Transport Bill is passed?

"I'm really not sure, although I can't see our current approach diminishing in any way. Transit's role is to respond to current and forecasted traffic

growth and road user needs. Cyclists are very much a part of this. Our role with respect to cyclists is that where there is a need, we endeavour to accommodate that need.”

I asked him about the future of road use, especially if cycle-commuting becomes an activity more encouraged by central government.

“In the urban fringe context the key area for us will again be with State Highway 88, and the more cycle-friendly we make it, the more I would expect cycle use to increase. As far as highway one goes, in and out of Dunedin, little will change as these are both motorway routes. The alternative routes are, however, signposted, so we’re not only telling cyclists where they can’t go, but also where they can go. This is something that also comes under the umbrella of the city’s Cycling Strategy (developed by the Dunedin City Council) which looks at cyclist needs and preferred routes across the city.”

I ask him, “If you were a bicycle what type of bike would you be?”

“One with bald tyres,” he jokes. I asked him to elaborate. “A mountain bike that might be past its use-by date but is still functional, no, make that fun, still a lot of fun left in it.” 🚲

Ministry of Cycling

Jane Dawson

Well, not quite ... yet. But the Ministry of Transport is setting up its own BUG (Bicycle Users Group) to support staff who cycle to work. Donna Soo (who is, appropriately, a Policy Adviser in Safety and Environment) started the idea off: “There is a core group of people here who bike to work regularly/semi-regularly, and the conditions are not the greatest (lack of parking space, no lockers for gear storage, not the greatest showers etc). I found some stuff on the internet on the SPARC website about starting a BUG and thought I’d start one at the Ministry”.

The idea was quickly picked up and supported by management, and a questionnaire has been circulated to find out who is interested. The first request has been for provision of lockers, but Donna says “the thing I’m really keen on is getting a good bike rack where we can park our bikes and secure them (but there are difficulties with the building having other tenants etc, so we might have to get them on board too, as well as the property developer) and getting a Ministry ‘bike pool’ with some bikes that can be used for riding round the CBD either for work or recreationally.”

It is always a pleasure to welcome a new BUG, but doubly so when it hatches in such a key agency, and triply so when the SPARC resources have helped it along. 🚲

Course - Fundamentals Of Planning & Design For Cycling

** Register now! **

This one-day course will introduce the fundamentals of planning and design for cycling in New Zealand. It is aimed at anybody who is planning or designing roads or other facilities that will be used by cyclists. Other interested people (e.g. cycling advocates) may also find it useful for background information.

The course has been developed in conjunction with Transfund NZ, Transit NZ, and the Land Transport Safety Authority, to meet the needs of the NZ transportation industry. The course is based on the draft *NZ Cycling Design Guide* and *Austrroads Part 14 (Bicycles)*, and also covers material addressed by the forthcoming *Cycle Network & Route Planning Guide*.

Topics

- Meeting cyclists' needs (NZ context, cyclist attributes)
- Planning for cycling (cycling strategies, data collection)
- Cycling between intersections (mid-block provision, on vs off-road)
- Cycling through intersections (intersection types, use of lanes/colour)
- Putting it all together (implementation plans, project evaluation)
- Bouquets and brickbats (examples from around NZ)

Dates and locations

- Auckland North Shore: Thursday 9 October (day before NZ Cycling Conference)
- Wellington: Wednesday 15 October
- Palmerston North: Thursday 16 October
- Dunedin: Thursday 23 October

Courses cost \$240 + GST (\$210 + GST for IPENZ members). All participants receive a set of course notes.

A course registration flier with more details is available at:

<http://ipenztg.tripod.com/files/cycling-course2003.pdf> (34 KB)

Register today!! Numbers for each course need to be finalised as early as possible to confirm course arrangements, otherwise courses may be merged or cancelled.

For further details about these courses, including more detailed course content, contact Lisa Knowles at NZIHT (lisa@nzih.co.nz, tel. 06-759 7065).



Cycle Touring Company on the move

We are moving into the Town Basin Kiosk, 45 Quay Street, Whangarei, tel. 09 430 2030

Our website is www.cycletours.co.nz

We will be renting bikes, organising tours, guided mountain bike trips, art gallery tours, trishaw rides and more!

Our motto - Best by bike!



Hot News from Transit

Rob Davidson (Secretary, on behalf of Cycle Action Waikato).

We highly recommend the Transit New Zealand's *10-year State Highway Plan* now available. The plan gives lots of information on all the Transit projects happening throughout the whole of New Zealand for the next 10 years. It includes project costs, and also investigation, design, and construction dates. The minor projects (< \$3 million) are scheduled for the first three years, starting this year, so get in quick.

Our experience is that in the past we were not always aware of what projects were coming up, or we are told at the 11th hour. Having a copy of this gives our group a lot more opportunity to have substantial input on the projects in our region that most affect cyclists.

Get onto your local Transit NZ office and request a copy for your cycle advocacy group. 🚲

Cycling News from around New Zealand

July

- A Nelson City Council promotion follows Waimakariri District's lead in encouraging motorists to give vulnerable road users plenty of space and not "burst their bubble".
- Wanganui District Council plan to spend \$50,000 on cycle facilities this year, mostly on cycle lanes.

August

- Kapiti Coast District Council release a draft walkway/bridleway/cycleway strategy for public consultation.

- Bike Taupo, with the support of the local Rotary Club, begin construction on a recreational cycle track to Huka Falls.
- A number of Christchurch City councillors call for reduced expenditure on cycle facilities in the city, especially on main arterial roads.
- A Christchurch District Court jury finds cycle race organiser Astrid Andersen guilty of criminal nuisance for the death of a woman in the 2001 “Le Race”.
- Greater Wellington Regional Council releases a draft cycling strategy that proposes spending \$560,000 over three years to promote cycling and sharing the road.
- Gisborne District Council plan to develop a cycling and pedestrian strategy over the next six months.
- Hamilton City calls for feedback on whether to allow cyclists along all or part of its riverside pathway, ironically soon after a pedestrian assaults a cyclist along the river.
- Construction of an off-road cyclist training park (complete with roads, lanes, stop and give-way signs and speed humps) begins in Dunedin on disused netball courts.
- Critical Mass rides in Hamilton, Wellington (photo at right), Nelson, Christchurch and Dunedin help to highlight support by cyclists for the Government’s Land Transport Management Bill.



September

- Christchurch City Council approve the installation of the last cycle lane section along Strickland St linking Beckenham with the city, after protracted debate about the resulting parking restrictions.
- Tasman District Council commission a cycling strategy, due for completion next March.
- The bicycle product safety standards are hastily amended by the Government, to allow the sale of second-hand bikes without owner manuals or maintenance checks.
- Otago-Southland police plan a crackdown on motorist and cyclist behaviour, after LTSA statistics show a high number of cyclists injured or killed in the region. 🚲

New research confirms more cycling is safer cycling

The latest issue of the journal *Injury Prevention* (vol 9, no. 3, 2003) contains an article by P.L. Jacobsen entitled 'Safety in numbers: more walkers and bicyclists, safer walking and bicycling'.

The study used several different data sets from around the world to compare the amount of walking or bicycling and the injuries incurring in collisions with motor vehicles. The results show that the likelihood that a given person walking or bicycling will be struck by a motorist varies inversely with the amount of walking or bicycling. This pattern is consistent across communities of varying size, from specific intersections to cities and countries, and across time periods.

Couldn't it be that people just cycle more in places where it is safer? According to the author, no: his analysis indicates that, "It is improbable that the roadway design, traffic laws, or social mores... could explain the relationship between exposure and injury rates."

"Since it is unlikely that the people walking and bicycling become more cautious if their numbers are larger, it indicates that the behavior of motorists controls the likelihood of collisions with people walking and bicycling. It appears that motorists adjust their behavior in the presence of people walking and bicycling."

The author concludes: "Policies that increase the numbers of people walking and bicycling appear to be an effective route to improving the safety of people walking and bicycling."

The article is can be found online at:

<http://ip.bmjournals.com/cgi/content/abstract/9/3/205?etoc> 

Connecting Cycling Conference - update

The following international experts will be giving presentations at this Conference, to be held in Canberra in November:

Todd Litman - Canadian author of the On-line TDM Encyclopedia

Werner Brog - founder of Socialdata, Munich, Germany

Registration

Please see the Conference website for registration details.

Pre and post conference workshops

Facility Design Workshop and Tour: How to build an effective bicycle network in the real world 10:00 - 17:00 Wednesday 19 November and 08:00 - 10:30 Thursday 20 November.

Bicycle Victoria will lead this workshop which has been successfully run for the Australian Institute of Traffic Planning and Management (AITPM) and for VicRoads. This workshop is designed to find practical solutions to real life problems that professionals encounter day to day.

Promoting Cycling to Government Workshop

How to lobby government to obtain a better environment for cycling 09:00 - 13:00, Saturday 22 November.


This workshop is sponsored by the Cycling Promotion Alliance and is free to conference registrants. It will be led by lobbyists and activists from cycling, the environmental movement and politics.

For information:

contact Barry Neame, Consec Management

Tel: +61 2 62510 675 Email: cycling@consec.com.au

www.bfa.asn.au/conference

Organised by the Bicycle Federation of Australia (BFA) 

No Bikes Please, We're Tories

A Conservative council candidate in Glasgow, UK, has called for cycling lanes to be taken out of his city.

Ian Miller, who stood in the Bearsden ward in the recent local elections, believes that priority should be given to motorised vehicles, and that purpose-built cycling lanes are choking the roadways.

"I've nothing against cyclists," Mr Miller told *Cycling Weekly*. "And I love cycling. But they should ideally find other routes.

"The sudden imposition of bike lanes in Glasgow has been shoved up the noses of motorists," he continued.

Mr Miller believes that people in general want to use their cars, and that roads should be widened in order to accommodate them.


"The cycling lobby is part of a dysfunctional Labour party policy, which is in tatters. Cycle lanes take up a third of the road and the amount of people using them, relatively speaking, does not provide value for money."

However, Mr Miller's views received short shrift from Glasgow City Council's cycling officer, Allan Maclean.

"Our cycle lanes are well used, and there has been a substantial increase in the use of our facilities. We have put automatic cycle counters on our routes, and our figures indicate that more people are using their bikes," said Maclean.

"We've also received committee approval for a new network of cycle lanes which will mean that cyclists will be no more than 500m from the closest route anywhere in the city," he continued.

Mr Miller was unsuccessful in his bid to be elected.

from *Cycling Weekly* 

Second-hand bike issue resolved for consumers

Consumer Affairs Minister Judith Tizard has welcomed the change to regulations covering the sale of pedal bicycles, which came into effect on 12 September 2003. The changes exempt second-hand bicycles from the Product Safety Standard.

This reflects a good balance between consumers' rights to safe products, the realities of selling second-hand bikes and the 'not-for-profit' transactions that take place, such as hand-me-downs and fund-raising activities," said Judith Tizard.

Consumers can be assured that when they buy second-hand bikes from a trader the general safety provisions of the Consumer Guarantees Act will still cover these bikes. A second-hand bicycle is expected to be roadworthy and to meet minimum performance standards unless otherwise agreed between the buyer and trader.

Families will also be able to gift or on-sell second-hand bicycles on an "as is where is" basis without the risk of acting outside the law.

The Product Safety Standards (Pedal Bicycles) Amendment Regulations 2003 came into effect on 12 September 2003.

"From this date lost property held by Police that may otherwise have been destroyed will now be available for consumers to buy," said Judith Tizard. 🚲

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank you for the kind words regarding my late husband (and former CAN webmaster) Tony Bewlay, which were in the June-July edition of Chainlinks, and for the lovely card received from CAN after Tony died.

Tony was a keen all-round cyclist. In England he regularly commuted to work by bike, as well as touring and racing (time-trials) for pleasure, and had a sound knowledge of cycle mechanics. He belonged to the Cyclists Touring Club (CTC) cycle campaign network, and during the 1980s was involved in the construction of the Windsor-Slough cycle path in Berkshire (part of the Sustrans network). In Sheffield (where we lived for much of the 1990s) he was a member of Pedalpushers, the local campaign group, and took part in several Critical Mass rides around the city. After emigrating to New Zealand in 1999, he eventually became involved in Cycle Action Auckland, and took up the post as webmaster for CAN; something he enjoyed doing. Despite Auckland's traffic, cycling remained his preferred mode of transport (although the lack of cycle access over the harbour bridged cur-tailed cycle-commuting for work).

Tony was the very best of companions, both on and off the bike.

Yours sincerely
Gretel Boswijk (Bewlay)

Hi there,

My wife decided to take up triathlon seriously as a sport last year. Since then she had discovered the joy (and dangers) of cycling on roads.

Gaining rapid progress in her sport, she adopted a more rigorous training programme that includes more and more cycle training time on roads. She has a healthy respect towards the motoring side of traffic, which is why she prefers to train in the early morning hours especially on weekends.

But the area that seems to have posed a greater risk to her and her training companions is the high incidence of getting flats. On one occasion, their group (of three) got 5 punctures all within 1 hour! Being stranded and tinkering with tools on the side of a main road has its dangers. But being repeatedly forced into this situation is another matter and can be very frustrating and costly. The cause? Broken glass - broken beer bottles to be exact... all over the roadside, on just about every street!

I was told that it didn't use to be this bad, until the emergence of the "boy racer" craze. I realise that it would be nearly impossible to deter the throwing of glass bottles by drunken motorists, but there must be a practical or creative solution to this problem.

We could request the city councils to get the street sweepers to do their thing during "strategic" times that correspond to bottle throwing frenzies... BUT that would only be a temporary solution. Besides the added costs of such a campaign would be unsustainable. Which council would want to use precious city funds for more street sweeping?

Perhaps the answer lies on bringing the responsibility back to companies who choose "glass" as containers likely to be thrown (or dropped) when its contents are consumed. And by that I don't mean identifying the bottle labels and sending the tyre repair bill to the appropriate company. That would be malicious (if not hilarious), and that's not what cycling is about. On the other hand, a fatal road accident resulting from a puncture wouldn't be so funny.

Respectfully yours,

R. A.

Tauranga (address supplied)

PS. There must be a reason why glass bottles are still around even after the arrival of aluminium cans. I realise that beer in plastic bottles similar to those used for soft drinks would look ridiculous, but a substantially thick, tinted version with a classy aluminium lid might be the answer? It stands a better chance of being recycled, than the shattered pieces one has to sweep off the pavement. 🚲

Designing For Cyclists

A Coloured Perception of Cyclists

by Glen Koorey

More and more we are seeing the use of colour on cycle facilities around New Zealand. This raises a few interesting questions: Should you use colour to mark cycle facilities? Where do you need to? And which colour? We'll try to address some of these issues this month.

There are a number of identified benefits of having coloured cycle lanes:

- The clearly defined paths produce more consistent cyclist behaviour.
- Cyclists feel safer (and overseas crash studies would appear to back this up).
- There is more awareness of cyclists by motorists.
- Key conflict points are highlighted more clearly for all parties.
- Motorists are more likely to give way to cyclists when crossing their cycle lane.
- Coloured cycle lanes outside traffic lanes can make the road appear narrower, slowing down traffic.

However coloured cycle lanes may lead to less checking or caution by cyclists (the so-called “magic carpet” effect). And then there is the cost; a rate of ~\$45/m² is fairly typical, depending on the specific colouring method used. So the prudent use of colour is probably warranted.

Coloured surfacing can be applied in continuous lengths for high-demand cycle lanes on busy routes (e.g. multi-lane arterials). In other locations, its usefulness is often best applied to “stress” points only. This may include:

- Approach lanes to intersections (especially between traffic lanes)
- On the departure side of intersections (especially where the cycle lane shifts over laterally)
- Adjacent to areas of high parking use/turnover
- In advance stop boxes
- Across the entry and exit areas of slip lanes
- On the inside of curves
- Across side roads/accesses (particularly where the adjacent traffic lane is regularly queued, blocking visibility)
- Along narrow cycle lane sections (pinch points)
- On contra-flow cycle lanes
- Where it is useful to alert crossing pedestrians to the potential presence of cyclists
- At the transition between cycle paths and cycle lanes
- On paths with many crossings
- Along shared bus/bike lanes
- Any other unusual cycle facilities



An interesting treatment tried in a few places around New Zealand is the use of “spots” of colour (well, more like squares) at regular intervals along a cycle lane (often where the cycle logos are) to further highlight the lane.

So which colour should you use? Currently in NZ, most of the country is going with using green, while Christchurch (which has the most extensive cycle network) has used red for its



routes. In the past, the issue of a standard colour has not been completely resolved, although it appears that the *NZ Cycling Design Guide* will probably endorse (but not mandate) the use of green.

Overseas practise doesn't give us any clear clues as to which colour to use. Some countries like the United Kingdom and Germany seem to use a mix of red and green as well. Others like the Netherlands and Sweden tend to favour red, while the likes of Australia and France go for green. Denmark and some places in North America have used blue (which actually has a number of visibility advantages over red and green), and apparently Switzerland has even tried yellow!

Does a standard colour really matter? Well in many respects, no. Which colour is used is of secondary importance, so long as it achieves the purpose of highlighting the area to both cyclists and other road users. Drivers and cyclists are most influenced by the presence of any colour rather than a specific colour. However, there could be problems if adjoining roading authorities use different colours. And it may help with better understanding by road users if the same colour is consistently used (e.g. no implication that different colours mean different things).

Relevant Reading

Christchurch City Council 2001, Cycle Lane Delineation Treatments.
www.ccc.govt.nz/Recreation/Cycling/TechnicalResearch/

City of Portland 1999, Portland's Blue Bike Lanes.
www.trans.ci.portland.or.us/bicycles/bluebike.htm

UK Highways Agency 1999, Coloured Surfacing in Road Layouts, Design Manual For Roads And Bridges, Volume 6 (Road Geometry) Section 3 Part 4, TA 81/99. Includes some useful information on material specifications.
www.official-documents.co.uk/document/deps/ha/dmrb/vol6/section3/ta8199.pdf
(305kb)

All feedback to Glen Koorey (koorey@paradise.net.nz, tel 03-331 7504) 🚲

Quotable Quotes

"I get the feeling, once I get out on my bicycle, that most motorists don't think you should be there."

Wellington city councillor and born-again cyclist Bryan Pepperell makes an observation all too familiar to regular cyclists. (*Dominion Post*, 09/08/03)

"I think this is a mistake. The painting of cycle lanes is supposed to make it safer for kids but this is the wrong strategy and we must have a look at it."

Christchurch city councillor Pat Harrow voices his philosophical opposition to cycle lanes on arterial roads. (*Christchurch Western Mail*, 13/08/03)

"I would love everyone to be out on cycles, but the reality is they won't, and we have to address realities."

We continue to wait for the day when Christchurch city councillor Carole Anderton hops on her bike... (*Christchurch Press*, 22/08/03)

"A little bit of extra thinking instead of putting it into the too hard basket would have paid dividends."

Hamilton city councillor Dave Macpherson can't understand why the city's riverside pathway wasn't designated for both cyclists and pedestrians from the outset. (*Waikato This Week*, 28/08/03)

"The project is not only highly desirable, it's well overdue."

Wellington regional councillor Glen Evans lends his support to developing a new cycleway between Petone and Ngauranga, ahead of any High Occupancy traffic lane eliminating the existing sub-standard path. (*Hutt News*, 02/09/03)

"Kids don't have to buy a new bike when they can have the fun of making their own at no cost."

Chief mechanic Michael Butler is pleased with the results of the "Build a Bike for Free" day at Riverton's South Coast Environment Centre. (*Southland Times*, 02/09/03)

"Hopefully, this will see fewer secondhand bikes cluttering police stations and save otherwise safe and expensive bikes from becoming scrap metal."

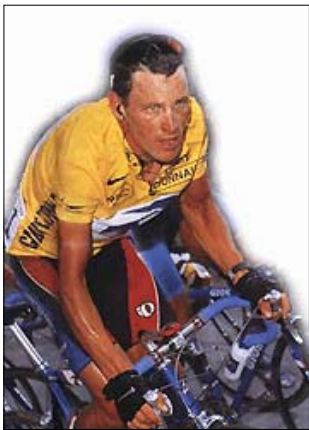
Police Minister George Hawkins echoes the relief of many police stations after the Government fixes up a loophole affecting the sale of second-hand bikes. (*NZ Herald*, 10/09/03)

"I don't know what it is - it is just something that has died right off."

Macandrew Intermediate's deputy principal Albie Benson bemoans the declining numbers of Dunedin children cycling to school. (*Otago Daily Times*, 12/09/03)


"I last bought a bike in 1967 and it's now 'wrecked'."

96-year old regular cyclist Stephen Forsyth of Frasertown, Hawkes Bay, explains why he recently bought himself a new bike. (*Positive Living*, Aug-Sep 2003)



“It’s ironic; I used to ride my bike to make a living. Now I just want to live so that I can ride.”
Lance Armstrong, Five Times Tour de France Champion

“Resource Consent process was underway for the Seaview Road underpass, and it was expected that construction would take place later in the year. A concrete nib would be included in the design, and the track would be underwater during high tide.”
Peter Kortegast, Nelson City Council, on their proposal to build a cycleway through a drain culvert

“CAN has been remarkably effective in its lobbying.”
LTSA at a recent meeting with Bicycle Nelson Bays 

Advertisement

Roger Boulter Goes Into Full-Time Consultancy

Roger Boulter, until recently Hamilton City Council’s transport planner, and a well-known figure in the cycle planning world, has gone into full-time consultancy.

His resignation from Hamilton City Council took effect just before the North Shore Cycling Conference.

Roger said it’s a move he’s been considering for a few years.

*“My New Zealand Cycling Strategy Project, culminating in the late-2000 *Into The Mainstream* report, was very well-received, and led to my being asked to advise Government agencies, speak at conferences, write journal articles, and even address Parliamentary Select Committees. Within the past year I’ve been approached to do some paid consultancy work, which surely has to be a sign that prospects are good to attract work full-time if I sought it.”*

Roger’s consultancy work in the last six months has included contributing to the Fundamentals of Planning and Engineering for Cycling training course, which is currently touring the country, and co-authoring the LTSA’s *Cycle Network and Route Planning Guide*, of which a draft is being presented to the North Shore Conference. He’ll also be using his general planning and policy analysis skills. This year he’s already spoken at conferences on transport taxation, funding and prioritisation issues, and on liveable cities.

Roger will be working from his home in Hamilton. Pending full business set-up, Roger can be contacted on email boulter@maxnet.co.nz

Cycling Research

A Pedestrian Way Of Travelling...

by Glen Koorey

One of the encouraging developments around urban New Zealand is the increase in the number of traffic-free areas such as street malls and squares. As anyone who's seen the European examples can confirm, this is a great way to entice more people into town while at the same time minimising the number of cars coming in.

Unfortunately, a disheartening trend at the same time is towards prohibiting cyclists from these same areas. The decisions often seem to be based on relatively subjective (or emotive) grounds, rather than on technical merit. There often appears to be a fear that cyclists will "run amok" creating havoc and danger for the pedestrians. Maybe there is even a concern that cyclists will drive away pedestrians and hurt local business. Is this concern justified?

Pedestrian areas where cyclists may be prohibited from riding through include pedestrian malls, squares, and even parks. The net effect is generally to force cyclists onto longer, busier traffic routes. Davies et al (1998) found that many alternative routes involved high capacity roads, additional hazardous junctions, additional distance and the majority required cyclists to dismount at some stage.

In many cases, there is adequate capacity in motor-free areas to safely cater for all non-motorised users. Similarly the conflicts/danger are generally more perceived than real. Providing further traffic-free links for cyclists can also encourage more cycling (particularly if the road alternative is unappealing). Remember, both cyclists and pedestrians benefit from removal of motor vehicles.

Trevelyan & Morgan (1993) analysed video recordings and questionnaires for a range of pedestrian sites in England and Wales, and also examined conditions overseas. They found that cyclists respond to pedestrian density and modify their speed, dismount, and take other avoiding actions where necessary. Interestingly, while pedestrians change their behaviour in the presence of motor vehicles, they don't in response to cyclists (as anyone who's nearly bowled a pedestrian stepping off a kerb will attest...).

Accidents between pedestrians and cyclists were very rarely generated in the areas studied; in fact only one pedestrian/cyclist accident was noted in 15 site-years. All up, the study found no real factors to justify excluding cyclists from pedestrian areas, suggesting that cycling could be more widely permitted without detriment. This is particularly important where there are





no satisfactory alternative cycle routes available around the pedestrian area.

CROW (1993) reports similar findings from some German surveys into pedestrian areas. It noted that in one instance initial reservations by the public against admitting cyclists, were significantly reduced after a year's experience.

Similarly, in another survey, it was found that cyclists adapted their behaviour and even dismounted when high densities of pedestrians were present. At the same time, there was no evidence that cyclists rode more quickly once legally allowed in pedestrian areas, and pedestrian-cyclist accidents were small in number and not too serious.

Of course, some consideration might still be required of how best to accommodate all parties. A wide variety of regulatory and design solutions exist to enable safe and effective shared use of pedestrian areas. Segregation is not always necessary or desirable; certainly at lower flows, both user groups mingle readily. However, where there are appreciable flows of pedestrians or cyclists, it may be worth encouraging cyclists to follow a defined path through the area to promote consistent behaviour. We'll cover design options for cyclists in pedestrian areas in another *ChainLinks* issue.

In summary, pedestrian areas should not automatically be considered cycle-free zones. What little evidence there is suggests that while there are often perceived concerns about safety initially, in practice there is little evidence of any real effects by cyclists. Hopefully the forthcoming *NZ Cycle Design Guide and Cycle Route/Network Planning Guide* can reflect this. In the meantime, local authorities should review any existing restrictions there are for cyclists in pedestrian areas and either remove restrictions if appropriate, or provide adequate alternative provision for cyclists.

References

CROW (Centre for Research and Contract Standardisation in Civil Engineering) 1993, *Sign up for the bike, design manual for a cycle-friendly infrastructure*. Netherlands (particularly section 4.5)

Davies D., Ryley T. & Halliday M. 1998, *Alternative routes for cyclists around pedestrian area*, Report TRL371, Transport Research Laboratory, Crowthorne, Berkshire, UK.

Trevelyan P. & Morgan J. 1993, *Cycling in Pedestrian Areas*, Report PR15, Transport Research Laboratory, Crowthorne, Berkshire, UK.

All feedback please to Glen Koorey (koorey@paradise.net.nz, tel. 03-331 7504)





CAN's Axel Wilke has been checking out traffic management systems in Germany. More on this in the next issue of *ChainLinks*.

New Bike in Town

by Leonard N. Bloksberg

Not long ago we asked some people what stopped them from taking short trips by bicycle, rather than car. While we're working on the cycle ways, and there's no hope for flattening the hills in Auckland, there has been a major improvement in the availability of specially designed commuter cycles. Road bikes are fast, but not built for the rigours of city traffic. Mountain bikes may be good for potholes, but they can be a bit over-kill and heavy for commutes. Enter the cross bike, specially designed for the commuter .

The cross bike puts the rider in a more upright position, for better stability and visibility in traffic. It has 700c wheels (easier to go faster), often has light-weight shocks and sometimes a suspension seat post, to soften the ride. The tires are narrower and smoother than mountain bikes so you don't have to work so hard, but wider than road bikes for better grip and handling. The frame is also between road and mountain bike in weight. It's not the

best bike for a pro racer, nor an off-road enthusiast, but it's an ideal bike for a commuter cyclist.

Rumour has it that such bikes have been available in New Zealand for years, but I'll be darned if I could find them. Suddenly, about a year ago, they started popping up everywhere. Now, most bike shops in Auckland carry at least one model, and often several. There are budget models for as little as \$399, and high spec models for serious cycle commuters for \$2,500.

Bike Barn offers several models in the Marin and Kona range. The American and European built bikes are generally higher quality than the Asian built models, but not usually affordable for us mortals. The Marin range of city bikes are all American made quality. My commuter bike has been a Marin for the past 6 years, and I average 8,000 km per year. Bike Barn is also offering a half price sale on some commuter models during October, to coincide with the NZ Cycling Conference.

Pack'n'Pedal has a wide selection, with models from Avanti, Specialized, and Raleigh. Avanti is probably the most popular brand of bikes in New Zealand, and an active supporter of local cycling. Pack'n'Pedal also stock a range of cycle trailers from BOB and Koolstop, selling from \$599 to \$1,000.



Planet Cycles offers the Giant range, including the cheapest full feature cross bike, the Giant Elwood, at \$399. The Elwood has shocks, a suspension seat post and everything you'd expect from a quality bike. If you want something more substantial, the Giant range goes all the way up to the Perigee (right), outfitted with a Shimano Ultegra groupset.

Adventure Cycles features the Bauer range. Adventure Cycles is the only cycle shop in Auckland that provides a full range of serviced used bikes, as well as rentals. This can be a great way to try it out, for those not ready to invest in a brand new bike yet.

These are all quality bikes from quality bike shops, who will take the time to fit your bike properly, customise it as desired (many customisations are free on new bikes), and keep it serviced for years of trouble free riding. Get to know this new breed of bikes in town, and get on your bike.

All products and vendors mentioned have been researched at the author's expense, and are recommended from personal experience. No payment or incentives were provided by any of the manufacturers or vendors mentioned in this article. No comment is intended or implied about manufacturers or vendors not mentioned in this article. 🚲

Lean Back And Pedal... an Introduction to the Culty

by Nigel Perry, email: npcycle@zoot.net.nz

The Culty is a cycle with a difference, or two. Made in Germany, it is a delta tricycle – one front and two rear wheels, with a low seat which looks rather like a chair. So far some will be thinking, “just a recumbent trike.” Well yes, but it’s a bit more than that. First it is front wheel drive, so no long chain like on many recumbents. Next it has rear wheel steer, which is unusual on most vehicles. Then there is the relatively high seat, at least for a recumbent, which at 30cm off the ground is higher than a standard car seat. Oh, and it tilts...



The Culty is solidly built, “over engineered” might spring to mind, but at least that means it is unlikely to fall to bits! Either a 7-speed SRAM, or a 14-speed Rohloff hub may be fitted. Further the 7-

speed hub may be supplemented by a “mountain drive”, a clever device from Switzerland which fits in the bottom bracket and is operated by the sides of your feet. This gives you an instant 2.5x reduction, great for hill climbing, and put to good use on the Port Hills in Christchurch. In combination these gears provide a massive 763% ratio difference on two slightly overlapping ranges. (In comparison my 21-speed upright provides only 408%.) Braking is supplied by twin rear hubs and a front side-pull rim brake.

The Culty has a good carrying capacity. Under the seat a large box can be fitted. This will carry heavy loads such as books, laptops, etc. with no effect on the handling. The rear “rack” can take a double child seat, again not tested (would a 16 year old fit?), and a standard saddle bag can easily be fitted on the seat back – my faithful Carradice now sits there.

Of course it has three wheels, so that adds weight, as does the engineering. The complete cycle is around 21kg – your standard upright might be 15-18kg similarly equipped.

Enough of the details, how does it ride?

First you sit back and relax, with a seat above those of the cars you can see and be seen. Feet on pedals and ride off in luxury, head up enjoying the view – it’s like riding a chair. So far so good...

Take a turn, oops... To turn you must steer, but not oversteer – and you can’t see the wheels turning as they’re behind you- and lean – “outwards” if going slowly, “inwards” if faster, and more inwards as you speed up. Sound awkward? Well it will probably feel so at first as it handles nothing like a bike, but you soon get used to it and can ride with ease, and leaning into

those corners is fun! Due to the rear-wheel steering the turning circle is much larger than on a bicycle, so you must also get used to that. However as well as tilting the Culty is suspended, front and back, so riding down that kerb – or over Christchurch’s rough and potholed roads – is a doddle. As an around-the-town load carrier/commuter it is a capable vehicle.



It will climb hills, and doing so is less strain than pounding your way up standing on the pedals as many mountain bikers do – but it is also slower. Those MTB’s will beat you to the Sign of the Kiwi, but you will have enjoyed the view. On the flat you can cruise along enjoying the countryside. However the upright riding position does have a drawback – hit a headwind and it slams into you slowing you down. This is

a problem on many recumbents and often partial fairings are added to address this, and incidentally keep your feet warm and dry in the rain. There is no factory fairing for the Culty, and I have not ridden a Culty with one though some owners have fitted them.

Should you get one?

Well I can’t really say. I will need to own mine for longer, and get out for some decent long distance rides, before I’ll know if it is a good all-rounder myself. For the trip to work, laptop and lunch underneath, it is great. The Culty is “different” so it is advised you try before you buy, I was lucky enough to be in Germany and visited the workshop where they are made.

Cultys are also not cheap as you would need to import one from Germany, however many good recumbents can be found closer to New Zealand. Trikes NZ in Levin import the Hase range of recumbents, my second choice was a Hase Kettweisel. They also have a high seat, but do not tilt, and only the larger Lepus is suspended (three wheels = three tracks = more chance to hit those potholes). Greenspeed, a world-renowned designer of recumbents is based not far from Melbourne, while Hotmover is in Queensland – but apparently builds them in Christchurch!

My recommendation is if you get the opportunity to try a recumbent trike give it a go. You will more than likely enjoy it. But be careful, you might get hooked...

Some web sites:

Culty: www.culty.de; Hase: www.hase-spezialraeder.de

Greenspeed: www.greenspeed.com.au; Hotmover: www.hotmover.com

Photos by Sam Perry & Culty

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Deadline for next issue of *ChainLinks* is November 21st, 2003

Please submit news items, articles, Letters to the Editor, comment, etc. Send to ChainLinks@can.org.nz, or post items c/o CAN, PO Box 6491, Auckland – electronic submission is strongly encouraged. For advertising enquiries please email secretary@can.org.nz or write to CAN.

“Cycletracks will abound in Utopia”

- H. G Wells, *A Modern Utopia*



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