

1994 Ride Page 1 of 6

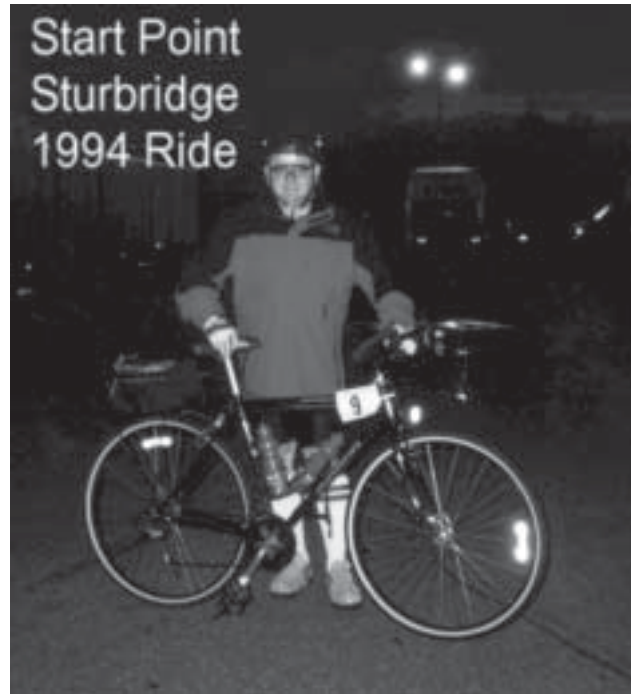
1994 Pan Mass Challenge

Brian M. Richards
Sturbridge to Provincetown
August 6 & 7, 1994

The official kickoff of the 1994 Pan Massachusetts Challenge (PMC) started the night before at the annual pasta dinner. I met Tom Phillips, our oldest rider this year (age 73) at the registration desk at the Sturbridge Host. We both made reservations for next years Ride. It was great to see him, and we were both looking forward to the Ride.

There were 1593 registered riders, with 1499 starting. There were 1405 two day riders (192 miles), 94 one day riders (80 miles). Male/female ratio was 75%/25%. After picking up the T-shirts and eating some pasta, I went to bed at 7:30 PM to get ready for an early start. Just before going to bed I saw my two favorite girls who informed me that the big bear of a hill on day two that I hate was eliminated. I smiled and said be still my heart.

Reveille was 3:30 AM Saturday morning. I was clowning around with my fellow riders after eating breakfast. I had a secret weapon this year, a Schwinn Cross City hybrid bike. It is a cross between a racing and a mountain bicycle. The gear ratio up front was a 50, 40, and 30 tooth chain ring, with a 14 to 28 gear sprockets in the rear (21 total speeds). The smaller the tooth ratio is up front and the bigger ratio in the rear means it is easier to pedal. Although the bicycle is rated at 21 speeds only 19 are physically accessible. You cannot access the extremes (i.e. 50 tooth chain ring up front to the 28 gear sprocket or the 30 tooth chain ring with



the 14 gear sprocket) due to putting too much tension on the chain. I'm still not sure if I can access on the 40 tooth chain ring (the center one) to the 14 or 28 gear sprocket in the rear without causing possible damage. There is a thing called gear ratio. Simply called taking your tooth ratio up front and dividing by your tooth ratio in the rear then multiply by the diameter of your wheel in inches, and round off to the nearest integer. A lot of gear combinations can have the same gear ratio, so in effect you may have only 10 usable gear combinations (something to keep me busy this winter figuring this one out). Two years ago I had a top gear ratio of 110 and a lower gear ratio of 49. Last year my lower gear ratio was 41 (same top gear ratio). This year my top gear ratio was 96 and lower gear ratio was 29. Although I ran out of top gears going down steep hills the lower gear ratio going up hills was real nice. I was joking around with my fellow riders that I had helium in my tires so I could float up the hills.



The Ride started at 6 AM. It was very cold, 50 degrees F. I had a jacket on to ward off any chills. It was a sunny day. In fact it was the best bicycling weather I have ever seen

1994 Ride Page 2 of 6



for the two days in the seven years that I have been doing the Ride. I came in with over \$4,500 in pledges this year, and was eager to start. I was at my familiar start point at the end of the pack. All riders had a number tag to place on their bicycle so the camera crew can identify each rider when the video is edited. I was number 9, which meant I was the ninth rider to register with the PMC. A few riders were envious of my low number. The riders were given the typical bicyclist's shirts, the one with the pockets in the rear. It was the best one yet. Those who did not want a bicyclist shirt were given the official riders' T-shirt; same design minus the advertising from US Sprint and International Bicycle Centers.

I had to take off my glasses because the sun's angle was making it tough to see until the twenty one mile point. The same familiar young girls were there on the first water stop, in a Hawaii type theme. I knew I was running slower this year because the girls were just finishing their last set of dances when I arrived. I was able to take off my jacket and put on my glasses, making the Ride more enjoyable.

The roughest hill on day one, and in fact for the entire Ride, was at the 30 mile point. Hills in the

Berkshire's can go anywhere from one to two miles long. Even with my 29 gear ratio it was a bear climbing up that hill. I was thinking of a very special girl this year who came down with cancer last year. It got me through the roughest part. As I was leaving the second water stop at the 41 mile point Tom Phillips arrived. I asked him what he thought of that hill at 30 mile point. He said it was the 32 mile point. Who am I to argue with the oldest rider <grin>? His daughter-in-law had a picture of her mother that she was looking at to get up the hill.

I had an accident at the 55 mile point. I was stopped at a red light at the bottom of a hill. A girl behind me on her bicycle slammed into the rear of my bicycle. She fell down. After I found out that she was OK I smiled and said it was my fault as I did not have my brake lights on <grin>. I felt that if I was using my racing bicycle this year my rear tire would have blown or more serious damage would have been done to the bicycle. The hybrid bicycle is built a little bit heavier than the racing bicycle, and the tires, due to the wider profile, can take more abuse than the tires used on my racing bicycle. Another advantage is the tires on my hybrid bicycle are the conventional design called clinchers, a separate tube that can be replaced, and the tire is not glued on to the rim. Cheaper to repair. My racing bicycle has tubular tires. Although there is a separate tube, it is inaccessible, and the tire is literally glued on to the rim. It is faster to replace a tubular tire but it is more expensive to replace (\$20 to \$40 plus) versus \$3 for a tube.

Lunch was at the 63 mile point on day one. I arrived at 11:45 AM, and spent 45 minutes there. Some people that I knew from years past on the Ride were concerned how I was doing, considering I was recovering from a broken ankle, and had little training. I told them the ankle was no problem, and I was experiencing no knee problems at all, unlike past years. The new bicycle was working just fine.



1994 Ride Page 3 of 6



I thought I was home free as far as the hills were concerned, but a few more were put in throughout the day. The winds started picking up and it was a head wind, making it more difficult to ride. Thank God I did not get that head wind at the 30 mile point. One advantage the hybrid bicycle gave me was on bumpy or sandy roads. With the wider tire profile it was no problem. I got in to the Mass Maratime Academy (MAA) at 4:30 PM.

I went to the ship (Patriot State) to take a shower and change clothes. Since my room mate got in before I did I ended up with the top bunk. There was no air conditioning on my side of the ship. In fact, they had the heat on. It was very miserable trying to sleep. One thing I noticed throughout the Ride that the food was not as plentiful as far as choices were concerned. The PMC depends on donations for food from corporate sponsors. I had supper and went to bed early (7:30 PM) as I was planning on a 3:30 AM wake-up.

Day two was even chillier than day one at 46 degrees F, but it quickly warmed up to the mid 70^{ies}. I left at 5 AM to get an earlier start. I took a Motrin as a precaution as my butt was somewhat sore from day one. Since I left so early every one was passing me. A few people were glad to see me yelling "How is it going New Jersian?" Quite a few riders were proud of me for raising the kind of money that I do from year to year, and still finish it. I had many friends who would slow down to stay with me. I told them to go on their way as I really had no problem doing the Ride. One thing I did do on the Ride was to go for it going down



hills so I could gather momentum climbing up hills. The hybrid bicycle with the wider tire profile made it easier as far as comfort and safety was concerned going down the hills and it was easy to get to the brakes and shifters while riding in a comfortable position on the handle bars. I never did that before on the Ride except for one hill last year. I hit a top speed of 43.3 MPH on day one and 37.5 MPH on day two. I was making jokes on day two to people cheering me on by saying "Bicycle for sale cheap at the P-Town Inn", but there was no problem doing the Ride.

The seventh water stop was real crowded, so I gave up any ideas of taking pictures. I knew the next 25 miles were going to be rough so I took another Motrin. As I was approaching one of the hills I saw my two favorite girls cheering people on. The camera crew was initially out of position. A spotter yelled number 9 is coming. I'm thinking ain't no way I am reclimbing this hill just to get a picture of MOI. The camera crew was able to film me as I was climbing. I was yelling at my two favorite girls saying to them the worst is over and thanks for cheering me.

With 17 miles to go I stopped by the familiar sand dunes



1994 Ride Page 4 of 6



to get a fresh piece of bubble gum. Another rider was 100 feet away lying down on the ground. The medical sag van stopped to take the guy out of the Ride. The medical personnel came to me to see what my problem was. I just told them I stopped for fresh gum and water. They were skeptical at first, but I told them I had 17 miles to go and figured at worst another 90 minutes of riding. The medical personnel asked if I was a veteran, and I said seven years and counting, so they let me go on my way. The head winds were picking up then but it was no problem finishing the Ride.

With four miles to go I started crying in joy knowing I was going to finish it without walking up a hill. I looked up into the skies and thanked God for keeping my seven year record intact. I thanked my mom and dad for keeping an eye on me throughout the Ride and making it a safe one.

The last two miles of the Ride was not at the P-Town Inn. All riders had to take their bicycles to the pier. The problem is that you get off your bicycle at the P-Town Inn, shower, change clothes, and eat lunch. After 90 minutes of inactivity my legs were starting to cramp

up. It was not fun finishing the last two miles, but I did it.

On the ferry I was in for a pleasant surprise. I was used in two videos in 1991. The second video was shot by a PA group. One person who saw the part of me talking about my sister's upcoming battle with cancer got so involved that he raised over \$20,000 this year. You do not know the feeling I had that I was involved in some small way in getting someone involved.

You all know why I am involved. The day after my first Ride in 1988 I was so proud of what I had done I saw my dad, who was approaching the end of his 40 month battle with colon cancer. I told him "Look what I have done for the Jimmy Fund." He shouted back to me saying "What has the Jimmy Fund done for me?" I started crying as I had no answer then. If I could talk to my dad today I would say "The Jimmy Fund has done nothing for you dad. It is what you have done for the Jimmy Fund. Because of you, your oldest boy got involved helping a child beat cancer in your name. Since 1988 I've raised over \$25,000 for the Jimmy Fund and only God knows how much that I indirectly raised because someone saw me riding or seen me in a video. Some day dad there will be an end to cancer as we know it, I just want to shorten up the time frame. We will be together again someday, where I can ride my bicycle along the best beaches in heaven just for the fun of it. Until then I'll have to settle for the best bicycle ride short of being in heaven, and that's the PMC. Say hello to mom. I miss you."

My 1994 Ride is hereby dedicated in memory of my parents, Joseph Albert and Kathleen Marie Richards, and dedicated in honor of Karen Snyder, who if it was not for her inspiration and prayers I never would of made it up that big bear of a hill on day one without walking up it. Thanks Karen for allowing me to say I have a seven year consecutive record of doing the Ride in its entirety without walking up a hill. Until next year.

Brian M. Richards



1994 Pan Mass Challenge

Sponsored by

A & B Glass,  **FOCUS[®] INTERNATIONAL BICYCLE SHOP, INC.**, Friends of the Cabin,

Island Charities,  **PSEG**

Gary Assimos, Edward W. Bailey, Joe & Laura Bearjar,
Jeff & Elizabeth Beecher, John Bocke, Steve Branosky,
Mike & Cheryl Breault, Jess Brich, Debra & Carol Christianson,
Nicholas Ciambella Jr., Sean & Debra Curran,
Larry & Eileen Deas, Michael & Lillian DePetrillo, Shirley Delp,
Lee Dickson, Mary Anne Driscoll, Edward Guertin, Ph. Hartung,
Joyce Hiles, Rob Howell, Tom & Kathleen Hoye, George Job,
Nelseine Johnston, Ed Jones, Dennis & Dawn Kimble,
Tom Kiessling, Lucien & Gloria LaFragne, Daniel Laughman,
Joe Levick, Daniel & LeeAnn Klinger, Terry Linscott,
Russ & Linda Littlefield, & Ann Lloyd, Michael LoPiano,
John Longtin, Tom Massey, Keith Mahler, Tom McKee,
Lillian McKinnon, Mike & Elizabeth McKinnon, Steve Milligan,
Ella M. Novel, Michael O'Connell, Richard & Joan Palmer,
Frank & Laura Pione, Harry Randolph, Brian Richards,
Kevin Richards, Steve Richards, Donald Rogozenski,
Nick & Jennifer Ross, Walt & Marilyn Sandy, Bill Schell,
Scott & Karen Snyder, John W. Starceвич, Gary W. Stoltz,
Thomas Szydowski, Rick VanRay, Charlie & Sally Vincent,
Desiree Walters, William Ward, Wanda Weed,
Kevin Whitney, Paul & Beverly Williams



The 1994 Pan Massachusetts Challenge
Riding for our loved ones Both Past and Present

In Memory of

Anna Anderson, Leo Arsenault, Charles Assimos, Doris Mae Beecher, Margaret Bertalan, John L. Black, Roland Bragg, Richard Breault, James Caudell, Anne Champion, Mr & Mrs Hubert J. Conner, Arthur P. Curley, Families of Mr and Mrs Larry Davis, Michael A. DePetrillo Sr, Jane M. Diaz, Evelyn Gamble, Rex J. Gorsline, Glen Hartman, Philip and Mayetta Hartung, Stuart R. Headman, Alma Janson, Einar Janson, John H. Johnston, Helen M. Jones, Joy Jeanore Klinger, Wilfrid Lantagne, Linda Levick, Clifton Tinscott, Josephine Tinscott, Catherine McKinnon, Lillian Marie McKinnon, Robert S. Milligan, Joan Moyer, James E. Noble, Jeff Novek, Eunice O'Keefe, Allen Richards, Joseph Albert Richards, Kathleen Marie Richards, Marguerite Richards, Louis Rizza, Ed Rogozenski, Agnes Sandy, William J. Schwab, Julia Snyder, Denise Marie Starceviech, J.C. Trainer Sr, Gena Wagner, Walbert and Caroline Willis, Jane Zachary

In Honor of

Anthony Berardi, Carol Brieker, Carol Christianson, Elizabeth Curran, Flora M. Fedon, Jimmy Gathers, George Jon M. J., Gloria Lantagne, Pauline LoPiano, Allen Marzean, Lillian McKinnon, Jack S. Novek, Raymond Richards, Cathleen Robinson, Joe Rogozenski, Mary Ann Sauer, Karen Snyder, Karen Whitney, Helen Zachary



Brian M. Richards



Mem & Dad would be proud. Until next year,
Thank you and May God Bless.

