



IPMBA NEWS



Official Newsletter of The International Police Mountain Bike Association

3rd Annual Police on Bikes Conference Promises to be a Fount of Information

Registrations for the 3rd Annual Police on Bikes Conference are beginning to arrive at L.A.W. headquarters. Hosted by the Broward County Sheriff's Office, the conference promises to be a source of information for both existing and newly forming bicycle patrols.

Registrants can choose from workshops on topics such as urban drug enforcement, community-oriented policing, storefront operations, and uniform selection. In addition, hands-on workshops are also scheduled and can be registered for on a first-come, first-served basis. These hands-on workshops require a bicycle and include maintenance I & II, advanced techniques, and bicycle handling skills.

You will not want to miss the police mountain

bike competition scheduled for Saturday afternoon. Participate as part of a four man pick-up team, or, if your department is sending enough people, you can participate in the department competition. Prizes will be awarded and fun for all is guaranteed.

Only two miles from the Atlantic Ocean, the Ft. Lauderdale area offers a variety of activities and attractions. Bring the whole family and visit the Miami Sea Aquarium or take an airboat ride at Everglades Holiday Park. Enjoy a bar-b-que and shrimp dinner cruise on the Jungle Queen.

If you have not received your registration packet, please call L.A.W. headquarters today. Hope to see you in Florida!

Police Cyclist Certification Training Seminar to be Held April 25-28

by Robin Miller, IPMBA Coordinator

After much planning and organizing, the first Police Cyclist (PC) Certification Training Seminar will take place prior to the 3rd Annual Police on Bikes Conference. Scheduled for April 25th - 28th at the Sheraton Design Center in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. the seminar will be taught by nine IPMBA certified Police Cyclist Instructors who will assure you that you are operating your bicycle in the most safe and efficient manner possible.

On-bike training, combined with lecture presentations, will focus on bike handling skills, emergency maneuvers, accident avoidance, dismounts, and stair climbs and descents. In addition, the legal rights of cyclists and liability concerns of bike patrols will be covered. Police Cyclist Certification will be given to those passing a multiple choice and road test.

Anyone interested in becoming certified as a Police Cyclist Instructor should submit a resume of cycling and teaching experience to L.A.W. headquarters, c/o Robin Miller. Instructor candidates will be considered on the basis of both resume experience and cycling performance in the pre-conference seminar. As these individuals will be

representing IPMBA throughout the country, only those meeting and upholding the IPMBA standards will be chosen for Instructor Certification. Certification will be received upon completion of all Instructor requirements.

Registration for the pre-conference training seminar is limited to 75 participants. The \$120 registration fee includes all PC training and certification materials and lunch each day. I hope to see you there!

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It is Time to Get Involved

I'm typing this the day before I leave for Charleston, West Virginia to do a bike patrol seminar, so please forgive me for being brief. There's not a whole lot of new stuff to talk about. The Police Cyclist Certification will be on line prior to the POB Conference in April and we'll be turning out some PC's from April 25th - 28th. If you are interested in becoming an instructor, aka, a PCI, please send a resume to L.A.W. headquarters. We would like to get the program started with as many qualified instructors as we can.

Please take note of the word qualified when referring to PCIs. IPMBA does not

expect you to be able to ride like Hans Rey, police better than RoboCop, and teach like a college professor, but we do need experience. Our organization, it's reputation, and our financial solubility is on the line every time someone teaches under the auspices of IPMBA. 'Nuff said about that.

Elections for IPMBA Governing Board will take place at the Third Annual Police on Bikes Conference April 29 through May 1 in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. If you are interested in serving on the board please send a letter describing your involvement in bike patrols and your reasons for running to Robin Miller,

IPMBA coordinator, 190 W. Ostend St., Suite 120, Baltimore, MD 21230-3755. I strongly urge you to become involved.

I got a call from the organizers of RAAM, Race Across America, and they are interested in doing a Bike Patrol Team Competition next year with the possibility of a demo team this year. If it works out, each team would have 6 members on it and each member would ride in shifts. This is still in the idea stage, but I'm working on it in my spare time. Until the conference, don't let the bad guys or the pavement magnet get ya.

—Allan

Bicycle Selection and Multiple Use Bikes

***By Gary McLaughlin
Sacramento Police Department***

I receive many requests for information regarding bicycle selection. By calling the department, I can find out what type of bicycle they are looking for and how the department intends to use the bicycles. Most importantly is how the patrol person thinks the bicycles should be used and what type of equipment they would like. Most departments want their bikes to be used by numerous officers because of the significant cost of a bicycle. However, is it possible to save money using bikes out of property? And, should bikes be used by more than one officer?

New bicycles vs. property bikes

Buying new equipment has more advantages than disadvantages. The cost for a new bike and all the required equipment is between \$1000 and \$1600 per bike, not including any special uniforms. New bikes are under warranty for one year, saving your department approximately \$200.

Taking a bike from property may be an attractive alternative to spending the money for a new bike. However, this is one of the worst mistakes a bicycle patrol unit can make. From time to time good bikes can be found in property, but great caution must be exercised when deciding to use them for patrol purposes.

There are several things to consider when

looking at property bikes. First, you never know how the bike was treated in the past. The frame may have a hairline crack, the stem may have been stressed to the point that it may give, or the pedals may be ready to come loose. Second, the cost of having the bike checked by a bike shop will normally run between \$200 and \$300. Third, most property bikes will not hold up to the standard needed for police services. If the bicycle is in need of constant repairs, the unit will be spending too much time in the shop and too little time on the streets. As a result of several experiences with property bicycles in my classes, I now advise departments sending officers to my class that no property bikes will be allowed.

Multiple Use Bikes

If an officer does not pay for the equipment being used, he or she is less apt to take care of the equipment. For example, just look at how a police cruiser is maintained. The reason for this is the belief that the department has the money to make repairs or purchase new equipment. How many times have you been forced out of a cruiser because it smells as if the last shift had a smoking marathon? Have you ever turned on the air conditioner only to have sunflower seeds blasted in your face? Bicycles often receive the same, and sometimes worse, treatment from officers. Someone else rides the bike, they bend the rim, get a flat tire, or they do not let you know the brakes need adjusting, or the

headset or bottom bracket is loose. Your pre-ride check may catch most of these problems. However, if the loose headset slips by your inspection, you may end up doing a header if you make a quick stop.

A department incurs a certain amount of liability if equipment is not maintained. The officer who rides the same bike all the time knows when the bike is not handling prop-

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Uniform Needs of the Bike-Mounted Police Officer (part IV)

by Sgt. Joseph Martin,
Haywood Police Department, California

Collapsing batons are a uniform option which seem to have been designed with bicycle officers in mind. Some officers have trouble getting these authorized and must carry a regular size baton. An effective way of coping with a full size baton is to carry it in a collapsing baton holder. Models such as the one produced by Monadnock allow the baton to be carried in a stable position. This overcomes the problem of the baton "flopping around." Some agencies have constructed very serviceable baton holders out of PVC pipe which they mount on the rear rack of the bike. The down side of this method of carry is that many departments train their officers to "exit the bike," (police-speak for "drop the bike") when contacting suspects. If your baton is attached to the bike, it will be out of reach if you need it. By wearing the baton on the belt, it is always accessible, and both hands are free as soon as you put the bike down.

There are some great little flashlights on the market now that can be worn on the belt, are rechargeable, and put out as much light as

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erly. For this same reason, departments refuse to let motor officers share their motors. Bike officers, like motor officers, become one with their bikes. They care for their bike as if it is their own. They keep it clean and maintained; we all know the bikes will last longer if this is the case.

In addition, a bicycle frame must be fit to the officer that will be riding the bike. The frame must have 2-3" of space between the rider and the top tube. The seat stem and handle bars need to be sized to the rider as well. If the frame is too big, some very unpleasant pain will result. If it is too small, back, knee and arm problems may arise. The seat must also be adjusted correctly to avoid knee and lower back problems. And an incorrectly adjusted stem could cause back, arm and neck injuries.

As you can see, departments should be aware of the problems associated with multiple use bikes and encouraged to have a one-to-one bike to officer ratio. Maintenance costs and injuries will be reduced greatly, making your department and your bike patrol officers happy.

their heavier cousins. One of these is the "Sure-Fire" light. I have been using one exclusively now for about four months and am happy to report no problems with it.

The hands need protection in the form of cycling gloves both from abrasions suffered in falls, and to help prevent Carpel's Tunnel Syndrome. You can find these in black and other non-day-glow-colors. In cold weather we wear "The Glove," a full-finger neoprene glove which allows you to write and shoot as well. You will not be able to remove any cycling glove fast enough in a shooting situation, so be sure to practice shooting while wearing them. Our department adopted a range program incorporating riding the bike and dismounting and firing under stress, with cycling gloves and helmet.

Protective vests are still a subject of great debate in some law enforcement circles. If climate allows you to wear one, I certainly recommend it. Our jurisdiction issues them and requires they be worn by anyone in uniform. Vented shirts and t-shirts made out of perspiration wicking materials, such as Cool-Max, being marketed by Flashwear and others, can help increase your comfort. For bike officers, the vest also provides another layer of material between you and the road. A welcome barrier for that inevitable trip to the pavement...

Shorts. Besides your bike helmet, nothing else so loudly proclaims "I am a bike cop!" There are a variety of choices for shorts. Allita makes a nice short which comes with an inside lining and chamois, belt loops and pockets. We started with this short and found them comfortable. However, we moved away from them for a number of reasons: the shorts do not have a fly, thus male officers quickly learn what their female counterparts endure any time they want to make a quick rest room stop; there were not as many pockets as in regular uniform pants, so officers not riding full time must adopt a different way of carrying their equipment depending on what day it is. Little things like finding your wallet to pay for lunch can become bothersome. This may be a moot point with full time units, but in departments where the bike officer must still spend time in their regular uniform, this is a nice feature to have. Another problem was the shorts are so popular with police agencies they were back-ordered several weeks.

We decided upon the Sportif model

630170. Sportif is a nation-wide company, their "Ink Blue" is a near perfect match with our navy blue uniform shirts, and they have available a wide choice of colors. The shorts have belt loops and pockets everywhere that uniform pants do, (and then some) with button down flaps for a uniform-style appearance. Officers wear either padded underwear, such as that made by Andiamo!, or padded bike shorts of their own choice. (We insist that the bike shorts not be visible below the uniform shorts.) Agencies in warmer climates can expect that once the tradition of long pants has been broken by bike officers, regular patrol officers will want to know, "Why can't we be comfortable?" Hey, why not? One of our bike qualified officers who is primarily working a bike beat, sustained poison oak over both his legs after crashing in an off duty mountain bike race. Rather than take off sick because of his inability to wear long pants, he asked and was granted permission to wear his uniform shorts on regular patrol. Citizens thought it was great.

IPMBA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone(____) _____

Police Dept. _____

Membership is \$35 for an individual, \$40 for family.

IPMBA membership is not offered to police departments.

Add \$15 for postage to foreign countries.
Pay by check drawn in U.S. dollars from U.S. bank, or international money order.

Enclose Payment or choose:

VISA MasterCard

Card #: _____

Exp. Date: _____

Signature: _____

Make Check Payable to:

League of American Wheelmen

190 W. Ostend St., Suite 120

Baltimore, MD 21230-3755

1-800-288-BIKE (membership only)

(410) 539-3399

Unit Profile

Memphis's Beale Street Bike Patrol

by Danielle Sweeney

The Beale Street Bike Patrol has been in operation since 1989. Headquartered out of the Beale Street Substation Museum, riding Specialized mountain bikes, this twelve-member squad's primary functions include: public relations with the summer tourists, handling calls in the downtown area, and keeping an eye out for auto theft and potential muggings.

Officer Vincent Higgins believes that the bike patrol helps to create a strong rapport between the police department and the downtown community.

"I find it very rewarding," he said. "[Patrolling on a bike] gives you a lot of opportunity to interact with people."

Higgins's love for bike patrol work goes beyond the public relations of being a police officer. He recalls how the sheer stealth of the mountain bike enabled him to capture a suspect who was trying to rob a parking meter. The thief didn't even see Higgins for almost five minutes. Had Higgins been working out of a squad car, the capture would have run less smoothly.

Higgins says that he averages at least one foot chase a day, and has not lost one foot chase since he's been a member of the Beale Street Bike Patrol.

Kevin Shaver, an IPMBA member who is also on the Beale Street Bike Patrol, added an interesting story about the bike patrol. Last summer there was a rash of auto burglaries in one stretch of town. The bike patrol, working in conjunction with rooftop surveillance,



Members of the Beale Street Bike Patrol in front of their unit headquarters.

caught 40 different people during the month of July.

Officer Dena Hendren, one of Higgins's colleagues, says that the POBs—who patrol

Memphis round the clock—are very popular in the downtown area, so popular, in fact, that getting the entire squad together for a group photo is next to impossible.

International Police Mountain Bike Association Governing Board

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Equipment and Uniforms

*Mt. Bike Specialized
Helmets Bell
Shorts Uniform shorts
Shirts Uniform shirt
Shoes Hi-Tech hiking
boots or combat boots*

Effective Dismounts Crucial for Bike Officers

By Kris Lafond, California State Police Department

Part 1 of 2

Through my field and training experience, I have made a distressing observation. Many bicycle patrol officers have a great deal of difficulty effectively dismounting from their bikes. Early in my bike patrol adventures, I realized that the bike can quickly put an officer in the middle of any number of situations. This, as you may know, presents the bike patrol officer with some obvious safety concerns, the least of which should be getting off a bike. I have developed several dismounts which have become very effective for me in the field. I will discuss a couple of them here, and hopefully, after training, you will find them of some use too.

First and foremost is consideration for the type of pedal system you will be using. The vast majority of systems I have seen have been toe strap pedal systems. I prefer a toe strap system, therefore, the following dismounts will take their use into consideration. If you choose to use toe straps, it will be imperative that you be able to proficiently "flip-out" of and into them. This does not simply mean removing your feet from the straps/pedals. It will require you to spontaneously remove your feet from the straps/pedals and then re-plant them onto the opposite, strapless, side of the pedal. You should practice this simultaneously so that you can remove both feet at the same time. Hint: Place your pedals/crank arms in the 3 and 9 o'clock position and practice "flipping out" and in. You will not always be able to anticipate when you will have to dismount. When you can, you should always "flip out" well in advance of the actual dismount. The "flip out" technique will greatly reduce the common mishap of becoming tangled up in your toe straps. This has happened to me during suspect encounters and I'm telling you it can be frightening.

The first dismount is the left side "over the saddle" dismount. Your first concern is to "flip out." If you are not using toe straps, don't be alarmed. You are already ahead of the game. Now that your feet are firmly planted on the pedals, identify your dismount location. Apply initial braking action. Lift



your right leg up and over the saddle. Place your right foot on top of the left crank arm where it fastens to the bottom bracket axle. Once you become good at locating this position you will find that you can also place your foot on the frame at the bottom bracket and even on part of the chain stay. Once your right foot is planted, practice getting your left foot off of the pedal and coasting on your bike. While in this position, practice braking and stepping off your bike. You will find, after some training, that you will be able to use this dismount at a variety of speeds and with different braking extremes. It is an excellent dismount under a variety of situations.

The next dismount is what I call the "top tube" dismount. Again, the first consideration must be to "flip out" of your toe straps. Next, apply initial braking pressure. After braking, lift your right leg up and over the top tube (the tube between the handlebars and the seat). This maneuver should be done as quickly as possible. You must be aggressive enough to thrust your leg up high enough towards your chest in order to clear the top tube with your foot. If you happen to be riding with a third tire, you will have to compensate by straightening your back and leaning slightly backwards. Do not brake during this maneuver. Once your foot has cleared the top tube you should then apply

your brakes. You can either step off in front of, or behind your left leg, depending upon the situation. This dismount can eventually be done so smoothly that it may appear to some that you never dismounted. It can also be used effectively in spontaneous close quarter situations.

A couple of notes. Initial braking is not a necessity. You may prefer to maintain a consistent speed while performing your dismount, the choice is yours. Just remember, you should not brake during the first part of these dismounts, it may ruin your day. Therefore, the steps should go as follows: initial braking, perform the maneuvers, stabilize, apply the brakes. You should train so that you are capable of reversing these maneuvers at any point and remounting. I have found this necessary due to suspects who will cunningly wait for a bike patrol officer to begin his/her dismount prior to them fleeing. They do this believing, with reason, that this is the time when you will be most preoccupied. For the "over the saddle" dismount, it will be very helpful to put adhesive no slip strips on the area where you will be stepping with your right foot (on top of the crank arm, top of bottom bracket frame area, and on the top of the left side chain stay). In part 2 of this article, I will discuss odd side dismounts and a useful quick mount.

Police Unit Notes

Bike patrols at malls

The success of the Virginia Beach bicycle patrol has led to the implementation of a bike patrol at the city's largest mall, Lynnhaven Mall. Averaging 25 miles a day, the two bike patrollers pedalling around the mall have stopped arguments between shoppers, confiscated guns, and broken up fights. Since the bikes were added to the mall's private security force, car thefts have dropped 50 percent. In addition, shoplifters have literally run into their bikes while trying to flee. The bikes can easily maneuver between cars, and have the added advantage of being quick and quiet, making them good for parking lot patrols.

Bike Patrol at State Park

Cedar Hill State Park was the first Texas state park to feature bicycle patrols. The bicycles allow park rangers to move through congested traffic easily, making the law enforcement presence felt among holiday crowds. In addition, bicycles can approach campsites unheard in response to noise complaints. The bike patrol has resulted in a noticeable reduction in alcohol consumption on the beaches at the park. Several other state parks now have bike patrols, and the benefits are far outweighing the costs. Besides costing far less than a patrol car, bike patrols save fuel, control pollution, lead to long-term employee health, and help with public relations.

Salem Police Department gets New bike patrol patch

The Salem Police Department is considering implementing a bike patrol and recently designed a special patch for the patrol. If plans go through, the patch and bike patrol will be on line this spring.



Writers, Photographers, Contributors Needed

Aside from joining IPMBA, there are many ways in which you can get involved:

- Write articles for IPMBA News, the bimonthly newsletter featuring articles of interest to bike officers: training tips, patrol tactics, unique funding, community involvement with bike patrols, etc.
- Send photographs or slides of your bike unit in action (either patrolling or engaged in community service work) for use in the newsletter.
- Let us know about new units that are starting up.
- Send newspaper clippings and articles about your bike patrol unit to be included in our scrapbook.
- Submit proposals for future conference workshops.

IPMBA Notes

Bikes Fly Free

In addition to all the wonderful benefits of IPMBA membership, you can now fly your bike free on certain airlines. Call 1-800-426-4055 to find out how to receive your free bicycle transportation certificate!

Police on Bikes Conference

Registration packets for the 3rd Annual Police on Bikes Conference were mailed January 18th. If you have not received yours, please call L.A.W. at 1-800-288-BIKE.

Police on Bikes Directory Update

The 1992 POB Directory is in the process of being updated. We are attempting to make this a complete listing of police bicycle patrols. Please let Robin Miller at L.A.W. headquarters know of any other units in your area that have recently formed bicycle patrols.

Police on Bikes '94 Conference Site

As the 3rd Annual Police on Bikes Conference draws near, it is time to begin planning next year's conference. If you know of a good location and a police department that is willing to host next year's conference, please notify Robin Miller at L.A.W. headquarters.

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