



IPMBA NEWS

Official Newsletter of The International Police Mountain Bike Association



Winter Months' Maintenance: A Few Cleaning Suggestions

By Officer Bruce Hopfengardner, Centerville Police Department (OH)

With the Winter months quickly approaching we are faced with the greatest challenges as police cyclists. Not only does the inclement weather play havoc on our bodies but is also very stressful to our equipment. Rain, sleet and snow creeps into hubs, bottom brackets and headsets cutting years of serviceability from our mountain bikes. While the advent of sealed bearings has increased the life expectancy of many components, technology is lacking for protection of the chain, freewheel and chain rings. The lubricants we use for these parts quickly attract road grime and salt to form an abrasive coating on these metal surfaces. Without regular maintenance a police cyclist can wear out these components in one winter.

Below is a description of the steps I take to keep the drive train of our department's mountain bikes clean of this grime. The relatively

low cost of the required maintenance materials will offset the replacement cost of a new drive train. Conduct these steps at least monthly.

Required tools:

- Parts washer. Use meatloaf pans, coffee cans or purchase a parts washer from your local bike shop. I am very pleased with our Finish Line Easy Pro parts washer. The cost was under \$24 and it includes a parts bin, brush and sprayer.

- Cleaning Solvent. Although carburetor cleaner and kerosene work well, they are toxic and difficult to dispose of. Be environmentally responsible and use a non-flammable, biodegradable degreaser. Any popular citrus acid degreaser works well.

See Winter on Page 4

Pursuit Tactics

By Officer Jerry MacCauley, West Palm Beach Police Department (FL)

Now that bicycle patrols are taking on some respectability in police circles, we are in a unique position to show how good we really are, or can be. We sold the idea to our administrators, the public, and our patrol car counterparts. We have shown that we can do what any other cop can do, perhaps we even stated that we could do it better. Well, the numbers of arrests can attest to that fact. The question that arises often is "What are we doing different?"

Many officers make a big mistake and believe their training is over once they've obtained certification and start peddling. For all of the advantages to patrolling on bikes, there are a host of issues that need to be addressed, and continuous training is of the utmost importance for safety and job performance.

Contact and Cover

The vulnerability of being out in the open is lack of immediate cover. Urban police cyclists

are always aware that they are a target to those who wish them harm. While patrolling, they play the "what if" game. Where can I go if I come under attack? What would be more appropriate, cover or concealment? Where is my partner? This last question is something that needs further mention. There is a tendency to

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Make Sure You Know What Training You're Receiving

I'm writing this just before going to Rochester, New York, with the rest of the board to prepare for the 1996 Police on Bikes Conference. Next years conference promises to be the best conference yet, mainly because of all the hard work done by host agencies in the past and the work to be done by my fellow board members and the Rochester P.D.

While I'm on the subject of training I'd like to talk about an issue that came up recently. In the interest of the parties involved I won't discuss any one case in great detail but currently there are a few lawsuits involving "instructors" and students that have been injured in "training." I quote the words "instructors" and "training" because the bulk of these suits involve "instructors" who were not certified to teach police mountain biking.

The students thought they were getting a bargain but what they ended up with was a broken bone, or worse. In cases like these, who's going to testify

in civil court on behalf of the self appointed "instructor"? Even if the method of this "instructor" was correct, how can one explain the lack of some documented, court definable certification to teach such thing?

Teaching someone to ride a bike on the job is different than any other training police officers normally go through.

If something goes wrong with bicycle patrol training there's an immediate payment to be made in the form of an injury. After that, a civil court will decide if any subsequent payments will be made.

Because your time is valuable, I'll make my point. If you know someone

who thinks they're not really taking a risk by "teaching" without the proper credentials, have them sell everything they own and send the proceeds to me. I'll have more respect for it than they do.

My final thought is this, if anyone is looking for an expert witness to testify on behalf of an "instructor" who is not certified to teach the IPMBA Police Cyclist Course save yourself some time, I can't help you. If you're involved in a lawsuit and you're an IPMBA PCI, my testimony is free of charge. In addition to that, you'll have a host of other court tested resources at your disposal.

My advice for you today is: if you're gonna swim in shark infested waters, don't wear a prime rib necklace. Until next time, don't let the bad guys, the pavement magnet, or the land sharks get ya.

-Allan

..if you're gonna swim in shark infested waters, don't wear a prime rib necklace.

A Shocking Column

Suspension

By Sgt. Joseph Martin, Hayward Police Department (CA)

Don't be afraid . . . this section is not about time off without pay! We're talking shock absorption for your mountain bike! Today's markets offer the public safety cyclist the choice of no

shocks, front shocks only, or front and rear (full) suspension.

A short while ago, suspension systems were considered an expensive addition. When shocks first appeared on the

market, police agencies viewed shocks as something only racers and serious recreational cyclists could realize a benefit from. Today most of the mountain bikes of a quality suitable for full time public

See Suspension on Page 5

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A CASE FOR OFFICER BIKE REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

By Sgt. Tom Northfell, Chicago Police Department (IL)

It has been said that one does not have to know how a clock works in order to be able to tell time. Similarly, one does not have to have even the slightest knowledge in automotive mechanics, in order to be able to skillfully drive a car. This logic can also be transferred to police officers and their bicycles. But the question I wish to raise in this article is whether or not this should necessarily be the case.

The Chicago Police Bike Patrol has been in operation for four years. The unit consists of one sergeant and twenty police officers. We have an inventory of twenty-five bicycles. In the early developmental stages of our bike patrol, we sent bicycles in need of repair to a local bike shop. This proved to be expensive, inconvenient, and downed the bike for an unreasonable amount of time.

As a result, the Department sent a few unit officers for specialized (formal) training in bicycle repair. This proved to be better, since we had the advantages of a quick, inexpensive, in house repair. The initial cost for the bike tools was quickly made up by the elimination of labor costs charged by the bike shop. However, what we found happening is that the officers, knowing that their bikes would be quickly fixed, would often fail to perform routine pre-ride checks and basic maintenance. When the bike went down, even when due to officer neglect, it was all too easy for the officer to demand, **FIX IT**, and get it back in a day, without any effort on his part. Consequently, there were an inordinate number of preventable bike repairs.

Recently, the CPD bike unit has instituted a "screw it up, fix it"

policy. Although not every officer in the unit has the same skills regarding bicycle repair, they are now aware that if their bike goes down, they will help fix it. When considering that our officers average 125 miles of hard riding per week, tire flats, bent rims, broken and stretched chains and frame dinks are to be expected. However, since the institution of this policy, the incidence of preventable repairs has dramatically decreased.

I have found that requiring that bike unit officers be knowledgeable, culpable, and responsive for their own bicycle maintenance and repair is both cost effective and a viable preventive measure. In addition, officers that have this professional knowledge are capable of and more apt to aid civilian bike riders stranded on the bike path. This is hands on community policing at its best. □



NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT SPORTS FEDERATION

"POLICE OLYMPICS MOUNTAIN BIKE INVITATIONAL"

The National Law Enforcement Sports Federation invites you to attend the Inaugural Police Mountain bike competition being held in St. Petersburg, FL October 27 & 28th 1995. The competition will take place along the wilderness trails in beautiful Fort DeSoto Park, The park is surrounded by the calm waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

Gold, Silver & Bronze Police Olympic medals will be issued for the first through third place. In addition cash prizes will be given in 1st through 3rd place. Police Olympic medals will also be given for 4th through 10th place winners. These awards will be issued in each age category. Cash awards \$100 first place - \$50.00 second place - \$25.00 third place.

AGE CATEGORIES: Male & Female

Open To 30
31 to 40
41 to 50
50 & Over

Four or more competitors will be required for each category. If there are not enough competitors in your age division, you will be placed in the next youngest division.

EVENTS:

Fri.: Skills course and wilderness trail run
Law Enforcement only.
(This is considered one event.)

Sat.: 25 mile road race -
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ENTRY FEES:

Fees includes a Police Olympic Tee-shirt
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\$50.00 both events
Deadline: October 14th, 1995.
Pre-registration event fee accepted until deadline, \$5.00 post registration fee after October 14, 1995.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
Lt. Marvin Widman, Floyd College Police Academy, 706-777-2239/706-295-3850
Sgt. Robert Barr, Newark P.D., 201-733-6105
Ms. Carol William, Coordinator NLESF, 813-527-9203(1800-2200 only)

FOR AN APPLICATION, PLEASE WRITE TO:
National Law Enforcement Sports Fed, P.O. Box 76039, St. Petersburg, FL 33734



Is Your Unit Suspended?

Dear Editor:

I have found the tendency for police bike patrols to go the route of not having suspension on their bikes. Some say the cost impedes it, some say it looks too expensive for public imagery, some say the extra weight doesn't justify it. I called my friend, Paul Turner, president of Rock Shox, and asked him if he would give me a dozen Mag 21 to experiment with and he immediately came through. We have them on three departments in West Hollywood, Beverly Hills and West L.A.. The immediate response in Beverly Hills is "fantastic." We will monitor this test and publish results in a latter bulletin.

I would appreciate any help other units could give me as to their impression of suspension versus solid front forks, either perceived or real, that I could use to include in that article.

Sincerely,
 Albert C. Farrell
 335 N. Maple Dr. #150
 Beverly Hills, CA 90210

(Editor's note: Please see "Suspension" on page 2 for more comment on this subject.)

Winter Months' Maintenance

Continued from page 1.

- Large cleaning brush and an old tooth brush.
- Chain rivet tool.
- Hex wrench to remove the chain rings.
- Wide (1/4" or greater) regular screwdriver.
- Lubricant, rags, and approximately 1 1/2 hours.

Begin by shifting your chain into the smallest chainring and smallest freewheel cog. This will give you plenty of slack to work with the chain. Break the chain by using your rivet tool to push any of the chain's pins out. Be careful not to push the pin out so far that it falls from the side plate. Always push the pin towards you (non-drive side towards the drive side) when breaking the chain. This makes it easier to reassemble the chain by pushing the pin away from you or towards the non-drive side. Slide the chain

from the bike and soak it in your cleaning solvent. Clean the chain last to allow the solvent time to begin dissolving the heavy grime collection on the chain.

Loosen and remove the bolts holding the chainrings onto the spider. You may need to hold a wide, regular screwdriver against the nuts on the non-drive side of the chainrings when loosening the bolts. Remove and clean the rings using your solvent and brushes.

Remove your rear wheel (and also the freewheel if you have the tools and expertise). Clean the teeth of the freewheel using the solvent and brushes and pay particular attention to the spaces between the freewheel cogs. These are difficult to clean but attract a lot of grime.

After cleaning all parts replace the chainrings and rear wheel. No lubrication is needed on the teeth of these parts. Replace the chain taking care to ensure

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the chain is facing the same direction as before. Putting the chain on backwards will wear out the drive train faster. Spin the crank. You will probably notice that the pin you replaced is causing a skip or kink in the chain. This means the plates are pinched too tightly. Loosen them by grasping the chain on both sides of the kink and flexing the chain laterally. This will loosen the pin's tension against the plates and free the kink.

Lubricate the chain using a lubricant suitable for your climate. Check with your local bike shop for advice. Remember that too much lubricant attracts grime. An indicator of excessive lubricant is the collection of thick, black grime on your rear derailleur's pulley wheels. □

See December's Issue of *IPMBA News* for more on Winter Months' Maintenance.

Suspension

Continued from page 2

safety uses have the option of a front fork suspension system.

Suspension systems have matured quite a bit. Front suspension systems have proved themselves to be a great benefit for police cyclists. Front shocks eat up the stresses of going over curbs, stairs, and numerous other obstacles confronted throughout the day. Remember you'll be spending as many hours on the bike as those guys in the Tour de France! On patrol, your attention is divided between riding the bike, and monitoring activity around you. As you at-

tempt to read the license plate on a suspicious vehicle, you may fail to notice a pothole you'd normally avoid. Having a front shock can mean the difference between that pothole being a minor unexpected bump, or a trip to the pavement. Full time officers should definitely take advantage of the high quality front suspension systems now available. If your bikes are used in very tame environments, part time, or only at special events, the added expense may not be worthwhile. However, if you have a choice, get a front suspension system.

As with any new equipment, if you change from rigid forks to suspension, get accustomed to the feel and handling characteristics before using the bike on duty.

Current thinking supports the idea fully suspended mountain bikes, those having front and rear suspension, are really only of benefit for those riding off-road in steep and challenging terrain.

Fully suspended police mountain bikes may become more economical as technology and demands increase. □

Pursuit Tactics

Continued from page 1.

ride in pairs, when possible, and become separated when one or the other makes a sudden decision to "check something out". We have all done it, but we must try to communicate so as to not become separated. As a team, we have the natural contact and cover tactics at our disposal. As a review, generally one officer makes all of the "contacts" with suspects or pedestrians, while the other offers "cover". The cover officer positions himself in a way to provide:

1. Personal cover for both himself and the contact officer;
2. Maintain an unobstructed view of the suspect(s) as well as the contact officer;
3. Provide a safe background in the event of the possibility of shooting;
4. Block likely escape routes.

This concept of "contact and cover" should be practiced on every call or action. It is very easy to be drawn into a conversation and fail to provide cover duties. Make this a habit and you will be reducing the hazards we face significantly.

Another situation we often find ourselves involved in is being "swarmed". This is desirable when putting on a bike demo at the elementary schools, but dan-

gerous when on patrol. If you are involved with drug and prostitution sweeps, it is very important that you have the appropriate manpower. Do not let yourself and your partner get surrounded by a crowd that could potentially get hostile. Bikes are not like patrol cars where you can quickly escape a mob. Try to isolate suspects before making contact and allow yourselves an escape route if necessary. When sweeping areas, take a few minutes to do some surveillance of the situation to provide for appropriate manpower and don't let yourselves get boxed in.

Suspects on Foot

Just as there is a difference between sport and reality, there is a need to understand the difference between a pursuit competition and actually pursuing a suspect. In training classes we see officers doing rolling dismounts and power slides as they approach the "bad guys." In reality, the suspect on his feet has many advantages over the bike mounted officer. For one thing, he has much better traction and can change direction quicker. He also has the advantage of knowing what he is going to do, while we need to react to his movements. A frequent mistake is to get too close to the suspect before we are ready to dismount. We know that the bikes can ride

faster than most suspects in a straight line, but not necessarily so on grass or in a confined area. It is important to leave a "reactionary" gap, much as we would in defensive tactics, in order to adjust and adapt to sudden movements. The technique of "herding" the suspect is very effective. You can cut off escape routes and tire the suspect and dismount when you decide. Try this on an officer during training in order to get a feel of this. Tell the "suspect" officer to try to not get caught and see how difficult it is. You need to control the arrest completely from the very beginning.

Training, obviously, is the key to perfecting your choice of tactics. It is especially important in the case of bike cops! □

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The IPMBA Police Cyclist Certification Course is now P.O.S.T. in Illinois thanks to the hard work of PCIs Dwayne Killian, Robert James and Gary Hoegner.

Voluntary Recall

Specialized Bicycle Components has announced the voluntary recall of all handlebars on the 1994 Rockhopper line and rigid forks used on the 1995 Sumpjumpers. The recall comes in response to verified reports of parts failures in the field. The handlebar in question is a YC-A125PB model spec'd on each and every Rockhopper, including the Sport, GX, FS, Comp, and Comp FS models. Contact your bicycle dealer for details.

Womens' Policing Conference

The National Center for Women and Policing will be hosting the first ever conference on "Police Leadership for the 21st Century: The Emerging Role of Women" in Washington, D.C., November 11 - 14, 1995. The conference will bring together 300 of the top command women in law enforcement in the country to participate in an exciting and challenging leadership development program. Participants will include chiefs and deputy chiefs of police, sheriffs, commanders, civilians in law enforcement management at all levels of government; campus police, transit police, police psychologists and trainers; and corrections personnel. For more information about the conference or the National Center, please call 213-651-0495.

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IPMBA On-Line



The following would welcome correspondence from fellow IPMBA members. *Send your address in!* IPMBA's on-line address: bikeleague@aol.com IPMBA's address will be ipmba@aol.com in the near future.

Roger Early, IPMBA member and six year bike patrol member/five year bike coordinator at Pima Community College Department of Public Safety.

rearly@pimacc.pima.edu

Thomas Woodruff, IPMBA member and patrolman with State University of New York, Oswego, Dept of Public Safety. (NY)

woodruff@oswego.oswego.edu

Duane Buck, IPMBA member and national park service ranger/bike patrol coordinator at Valley Forge National Historic Park near Philadelphia. (PA)

bikeranger@aol.com

David Cox, IPMBA member and reserve officer/bike patrol unit organizer for the Broken Arrow Police Department. (OK)

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IPMBA News

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On the Job Training

By Officer Gary Hoegner, Moline Police Department (IL)

There has been a lot of talk lately about IPMBA adopting a one or two day "Police Cyclist" refresher course. Many police agencies currently set aside a day or two, monthly or yearly, for honing those skills we all learned during our initial PC course.

What if your department doesn't have continuing "On Bike" training? Is it possible to train on your own while working?

Some officers daily seek out riding challenges and have found that such non-structured training still maintains their proficiency and allows for greater confidence by practicing obstacle clearing techniques in the sector they work. Wouldn't it be preferable to practice that difficult obstruction on our beat than to have to negotiate it quickly while working, maybe under adverse conditions? If during the course of our duties we see a set of steps, is there anything to preclude us from riding up and down them? With practice, officers can routinely scale four to eight steps and descend very steep steps that reverse direction. Quick turns, panic stops, and hook slides can be practiced in remote areas. Parking blocks are everywhere and parking spaces usually are ten feet wide, allowing us to practice "The Box" without cones. This kind of training allows us to maintain the skill level needed to ride slowly in areas congested with pedestrians.

Schools, churches, and municipal lots are good places to practice. The practice should be done during non peak hours to avoid conflicts with pedestrians or vehicles. This will also minimize our embarrassment in the event of a "Face Plant". Is there a wooded area such as a park, preferably with hills, in the area you patrol? Perhaps nothing improves our abilities more than off-road riding.

There's no substitute for structured training with other bike officers for the updating, information exchange, camaraderie, competition and just pushing ourselves to our limits. However, if such group training is infrequent or unavailable, self actuated, on the job training is a great alternative. No, we're not going to give Hans Rey any competition but shouldn't we strive to be as proficient as possible within our abilities in order to perform our best as bike cops? ☐

(Editor's note - IPMBA is planning on having a "refresher"/advanced police cyclist course in place by the end of 1996.)

Congratulations LPMBA

Louisiana Police Mountain Bike Association is celebrating its first year as an organization. Thanks for supporting bike officers in your state and for being such strong supporters of IPMBA!

Thought for the Day

How come people never ask you how much a police cruiser costs but they always ask how much your police bike costs?

*-Contributed by Officer Scott Monaco
New Orleans Police Department*

CRASH PACK

FIRST AID KIT

Never fall down?

Knock on wood and all that — we hope you never do! We also hope you'll never need that umbrella, spare tire or insurance policy, but being prepared sure can make you feel better.

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May 5 - 8, 1996

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For December's Issue (the last issue of the year) *IPMBA News* would like to publish the best police cycling stories of 1995. Please send or e-mail in your "best of" Police Mountain Bike stories. From arrest to training or from police mountain bike victories to serious tales of heroism, we want to publish it in December. The deadline is November 10. Let's hear from you!

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