

# RCN

RECUMBENT CYCLIST NEWS

Issue # 62  
March/April  
2001




*2001 Season  
Preview Issue*

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Recumbent Cyclist News is published six times per year. US subscription rates are: (Note new USA lower rates)

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\$70 2-Year 12 Issues

\$70 Airmail (not available in Canada or the UK—see below)

**Contact**

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RCN

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**Schedule**

You should have your RCN issue by the end of the first calendar month of the issue in question. Our goal is to attempt to get you the issue before the calendar months of the issue (read: early).

**Fine Print**

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http://www.cambiecycles.com

Europe/UK

Future Cycles

Tel. 011 +44 1342 822 847

or sales@futurecycles.prestel.co.uk

or http://there.is/futurecycles

■ **On the Cover...**

The new Burley Hepcat/Django SWB in the grass. Photo courtesy of Burley

■ **In Our Last Issue...**

RCN#61 was mailed in mid-December. It has a Red/Magenta cover with a photo of Craig Johnsen and his Trice.

If you did not receive this issue (and should have), please write, call or email us today.

■ **Our next issue...**

RCN#63 is due out in two months.

# ***Editorial License***

by Bob Bryant  
drrecumbnt@aol.com

Welcome to 2001—the recumbent odyssey. The new year marks the beginning of our 11th year publishing and this is our 62nd issue in print!

As our industry is concerned—there is good news—and there is some bad news.

The good news is that new 2001 models are plentiful, readily available and manufacturers are eager for your recumbent dollar. The new recumbent enthusiasts will find more models and better values than ever before—though be cautious. Our advice is to buy a recumbent bicycle from a known reputable company—or better yet—from a good dealer for that company. Education is the key. RCN is a great place to start. For owner references—search out your local rider group, Internet user mailing lists, and the two primary Internet recumbent groups: hpv mailing list ([www.ihpva.org](http://www.ihpva.org)) and the recumbent group ([alt.rec.bicycle.recumbent](http://alt.rec.bicycle.recumbent)). These sources can be very helpful.

The bad news is in regards to our recumbent industry. The “oh-so-hot” recumbent market that everyone was predicting for 2000 did not really materialize. Sources put the current recumbent market somewhere between 18,000 and 35,000 units per year (my guesstimate is around 20,000).

After a very hot 1999, many manufacturers geared up, moved into new factories and some moved production to Taiwan to handle the seeming recumbent blitz that was just over the next hill.

Well, the blitz/mega sales didn't really come (some expected 2-4 x growth). Though recumbents are now easier to find, and more dealers handle them—the over all sales numbers have not increased much. This has left manufacturers with bikes available and/or the capacity to build and deliver quickly. The competition for your recumbent dollar has never been hotter.

Entry level recumbents are having more competition from the hot selling upright Comfort Bikes. The one distinct difference between an upright Comfort bike and an entry level recumbent is PRICE. Comfort uprights start in the \$200-\$300 range (or about half what a BikeE CT or EZ1 costs). It is my guess that the entry level market is 35-50% of the recumbent market in general (6,000-10,000 units per year).

**Industry Woes!?**

What seems to be happening is that we are moving back to a more enthusiast-driven recumbent market. Manufacturers with realistic sales expectations who build quality enthusiast recumbents should do fine. The

heavily indebted companies that require market expansion by leaps and bounds may be in for a rough road. The few companies with bad attitudes, poor quality control or those who are just trying to build a marginal/saleable product may find their days numbered. Enthusiasts prefer manufacturers whose goals are to build GREAT recumbent bicycles, while offering good values and exceptional service.

There are a few recumbent manufacturers who seem to be having financial woes. We have heard rumors that at least two of the top 10 recumbent manufacturers are for sale and more than one seems to be in financial straits. A few others seem to be in a semi-hibernation state (what's up with this?).

On the mainstream bicycle front—we've heard no new mainstream rumors from upright manufacturers ready to jump on the bandwagon. The future of the Trek R200 seems to be in question (Trek's commitment has always been poor). The Huffy ReBike is also out of production at this time (apparently the bike didn't sell well at Sears).

Dick Ryan (Ryan Recumbents) sold his company to Longbikes two years ago. In November, Dick has now taken his company back (see article on page 42).

As dealers go—we have lost two excellent ones this year: 21st Century Bicycles and the True Wheel, both have gone out of business. In a late note, it appears that Recumbent Barn is apparently leaving the dot.com direct retail recumbent market (and going whole-sale only?).

Are we going into a recumbent recession? Or has our (most recent) run for the big time run its course? The economic downturn in our economy certainly will not help matters.

The decades old problem of finding a knowledgeable recumbent dealer (with respectful salespeople and a talented mechanic) is still with us—as is the anti-recumbent attitudes of many upright cyclists—particularly the racer types (many are bike salesman). RCN ads are a good place to find a regional recumbent specialists.

**The Media**

The bicycle media is in trouble. *Bicycling Magazine* still doesn't cover recumbents—in fact they have an antagonistic attitude towards them. Open Road, publishers of *Bicycle Culture Quarterly*, *ByCycle* and *EnCyclelopedia* filed for bankruptcy in November. Open Road owed more than \$926,000 to their creditors, including over \$100,000 in back taxes. This does not even include all of the subscribers who will not get

*Continued on page 7*

## RCN INFO

### Back Issues

We have the following issues in stock: RCN#61, 59, 58, 52, 51, 48. They are \$7 each or \$20 for three or \$33 for six. We will also reprint certain articles on request. We charge \$1 per page mailed (US only).

### When to Renew

To continue receiving your RCN subscription without interruption, please consider renewing two issues prior to your expiration date/issue. The reason for this is that while you are reading this issue, the next issue and database information are at the printers.

On most RCN issues and renewal forms, you will have the following text on the top line of your label, "61 LAST ISSUE." This means that RCN#61 is your last issue. We will send you one renewal notice via first class mail when it is time to renew. We will not backdate subscriptions, so if you are late renewing, missed issues must be ordered as back issues.

### Change of Address

If you move, don't forget to send in your new address! We actually need 60 days' notice so you don't miss an issue. We have to pay the post office up to \$1 for your new address as well as the re-mailing of issues—which contributes directly to subscription costs.

### Missed Issues

You should be receiving RCN every two months. If not, email us ASAP. *DO NOT* wait six months to let us know there is a problem. RCN is published six times per year. You should receive your issue by the first day of the second calendar month of the issue. Check your address on your mailing label from previous issues to see if there is a problem. If not, assume that it is a US Postal Service error and drop us an email or send us a card and we'll send a replacement (bob@recumbentcyclistnews.com).

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### The Bentist (a poem by d b doty)

Little Miss Muffett sat on her SWB  
Pedalin' to beat the band  
And Little Boy Roadie was so enamored  
He ask her for her little hand.

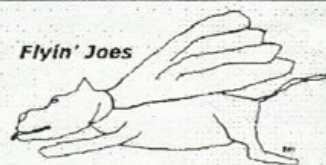
She laughed and dropped him.

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\* Trek \* Longbikes \* \* Penninger \* Haluzak \*  
\* Rotator \* RANS \* BikeE \*

More recumbents than you can shake a stick at.

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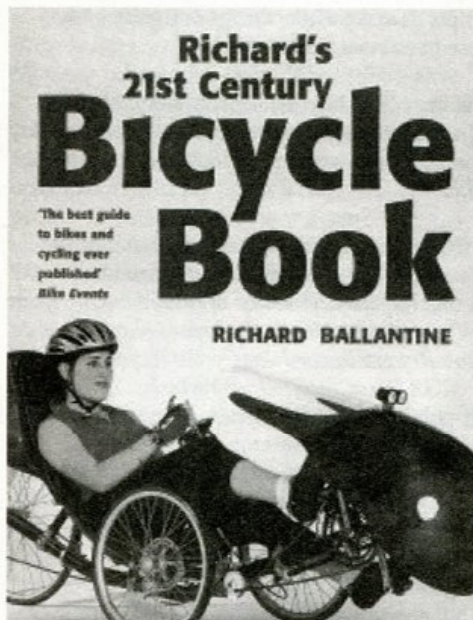


"Now what?"



# Recumbent News

## Winter Bike Book Reading



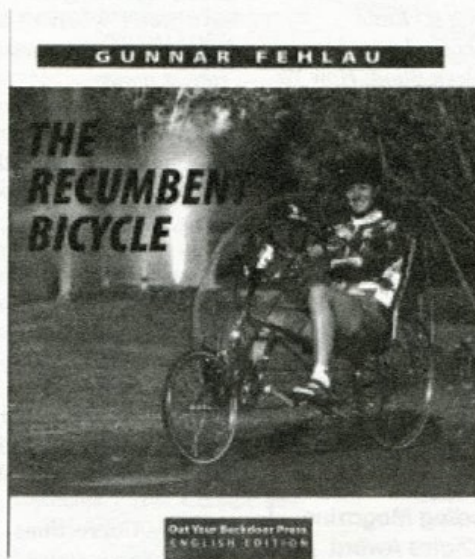
### Richard's 21st Century Bicycle Book

by Richard Ballantine  
PAN Books/Macmillan Publishers 2000,  
ISBN 0 330 37717 5  
360 pages

*Richard's 21st Century Bicycle Book* is the definitive guide to cycling—from choosing the right bicycle for you and using it for mountain biking, commuting and competing, fitness and pleasure, to maintenance for comfort, reliability, and top performance.

First published in 1972, *Richard's Bicycle Book* became a classic which inspired millions of cyclists. Now completely revised and updated to lead cycling into the new millennium, *Richard's 21st Century Bicycle Book* covers the latest innovations in cycle design from suspension systems and disc brakes to compact lightweight folders and cargo bikes, to aerodynamic superbikes and swift, all-weather human-powered vehicles. Cycling is economical, ecological and most importantly great fun—this book confirms that pedal power is, quite simply, the only way forward into the 21st century.

*Richard's original Bicycle Book* was one of my most read bicycle books. It was truly a cult classic and covered the unique aspects of bicycles not found in mainstream road or mountain bike books these days. My original copy is long since worn out. Richard Ballantine is a wonderful writer and passionate bicycle enthusiast and it comes out in every



*word of his text. This latest version is slicker and fancier than the first, but remains full of great bicycle information. The famous chapter about recumbents, the 29 pages of, "Zzzwwaaaammo!" provide a good overview of recumbency that should get another generation excited about our favorite kind of bicycles—Bob Bryant, RCN.*

This book can be ordered at Amazon.com or any other bookstore.

### The Recumbent Bicycle

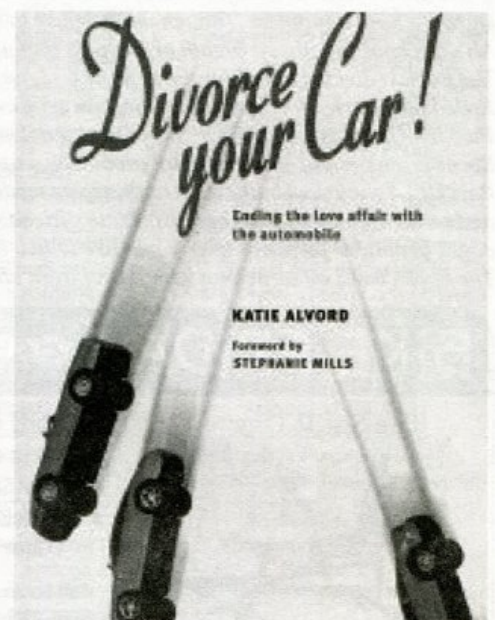
by Gunnar Fehlau, 2000  
ISBN 1 892590 53 0  
180 pages; paperback; 7.5"x9", color cover;  
B&W text; profusely illustrated.

For the past century, the recumbent has lived in the shadow of other bicycle concepts. Despite amazing successes, it remained a constant victim of bias and overlooked until a few years ago.

Author Gunnar Fehlau presents the historical development by describing the works of the Mochets, Chet Kyle and other pioneers. He surveys the application of the fast velomobile in everyday life, on journeys, and in exciting racing action.

Physics and biomechanics, design basics, tips on home-building frames and fairings, chapters on all these will enlighten any recumbent information quest.

*This is the single best published work on recumbent bicycles (the only real-world based view of recumbent bicycles). The slant of this*



*book is a bit European, though I was very impressed with the vast scope of the information provided. The resource section is better than we have offered (since our last one-issue buyers' guide in 1997). This is a must read—Bob Bryant, RCN.*

Suggested Retail Price \$24.00. Cash, check or MO accepted. Shipping included on direct orders to: Out Your Backdoor Press, 4686 Meridian Rd., Williamston, MI 48895. Also available via those online bookstores that only send a small fraction of proceeds back to the author and publisher.

Note: OYB Press also has the latest issue of *Out Your Back Door* zine available.

### Divorce Your Car! Ending the love affair with the automobile

by Katie Alvord  
New Society Publishers 2000, ISBN 0 86571  
408 8 242 pages + notes & resources

Our romance with cars has become a very troubled entanglement. Today's relationship with the automobile brings pollution, sprawl, congestion, noise, injury, and even death. Yet we continue to live with cars at an escalating cost to ourselves and the environment. *Divorce Your Car!* is the ultimate guide to liberating ourselves from our addiction to cars and the automobile culture. It is full of inspiring examples and realistic actions we can take as individuals and as communities to reduce our auto dependence. Divorcing your car can take many forms, from simply using cars less to not owning one at all. In North

America, well over 50 percent of trips are under four miles. Each day there are countless opportunities for people to re-meet their feet, board a bike, take a train, or hop on a bus. This practical guide shows how divorcing a car can be fun, healthy, money-saving, and helpful to the planet in the process.

Katie Alvord has been a transportation reform advocate for over 15 years, working with a number of non-profits in that time. She has pursued both car-free and car-lite divorces with the aid of bikes, skis, a kayak, and a solar-recharged electric bike.

*If you are a cyclist in a major metropolitan North American city—you know we have a problem. Though many refuse to admit it. Katie Alvord's book breathes a breath of fresh air into this hotly debated topic. The book is divided into three parts: Part I—Love's Been Blind: How We Ended up Married to Cars which our love affair, or addiction to cars; Part II—Grounds for Divorce: Why Our Automotive Marriage is on the Rocks discusses the environmental problems, costs and safety of cars; Part III—Solutions. Unlike most mainstream media which love to shock and scare without offering options, Katie's friendly voice offers over 100 pages of options for those who would like to live car-free, or car-lite. The book comes off as helpful with lots of fresh and realistic ideas from a*

*very friendly voice. This is the best book on the subject that I have read—Bob Bryant, Recumbent Cyclist News.*

We actually stumbled onto this book in our local book store. It should be available through most books stores.

**HUMAN POWER: The Forgotten Energy 1913-1992**  
by Arnfried Schmitz with Tony Hadland, 1999, ISBN 0 9536174 1 6  
127 pages

For a hundred years bicycles have looked the same. Most developments and design changes have happened solely for marketing reasons. There have been few serious attempts to make a bike that goes significantly faster and in most cases these have been well suppressed.

Within the framework of the incredible but true Mochet story, Arnfried Schmitz tells of his own efforts and contacts with some of the outstanding figures who asked themselves what exactly is pedal power and what should the ideal cycle be like.

*If you enjoyed our story in RCN#52 and #53 of Charles Mochet and the Velocar, you will love this book. Modern recumbent enthusiasts know little of this obscure history and the ups and downs of recumbent bicycles over the past 80 or so years and the early days of bicycle—and hpv (recumbent) racing—Bob Bryant, Recumbent Cyclist News.*

This book is apparently self-published and is difficult to find. Pal of RCN, Ron Schmid, had ours shipped from Amazon.com in the UK. Bikefix, a recumbent shop in the UK has also advertised this book.

#### Updates/Corrections

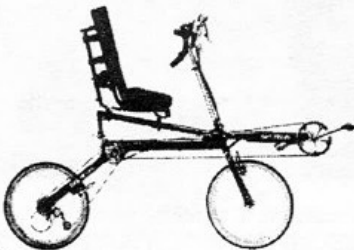
*Tour Through Amish Country:* article author's email address is cycleclets@aol.com

#### Late Additions

Rans is offering 2001 Recumbent Bicycle Calendars. These can be purchased for \$9.95 plus shipping. Quantity discounts are available. ♦

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# Events Calendar 2001

refunds. *Bicycle Culture Quarterly* was an ad-free publication done in gorgeous full color on oversize slick paper stock. The issues were filled with recumbents, workbikes, folders and bicycle lore. *EnCyclelopedia* was a magalog of sorts where invited manufacturers showcased their products in a full page color format. Open Road will not be mailing the CD which was to be sold with their most recent issue. Open Road will be missed.

In a report in the industry trade journal, *Bicycle Retailer*, Open Road founder Jim McGurn is hoping to keep *Bike Culture* alive by publishing it himself. There were reports of subscribers on the Internet who had paid over \$100 and received only a few issues. Do the principals of this publication really think people will send them money again?

The rumored freebie *Tandem & Recumbent Magazine* has never materialized—though recent word is that yet another publisher is trying to get into the lucrative (kidding...) world of recumbent bicycle newsletter publishing. ...And all the while little old RCN is still plugging right along for 10 years.

## Conspiracy Theory

RCN is a simple, straightforward and honest publication. We try not to spew too much BS. I like to be able to sleep at night, and feel the need to be straight with you on my opinions—I do not feel the need to have the corner on the market for recumbent opinion. However, don't expect happy, advertorial fluff all of the time—our willingness to criticize has made recumbent bikes better. I'm not afraid to learn, and my opinions do evolve, and I am wrong once in a while (and not afraid to admit it).

Anyone who has read RCN for some time will see the diverse opinions. Anyone who criticizes RCN's editorial slant would be better served by writing some articles for RCN. I would prefer to publish even more diverse recumbent points of view.

I honestly don't have the time, energy or intention to re-edit, contrive and fabricate every story to align with my views and opinions. So, rest assured that there just aren't enough waking hours for this type of conspiratorist agenda. Anyone who is criticizing the *NEWRCN* is holding an old grudge. We are only guilty of being around for a very long time—10 years and 62 issues.

## Commitment

Seemingly unlike the rest of the bike media, RCN is going strong. Despite the absence of a few of our advertisers—we are looking forward to a great 2001. We are looking for and bringing on board even more writers and reviewers. If you have an opinion—we'd love to have you write for RCN (see writer guidelines this issue).

We haven't given up on a "monthly RCN", and we'd also like to lower subscription rates (but need more subscribers). For now, look for an RCN in your mailbox every two months!

Viva Recumbency!  
Bob Bryant ♦

**Feb. 18-24, 2001**  
**BJ & Dale's Ocean Breezes and Palm Tree-zes Tour.**  
Ft. Lauderdale to Key West,  
Contact: bentbbj@earthlink.net

**March 2-4, 2001**  
**Santa Barbara to San Diego Tour**  
Contact: San Diego EERC Jim Rudolph bencycler@aol.com or 760-941-0367

**March 3, 2001**  
**Way Down South HPRA Race**  
Cooper City, FL  
(Brian Piccolo Velodrome)  
Contact: Shari Bernhard 954-370-4804 or sharibernhard@mediaone.net

**March 4, 2001**  
**Tour De Broward**  
Western Broward County, FL  
Contact: Shari Bernhard 954-370-4804 or sharibernhard@mediaone.net

**March 11, 2001**  
**Atlantic Recumbent Rally, Ride**  
Food, Freebies, store-wide discounts, Prizes, Contact: 954-971-9590 to be put on the mailing list.

**March 25, 2001**  
**4th Annual Kiwanis Tri County Tour**  
Marion County, FL  
Contact: Glen Coombe 352-821-4653 or <http://afab-inc.com/kiwanistour.htm>

**March 25, 2001**  
**1st Annual Penn. Grand Canyon Ride**  
Pine Creek Trail PA Rail Trail  
Contact: [www.dcnr.state.pa.us/rais/pinct.html](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/rais/pinct.html) or recumbent@bikeriders.com

**April 5-8, 2001**  
**Wheel & Sprocket Bike Expo 2001 Sale**  
Wisconsin Fair Park (south Exhibit hall)  
Contact: [www.wheelsprocket.com](http://www.wheelsprocket.com) or, call 1-800-362-4537, and ask for Harry.

**April 7, 2001**  
**POWOW/Wheel & Sprocket Race**  
Wisconsin Fair Park Milwaukee Mile  
Contact: [www.wheelsprocket.com](http://www.wheelsprocket.com) or, call 1-800-362-4537, and ask for Harry.

**April 27-29, 2001**  
**HPB Race at Barrie Outdoor Show (Boat)**  
Barrie, Ontario, Canada  
Contact: Steve Copeland [velosea@home.com](mailto:velosea@home.com)

**May 5-6, 2001 (tentative)**  
**BJ's Touring Primer,**  
Withlacoochee trail, Central Florida, Learn touring basics, and have fun. Contact: bentbbj@earthlink.net

**May 12th Saturday**  
**Michigan Recumbent Rally—East**  
Willow Metropark pool shelter  
Contact: [www.lmb.org/wolbents](http://www.lmb.org/wolbents), 734/487-9058 or bobmich@compuserve.com

**May 26-28, 2001**  
**HPV/Electrathon Race**  
Portland, Oregon, PIR Raceway  
Contact: <http://home.pacificer.com/~jwills/pir2001/2001race.htm>  
Tel. 360-254-3736 or [jwills@pacifier.com](mailto:jwills@pacifier.com)

**May 26-28, 2001**  
**Great Western Bike Rally**  
Paso Robles, CA  
Contact: Jim Rudolph bencycler@aol.com or 760-941-0367 or Richard r2parks@earthlink.net

**June 2-3, 2001**  
**Recumbent Rally**  
Stevens Point, WI  
Contact: [www.hostelshoppe.com](http://www.hostelshoppe.com)

**June 15-20, 2001**  
**Wolf Creek Tour**  
Durango, CO through San Luis Valley visiting hot springs and deluxe accommodations (pre Slum. tour) Contact: Kelly tel. 970-625-5025 or kiniguez@sopris.net

**June 23 & 24, 2001**  
**Michigan HPV Rally**  
Waterford, Michigan (northern Detroit area)  
Contact: [www.lmb.org/mhpva](http://www.lmb.org/mhpva), 313-884-0109 or [wkiehler@aol.com](mailto:wkiehler@aol.com) or [www.lmb.org/mhpva](http://www.lmb.org/mhpva)

**June 23 & 24, 2001**  
**4th Annual Recumbent Roundup**  
Ogden, Iowa (The Bike Barn)  
Contact: [www.thebikebarn.com](http://www.thebikebarn.com) or 800-645-2981

**June ?, 2001**  
**A Return To Freedom**  
Easy Riders Recumbent Club  
Contact: [www.geocities.com/toureyeasylover](http://www.geocities.com/toureyeasylover) or [toureyeasylover@hotmail.com](mailto:toureyeasylover@hotmail.com).

**July 14-15, 2001**  
**RARE 2001**  
Rochester, NY 75 mile ride/campout Contact: Mike Brisson 716-461-5084 (eve), [mbrisson@rochester.rr.com](mailto:mbrisson@rochester.rr.com) or Hank Walck 716-217-9450 or [cwalck@frontiernet.net](mailto:cwalck@frontiernet.net)

**July 28-30, 2001**  
**World HPB Champs (Boat)**  
Leicester, England  
Contact: [roger@spokesfest.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:roger@spokesfest.freereserve.co.uk)

**July 30, 2001**  
**Steve Shutt Memorial HydrBowl (Boat)**  
Elkhart, IN  
Contact: JFreeEnt@aol.com

**August 4, 2001**  
**Waterfest (tentative/Boat)**  
Buffalo, NY  
Contact: [ron@humanpoweredboats.com](mailto:ron@humanpoweredboats.com)

**Sunday August 5th, 2001**  
**Calhoun Cycle Anniversary Ride & Party**  
Contact: [www.calhouncycle.com](http://www.calhouncycle.com) ("events") or call 612-827-8000 Free t-shirt to the first 100 riders who pre-register.

**August 12-19, 2001**  
**POWOW/Wheel & Sprocket Rally (HPV & Boat)**  
Sparta, Wisconsin  
Contact: POWWOW website at [www.wisconsinbicycle.tours.com](http://www.wisconsinbicycle.tours.com), or by calling 414-671-4560. Wheel & Sprocket site is [www.wheelsprocket.com](http://www.wheelsprocket.com). Or, call 1-800-362-4537, and ask for Harry. HPB Contact: [ron@humanpoweredcoats.com](mailto:ron@humanpoweredcoats.com)

**August 12-19, 2001**  
**Recumbent Rally**  
Stevens Point, Wisconsin  
Contact: [www.hostelshoppe.com](http://www.hostelshoppe.com)

**September ?, 2001**  
**WISIL HydroBowl (Boat)**  
Rockford, IL  
Contact: [bikeguybob@aol.com](mailto:bikeguybob@aol.com)

**September 8th (Saturday)**  
**Michigan Recumbent Rally—West**  
Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo). 10am  
Contact: [www.lmb.org/wolbents](http://www.lmb.org/wolbents), 616/353-0125 or [Paul.Pancella@WMich.edu](mailto:Paul.Pancella@WMich.edu)

**September 15th (Saturday)**  
**Fall Recumbent Rendezvous**  
Stony Creek Metropark Eastwood Beach shelter (north Detroit area). 9am-3pm. Contact: [www.lmb.org/wolbents](http://www.lmb.org/wolbents), 734/487-9058 or bobmich@compuserve.com

**Other Events/Contacts:**  
**Seattle Area Homebuilders**  
Now called SeaWheels. Nick Hein is starting up the group again. Get on their mailing list at [www.bikelist.org/mailman/listinfo/seawheels](http://www.bikelist.org/mailman/listinfo/seawheels) or give Nick a call at 425-255-7560.

**HPRA Race Events:** <http://recumbents.com/hpra>

**IHPVA (HPVA) Race Events:** [www.ihpva.org](http://www.ihpva.org)

**HPB (boat) events:** [www.humanpoweredcoats.com](http://www.humanpoweredcoats.com)

**Local Rides:** See rider group listings elsewhere in this issue. Is your rider group listed in RCN?

**Planning an Event?** If you are planning a recumbent ride or event, please send the information to: [bob@recumbencycyclistnews.com](mailto:bob@recumbencycyclistnews.com) Allow 3-4 months advance notice

# Recumbent Events 2001

## POWWOW and Wisconsin Classic merge events

As a preliminary to the human powered racing season, Northey and Wheel & Sprocket will stage a race on April 7th, weather permitting, at the famed Milwaukee Mile, which will be in conjunction with Wheel & Sprocket's annual Spring Bike Sale event at the Wisconsin State Fair Park during that weekend.

Interested participants, tour riders and spectators can get more information on all events by viewing the POWWOW website at [www.wisconsinbicycletours.com](http://www.wisconsinbicycletours.com), or by calling 414-671-4560.

The Wheel & Sprocket site is [www.wheelsprocket.com](http://www.wheelsprocket.com). Or, call 1-800-362-4537, and ask for Harry. These combined events will result in the largest human powered racing program to be staged in the Midwest during 2001. ♦

## Wisconsin Recumbent Events Slated for Bicycling Capitol of America

Two well known bicycling organizations have joined forces in staging a week-long tour, recumbent rally, and seminar in Sparta, Wisconsin in August, 2001. Dennis Northey's POWWOW Bicycling Tours has merged with Harry Wozniak's REC Roundup, to put on numerous events aimed specifically for recumbent riders, but open to any form of human powered vehicles.

Northey has promoted bicycle tours in Wisconsin since 1984, and has organized the Wisconsin Classic for eleven years. Wozniak is the recumbent guru of Wheel & Sprocket, largest bicycle retailer in Wisconsin, and is the originator of the REC Roundup. The merged events will take place from August 12th to 19th in Sparta, located 115 miles from Madison and 184 miles from Milwaukee.

Highlighting the week's events will be the six day BikeMe tour, limited to 300 people and consisting of six different loop rides that average about 50 miles per day, transversing some of the most beautiful of Wisconsin's scenic landscapes.

The Classic events will begin on Thursday, August 16th, and will include the following:

- **Thursday 8/16:** Start of 24-hour human powered boat race
- **Friday 8/17:** Ice racing at an indoor hockey arena
- **Saturday 8/18:** The REC Roundup seminar: 200 meter time trial for recumbents or any other human powered vehicle on a closed-circuit race course; 1/8th mile elimination drag races for all classes of human power; Multiple classes of hp slalom boat races.
- **Sunday 8/19:** Various races at the Excalibur 1/2 mile paved oval speedway in Tomah, 15 miles from Sparta, including a "last man out" race and a featured 26 lap race.

Trophies will be awarded to winners in all categories throughout the weekend.

Registration for the BikeMe tour is \$148. Registration for participants in the Wisconsin Classic is \$35 in advance and \$45 on the day of the event, with special rates for motels and camping. There is no charge to spectators at race events. ♦



## New Sub \$500 Lowrider Bike

Lowryderbike (formerly Backsafer) has a new dual 20-inch CLWB ASS recumbent coming out. The bike will cost \$499 + shipping. The bike is scheduled to be built by Hero Bicycles of India and production is expected by April. The bike has a 12-speed mostly Shimano drivetrain with an optional indoor training stand and wheel block. For more information, visit their website at [www.lowrider.com](http://www.lowrider.com) or email them at [lowryderbike@aol.com](mailto:lowryderbike@aol.com)

Source: Lowryder ♦

## New Compact Recumbent

We saw this recumbent at Interbike 1999. It is called the Velo Scoot.

A similar version is now being sold by Neiman Marcus

in their Christmas catalog (no carbon fiber wheels). It is apparently imported by a company in Utah. We tried to get information on the bike, but were unable to. This is typical of the new recumbent marketers. This new recumbent sells for \$599 + \$149 shipping.

We'd love to receive a report on this bike. ♦



## Oregon HPV Race Announced

Oregon Human Powered Vehicles invites HPV riders and racers to the second annual Electrathon/HPV Races at Portland International Raceway, Memorial Day weekend 2001. Racing will be continuous from 9am Saturday, May 26 through noon Monday, May 28. The schedule allows for recharge time for both human and electric-powered vehicles.

The site of the 1990 IHPSC, Portland International Raceway is a full size Indy-car facility just north of Portland, Oregon. It's easily accessible by bike, car, train, bus and airline. Hotel and lodging information is available on the PIR website (link from the the event page, below).

All HPRA rules and classes apply for the HPV races. HPV races will include road races, drag racing, and 200-meter maximum speed runs. We will also have manufacturers displays and a test ride area.

Racers will be sharing the event with Electrathon electric vehicles and the U.S. Handcycling Federation.

For more information and event schedule, see: <http://home.pacifier.com/~jwills/pir2001/2001race.htm>. Questions and inquiries can be directed to: Jeff Wills Tel. 360-254-3736 or [jwills@pacifier.com](mailto:jwills@pacifier.com) ♦





# Recumbent Mail

If you have something to say, a differing viewpoint or experience—we want to hear from you! **Please limit letters to 300 words.** No charity ride sponsorship request letters. RCN reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, content and space limitations. bob@recumbencyclistnews.com or RCN, PO Box 2048, Port Townsend, WA 98368

## Crash Response

Dear Wells M. Goodhue,

I am writing this as an open letter to you here in hopes that many can benefit from your lesson. First, I am VERY glad you were unhurt in your experience with that large truck. The loss of your bike is also a sad thing to me, as I've lost a fine bike to events I seemingly could not control. However, having been on "both sides of the steering wheel," so to speak, I am compelled to state that you had more control of the events than you seem to think, and forfeited that control, with what could have been even more tragic results.

Most large tractor-trailer type trucks (especially those with box trailers) have on them either a mud flap or a large sticker illustrating the danger of attempting to pass such a truck on the right when the truck is making a right turn. The reasons for this are easily observable. To get the rear of the trailer to make the turn without clipping a light pole at the corner or doing similar damage to sidewalks, or dropping the wheels in a ditch, the cab of the truck MUST go wide and far in the turn. The wheels of a trailer follow a shorter turning radius than the cab, and longer trailers now becoming more popular show a greater disparity in relative turning radii. The truck driver has much to watch. He or she simply cannot see everything around the truck. When the truck is rounding a corner, there is a period of time when the driver CANNOT see all the way down the length of the trailer using the existing mirrors. A relatively small and unexpected "object" such as a recumbent rider is very hard to see in the convex mirrors, to boot.

The lesson here is this: As cyclists, we MUST use caution when dealing with vehicles that are much larger than ourselves. With that in mind, passing ANY vehicle on the right side is a treacherous strategy. Passing, or traveling beside, a truck that may make a right turn "across the bow" is nothing short of suicidal.

Please ride safely. Someone in your life needs you to come home.

Tom Armstrong, bikeolounger@prodigy.net

Life is TOO SHORT to ride a wedgie bike!!

*Editor Comments: We suggest that serious riders (anyone riding in busy traffic) and all serious bicycle enthusiasts should check out John Forresters book, "Effective Cycling" or take the course (offered by many bike clubs).*

## Silk Road

I want to call the readers' attention to the name "Silk Road" used in the article Project Silk Road by John Huddleson (RCN#59). Please note that the name "Silk Road" is a registered trademark of the Cannondale Corporation. For the historically curious we began using the term when we introduced our first road bikes with front suspension. I also want to compliment John on a neat bike, and note that it is commercial use of the name, not personal use, that we must control.

Best Regards  
David Campbell  
Cannondale Corporation

## Slick Solution Found

First let me say that I truly enjoy RCN and support your independent view of this world. I also agree that those recumbent manufacturers that are not onboard with RCN are extremely shortsighted and should rethink their positions. Why? More boomers coming of age and their move from wedgies to recumbents means more money! Why alienate the primary advocate for this small but growing segment of bikedom?

With that said, the real reason for this letter is to suggest at least one fix for what I have found to be a slick Rans seat on my 2000 Stratus. Don't get me wrong; I love that seat and the bike! I just get a little tired of 'scotching' myself up, especially living here in Texas where it is 'hot

and humid' most of the year and a sweaty pair of shorts doesn't help much.

My wife and I love to motorhome in this beautiful state, and we both like to bring our bents along and ride in the areas where we camp. By the way, riding a recumbent (we both have Rans bents) around a large campground is definitely a good way to start a large 'kid parade' (also dogs, and in one case a rabbit!). There is no end to the questions, and it is also a great way to meet your neighbors (sometimes whether you want to or not)!

I know that most of you have not read any of the popular motorhome magazines, but if you have, you will know that they offer a plethora of merchandise for sale to us baby boomer RVers. One such item is a product named 'Scoot-Gard' (Vantage Industries, Atlanta, GA, 800.221.4329) that we all use to keep the canned goods from sliding out of the cupboards onto our feet. It is especially useful for holding one's beer can on the table (when someone else is driving, of course). Seriously, this product comes in very handy for a number of reasons when you live in a world that is moving and you are having trouble keeping things in their place. It is used for everything, essentially. You line all your shelves with it and lay it down anywhere you don't want whatever is on it to move should you need to take a sudden left turn in traffic.

In thinking about this, I asked myself, "What about my butt?" (no offense intended!). Well, I tried it, and it actually worked...

Nothing is perfect, of course, so this may not meet everyone's needs. But it sure works for me. There are some issues to consider though:

**1. The Rans seat is black.** So when picking out the material, those of us who like color coordinated bike stuff will definitely need to search for the correct color scheme. I use grey, but it really doesn't matter. Besides, you're sitting on it, Ralph!

**2. How do you secure it to the seat?** Well, all I do is lay it on the seat and simply tuck it down a little between the seat back and base. This way it is also easy to remove and chuck into the washer from time to time. This fabric also comes in large rolls; so it can be cut with scissors to custom fit the seat. This material also has numerous holes in it, so it is breathable.

**3. Where to find this stuff?** Well, it seems to be everywhere these days. I would suggest that you stop by your local RV supply store (usually associated with a dealership) and they will have it. Also, I have seen rolls of it in the ubiquitous Wal-Mart's, Target's, etc., around the country. It is easy to find.

My suggestion is that if you are sliding down your Rans seat, give this a try. It may work for you. Enjoy!

Carl Jackson, carlbjackson@worldnet.att.net

## Rat is a Gem!

Greetings from Minneapolis! This is just a short note to salute your efforts and encourage you to continue producing an excellent magazine. I read it cover to cover within a day of receiving it. The latest issue #59 was especially intriguing. I happened to read the Recumbent Anthology first, then your PT Kruse, but the real kicker was the Rat's Long, Cheap & Easy, a real gem. Bravo Bob!

Dick Webber  
(former home of Dick's Recumbent Cycle)

## More RCN Bias

Seems like since relocating to Port Townsend, there's been a bias toward watercraft. I'd just as soon see the space devoted to land-based recumbents.

One more preference: while I am most appreciative of your up front bias against up high bottom brackets, why not give over the reviewing to someone that actually likes the more extreme positioning?

I gave up on a Haluzak Horizon in favor of a Rotator Tiger, only because the bottom bracket was too low (kept thwacking my thighs...which is also the case with your 'beloved' Rans seat which I find awkward).

Letter unsigned

**Editor Comments:** We do not employ any recumbent reviewers. However, we do accept articles, road tests and reviews from readers or anyone who chooses to participate. Most of our reviews are unchallenged. I think we have proven that we'll print constructive criticism as we receive it. We would gladly accept pro-extreme riding position articles. Several high BB bikes have received excellent reviews in RCN. Our only point is that they don't work for everyone (our research shows 5%-10%).

As for watercraft, we have covered them exactly twice....kind of. In RCN#55, we wrote about Kinetic Sculpture Racing and in RCN#59 we wrote about recumbent watercraft. Whether RCN continues to cover boats is really up to the readers.

### Screw the Fools

I don't usually send letters to the editor, but I should let you know that RCN is the best bike-oriented thing I receive, and I get as much as is out there. Take heart, you must have a strong supportive "silent" majority out there. Screw the fools who complain about the petty issues—although I do wish Lightning would come around and have you test the Raptor and the S&S coupled P-38.

Ed Lifschitz, ED@nmafa.si.edu

### Bent From Hell: Kudos for Rat

Kudos on #59, another fine issue. As a recent inductee into the world of recumbents, I find your magazine honest, straightforward, and truly a breath of fresh air compared to the usual Glossy Bike Magazine fluff and gibberish. As a homebuilder, I had been disappointed in the last few issue as the coverage of low-cost and homebuilt recumbents was scarce. However #59 made up for it all. From the very cool chopper on the cover, to the homebuilt tandem, or Rat's Long, Cheap & Easy article, I loved it all. In fact, look forward to my write up of my own Long, Cheap & Easy project "Bent from Hell," as well as my current project of resurrecting a very neglected MASA Slingshot. Keep up the great work.

Mike Sumner  
mws@1stconnect.com

### RCN#59 & 2001 Turner

I really liked the boats in your last issue. I want one. Where I would use it in the high desert of Arizona is another story. Oh Well. I also liked the story from the past by Dan Henry about the ULTRA-LWB.

I recently was in Tucson and saw and rode the new Turner T-Lite Deluxe. The changes are slight just from looking at it, but it is much changed when you sit down and ride it. First the bike is the stiffest metal framed Turner yet. I don't know how he did it, but it must be the changes around the seat area. There is not a vertical tube on the bike. All tubes are at angles and complete triangulation on the frame. The seat is lower as well, and the rear wheel is a 559. This combined with the 20" 406 front

wheel, lifts the BB up slightly, though it still is level with or below the seat slightly. How does it ride? It is very fast. I think my T-Lite is fast, and this may be my imagination, but the bike seems to be faster than my bike. The lower seat as well as the absence of the old seat tube allows the seat back to be reclined at a much greater angle than the old T-Lite did. The bike I rode had the new seat on it. This is a carbon graphite seat which is solid but is laid up using three separate pieces. It is still lightweight, but is even stiffer than the old carbon graphite seat shell. The back is taller as well....I am not sure that is something I like yet, but it didn't seem to bother me on the short ride I took around the area. Milt has come into the present with the inclusion of Bar-ends. The bar-ends he used on this bike are hefty and solid feeling. He is using bar-con (bar-end) shifters on them, and had to find brake levers which have a lot larger mount than the average handles. The brakes he is using are a sidepull dual pivot design, and they really stop the bike. The modulation is great. Milt's plans are to sell this model as the Deluxe for the 1st six months or so, and then use this frame for all his bikes. He does have a LWB frame built, but it is still not ready to market. I am partial to it as well. Long, Low...(as low or lower than the Vision LWB) and should be fast. I still ride my T-Lite Deluxe daily to work, pulling a BOB trailer.

Bob Miller, n4nrk@theriver.com  
LaidBack and Lovin It!!!

### Human Powered Boats

Great article on recumbent pedal boats. A couple of months ago a friend told me about the Hobie Mirage and I purchased the solo version. I was absolutely amazed at how efficient the propulsion system was. I didn't expect much when I bought the boat so that was a pleasant surprise. I find that I don't use my paddle at all about 80% of the time. Then it's usually in shallow spots. In those places, I push a pedal forward and the hydro-sails fold up against the bottom of the boat (the normal position at the extreme of each stroke).

I loved the boat so much that I went back to the store and purchased the tandem version. I wanted that boat for two reasons; obviously so I could take another person along but also so that I could do overnight trips of one to several days and be able to carry the gear. I'll be camping out on the big island in Mono Lake in November, using the tandem Mirage. I found that the tandem works very well solo but I haven't tried it yet with camping gear and a load of drinking water.

Frank Colver  
fwcolver@pacbell.net

### RCN Kudos?

I wanted to let you know how much I appreciate RCN. I live in New Hampshire and there aren't many opportunities to find out about recumbent cycling up here. You publish an informative and interesting magazine at a bargain price.

I like reading your editorials. I like your extensive coverage of homebuilt cycles, as well as the commercially available bikes. I am pleased to see that you include within the scope of RCN other human-powered vehicles, such

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as recumbent human-powered watercraft. Your coverage of recumbent cycling is superlative, and for the moment, unparalleled. Keep up the good work.

Steve Eickhoff

### Recumbent Watercraft

In the last issue of your fine magazine you published articles on human powered watercraft. I found these stories to be both interesting and informative. Please don't do it again!

Dick Thornton  
dickthornton@earthlink.net

### I Sold My Vision

I can't think of anything I'd rather do than ride a recumbent bicycle. I think about them when I get up at night to go the bathroom. I ride a Bike E CT which I've had for four years. I recently wrote a letter praising the Vision. When I wrote the letter I loved the bike. After nine months I sold it. Although the vision has some good qualities, I think it's a poorly designed bike.

Vision, as well as most recumbent manufacturers, needs to get a dictionary and look up the definition of the word ergonomics. My dictionary and my neighbor's computer said nothing about comfort. Lately it seems that comfort should come before everything else. I think a bike can be too comfortable. Those who ride Visions and other lawn chairs will wonder what planet I'm from and what drugs I'm taking. There are many recumbents available and they all work. However, there are very few that are exceptional. Unfortunately comfort, speed, and gimmicks sell.

The Vision is a good looking bike, well built, and has good components. However, it flexes and eats energy. The seat is a hammock on top of a bike. It doesn't provide any support. The seat is extremely comfortable, but what good is comfort without support? I, like most, was deceived by the comfort of the bike. I soon discovered that it required more effort than my Bike E, I tried both short and LWB and USS and ASS. The LWB is heavy and flexes. The SWB is lighter but no more efficient. The SWB is also out of balance. There is too much weight on the front wheel. This is common with nearly all SWB bikes.

I have seen riders on Visions who are very fast. Imagine how fast they would be on a Turner or an Easy Racer.

Some examples of what I consider good ergonomic bikes and seats

are: Turner, Rans, Easy Racer, and Bike E.

I have been hard on Vision and I make no apologies. We all choose what we ride, but we shouldn't choose a bike based only on comfort. Weight distribution is critical on a SWB, RCN needs to talk about this more because dealers probably won't. I realize that RCN cannot recommend one bike over another, but you can talk about ergonomics and what constitutes a good ergonomic bike. I know this is a long letter, but please pass it on to your readers.

Harvey Stackpole

### More Recumbent Boats

I just wanted to mention how much I enjoyed the latest issue of RCN. It would seem as if our editor is back in charge again following his heart and intuition in providing the readers with HIS opinions on recumbent related stuff. I particularly like the diversity on Human Powered Recumbent Boats. I subscribe to another publication similar to RCN titled "Messing About in Boats", whose niche is to focus primarily on smaller boats. This past spring and summer the magazine has published some articles about Human Powered Boats and I couldn't help but think about the interest that some of your readers may have on this subject.

In case you would want to follow-up: Messing About in Boats, Bob Hicks, 29 Burley St., Wenham MA 01984-1943.

Bill McNally  
WPMcNally@uss.com

*Editor Comments: I have been a subscriber to Messing About in Boats for many years. Bob Hicks is an incredible small publisher who manages to put out 24 issues of MAIB per year. Bob Hicks is a friend of RCN, recumbent rider, builder and enthusiast. I highly recommend his magazine and it is a bargain at \$24 per year.*

### The World of HPB's

Thank you for your article on HPBs in RCN. Human-powered boats are usually regarded in a context of leisure and sport. I would like to lose a few words on practical transportation issues for both workboats and tourism. Conventional human-powered craft are of course well-established in these areas but are steadily losing out to motorized craft because of the well-known disadvantages of oars, paddles, and poles:

✓ The effective use of conventional propulsion systems requires a certain amount of skill and experience, whereas leg-pedaling is easy.

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✓ The muscle groups in back and arms tire quickly unless especially trained, whereas most people are able to pedal (moderately) with their legs without tiring.

✓ Correctly-sized propellers and paddle-wheels have higher efficiencies than paddles and oars.

✓ The geometry of paddles and oars introduces rigorous constraints in boat geometry and rider position, e.g. rowers mostly face backwards and paddlers are likely to get wet. Pedal systems allow more flexibility, e.g. a higher position above the water.

The rotary motion of pedaled systems is more easily combined with auxiliary power in hybrid boat systems (see article in the proceedings of the 4th Velomobile Seminar "Assisted Human Powered Vehicles" available from [www.futurebike.ch](http://www.futurebike.ch) or the HPVA).

The disadvantages of propellers and paddle-wheels are however: greater cost and complexity, less reliability and robustness, and greater draft and susceptibility to seaweed.

Touristic HPB-use is widespread in the form of resort-type pedals. Many thousands can be found on beaches and lakes throughout the world. They are however heavy, only moderately efficient, and usually rather ugly, a compromise because they must withstand the very punishing treatment of the rental market and appeal to masses rather than to connoisseurs.

The new breed of HPBs described in RCN are a significant improvement, however most designs would perhaps not last long in the rental market. Some are ideal as workboats or yacht tenders, but few people yet realize this, just as the advantages of HPVs are not well-known. I conclude with a negative example where I failed to convince an influential group of the advantages of using HPBs:

A while ago the planners of a Swiss national exhibition decided that Human Powered Mobility would be a good thing and initiated a project for carrying out this aim, including water transport, as the four exhibition areas are all on interconnected lakes. I was asked to show them an HPB and I demonstrated a SeaCycle in what I thought was a very convincing demonstration:

The test was on a cold winter's morning with snow and sleet and an onshore Force 6 wind with large waves. We were able to ride in the waves outside the harbor in perfect safety while wearing ordinary street clothing without even getting wet. The use of kayaks, canoes or smaller rowing boats would have meant getting drenched at best and would have been out of the question for inexperienced riders anyway. I thought this was perfect proof that something like a SeaCycle would be ideal to let out to ordinary people, inasmuch as they would only have to stand up to 6 months' use. Somehow, the group drew different conclusions to mine, and the only long-distance HPB transportation intended for the exhibition will be craft like canoes. I have nothing against canoes, but doubt that the public will take to these in a big way for the reasons mentioned above. We have a long way to go to convince people of the virtues of HPBs.

Incidentally, a video of the HPB '99 world

championships 1999 in Interlaken is available from me (PAL version, Sfr. 50.-) or Ron Drynan <[www.humanpoweredboats.com](http://www.humanpoweredboats.com)> (NTSC version \$25.-). This shows the best European racing HPBs in action.

Theodor Schmidt  
VP FutureBike Switzerland

### Start Your Own Recumbent Mag

Please renew my subscription. Keep up the good work. Keep your eye on the future and don't worry about the people who can't take the truth as you see it. Let them start their own mag while they pat themselves on the back.

Tom Hartman

### Things Gardner Never Warned Me About

I recently had an experience on my Gold Rush Replica (GRR) that I thought might be worth passing on to your readers. I have had the GRR just over a year now and have about 7,500 miles on it, so, while I haven't been riding it that many years I have ridden it a lot in a short time. I say this to indicate my relative skill on balancing a recumbent, which all bent riders know is somewhat more difficult than a wedgie.

I was riding down 38th Street in downtown Indianapolis yesterday during rush hour. As I approached a traffic signal at about 25 mph, it turned red. I was in the position where I had to decide right now whether to go through or stop. I elected to stop. As I began to stop I noticed the pavement seemed to appear slightly wet although it was difficult to judge since I was riding into the setting sun. During the time I considered stopping or going through I wondered where this apparent wetness on the pavement came from in that it had not rained recently. I considered the building on the corner might be a car wash and the water was an accumulation from the drippings off washed cars. I didn't have time to verify this hypothesis, however, before beginning to stop.

As I touched the rear brake, I was instantly down doing the horizontal glide on my left forearm and left ankle. After stopping, I looked a little more carefully at what I thought was water on the concrete pavement surface. Then I looked back at the building on the corner. I was done in by a fried chicken joint as it was grease on the road, not water.

The good news is: the coefficient of friction of chicken grease on concrete pavement is low, so I only lost a little skin off my left forearm. The bad news is; the coefficient of friction of chicken grease on pavement is low, which is why I was down there losing skin off my forearm in the first place.

So, I have identified another traffic hazard we bent cyclists have to deal with. Watch out for chicken joints (and I am not talking about wings here!)

Dave Bird, [DavidWBird@aol.com](mailto:DavidWBird@aol.com)

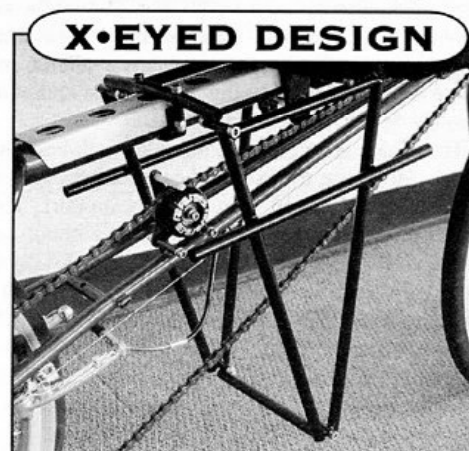
*Editor Comments: We learned in early December that Gardner Martin has been ill hospitalized. We wish Gardner a speedy recovery.*

*Note: If you are an Easy Racer fan or owner and are not a member of the Easy Riders Club,*

*they recently put out a 100 page issue of their fine publication. See the classified ads for contact info.*

### Back to a Wedgie?

I appreciate recumbents. I've owned two Rans Stratuses (Strati?) And I'm back on a new Motobecane upright, though I still like to read RCN! Yes, there are an increasing number of upright riders going to recumbents for many good reasons. But the lesser heralded fact is a lot of us go back to uprights after riding recumbents. Why? I like to hotdog around. Jump speed bumps and an occasional curb. Some like the attention they get on their recumbents and enjoy answering all of the inevitable questions. I didn't. The clencher for me was riding from Phoenix to Strawberry, AZ, a 95-mile up-mountain ride requiring all day climbing. I've done this ride on an upright twice with no problems, though it's always



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#### MID-SHIP RACK

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The best racks are made of tubular steel. Ours are made of 4130 aircraft grade tubular CroMoly. They're stronger than aluminum, finished in a tough satin black powdercoat and should last you a lifetime. The *Mid-Ship* is also very modular, so if you do happen to mangle it, you can replace just the broken piece and not have to buy a whole new rack. The *Mid-Ship* allows you to move your panniers forward and down for better weight distribution, ideal for commuting and hard core touring. They fit any RANS bike with a 1.5" or 2" top tube. If you ride something else and really want this rack, please let us know. We started with the RANS bikes because that's what we ride and are most familiar with. And because we wanted a rack for ourselves. X-EYED gear will be sold (for now) exclusively through the BIKE DEPOT, John's new bike shop in Hays, Kansas. 785-625-5685 or [Bikedepo@ruraltel.net](mailto:Bikedepo@ruraltel.net)

John Schlitter

Mark Colliton



tough. But on the Stratus I almost killed me. I was dead last. The next day I had to sag over a 12-mile long 8 to 9% mountain and I've never ridden in a sag vehicle in my life. Bikes are specialized machines. Some types excel at one thing but are not as good at another task. This type of recumbent will never come close to an upright in climbing, period. Balancing a recumbent at 5 miles an hour will wear you out compared to an upright. Comfort cannot always be defined as simply a seating position. Comfort in climbing is, well—getting there with the least amount of pain and effort. Yes, my wedgie can be uncomfortable, especially after about 70 miles. But a recumbent can also be uncomfortable. In our heat, a sweaty back and soaking butt are uncomfortable. Car rack problems are uncomfortable. Slow speed balance is uncomfortable. Swerving around on a dirt surface because of low center of gravity is uncomfortable. So, back I go to my other form of (uncomfortable) fun!

Keith Miles, kmiles@ratedg.com

**Editor Comments:** *It is fine to be a bicycle enthusiast interested in all types of bicycles. I'll admit to riding my beloved bright yellow Klein Mantra (full suspension MTB) once in awhile. There is a small group of riders who just don't adapt to recumbents, go through the recumbent phase in their lives, or just find the simplicity and performance of uprights to work better for them. To each his own. I have often thought of expanding RCN to include all comfortable/utility bicycles, however, it is the loyal niche of recumbent riders that has kept us around for going on 11 years. Drop me a note if you like the comfort bicycle idea. There might be a need for this with the demise of Bike Culture and ByCycle. Viva cycling!*

### Kindler, Gentler RCN & Clipless Pedals

The last two issues of RCN have been outstanding! Boats, scooters; kinder, gentler reviews. Wow!

I broke down and bought clipless pedals. Riding with them was nice. Stopping was awful! I think that with an upright bike you have more weight on your feet so it's easier to release the clamp. After falling over too many times, I found a solution. The Specialized pedals have two springs that hold the clamps closed. I removed one spring! On the loosest setting they are perfect. I can twist my feet free and stop without falling over. I also put the adapter for using regular shoes on one side of the pedal so I can choose to be unclamped when it seems prudent. I used 2 wire ties to hold each one on since they seem to be made for temporary use. Anyway, removing a spring solved my problem.

Storm Connors, stormc@megahits.com

**Editor Comments:** *I am serious about my job as facilitating a recumbent bicycle publication. We invite all manufacturers to participate. I have no plans to road test any bikes that the manufacturer does not want me to review. I have come to a point in my cycling life that I realize that there are some bikes that I should not review. We would like to see a united recumbent world where those manufacturers who do not participate come around. We'd accept their articles, press releases and help them find somebody to review their bikes.*

### Commuting Scooter

For anyone who read the always fine RCN article about scooters, Mr. Bryant had commented about "the one that got away" the KnowPed by GoPed scooters. After Bob had given me several suggestions and comments, I ordered the KnowPed from www.goped4u.com. I think this is a great scooter for commuting, it folds faster than anything I've seen, it is bullet proof. Its large wide tires eat up pot holes and won't "human cannonball" you like those skate wheel type. It's faster than a skater scooter, but slower than a bicycle wheel scooter, as I am now trying a Sidewalker micro. If anyone is looking for a lower cost, Xootr type scooter, I would give this a look at the company I ended up buying it from. Goped4u was fantastic. The owner, Lolen East, personally followed the transaction, including giving a direct shipping link to UPS, and even mailed me to make sure I was completely satisfied. I highly recommend them.

khall8@utoledo.edu

### KickBike KickBack

I tried to interest my husband in a Kickbike after John Cunningham talked them up. My husband wasn't interested until the RCN article. Oh, the power of the media! We bought one from John and have been fighting over it. Now I've bought two more. One, because I wanted to

avoid the fighting. Two, because even after posting several places that was the only answers to my for sale I got. So, I have an extra Kickbike I would sell if you know anyone looking for one. Check out the Spurter 2000 at www.flexistep.nl It seems to be a fancier Kickbike. It sells for \$450. plus \$48. shipping. It has a coupling, choice of footboard heights, off road tire choices. Also has better water bottle holder positions, and more goodies included than a Kickbike.

Kelly, kiniguez@sopris.net

### Fallen Friend

This past Saturday, my dear friend, Gene Villaret, the man responsible for my foray into the world of recumbency, was struck and killed as he rode his bike. The hurt I'm feeling is overwhelming, so please indulge me while I tell you about this.

I didn't find out about it until yesterday (Sunday) afternoon. I was reading the Sunday paper and the local section, there was a short article about a Dania Beach cyclist, 76, struck and killed at 2:11 pm on Rt 27 about 10 miles north of I-75 heading south. The driver of the Mercedes, a man from Miami, drove off the road, and then back on the road, and hit the cyclist from behind as he rode on the shoulder of the roadway. The name of the cyclist was withheld pending notification of the family. The driver must have stopped because the police released his name.

I wondered (feared) if I knew the cyclist. There was only one 76 year cyclist from Dania Beach who would ride on that road, but I didn't want to think about it. Two minutes later, my phone rang. I looked at the caller ID and say "Eugene Villaret." I felt sick. I picked up the phone, and Louisa's voice say, "Shari?" I broke down hard.

Louisa was amazed that I knew what she was going to say, since I was the first person from the bike club that she called. I told her I had just read an article about an unnamed cyclist killed on US 27. She asked me to read her the article because she had no details of anything. It was very difficult, but I did, and now, besides shock, she felt angry. Gene was struck at 2:11 pm. He died at the hospital at 5:20 pm. No one from the hospital called her. The police came to her door at 10:30 pm Saturday night to tell her. She spent the entire afternoon and evening wondering what happened to her husband. He always carried ID, which was proved out by the cops knowing where she lived.

Gene was, above all, a safe cyclist. He always wore his helmet and used a safety flag. He had two mirrors and was aware of his surroundings. He signaled his intentions to other riders and driver around him. He did everything right. He was riding alone on this route he took many times. It's a 4-lane, straight highway with low traffic, smooth pavement, wide shoulders and no visual hazards. The police are investigating it as a homicide. They are trying to find any other reason he would have driven off the road when and the way he did.

Gene has been like a favorite uncle to me. Five years ago, after I complained about the pain I felt during my last long tour on my Trek, he lent me his Lemle Lightning Tailwind for a 1.5 hour ride to show me how comfortable riding could be. He also gave me a couple of back issues of RCN and the IHPVA News, along with information about this mailing list. I joined the list, I asked questions, and got answers. A few months later I bought a Lightning Tailwind, and we had fun riding together and getting funny looks and smiles from people. He seemed to revel in the fact that he started a movement in the club—we're up to about 12 or more club members who ride recumbents.

Gene Villaret was a brilliant and vibrant man with a wonderful attitude toward life and people. He was a devoted husband and a great friend. I will miss him terribly.

Shari Bernhard, shari.bernhard@ccur.com

**Editor Comments:** *Gene had been an RCN subscriber for years. He wrote to RCN every once in a while offering words of encouragement and even writing a few articles about his beloved LWB USS Gene Lemle Tailwind. We shared the enjoyable experience of dealing with Gene Lemle. Mr. Lemle custom built me a LWB USS recumbent several years ago. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Gene's family. ♦*

# Interbike Report

## The 2001 Season Preview

by John Riley

How low can you go? And how laid back? These are the questions North American recumbent riders will be asking themselves now that a host of low and semi-low recumbent bikes and trikes will be hitting the market following their introduction at Interbike, the largest North American bicycle trade show.

The show was held last September in Las Vegas, with a Demo Day held in the mountains outside the city the day before the opening. Over 60 companies took part in the demo day and more than 900 companies exhibited at the show. Attendance, including exhibitors, was expected to be in excess of 20,000. The show occupies nearly 300,000 net square feet of exhibit space.

The big news, and a big part of the reason there were so many new low bikes, was the presence of a number of recumbent builders from outside the US, primarily from Europe.

**HP Velotechnik:** Principals Daniel Pulvermuller and Paul Hollants from Germany, with help from London, England dealer Stuart Dennison introduced the Street Machine GT and the Speedmachine.

The Street Machine GT is a classic European SWB touring machine. It has full suspension, with a Ballistic unit on the front. The crank axle height is 27.5", seat base height is 23.5" and the wheelbase is 41". At 35 degrees, the seat back is decidedly more laid back than on most American machines. As is common on European machines, the seat is a padded hard shell design. The frame is CroMo steel.

A long list of options are available, including racks, front and rear fairings, various lighting systems, other springs, above-seat-steering, and two different kickstands. Retail price is \$1750.

The Speedmachine is a sporty semi-low fully suspended bike with a seat base height of 15.7", a crank axle height of 26.4" and a wheelbase of 47". The seat back angle is 30 degrees. The main frame tube is aluminum and the rear swing arm assembly is CroMo steel. Brakes are Magura Clara disks. Front suspension is in the head tube, and the rear suspension on both bikes is what they call a "no squat" design. The chainline runs very close to the suspension pivot and is kept there by an idler. The weight is 33 lbs. A similarly long list of options are available for the Speedmachine. Retail price is \$2595.

**M5:** Dutch racing legend and bike designer Bram Moens displayed two of his twelve available models. The M5 Shock Proof has a seat base height of 15.7". Because the boom is at an angle, the crank axle height varies depending on extension. The range is 23-24.5". The seat back angle ranges from 21 to 25

degrees. This elegant looking bike has full suspension, with a monoblade front fork. Weight is 32.5 lbs.

The M5 Low Racer has a seat height of 9.45", a crank axle height of 19 - 21" and a seat back angle of 19 to 23 degrees. Weight is 26.4 lbs. It is unsuspended. This bike is also

*"Recumbents are the black sheep of the bicycle family, and despite their inherent design advantages-lower wind resistance and comfortable Barcalounger seating-they have yet to gain widespread acceptance in the mainstream cycling universe." Sean Coffey, Bicycling Magazine (from Bicycling's website)*

available from Lightning cycles with some modifications. (see below)

Both bikes are available with various soft bags and hard tail fairings, and a full fairing as well. The rest of the M5 line is mostly made up of a variety of SWB designs with various options for wheel sizes and steering. All have rear suspension. There is also a CLWB design that comes optionally as a folder, and a tandem.

**Thijs Row Bike:** Fellow countryman Derk Thijs shared the booth with Bram Moens, displaying his row bike. The seat is fixed. A moving steering column and linear sliding foot positions provide the rowing motion. The final drive is by cable, and the unique SNEK drive system provides a variable ratio throughout the stroke. The overall ratio can be varied as well, by a derailleur like device that moves the cable side to side on a conical drum that is positioned where the freewheel cogs would be on a conventional drive.

**Lightning:** Lightning has been selling the M5 low racer for some time. They now import the frame (unpainted), seat, stem, and headrest. They make the fork, powdercoat the frame/fork, and do all assembly. The biggest difference between the Lightning bike and the European version is that the Lightning uses a 406mm 20" front wheel instead of the 451mm wheel that the Dutch bike uses. This eliminates front wheel/crankarm interference which occurs if the 451 wheel is used. The fork is a one sided design using streamlined tubing and a wheelchair hub.

The Lightning version comes standard with two sets of chain idlers, so that the chain does not interfere when turning the front wheel. However, if a person is racing on a course that lacks tight turns, it is easy to take the chain off the front set of idlers, and run it beside the front wheel.

According to Lightning boss Tim Brummer, this increases power to the rear wheel by about 5%. Tim experienced the difference this makes first hand. "I opted to do a 10-mile time

trial using only the rear idler set, even though because the road was narrow at the turn-around, I had to stop, get off the bike, pick it up, and turn it around. The extra 5% power more than made up for the time I lost at the turnaround, and I won the time trial by 30 seconds." The prices for the M5 Low Racer are \$1700 for the frameset or \$2750 complete.

Tim also had on hand at the show a carbon and steel one-off low racer that he has been experimenting with. It is shorter than the M5. Tim calls it the U-2. From trials, Tim has discovered that with normal Spandex cycling clothes, the U-2 is not any faster than a production M-5. The U-2 is faster (by about 1.5 mph) ONLY with the custom skin-suit, aero shoes, and super-aero helmet he made. "This setup is really hot, and I have to carry lots of ice to stay cool. So in the end, the U-2 is even less practical than the X-2 (fully faired bike) was."

There are minor changes to the rest of the line. The Thunderbolt A-10 gets a CroMo main tube and component upgrades. The Stealth gets a new name—it is now the Phantom—and minor changes to the frame.

There are component upgrades throughout the line. An aluminum boom tube is standard on all the Phantom and P-38 models. Suspension options are available.

Lightning now also makes a carbon composite integral crankset and bottom bracket. The crankset and bottom bracket assembly weigh 390 grams. This will not be in series production until sometime next year. Because of limited quantities, it is currently available only on the R-84 Ti.

**Earth Cycles:** In addition to his Dragonflyer trike, which has been on the market for some time, Sean Bjoralt displayed his new Sunset Lowracer. Seat base height is 12" and crank axle height is 18.5". Seat angle is adjustable from 30 - 38 degrees. Frame is heat treated CrMo. The weight is 27 lbs. This very compact bike has a 16" (305) front wheel and a 20" (406) rear wheel. It has a monoblade fork and an adjustable chain line. The chain can be run up over the front wheel for wheel clearance in turns, or it can follow a more direct line alongside the wheel for racing.

In addition to a telescoping boom, the frame also telescopes so the bike can be adjusted to fit a wide range of people without upsetting the weight distribution. Unlike many other low bikes, this bike comes with a sling seat. Racks and fairsing mounts are standard.

The Sunset has had limited availability this year. The design is still evolving and a second prototype batch will be available late next Spring.

80% of all Earthcycle trikes are ordered with disk brakes, so they are in the process of

making the switch to disks as standard equipment. The rubber elastomer will be replaced by a Fox coil/oil shock. The frame is also in the process of being redesigned so that it will collapse better without using S & S Couplers.

**Barcroft:** In addition to two SWB bikes, the Barcroft line now includes a tandem that at 81" in length is shorter than many LWB singles, and a FWD low racer.

The Columbia tandem has a wheelbase of 54.5", 20" (406) wheels front and rear, Rans seats and Rans Flip-it above-seat steering. Frame is TIG welded CrMo steel. The weight of the bike is 46 lbs. The bike is agile enough to do a U-turn inside a 12 foot circle. The captain crank axle is at 24" and stoker's is 12". The seat base height is 28" for both. The price is \$3495, or \$3695 with a suspension fork. Shipping is extra.

The Barcroft Oregon is a prototype low racer. The prototype uses a German Zox front-wheel-drive system, but when the bike goes into production, probably in the first half of 2001, the front-wheel-drive system will be Barcroft-specific. Handlebars will be different, probably mustache style. Both carbon and Rans seats can be fitted. Price and availability are to be determined.

Since the show in Las Vegas, Barcroft head Bill Cook has ridden the Oregon on the (flat) Seagull Century. Bill had these comments about the experience: "Though I had a very bad cold, I still went faster than ever before (for me, as I'm fairly slow). The bike was fitted with mustache handlebars and a Rans seat. I was able to cruise easily on the flat at 20-plus mph, maybe 2 to 3 mph faster than I could on my Virginia GT, which is fast. Best of all, the ride was extremely comfortable, as comfortable, in fact, as my other comfortable bikes. That's certainly not the case with most low racers. This morning I have no soreness or any indication that I rode as hard as I could yesterday for 100 miles."

The Barcroft Dakota and the Barcroft Virginia GT both have a 47" wheel base. Both have 26" rear wheels and 20" front wheels, but tighter clearances on the GT limit tire sizes, and eliminate fender clearance. This gives the Virginia GT a seat base height of 19", vs. 21" for the Dakota. The crank axle is at 24" for the GT and 26" for the Dakota.

The longer wheelbase on these bikes accommodates a more laid back seat angle, for increased comfort and improved aerodynamics. Prices are \$2095 for the Virginia GT and \$1995 for the Dakota, exclusive of shipping.

**BikeE:** The low racers were not the only new bikes at the show. BikeE is the largest recumbent manufacturer in the world selling probably 10 times the amount of all lowracers imported into the USA combined. BikeE showed the prototype of the new, much-changed entry-level model, the CT. The bike has a new main beam extrusion that includes a T-shaped slot on the bottom. The cables now run in this slot, rather than inside the beam. The rear stays are now oval and are welded on rather than riveted. They fit neatly up against



*The HP Velotechnik Speed Machine full suspension low SWB/semi-lowracer—John Riley*

the bottom of the frame, rather than along the side. The frame is painted rather than anodized. With these production changes, the bike is completely built in house at the Giant factory, and production time is much faster.

The new seat slides on the main beam for leg length, but other than that and the mesh tension, there are no adjustments. It has an aluminum frame. This simpler seat is 3 lbs. lighter than the Sweet Seat used on the other models. Total weight for the bike should be around 28 lbs.

The geometry of the bike has been revised to optimize low speed handling. It reportedly can be ridden no hands. The head tube is slightly steeper and the crank axle is slightly higher. The drivetrain is SRAM 3 x 7 21-speed, as before. All this and a new, lower price: \$550.

Replacing the NX, the RX is the new BikeE prescription for performance. It is a road version of the FX. It has higher 27-speed gearing with SRAM 7.0 components and the same mid-drive system as the FX. It has a carbon fiber extension tube with a top loading stem that angles rearward on top of that. The Sweet Seat is standard. Tires are 110 psi Maxxis Hookworms. The price with rear suspension is \$1395. Price with front and rear suspension is \$1695. A kickstand is now available for the NX, FX and RX bikes.

The BikeE E2 remains the only entry-level recumbent tandem. It is designed for couples and families who want to ride together. At \$2195, it is the most affordable tandem available. BikeE reports good success with the tandem. The E2 has quickly become the best selling recumbent tandem in North America.

BikeE now has a free interactive brochure on CD. The CD explains the features and benefits of the bikes, including the accessories, and the philosophy behind them.

**Joule Q:** This surprising new bike from Rochester, NY looks like a V-Rex at a distance,

but up close reveals a host of unique features. It has rear suspension with the suspension pivot being concentric with a mid-drive. This arrangement should reduce any chance for pogo.

The combination of a suspension swing arm, a folding seat back, and a folding steering column allow the bike to fold. The seat back is supported by cables that run from the back to the base on either side. The aluminum framed seat is a full mesh design, with a partially triangular base. To adjust the seat position for leg length, the seat base is simply tilted forward and moved along its mount. Tilt the seat back and it securely locks in place. No tools or quick release are needed.

The bike is offered in three versions, differing in component spec. Prices are listed as \$2400, \$2900 and \$3864. But it is early days for this company, so this may change. Principals Craig Smith and Tim Cerqua were not taking orders at the show pending the working out of production details. The plan is for bikes to be available by the end of the year.

A Joule, named after James P. Joule, is "a unit of work or energy equal to the work done by a force of one newton acting through a distance of one meter."

**Burley:** Following up on the introduction of their Limbo model last year, Burley has introduced two new performance oriented SWB models. The HepCat and Django share the same CrMo steel frame and aluminum frame seat. The seat has the same mounting system and Corbin base as the Limbo seat, but the Limbo seat has a steel frame. The seat back is self-supporting, but optional seat supports will offer additional support and stiffness. The two models differ in component spec. The HepCat has an aluminum fork.

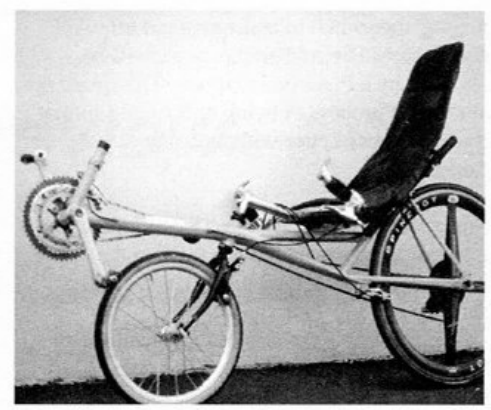
The seat base is at 23" and the crank axle is at 25.25". Above seat steering with a tilt-away column is standard on both models. Prices are



*Recumbent Tech shaft drive Odyssey. We have received no indication that this bike is actually in production. Photo by John Riley.*



*The Cycle Genius CLWB with a Rans seat. We have received no indication that this bike is actually in production. Photo by John Riley.*



*Milton Turner wasn't displaying at Interbike, but sent along this picture of his new T-Lite—Courtesy Turner Enterprises*

expected to be \$1399 for the Django and \$1799 for the HepCat. These new models will be available in April.

According to Burley information, the Django name is after Jean "Django" Reinhardt. "Born in Belgium into a gypsy family Django Reinhardt was a highly innovative and influential jazz guitarist in Europe between World Wars. His swinging, improvisational style established a milestone in modern music."

**Cycle Genius Recumbents:** This modestly named company from Houston, TX has a new CLWB design. The frame has a square top tube, with the rest of the tubes being round. A range of models using the same basic X-frame design are available. Standard wheel sizes are 16" front and 20" rear, except for the titanium model, which has a 24" rear wheel. The larger wheel is optional on other models.

The prototypes were shown with a RANS seat, but production bikes will have a similar mesh back, padded base, Cycle Genius design. The CG 8, a basic steel version is \$450. The CG 24 and CG 27 have an aluminum frame and are priced at \$600 and \$750 respectively. A titanium version is available for \$2000.

Most of the bikes will be available in February, but the titanium model will be available sooner.

**Recumbent Tech:** Concerned about that long chain? This Canadian company offers a SWB, the Odyssey, with a shaft drive. A gear box at the crank axle drives a stainless steel shaft with two universal joints. At the rear, the shaft drives a 7-speed Shimano internally geared hub. Wheel sizes are 20" front and 26" rear. Seat height is 30" and crank axle height is 29". The price is expected to be around \$1700.

**Vision:** The R 44, R 45, and the R 64 and R 65 Saber lines get a new 2" diameter main tube. It is a thinner wall tube than the tubes used before (and thinner than the 2" tube used for the R 40 as well) so there is no weight penalty. But there is a welcome 40% increase in rigidity. The R 65 Saber gets a new lower price of \$2795. The all new 105 equipped R64 will be available in January for \$1995. A centerstand kickstand is now available for the suspended R 50 series.

Unlike some other makers, Vision does all

their production in their own factory. Much of their recent efforts have gone into making the manufacturing process more efficient. Advanced Transportation Products, the parent company of Vision has also sought other work to keep the facility busy year round. They will be painting and assembling conventional bikes for another company. They also own Winkel Wheel and will be assembling wheels for Shimano.

**RANS:** Main tubes on several RANS models have also been upped to two inches. Again, the wall thickness is thinner than that of the tubes being replaced, so there is no weight penalty.

The Tailwind gets a 2" main tube, a 1-1/8" steerer tube, and 1-1/4" diameter handlebar riser for increased stiffness all around. It also gets wider Primo Comet tires. Wider tires are used through most of the line.

The Rocket has the larger main tube and a 1-5/8" longer wheelbase. The Tailwind and Rocket are "Flash Red" in color.

The fully suspended Vivo gets the larger main tube, RST front suspension and an RST coil and oil rear shock. It also gets the same components as the Rocket and a new lower price of \$1399. The new color is "Techno Yellow."

The Wave stays with the smaller main tube, but gets a 20" front wheel and is now "Machine Green" in color. All models except the Gliss get one piece aluminum seat frames. There are no changes to the seat mount.

**Radius:** There are minor changes and new options for the Hornet and C4 models. The Hornet seat base and handlebars have been widened. There is a new seat cushion. There are bottle bosses on the underside of the frame for a battery. Options include a dyno hub and 81 speeds with a SRAM 3 x 9 hub (and a front derailleur). The C4 has a new quick release rake adjustment on the seat back, and an optional fairing. All the frames have wiring for lights.

Both bikes have several new options for brakes, including hydraulic rim brakes and hydraulic or mechanical disc brakes. Prices start at \$1599 for the C4 and \$2150 for the Hornet.

**Easy Racers:** Gardner Martin was at the J & B

Importers booth with their latest collaboration, an aluminum version of the EZ-1 SC called the EZ-1 SC Lite. It has an aluminum frame, seat mount, handlebars and chainrings. This brings the weight down about 5 lbs., from about 40 lbs. to 35 lbs. The price on the steel EZ-1 is \$550. The price on the Lite version is \$750. It should be available in February.

**Trek:** At a show where recumbents were prominent, the R200 was a no show, but word is a rear luggage rack is now available.

**Longbikes:** Longbikes has a new full mesh seat with a triangular base.

**Rotator:** No booth, but two bikes were on display at other booths.

Shimano had a booth highlighting comfort bikes and the components Shimano makes for them. There were several recumbents along with conventional city and comfort bikes. Hanging by a scale so that you could see that it only weighed 28.5 pounds was a titanium Pursuit with front and rear fairings.

Meanwhile over in the Rohloff booth there was a one-off Pursuit done for Thomas Siemann from Rohloff USA. It had a 26" rear wheel, no mid-drive, a 14 speed Rohloff hub in the rear and a Schlumpf Mountain Drive at the crank axle. It also had a Mueller fairing.

**Crank-It:** The people who created the elegant, fully suspended Mountain Quad introduced a road-going tadpole trike, the Scorpion. It has a perimeter aluminum frame, 20" wheels all around, and 8.5" seat base height, side stick steering, and a carbon fiber/Kevlar bucket seat. The perimeter frame is said to increase torsional stiffness. A front suspension is optional. It is a bolt-on design that can be added at any time. Since 70% of the weight is on the front wheels, the designers did not believe that rear suspension was necessary. Other options include front disc brakes, Schlumpf Mountain Drive, and the Rohloff 14-speed hub.

The weight of the trike is 34 lbs., lighter than some recumbent bikes. There is a rider weight limit of 260 lbs. Price for the base model with drum brakes and 3x9 hub drivetrain is projected to be \$3350. It should be available in May.

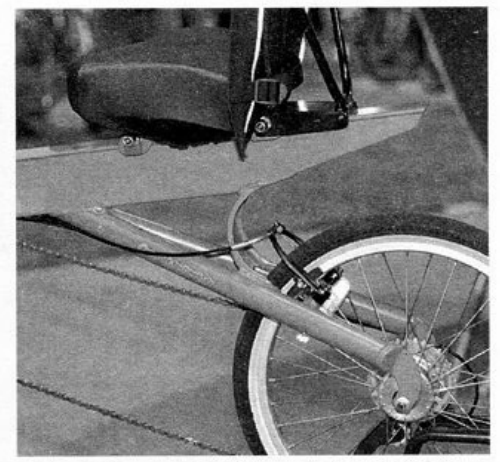




*BikeE wheelie at BikeE's drag race at Interbike  
John Riley*



*The 2001 BikeE CT is now \$550. Note welded on rear stays, bigger seat base and the CT is now powdercoated instead of anodized—John Riley*



The Mountain Quad now has 20" wheels all around and sidestick under-seat steering replaces the joystick steering it had before.

**Greenspeed:** Ian Sims and his son Mick were on hand to introduce the GTO, a development of the touring trike series. It has a bolt-on seat and one S & S coupler beneath the seat. When disassembled, it packs into a suitcase. It is a bit lower than the GTR, the standard touring model. A front derailleur changing three rings and a 3 x 8 rear hub give it 72-speeds. The seat back angle is 40 degrees. A second new model, the GLR race trike has a more reclined seat, narrower track, lighter frame and a 20/16 wheel combination.

These models complement the GTS, a sports touring trike, which has a seat base height of 10" and a seat back angle of 30 degrees. Converting from Australian dollars, the price for the GTO is about \$2790 US and the GLR is about \$3660 US. Prices do not include shipping, customs or duty.

**Hotmover:** Another trike from down under, the Hotmover, was introduced by Hamish Gale and Phil Metaxas. Hamish handles sales and marketing and is based in Brisbane, Australia. Phil manages the production and shipping from Christchurch, New Zealand.

The trike has three 20" wheels and a primary seat back angle of 25 degrees. Like most laid back seats, it curves upward at the top end. But in addition to that, a padded head/neck rest is available in two sizes. Steering is by way of levers coming directly off the kingpins. Rim brakes are used. A bag that can be used as a backpack comes with the trike and clips under the seat. A fairsing, pannier rack, fenders, and bags are optional. Weight of the trike is 41 lbs.

The trike will be available through dealers, but it will also be sold direct. According to Hamish, the trike can be shipped fully assembled to the purchaser's door (8-10 days delivery) with no worries about customs and duty. The price is \$2557 US.

**Hase Spezialraeder:** This German company offers alternatives to all the tadpole trikes. The KettWiesel is a sporty, maneuverable delta trike with an adjustable angle seat, easy length adjustability, and rear disc brakes. The rear wheels are canted inward to improve road

holding. Gearing is 9 speed with a rear derailleur only. Width is 33". Weight is 37 lbs. With the front wheel of one trike removed, two trikes can be linked together. The crank axle can be lowered 2.3" by fitting a 16" front wheel. The length can be adjusted down to child size, and appropriate length cranks are available.

The Lepus offers rear suspension, foldability, and increased cargo capacity with a cargo deck between the rear wheels. A mid-drive gives this trike 27 speeds. Width is 32". Seat base height is 22.8" and crank axle height is 19.7". Weight is 48.5 lbs. Two rear discs and one hydraulic rim brake on the front give this trike plenty of stopping power. Both trikes have full mesh seats and 20" wheels all around. Price on the KettWiesel is \$2100. Price on the Lepus is \$3000.

Hase also offers a tandem bicycle, the Pino, that has a recumbent position over the 20" front wheel and a conventional riding position behind that. There are options to accommodate children in the front position. This company offers many options on all their models for people with special needs.

**Taiwan bikes:** There is always a section of booths at the show for companies from Taiwan. Most of their products seem to be aimed at other suppliers, rather than retailers. So when you see a recumbent in this section, its availability may depend on the Taiwan company finding a US partner to distribute it.

A very elegant titanium semi-low bike was on display in the booth of a company called Performer. A similar steel design was on display at the booth of an American company, Ziegler-Lam Cycling, but it was not clear if a deal had been finalized. An aluminum, curvy-framed, long wheelbase bike was on display at the You-Chuan-Yu booth. It had many interesting features, including an easily adjustable seat back angle, but the design did not come together well. The front wheel was larger than the rear, giving an odd appearance. And it appeared that the seat did not go back far enough even for one as short as me. There was no evidence that the bike was available in the US, although a web site made it sound that way. It said the price would be \$1800. It also said the bike "offers the trend-setting cyclist the opportunity to experience all of 2001's

hottest fads in one single bike." If that was the goal, that might explain the lack of integration in the design. In all cases, prices and specifications listed in this article are subject to change.

**Other stuff:** ATOC Topper racks have been available for recumbents for some time. Now Sportworks offers a series of hitch mounted racks for recumbents. They will accommodate short and medium wheelbase bikes with various wheel sizes.

Shimano components are ubiquitous, but we do not necessarily see all of them because there is no market for sophisticated city bikes in the US. Hopefully some of the Nexave components will be available. These include flangeless hubs that take conventional spokes. This means a broken spoke could be replaced without removing the freewheel or disc brake.

The light action rear derailleurs have larger jockey wheels, which should reduce drag, and wide gear ranges.

The complicated Shimano Power Change Mechanism (SPCM) front derailleur is part of the Nexave C900 group. The cable from the shift lever goes to a mechanism that surrounds the crank axle. When a shift occurs, the cable causes a pawl to engage that uses the force of the spinning crank to pull another short cable that actually moves the derailleur. I think. All this in the name of light action at the controls. Perhaps the most interesting thing about these components was that they were the basis for a prototype group that was on display at the Shimano comfort bike booth. In the prototype, these components were all electronically controlled. On a recumbent with long cable runs, there might be an advantage to a fly-by-wire system. In any case, there may be situations where these current comfort bike components might be better for a recumbent application than the mountain bike components that are now used.

I have looked for a long time for something I could wear under my helmet to keep from sun burning the top of my head through the vents. A skull cap from a company called Headsweats seems to be doing the job. It is snug on my head; it might be too small for some. But if enough of us ask for bigger ones, I think they would accommodate.

As one wanders around the show floor, one



The Dutch Thys Row Bike—John Riley



The Vision Saber Jet Bike—we're not asking for a test bike—John Riley

samples the various nutrition bars on offer. I don't know anything about the nutritional needs and tastes of extreme athletes, but I know that to me the fig based Nutra Fig Cheetah bars were the best by far.

Just for fun, BikeE: On the evening of the opening day of the show there was a "block party" in a parking lot behind the convention hall. There were BMX and skateboard stunts, and a BikeE drag race. Lee Eckroth from BikeE did an NHRA set-up complete with timing lights. Like the NHRA funny cars, BikeE built a special shortened CT with a big wheelie bar in back. It had a special black and yellow paint job that included flames. It was possible to ride the bike on the back wheel and wheelie bar most of the length of the track.

As it turns out, there was also a recumbent rail style drag racer in the Specialized booth—with front wheels procured from BikeE. But it was just for show, not go.

**Just for fun, Vision:** Tired of people drafting you? Need a little extra boost? Vision has mounted a small AMT AT180 turbojet on a Saber. It requires compressed air to get spinning for start-up, but otherwise it runs with just the fuel tank under the main beam of the bike. Here are the numbers for you rocket scientists:

- Weight: 3.1 lbs.
- Thrust: 18Lbf@142,800
- Thrust at idle: 0.9 Lbf, idle
- RPM: 48,000 to a max of 150,200
- Mass flow: 0.45Lb/sec@18Lbf
- Fuel consumption: 8 oz/min@18 Lbf
- Normal exhaust gas temp: 1020 degrees F.

**Final thoughts:** Before the show, I had been thinking that the recumbent market was maturing and that mostly we would just see refinements. Before the show, I also knew that the European bikes did not make sense for the American market.

After the show, I think there is more innovation and vitality in the recumbent sector than I have seen in years. After the show, I think the

European bikes will find a home in the US.

I did not ride the Speedmachine at Demo Day because I did not think I could. I got my nerve up in the demo area of the show floor and rode it. I was sorry I had not ridden it at Demo Day where I could have ridden it on the road. It is a very interesting bike. I do not know if I will own a bike like this, but having ridden it, I think there are lots of people that will.

Before the show there was some speculation that Cannondale might have a recumbent there. They did not. After the show, I could not think of anything that mattered less.

By my conservative count there were eight recumbent companies and 18 recumbent bikes making their first appearance at this show. As far as I can see, these companies, and the other established recumbent makers, are run by people who love recumbents. They are recumbent nuts. They know people like us because they have ridden with us, talked to us on the phone, and read our email. Who is better going to meet our needs, fellow recumbent nuts, or Cannondale?

Before the show, I thought it would take a large company with development dollars to do anything different in the recumbent market. After the show, I can see that the new ideas are coming from the same people they have always come from, recumbent people. Keep your subscription up to date, people. Things are going to get interesting. ♦

"A real hoot"  
Bob Bryant, RCN



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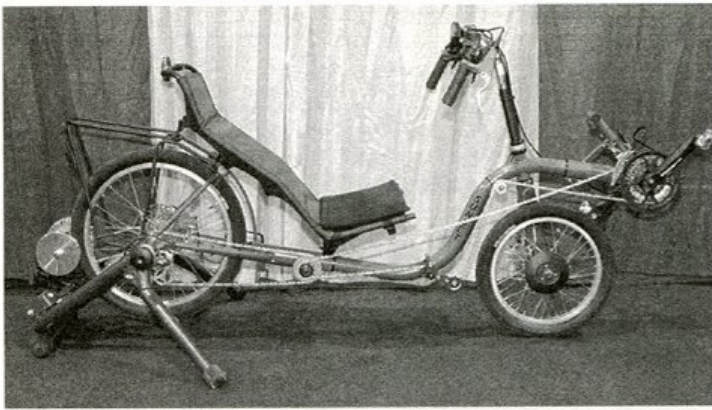
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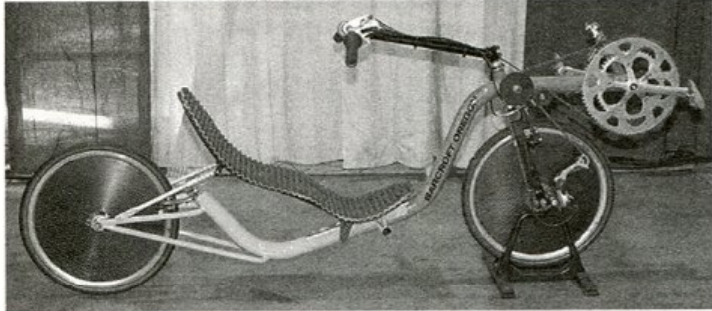
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Earthcycle's Sunset—John Riley



M5 Shock Proof—John Riley



Barcroft Oregon with Zox FWD—John Riley



M5 Lowracers—John Riley



You Chan Yu bike from Taiwan. We have received no indication that this bike is actually in production. Photo by John Riley.



The new Burley Hepcat SWB. Note laid back stem, seat and new sprint braces on the seat—John Riley



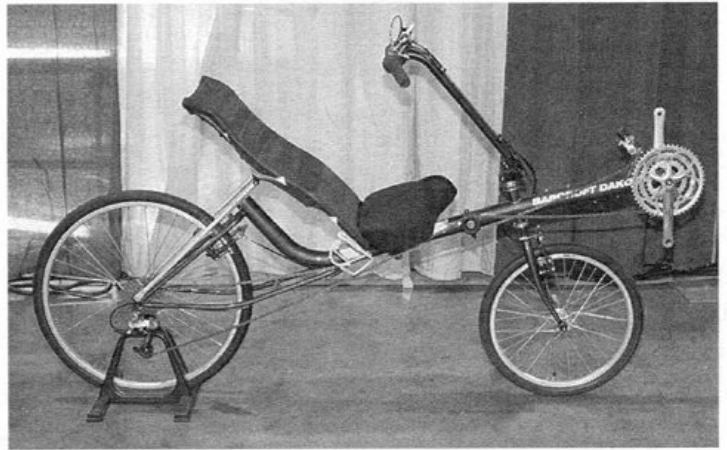
Crank It!'s Scorpion road trike. We have received no indication that this bike is actually in production. Photo by John Riley.



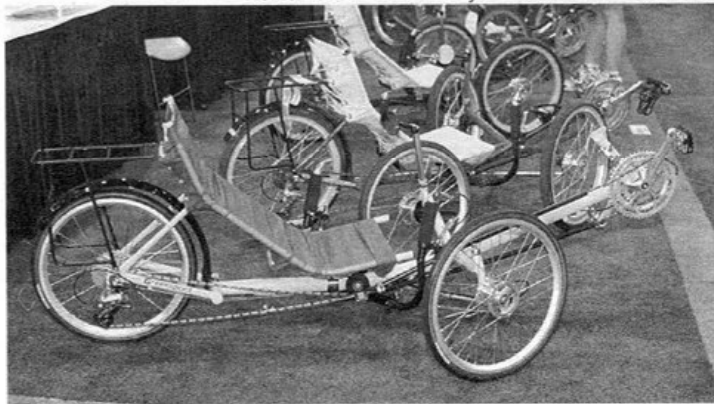
HP Velotechnik Street Machine—John Riley



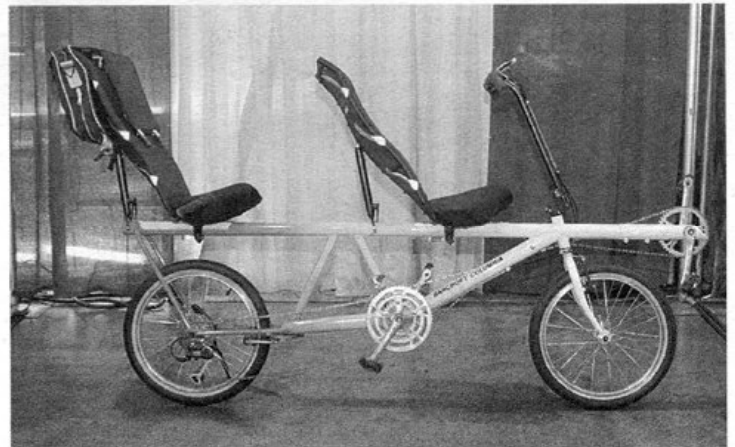
A one-off Rotator with Rohloff hub and 26-inch drive wheel at Rohloff booth—John Riley



Barcroft Dakota—John Riley



Greenspeed GTO—John Riley



Barcroft Columbia—John Riley

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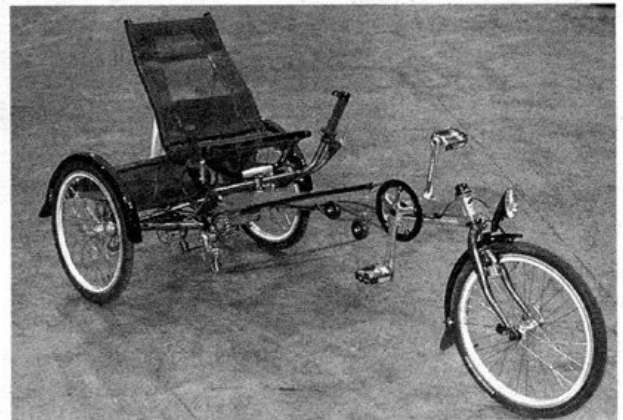
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Hase Spezialraeder Lepus—John Riley



Greenspeed touring trike (left) and racing trike—John Riley

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## An Editorial

As legends go, Flyin' Joe is pretty lame. This dog supposedly used gravity to fling himself into infamy and the psyche of unsuspecting bentists everywhere. Why couldn't I just fall off a ladder and expect the same treatment. I liked Joe. He was a good dog. But I don't understand the obsession with keeping his image alive. Evidently, he had a good publicist.—d. doty

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# How To Choose Your Next Recumbent Bicycle

by Bob Bryant

The recumbent experience is totally unique in the bicycle world. There are racers in streamliners, tourists riding across the country, average folks riding for fun or fitness, club rides and somebody's mom getting back on a bike after 20 years. The one thing they all have in common is comfort.

There is a lot to know about recumbent selection. It is a topic that can be studied as deeply as one might like, or do it the fast & easy way by wandering into your local shop and choosing one. This may actually be easier if you are an entry-level customer looking for a first recumbent. The best recumbent deals are on entry level compacts (CLWB). These can be had for \$550-\$800 and are excellent values.

For advanced or more serious riders, you need an education. The biggest problem facing recumbent customers is the lack of information sources—that's where we fit in. RCN has been supporting the recumbent bicycle enthusiast through our newsletter since 1990. A regular subscription will keep you informed about the changes, new models, news, rumors, reviews and buyers' guide information in each issue.

## Recumbent Costs

The bad news is that recumbents are expensive. They can cost nearly double, sometimes more, than an equivalent upright bike and you get what you pay for. There are some good values, but the prices are still up there. The more serious a rider you are, the more you may have to spend on a recumbent. Enthusiast models capable of increased comfort, performance and more miles start at \$1000 and serious enthusiast recumbents at \$1300 and go way up from there.

## Selection

Because there are no arbitrary rules to limit the design process, recumbents come in every shape and size you can imagine. A recumbent may initially feel foreign to you: too sensitive, overly quick or it may take you some time to get accustomed to the position. These are traits of the recumbent newbie. The word to remember is **R E L A X !** Lean back in the seat, take a deep breath and enjoy the ride. Many of the symptoms can be traced directly to upper-body stiffness from riding your upright. Allow your body to relax and stay loose. Your next decision will be which design style to choose.

Not all recumbent styles are created equal. All have their strong and weak points. Think of each model having a check list of pluses, minuses and compromises. Next we'll take a look at the different types of recumbent bicycles:

**Compact Long Wheelbase (CLWB):** This design is the most popular recumbent type in the world today. The Compact is a casual, utilitarian, recreational recumbent bicycle. It is the most user-friendly, and affordable of recumbent styles (\$550-\$1200). It is also the easiest to find at a dealer. It is the purest and simplest form of recumbent. The design is similar to a long wheelbase in layout. The difference is that the designers have reduced the wheelbase by using a smaller diameter wheelset (most have a 20-inch rear/16-inch front) and moved the rider position rearward and higher up—shortening the wheelbase (over that of the LWB).

The downside is that the compact can place more rider weight on your behind (recumbent butt), and have poor weight distribution (some have 80% of the weight on the hind end), some have a longer reach to the controls, and many are not as capable performance-wise (especially internally geared models or those with 16-inch front wheels) and they can be heavy. Examples: Supercruiser EZ1, BikeE, and Rans Wave.

**Short Wheelbase (SWB):** This design is the sportiest of recumbents—perfectly suited for those who want a responsive, performance machine to ride on organized or club rides. The SWB has become the enthusiast choice. The wheelbase is shortened by placing the front wheel under the rider's knees (or just forward) and raising the pedals up to seat height

(and higher). The wheelbases can range from 33-48 inches. This design offers improved weight distribution, quick road bike-like handling, lighter weights and improved weight distribution (usually, the best).

The downside to this design is that the higher the pedals the greater the need for a foot retention device (clipless pedals) and the more possibility for toe/foot numbness problems (5%-10% of riders). Also they can be very quick handling, which some new riders may not be able to handle (or want to). These bikes are best suited to avid cyclists, serious enthusiasts, club riders and athletic types. Examples: Rans Rocket, V-Rex, Vision R40, Trek R200, Lightning P38.

**Long Wheelbase:** These long and limo-like recumbent models make perfect touring bikes, though can be very fast. They have wheelbases of 60-70 inches. The pedals are behind the front wheel and low to the ground. The LWB design concept dates back to the turn of the 20th century. LWB models vary in performance, handling and style. The LWB under-seat steering bikes are great for comfort touring. The above-seat steering bikes are the Harley Davidson's of the bicycle set. They are capable tourers with the added bonus of a simpler design (no steering linkage) and better performance (easy to add a Lexan fairing).

The downside to the LWB is size, storage, transportability and weight. LWB are more difficult to find at dealers. They are best purchased from manufacturer/dealer who specializes in the design. Examples: Easy Racers, Burley, Rotator and Rans Stratus.

**Lowracer:** Imagine being so low that your palms can touch the ground—you are stretched out, laid back with your feet up high. This is the very fast Euro-lowracer. Initially only for the race tracks, more streetable models are appearing, as well as advanced enthusiasts to ride them.

The downside is cost, difficult to find in the USA, and most all a difficult fit. Short, very tall and large riders are more difficult to fit. There can be lots of heel interference with the front wheel, limited turning abilities, tight seat-to-steering space (or even hyperextension). You also must fit the Euro-style seats with their lumbar bends (some offer different seat sizes), be able to tilt your neck forward (from a very reclined position) and handle having your feet/bottom bracket up to 9 inches above your seat.

Lowracers are probably best for the track, or to be used as your ultimate speed bike for shorter speed events. Most have seats that are not very comfortable and the extreme positions can cause neck pain.

**Trikes:** Recumbent trikes cross the spectrum from a very advanced pedal powered high performance sports car to mobility for special needs. Models vary greatly. Enthusiast performance trikes have two wheels in front (tadpole) with the drive wheel in back. Many ride their trikes everywhere and will defend their supremacy, safety and usability very intensely. The recreational/mobility more casual trikes are generally two wheels in back (delta) with a higher center of gravity. They work well for special needs, those with balance problems or enthusiasts who don't like being so low to the ground.

Trike ergonomics vary dramatically. Be aware that some models have very reclined seats, high feet/pedal placement and that your body may not have the upper body relaxation of a two wheeler (you'll need to use body English to command a trike).

The downside is storage, transportability and durability (cheaper models), places to ride trikes and you get what you pay for (good trikes are expensive). Examples: (tadpole) Greenspeed, Trice, WizWheelz Terratrike; (delta) Penninger, Hase Spezialraeder, HPM Tritan.

**Medium Wheelbase (MWB):** This style of recumbent is similar to both a Compact and a SWB (a SWB without a boom), but with the crankset placed at or near the headtube. Some feel this works great for urban

indicate a performance bike, but the two currently available models are rather heavy and both have SRAM 3x7 hubs (not good for performance bikes due to added internal gear friction losses). The best use for a MWB is probably casual recreational and sport touring. Examples: Radius C4 & Vision R32.

**Tandems:** These double recumbents come in a few different shapes and sizes. The most popular design for enthusiasts is the SWB style (SWB front/captain + LWB rear/stoker). Selection considerations should include captain and stoker sizes, acceptable c.g.'s, and preference for ASS or USS. The CLWB ASS style is a more recreational/family tandem.

The downside is storage, transportability, riding with kids (some models don't fit child stokers), and they are expensive. Examples: Rans Screamer, BikeE E2.

**Off-road:** Many recumbents will do fine on fire roads, though technical single-track is best left to the upright MTB's. Compacts make the best off-road recumbents. The small front wheels (16-inch) and knobbies will make on-road performance poor. Some enjoy riding SWB off-road, though the high seat/c.g. can wreak havoc on wet terrain. We have enjoyed riding LWB ASS models off-road as well. Example: BikeE FX.

**Travel Bikes:** This is a relatively new style of recumbent. These are bikes that come apart in some way for easy stowage or transport. Bike Friday's Sat R Day SWB has dual 16-inch wheels and folds into one suitcase. Several recumbents have folding swing arms and/or removable seats. Be forewarned that none fold as well as a folding upright bike. Examples: Greengear Sat R Day SWB (dual 16-inch wheels; folds into suitcase), Angletech Altitude, HPM, Linear.

### Comfort

The first and foremost reason to consider a recumbent bicycle is comfort. When you ride a recumbent bicycle your body feels good—no pain. Your arms and wrists are totally relaxed—as they do not support your weight on a recumbent. Your neck and shoulders are relaxed—because you are looking straight ahead. Your bike seat offers full ergonomic back support—and total comfort. Your hind quarter wonders what kind of a seat this is and why there isn't pain, chafing and numbness. Another benefit of the recumbent seating position is a more open chest and diaphragm that makes for easier breathing. You will be able to ride longer with less fatigue and arrive at your destination feeling refreshed. Finally, a better view of the road ahead and your surroundings—recumbents are great for touring and day rides. There are specialty recumbent designs for racing, off-road, travel as well as tandems, trikes and quads.

Here is our list of great recumbent seats: **Rans**—the most popular recumbent seat is

(though still very good). **Easy Racers Kool Back**—A very high quality seat made in the USA of stainless steel, mesh and carefully layered foam. **Lightning**—Perhaps the best recumbent seat, though the closed pedal angle (upright seat and high BB) may restrict comfort for some. **Rotator**—This seat is VERY comfortable and has a bungy laced mesh seat base. The closed pedal angle (upright seat and high BB) may restrict comfort for some. **Other good seats:** Vision with a Thermarest pad (especially for those who ride with the seat more upright) the new Burley, BikeE (base is still too small and not soft enough (Calhoun offers a Rans base kit for BikeE's).

### Seats by Style

Recumbent seats vary in comfort. The main types of seats are as follows:

✓ **Sling/Mesh:** A hammock/lawn chair type seat. These have frame rails for the back and base with finely crafted and adjustable mesh sections that "sling" your body. These are the best for long term comfort, though can make the bike more difficult to hold up at a stop, take longer to get accustomed too, or 'push-through' more which can negatively affect performance. A curved lumbar or very taught mesh can make for the best in comfort and performance. A good sling/mesh seat is considered the "holy grail" by many seasoned recumbent riders—especially those interested in touring and comfort. Unfortunately, the makers of the best sling/mesh seats are

The height of these seats necessitated the design of the hybrid mesh back/composite base seat designed by Rans back in the early 1990's. Back then, the Counterpoint Presto and Lightning seats were considered the most comfortable. The 20-inch drivewheel made the seat bases too high for the average rider, thus the composite base.

✓ **Sling/Mesh/Composite Base:** Same as above with a seat base that looks like that of a tractor "bucket" with layered foam and cover. This is the current industry trend—a mesh back seat with a composite shell base with foam and a cover. These have been very expensive seats to manufacture. For most builders, this is the most expensive part on the bicycle. These seats came into existence due to the need for a seat to more easily reach the ground with your legs at a stop. These seats can be very comfy as long as the base is big enough, shape ergonomic enough, and foam plush enough. This is the most popular type of recumbent seat: Rans, BikeE, and Burley.

Vision uses a seat that crosses in between the full sling/mesh and hybrid. It is basically a sling/mesh seat with cut down sides, and the material pulled tight to a seat horn. Some riders are bothered by the seat horn (crotch area), yet others "bottom out" on the base foam and feeling the frame tubes beneath (optional inflatable pad is available from Vision).

✓ **Composite Shell/Foam:** These seats have aluminum, fiberglass or composite shells and they are very stiff. They can be less comfortable, but if you like to push into your seat for power,

## Bicycle Comfort & Industry Rant

The current trend in upright bicycles is the "Comfort Bike." These are 26" and 700c wheeled hybrid style city bikes with upright adjustable stems, Comfort bike specific componentry and some models even have suspension. As a bicycle enthusiast, I see this as a great trend. The downside of the trend is the negative effect it may have on low-end recumbent sales—as these Comfort bikes can be had for half the cost of even an entry level recumbent. For short distance riders, they are probably the best answer. I must admit to being more comfortable on some upright Comfort bikes than on some recumbents (those with mediocre seats or extreme ergonomics).

In contrast, the buzz in the recumbent world is for more extreme racy models with high pedal/BB's (often up to 9-inches above seat height) with radical riding positions. These bikes may be fast (though not much faster than a performance SWB ASS or LWB ASS with Lexan fairing), but they are not comfortable in the recumbent *comfort* sense of the word (or why all of us old timers (I'm 40 and have been riding for 15 years) came to recumbent bicycles).

Racing models of anything aren't necessarily the most comfortable models. Compare the ride of a Corvette to a Lincoln Town Car. In recumbency, just as in upright bikes or even automobiles, individual models have a design mission or intention.

As an industry, we need to be careful about how our bicycles are perceived, represented and sold. This industry needs to set some standards and come up with some guidelines to help educate recumbent customers. Our bikes aren't perfect, and they cannot do everything—well. It is time for manufacturers to honestly determine usage. Incredible "does everything" claims will not win repeat customers.

This lack of design standards in our industry can make finding the right recumbent (for you) more difficult. It can also become an expensive process (purchasing multiple bikes). In contrast, upright bicycle selection is so EASY. Setting recumbent standards will be a difficult and exhaustive project—though it may be the best way to increase the level of recumbent education, awareness and understanding. ♦

this is the way to go (though some suggest that this is a poor way to develop recumbent power, and that spinning is superior). They are stiff foam and usually have no cover.

Compared with comfort-based, seats they are not that comfortable. They were developed for racing—which doesn't have much to do with comfort.

Suspension may be necessary with these.

### Seat Adjustment Methods

Recumbents adjust to fit varying rider sizes in several different ways.

✓ **Sliding Seats:** These seats slide on seat tracks. Some mechanisms work better than others. The best are those from Burley and BikeE, though the only one we've never had slip is the Easy Racers (nuts & bolts, no QR). These work best on recumbents that come in frame sizes (to achieve optimum center of gravity).

✓ **Sliding Boom/Mast:** Telescoping pedal tube (frame section) that slide out of trike and SWB mainframes to accommodate different size riders. Adjustment can also require shortening or lengthening chains which may require new master links. If you adjust often, keep a few boom bolt spares.

**Other Stuff:** Be aware of "radiator hose-clamp" seat adjustment mechanisms. Though a cost effective and simple device, they have no place on \$1500+ bicycles. We've had several strip out during our test ride process, nearly leaving us stranded miles out. This is not a deal breaker, but you should carry an extra or two, set them, and leave them alone. I'd rather put up with hose-clamps than a mediocre boom

arrangement. Once they are set, they are usually fine. It is the adjustment process that can strip them out.

Lastly, keep in mind that one-size-fits-all frames do not fit everyBody. Manufacture sizing recommendations can be very liberal. A bike may FIT you, but not fit you correctly. A one-size CLWB with a big/tall rider may have over 80% of the weight on the rear wheel. The same can be said for a big/tall rider on a one-size SWB (heavily loaded on the front). If you are not "average" height (mid-to-upper 5' range of average weight, consider recumbents with additional frame sizes (not just longer booms).

### Ergonomics & Fit

Recumbents have various degrees of pedal angle. This is the opening of the angle derived from the seat back/base out to the height of the pedals/bottom bracket. Recreational cruisers have open pedal angles, more enthusiast oriented machines have more moderate (or more closed) pedal angles and performance machines have very closed pedal angles. Consider comfort first, and check to see if the bike meets the other performance criteria before buying into the closed pedal position. Closed riding positions are nearly useless on heavy and/or marginally performing models. Also, the higher the pedals/bottom bracket, the more a foot-retention device is necessary (clipless pedals).

Be sure that you are willing to ride with clipless pedals. They connect you to your pedals. Not all riders are okay with this. The safety of clipless pedals is debated. On the

other hand, riding a high pedal/BB bike without them can cause "leg suck" (feet slip off pedals, legs go back under bike). If you don't want to mess with clipless pedals, buy a low pedal/BB recumbent bicycle.

For the more comfort based USA market, an adjustable seat recline is almost a necessity. A fore-aft base adjustment is also nice (especially for smaller seat bases).

Here are more comfort/fit specifics:

✓ **Shorter Riders:** Check out models that come in multiple frame sizes. Low LWB, trikes, and SWB (with 16-inch front wheels) and some CLWB (high seats, cut away seat bases). Your best bet is the low seat SWB (Lightning) or LWB (Easy Racers, Rans Stratus) that comes in multiple frame sizes.

✓ **Taller Riders:** Check out models that come in sizes. MWB, LWB and longer SWB (with 40+ inch wheelbase) and custom built bikes. Beware of direct USS models due to their forward center of gravity (c.g.) and steer clear of anybody who has an optional "extra long boom."

✓ **Large Riders:** Check out models that come in frame sizes. Look for triangulated CroMo frames, 700/26 or 20-inch wheel combos and low pedal heights with more moderate or open riding positions. Look for fully triangulated frames and ask about warranties. Keep in mind that most recumbent suspensions are best suited for riders in the 150-200 pound range. Those requiring air pressure are a hassle to work with as they require 110%+ the weight of the rider in the air shock. This can be a sure prescription for pogo (pedal induced suspension movement). The

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still pogo (especially on a suspension CLWB or LWB).

### The Truth About Ergonomics & Comfort

When bicycle comfort is discussed, it is assumed that all recumbents are comfortable—this is *not* correct—especially for everyBODY. Lets face it, most recumbent riders are baby boomers—and many could stand to lose a few pounds, and many have a few aches and pains. Some of these aches and pains can be aggravated on some recumbent bicycles. The below might help you in your selection process.

✓ **Upright seat**—Place weight on your seat, even the best recumbent seat design may result in “recumbent butt” which may require the rider to get off the seat every 45-90 minutes (many do this anyway). These are the most user-friendly in traffic and to see around you.

✓ **Super-Reclined seats**—These ultra-laid back seats often require you to drop your chin to your chest to look straight forward. If you have ever experienced neck or shoulder pain, arthritis in either place or migraine headaches related to this, skip these. It is more difficult to see behind a laid back recumbent.

✓ **High Bottom Bracket (BB)**—Some riders experience toe and or foot numbness when their feet are placed from 3-inches below the seat base, to a foot above. We guess this could be 10% of recumbent riders. This makes stops and starts that much more difficult.

✓ **Low BB's**—This is the natural, normal and ergonomic position for the pedals. If the seat is too far reclined, this can suck all of the power out of the position. If the seat is too upright, this can make for “recumbent butt.”

✓ **Moderate BB's**—The neutral BB at seat height (or just below) is a very popular position. However, some riders can still experience numbness. A long test ride will be worthwhile.

Most riders who are interested in supreme comfort will prefer a BB that is at seat height or lower—somewhere in between an Easy Racer—Rans Tailwind—Vision SWB.

✓ **Headrests**—These help somewhat. However, they cannot be fully utilized when wearing a bicycle helmet.

✓ **SuperLow seats with SuperHigh BB's**—Good training for space shuttle pilots. Bikes with this design format were mainly designed for racing. A few hearty souls ride them on the road and profess their safety. Lowbike safety is in the eye of the beholder. I don't feel safe on them. They are difficult for traffic to see, more difficult for you to see traffic (especially behind you), more vulnerable, more difficult to control (in an emergency). Some front-wheel drive (FWD) models can lose traction on wet or imperfect pavement.

✓ **Control Reach Hyperextension**—Often found in SWB USS models, or LWB high BB models (raises the BB, moves the rider position rearward on the bike, and also messes with the bike's center of gravity). I have experienced this with Vision USS, straight-bar USS (like

### Recumbent Selection Notes

✓ **Above-seat steering (ASS)**: is more user-friendly and can be more aerodynamic than under-seat steering (mainly on two wheelers, with larger riders). RCN readers prefer ASS 2:1 over USS.

✓ **Under-seat steering (USS)**: is considered more comfortable by many riders, though can take more time to become accustomed to. USS offers a relaxed magic carpet ride.

✓ **Seat Height**: Some SWB and LWB with full size rear wheels may be too tall for shorter riders.

✓ **Pedal Height**: Some high pedal/bottom bracket models are best suited for athletic types. Toe and foot numbness is a concern for some riders.

✓ **Control Reach**: Some under-seat steering SWB and high pedal height LWB can have control reach problems for some riders.

✓ **Wheels**: Small wheels feel less stable, offer a more harsh ride, accelerate faster, but decelerate faster as well. Heavy loads (forward center of gravity) and 3x7 hubs accentuate this concern. The majority of 16-inch front

mountain bike size used in recumbent rear wheels and the 406mm 20-inch for the front. Dual 20-inch bikes are very cool, but high and wide range gearing is sacrificed. We recommend careful consideration when dealing with the rare tire sizes: 18-inch, 451mm 20-inch and 24-inch. Only one or two tires may be available per rim size. If you choose this route, be sure to keep your own cache of tires and tubes at home at all times.

✓ **Tires**: Most riders and models can use wider and fatter tires than the manufacturers provide. This will make the ride more comfortable, less skittish, and you will have fewer flats. There is little or no performance penalty if you choose the right tires.

Fatter tires are more common on recumbents. Some manufacturers are catching on, others are not. We recommend tires of 1.5 - inches or wider. We have had lots of flats on 1.375 and narrower tires as you cannot deweight the rear wheel and some SWB have heavily loaded front wheels.

✓ **Odd Drivetrain Parts**: Mid-drives, independent pedaling options, disk or

## Recumbent Glossary

**ABOVE-SEAT STEERING (ASS)**: Handlebars above the seat, knees or frame. A standard bicycle type of bicycle steering.

**BAR-ENDS**: Handlebar extensions most often used on USS bikes to bring the controls closer to the rider.

**BAR-CON**: Shimano bar-end shifters—the best and toughest shifters ever made. These are also made by Campagnolo.

**BB**: Bottom-bracket or boom bracket (pedal axle).

**BENT**: Slang for recumbent.

**BODY STOCKING**: A soft full fairing, usually made of Lycra or other stretchable fabric.

**BOTTOM BRACKET (BB)**: pedal axle & bearings, sometimes called boom-bracket.

**C.G.**: Center of Gravity

**CHAIN-IDLER**: Skateboard or rollerblade wheel that directs the chain through the frame.

**CHAIN MANAGEMENT**: How the chain is managed, via idlers/tensioners though the chain path.

**CHAIN TUBE**: Flexible tubes used as chain idlers.

**COMPACT**: Compact long wheelbase

**COROPLAST**: Plasticized cardboard used for crafts and political signs that works great for homebuilt recumbent fairings.

**CLWB**: Compact long wheelbase 47"-60"; smaller wheelset, higher seat, usually low pedals behind the front wheel.

**CroMo**: Chrome-moly steel used in frames.

**DELTA**: Trike with two wheels in the rear.

**FAIRING**: An aerodynamic windscreen designed specifically for recumbent bicycles.

**FLIP-IT RISER/FOLD FORWARD**: Above-seat steering riser that has an adjustable recline angle and folds forward for easy entry and exit.

**FWD**: Front Wheel Drive

**GEAR-INCH RANGE**: Front chainring tooth count divided by the number of rear cog teeth multiplied by the actual measured drive wheel diameter. (high: large front to small rear/low: small front to large rear).

**HEEL INTERFERENCE**: When your heel (or toe) crosses the path of the front wheel.

**INDIRECT STEERING**: Under-seat steering via a

rod linkage that connects the handlebar to the fork.

**JACKSHAFT**: A non-shifting mid-drive cross-over used on some two-chain recumbent drivetrains.

**LEG SUCK**: When your feet slip off recumbent pedals and 'suck' back under the seat and bike.

**LWB**: Long wheelbase 60"-71"+, pedals usually low and behind front wheel, seat can be low or high.

**MID-DRIVE**: A mid-ship mounted, wide-ratio, two-chain drive freewheel shifted by a rear derailleur.

**MWB**: Medium Wheelbase: Similar to a Compact with BB at headtube.

**PEDAL STEER**: Pedal-induced steering input that makes the bike more difficult to track straight.

**POGO**: Pedal-induced suspension movement.

**SWB**: Short-Wheelbase 33"-47", pedals/BB higher (range can vary by design) and ahead of front wheel, usually higher seat.

**SACHS 3 X 7**: Sachs/SRAM internally geared 3-speed hub used in conjunction with a 7-speed freewheel (21 speed total). Gear #1= reduction underdrive, #2 =1:1 lockup and #3 = overdrive.

**SWING ARM**: The rear frame section that is suspended (on a suspension recumbent design).

**SCHLUMPF MOUNTAIN DRIVE**: A two-speed internally geared bottom bracket.

**STEERING ROD**: The steel or aluminum rod that connects the fork to the bars.

**STEERING RISER**: An ASS extension that rises from the stem/head tube raises bars over the legs.

**TADPOLE**: Trike with two wheels in front.

**TILLER**: A long distance between the head tube and controls can create a feel much like the feel of a tiller of a boat. This effect can be found on LWB & SWB.

**TAILBOX FAIRING**: An aerodynamic tail section often used for storage, mostly homemade of coroplast (plastic cardboard used for political yard signs). Fairings are mounted on a rear rack, cut to shape and stitched together using zip-ties, etc.

**UNDER-SEAT STEERING (USS)**: Steering via handlebars beneath the seat.

**X-SEAM**: A recumbent fit measurement that simulates the distance from the seat back/base out to the farthest reach of the pedal stroke. Sit with your back against a wall and measure from the wall to the bottom of your foot.□

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hydraulic brakes, or other proprietary parts can complicate your bike and make service and parts replacement more difficult, time consuming and costly.

In 2001, the SRAM 3x7 will become completely outdated with a new SRAM 3x8/9. Converting from a 3x7 to a 3x8/9 will be costly. (A 3x7 is a SRAM/Sachs three speed internal hub with 7 derailleur gears on a cassette.) These work great and solve gearing concerns for some small drive wheel bikes, but it comes at a cost. These are bolt-on hubs that are heavy and the internal gears have added friction. Replacing these hubs can be very expensive, though they do last well—though not as well as a similar derailleur drivetrain bike.

✓ **Suspension:** Suspension is more necessary on recumbents because you cannot deweight your butt off the seat as easily. Models with small drive wheels, skinny tires, stiff frames or stiff seats and without suspension can make for a very jolting ride. Suspension solves this problem—though is not the perfect solution.

Suspension complicates the design, is more expensive, and requires more maintenance. A high quality coil/oil shock is best—though difficult to find on recumbents. Air shocks are fine, though we've had a fair amount hassles with them. The biggest being too much leverage on them (rearward center of gravity) which means suspension pogo (pedal induced suspension movement).

✓ **New Riders:** The CLWB above-seat steering recumbent is the best selling recumbent in the world today due to the excellent values and user-friendly entry level design. Make sure it is enough bike for you. They are primarily recreational, utility and fitness bikes. Ride a bunch of bikes, and then go back and ride them again. That first bike that seemed difficult to ride—might feel good.

✓ **Serious Tourist/Commuters:** Buy a robust touring bike with a triangulated CroMo frame, with reasonable weight distribution and a manufacturer suggested method of carrying a touring load. Lower pedal/BB bikes with little or no heel overlap with the front wheel are best for urban riding (consider what fenders might do to this situation as well).

✓ **Performance/Racing:** Look for racing models from manufacturers with race teams and records. The fastest bikes are faired SWB ASS and unfaired lowracers. LWB ASS models with front fairings and SWB ASS models with tailbox fairings offer more user-friendly 'average' rider performance. Compact (CLWB) recumbents do not offer much in the way of performance, even with a front fairing.

## Recumbent Dealers

Not all recumbents are created equal. Carefully select your dealer. Check out 'specialists' in the type of bike you are looking for. Take control of your recumbent education. Do not rely completely on dealers (or manufacturers) who are looking to sell you a new bike. RCN is a good place to start. Most of the advertising dealers are serious regional recumbent experts with lots of experience in selling long distance (though some more than others).

Especially important in the long distance sale will be preassembly and/or a bench or road test prior to shipping. If you buy a bike mail order that has never been set up, expect headaches in getting your new bike road ready. Even we've had trouble setting up some test bikes. Many manufacturers don't preassemble, bench or road test bikes before they go out. Some recumbent specialty dealers do, and this is a service worth paying for. Look for niche dealers. Find out who specializes in what you are looking for and deal with them.

## Recumbent Manufacturers

Not all manufacturers are created equal. It is fairly easy to find out who has the good reputation and who does not. The same can be said for dealers. Become educated. Local rider groups and Internet newsgroups and web sites can be very helpful as well. Beware of dealers who may only sell one or two brands or models—unless they are offering good deals on closeouts.

Lastly, like my dad used to tell me, "There is no free lunch." You get what you pay for in the recumbent world. There are some good values, but beware of companies that you cannot find evaluations or opinions of their products, or that only sell discount on the Internet. A good recumbent bicycle with name brand components will be expensive. ♦



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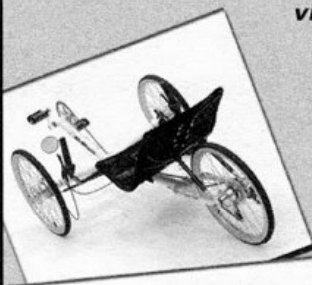
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# View From The Big Chair

## The Future: Components for Recumbents

by BJ Strass  
Atlantic Bicycles

The best news is this year is that there will be no additional rows of gears on our rear wheels. With Shimano and SRAM already at nine speeds on the back and Campagnolo last year jumping to ten, I dreaded the unthinkable 11-speed cassette.

Comfort bike was the key word for the Interbike show. Jeez!!!! Talk about repackaging! These are just a hybrid with raised handlebars, the same width rims/tires in 26" instead of 700c and a cushier seat. Come on guys.....is this the last ditch effort before calling them recumbents???????? Anyway enough preaching. Shimano showed their redesigned Nexave line. Part of this is an "All in One" handlebar with built in lights, shifters, horn and even a compass! The rest of the Nexave line uses a reverse pull rear derailleur, a cam shifting front derailleur (very unusual and seemed complicated), and push button shifters. The bottom pulley on the rear derailleur is very large. It looks to be a 13 tooth or larger. Shimano has a line of shifters and brakes for "Flat-Bar" bikes. A "Flat-Bar" bike is a high end road bike with a slightly higher stem and flat mountain bike type bars (another futile attempt to push their brand of comfort). The good news is that this gives recumbent riders road components that do not have to be on drop road bars. Come on....let's just call them recumbent components!

SRAM is proving that they are embracing the multi gear hub concept by featuring their not yet available, totally redesigned 3x8 and 3x9 hubs. These are not reshaped 3x7 Spectro's but a totally new hub. Shifting on the hub is now very light and more accurate. Also it is not necessary to readjust the shifting

when removing/replacing the rear wheel. Their "Click Box" system is much easier to use. Loosen a small thumb screw, slip the click box off, remove the wheel,..... install the wheel, slip the click box into place, tighten the thumb screw. Much simpler. Efficiency is also said to be a bit better over the 3x7 system. Shifting is all accomplished by the right hand using a twist type grip shifter which has a built-in side lever to shift the hub. Shifter use feels very natural. The hub appears to be more compact has a much sleeker look overall.

With the show's comfort bike theme, SRAM was also highlighting their Spectro 3, 5, and 7 speed internal gear hubs. These hubs have had some updating recently, but overall remain the same as on the market for a few years. The Spectro 7 is of most interest as it gives a very wide range, much wider than Shimano's Nexus 7, and also utilizes the click box system for the hub shifting. A few years back I retrofitted a new '96 BikeE with this system and found it to be very useful and easy to use.

Also of note is SRAM's I-brake. This is a low maintenance hub brake similar to a drum brake. Unlike a Sachs or Sturmey drum brake the I-brake mounts to the side of the hub and can be removed, similar to an Aria tandem drag brake. An exterior disc mimics a disc brake but is actually a cooling fin.

The Rohloff hub is making a big splash on higher end recumbents. Many smaller manufacturers had models with their hub, most notably the Greenspeed trikes. I did have the opportunity to try the hub on a Greenspeed. Shifting is different from a derailleur system and feels odd at first, but after a couple of laps it felt very natural and easy. The simple chain

line, and lack of derailleurs, keeps the chain taut and out of the way. It also can simplify gearing for 20" drive wheels. Another benefit of this hub is its ability to use a standard quick release skewer, as it can be had in a hollow axle as well as a solid axle. Also it can be ordered for disc brakes or to conventional rim brakes. The hub's high cost will hopefully come down with production and popularity going up.

In speaking of disc brakes, they are appearing on more bikes and on lower end bikes, some even on hybrids/comfort bikes (there's that term again). There are also more manufacturers of disc brakes with Formula, Tektro, Shimano, Cane Creek, Grimeca, Magura, and many others being displayed. Most recumbents other than trikes are still opting for rim brakes at this point.

In the brake department, many of the mid to higher end recumbents are dropping SRAM and Shimano V-style (linear pull) models for the Avid brand. Top line Visions and Rans have the Avid model with a parallel push system that brings the pad onto the rim at a more optimum angle. These seem less complicated than Shimano's similar system that has been around for about 3 years. I have been using Avid basic model brakes on 3 different bikes with good results.

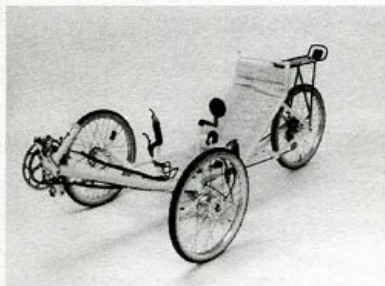
So is it a matter of time before we have "Recumbent Gruppo's." Maybe. Of course it is entirely possible the mass market will kill the term "recumbent" and substitute "comfort bikes."

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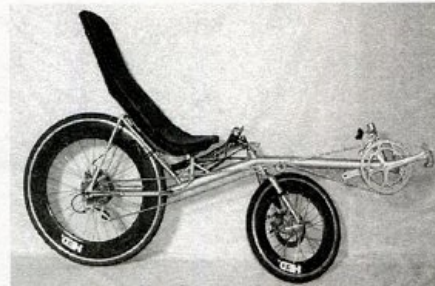
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# 2001 Recumbent Info

## Models currently being sold in the USA

Two Wheelers		Style	Frame	Components	Wheels	WB/SH/BB HT/WT	Seat Style
Price							
\$550	BikeE CT	CLWB ASS LB	Aluminum TIG	ESP 3.0/3x7 Mix	20/16 BO	56/25/17/#28	MB/FB
\$550	Sun SuperCruiser EZ1	CLWB ASS LB	Sq. steel TIG	Mix	20/16	56/24/14.5/#39	MB/FB
\$599	Backsafer Lowbike	CLWB ASS	N/A	N/A 12-spd	20/20	N/A/#39	SHL/FB
\$750	Sun Supr Crzr EZ1 Dix	CLWB ASS LB	Aluminum TIG	Mix	20/16	56/24/14.5/#N/A	MB/FB
\$799	Rans Wave	CLWB ASS LB	CroMo TIG	ESP 5.0 Mix	20/20 BO	61/23/19/#30	MB/FB
\$850	HPM Trick	SWB USS/ASS MB	Sq. steel TIG	SRAM 3x7 mix	26/20/16 combo	Varies	FSM
\$850+	Lightning Thunderbolt	SWB ASS HB	Steel brazed	N/A	26/20 or 16	40/21/NA/NA	FSM/FB
\$999	Rans Tailwind	CLWB ASS MB	CroMo TIG	ESP 7.0 Mix	20/20	61/23/19/#30	MB/FB
\$999	Rans Rocket	SWB ASS HB	CroMo TIG	ESP 7.0 Mix	20/20	41/23/19/#30	MB/FB
\$1095	Vision R40	SWB/LWB ASS MB	CroMo TIG	Shimano Tiagra mix	26/20	40/24/24/#30-34	FSM/FB
\$1095	BikeE AT	CLWB ASS LB	Aluminum TIG RS	ESP 5.0/3x7 Mix	20/16 BO	56/25/17/#30	MB/FB
\$1099+	Linear Compact	CLWB USS or ASS	Aluminum TIG	N/A	20/16	52-58/NA/NA/NA	MB/FB
\$1200	HPM Roadster	LWB ASS LB	CroMo TIG	Shimano/SRAM mix	26/26 BO (3x7 opt.)	61/NA/NA/#32	FSM
\$1295	Vision R32	MWB/ASS HB	CroMo TIG RS/FS	Shim/SRAM 3x7mix	20/20 BO	54/24/26/#37	FSM/FB
\$1250	Turner T-Lite	SWB USS	CroMo TIG	Shimano/Ritchey Mix	26/20 or 16	38"/24"/NA/#28	SHL
\$1350	Linear	SWB/LWB USS MB	Aluminum TIG	N/A	26/20	38-62/25/19/#32	MB/FB
\$1395+	Lightning Phantom	SWB ASS HB	CroMo brazed	Shimano Alivio mix	26/20	41/19/NA/#27	FSM/FB
\$1395+	BikeE RX	CLWB ASS MB	Alum RS/opt. FS	ESP 7.0 Mix/MD	20/16	52/29/21/#32	MB/FB
\$1399	Rans Vivo	SWB ASS HB	CroMo TIG FS	ESP 7.0 mix	20/20	61/23/19/#32	MB/FB
\$1495	BikeE FX	CLWB ASS MB	Alum TIG FS	ESP 7.0 Mix/MD	20/16	52/29/21/#32	MB/FB
\$1399	Radius C4	MWB ASS HB	CroMo TIG RS	SRAM 3x7 mix	26/20 BO	NA/23/24/#38	MB/FB
\$1399	Burley Django	SWB ASS HB	CroMo TIG	ESP/Sora/LX/105	26/20	41"/23"/25"/#30	FSM/FB
\$1399	Burley Limbo	LWB/SWB ASS MB	CroMo Steel RS	ESP/Sora/LX/105	26/20	42-58/24/#37	MB/FB
\$1500+	Cambie Recamboni	LWB ASS LB	CroMo	STX +	26/20	70/21/15/#33	MB/FB or Rans
\$1500+	Cambie Recambini	SWB ASS HB	CroMo	STX +	26/20	48/23/27/#33	MB/FB or Rans
\$1650	Trek R200	SWB ASS MB	Alum TIG RS	SRAM MD mix	20/20	44/27/24/#32	MB/FB (Rans)
\$1599	Rans Stratus	LWB ASS LB	CroMo TIG	ESP 7.0 mix	26/20	66/21/14/#32	MB/FB
\$1599	Rans V-Rex	SWB ASS HB	CroMo TIG	ESP 7.0 mix	26/20	43/24/26/#28	MB/FB
\$1495+	Vision R44/45	SWB USS/ASS MB	CroMo TIG	105/Ultegra	26/20	41/24/24/26+	FSM/FB
\$1695+	Vision R50/54/55	SWB USS/ASS MB	CroMo TIG FS	Tiagra or 105 or Ult.	26/20	40/24/24/#27	FSM/FB
\$1735	Rotator Pursuit/Tiger	LWB/SWB ASS H/MB	CroMo brazed	SRAM/Shim. mix MD	20/20	41-65/15/NA/#30	FSM
\$1795	Easy Racer SS/EX	LWB ASS LB	CroMo TIG	Shim/SRAM mix	700/20 (451 or 406)	66-69/22/13/#30	SHL or FSM/FB
\$1795	Greengear Sat R Day	SWB USS/ASS FLD	CroMo TIG	Mix	16/16 (349)	40/26/24/#32.5	MB/FB
\$1795	HP Velo Street Machine	SWB USS HB	CroMo TIG RS/FS	Shimano mix	26/20	N/A	SHL
\$1799	Burley Django	SWB ASS HB	CroMo TIG	Shimano 105/LX/XT	26/20	41"/23"/25"/#29	FSM/FB
\$1800+	Optima Dolphin Sport	SWB	CroMo	Neos or RX100 or XT	20/20	N/A	SHL
\$1850	Reynolds Wishbone	SWB USS HB	CroMo TIG	Mix	26/20	48/14/25/#25	SHL
\$1850	Reynolds Nomad	CLWB ASS HB	CroMo	Shimano LX mix	26/20	56/12/20/#25	SHL
\$1900+	Optima Lynx Road Rcr	SWB	CroMo	Neos or RX100 or XT	26/20	N/A	SHL
\$1900+	Optima Orca Tour	SWB	CroMo	Neos or RX100 or XT	26/26	N/A	SHL
\$1995	Barcroft Virginia GT	SWB ASS (Rans) HB	CroMo TIG	Shimano 105/XT	26/16	48/19/24/#29	MB/FB (Rans)
\$1995+	Vision R65 Saber	SWB ASS MB	CroMo TIG	Shimano 105+	24/24	40/29/29/#26	FSM/FB
\$1995	Rans Gliss	LWB ASS MB	CroMo TIG	ESP 9.0 mix	26/20	66/24/26/#31	MB/FB
\$1999	Rans Gliss	LWB ASS LB RS	CroMo TIG	ESP 9.0 Mix	20/20	66/23/19/#30	MB/FB
\$1949	Rans Velocity Squared	LWB ASS MB	CroMo TIG	ESP 9.0/105 mix	26/20	66/21/23/#31	MB/FB
\$2020	Radius Hornet	SWB ASS HB	CroMo TIG	Shimano LX/XT	26/20	N/A	MB/FB
\$2095	Barcroft Virginia GT	SWB ASS (Rans) HB	CroMo TIG	Shimano 105/XT	26/20	47/21/24/#29	MB/FB (Rans)
\$2400+	Optima Baron	Lowracer ASS	CroMo	RX100 or Ultegra	N/A	N/A	SHL
\$2495	TerraCycle TerraZa	SWB ASS MB	CroMo TIG	105/SRAM 3x7 mix	20/20 BO	43/23/24/#32	FSM/FB (Rans)
\$2500	Lightning P-38	SWB ASS HB	CroMo brazed	Shimano 105 mix	700/20 or 16	36.5/21/NA/#27	SHL w/pads
\$2595	HP Velo Speedmachine	SWB lowracer ASS HB	CroMo TIG RS/FS	Shimano mix	26/20	47"/16"/26"/#NA	SHL
\$2750	Lightning M5	Lowracer ASS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
\$2995	Wicks HedTurner	SWB USS LB	Aluminum	Ultegra	700/20 (451 or 406)	66-69/22/13/#27	SHL or FSM/FB
\$3699	Boulder Galaxy	SWB ASS HB	Aluminum FS	SRAM/Shimano	20/20	42/23/27/NA	FSM/FB (Rans)
\$4000	Angletech Altitude	SWB ASS HB	Aluminum FS	ESP 9/0 3x7 mix	20/20 BO	42/23/27/#31	FSM/FB (Rans)
\$4700	Angletech MC2	SWB ASS HB	CroMo brazed	Ultegra	26/20	42/23/23/#27	FSM
\$5000	Lightning F40	SWB ASS HB	CroMo brazed	Shimano 105 mix	700/17 Moulton	42+/18/NA/#32-34	FSM/FB
\$5000+	Lightning R84	SWB ASS	Carbon fiber	Campagnolo	700/20	42-47"/18"/NA/#20-22	FSM/FB
\$5195	Easy Racer Ti Rush	LWB ASS LB	Titanium	Shim/SRAM mix	700/20 (451 or 406)	66-69/22/13/#27	SHL or FSM/FB
\$7500	Lightning F90	SWB ASS	R84 with body	N/A	N/A	N/A	FSM/FB

Notes: Zox, M5 and other Euro brands must be purchased direct or through a dealer who specializes in European recumbents. Optima recumbents are imported and sold direct through Yellowbike.com.

Three Wheelers		Style	Frame	Components	Wheels	WB/SH/BB HT/WT	Seat Style
Price							
\$1900	HPM Tritan	Delta USS LB	CroMo TIG	Shimano	3x20	73"/NA/NA/#35	FSM
\$2295	WizWheelz TerraTrike	Tadpole USS HB	CroMo TIG	Shimano mix	3x20	41/11/14/#34	FSM
\$2300	Catrike C2000	Tadpole USS MB	CroMo	Shimano MD mix	3x20	N/A	FSM
\$2495	Penninger Traveller	Tadpole USS MB	CroMo TIG	Shimano LX/Phil	3x20	N/A	Hammock mesh
\$2795	Penninger Voyager	Tadpole USS MB	CroMo TIG	Shimano LX/Phil	3x20	N/A	Hammock mesh
\$2900	Wicks Trimuter	Tadpole USS HB	CroMo	SRAM/Shimano Mix	3x20	N/A	FSM
\$3100?	Greenspeed GTR	Tadpole USS HB	CroMo	SRAM/Shimano Mix 63-spd.	3x20	37.4"/12"/NA/18 kg	FSM
\$3100?	Greenspeed GTO S & S	Tadpole USS HB	CroMo	SRAM/Shimano RX Mix 72-spd.	3x20	38.4"/10"/NA/18 kg	FSM
\$3300	Optima Rider Speed	Tadpole USS HB	CroMo	SRAM/Shimano	3x20	N/A	SHL
\$3395	Earthcycle Dragonflyer	Tadpole USS HB	CroMo TIG RS	Shimano mix MD	3x20	N/A/12"/17"/#41	FSM/FB
\$3400?	Greenspeed GTC	Tadpole USS HB	CroMo	SRAM/Shimano Mix 63-speed	3x20	N/A	FSM
\$3600?	Greenspeed GTS	Tadpole USS HB	CroMo	SRAM/Shimano Mix 54-speed	3x20	41.3"/10"/NA/18 kg	FSM
\$3600	Angletech TriSpeeder	Tadpole ASS LB	CroMo TIG	Shimano mix MD	3x20	N/A/21/13/#39	FSM
\$4000	Angletech Quadraped	Tadpole ASS LB	CroMo TIG	Shimano mix MD A/F	3x20	N/A/21/13/#44-47	FSM
\$4200?	Greenspeed GLR 16/19	Tadpole USS HB	CroMo	Shimano 18 speed	16/19	N/A	FSM

**International Trike Manufacturer Notes:** Some manufacturers are willing to ship to the USA. They are listed in our manufacturer section. **Greenspeed** has seven models. Prices shown are estimated US prices. Not all models shown. See website for specs and contact manufacturer for US prices. **ICE Trike** are delivered to the USA as framesets. Contact dealers for US specs & prices. **Windcheetah's** are available from their web site. We are unaware of any USA dealers. **Hotmover** is a new trike manufacturer. We're not sure if they have any USA dealers.

**Tandems**

Price	Style	Frame	Components	Wheels	WB/SH/BB HT/WT	Seat Style
\$2195	<b>BikeE E2</b>	CLWB ASS LB	Aluminum TIG	SRAM ESP MD	20/16	N/A
\$3495	<b>Barcroft Columbia</b>	SWB HB/LB	CroMo TIG	Shimano LX/XT mix	20/20	55/29/NA/#46
\$N/A	<b>Cambie</b>	LWB ASS	CroMo TIGNA	26/20	N/A	SHL (opt. Rans)
\$3800+	<b>Double Vision</b>	SWB USS/ASS MB	CroMo TIG	LX/105 mix	26/20	70/24/25/#52-54
\$3999	<b>Rans Screamer</b>	SWB ASS MB/LB	CroMo TIG	Shimano ESP mix	26/20	75/24-26/24-26/#45
\$4599	<b>Rans Screamer TR</b>	SWB ASS MB/LB	CroMo /S& S Coupl.	Shimano ESP mix	26/20	75/24-26/24-26/#45
\$5500?	<b>Greenspeed</b>	Trike USS HB	CroMo MIG	Shimano mix	3x20	90/15/11/#66
						MB/FB
						MB/FB (Rans)
						SHL/FB
						FSM/FB
						MB/FB
						MB/FB
						FSM

**KEY:** Alum.—Aluminum; **CroMo**—Chome-moly aircraft steel; **Steel**—Mild steel; **BO**—Bolt on rear hub; **RS**—Rear Suspension; **FS**—Full Suspension; **MD**—Mid Drive; **AF**—Arm & foot pedaled; **MB/FB**—Mesh back + foam base; **FSM**—Full sling/mesh; **FSM/FB**—Full sling mesh + foam base; **SHL**—Shell (alum. or fiberglass); **HB**—high bottom-bracket/pedals; **MB**—moderate height bottom-bracket/pedals (2 inches +/- seat); **LB**—low bottom-bracket/pedals.

**NOTE:** A few manufacturers do not participate in our Season Preview and their specs are not complete or may not be listed. We reserve the right to exclude any manufacturer for lack of cooperation, ethical or financial concerns. RCN has an open door policy. We would love to include every manufacturer and invite all to contact us.



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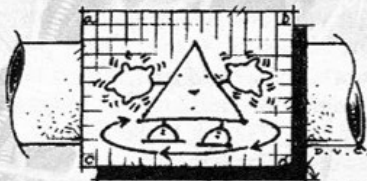
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# Recumbent Manufacturers

**Note:** The following are listings for companies that we know are in the business of selling recumbent bicycles in 2001.

## Angletech

**Priced from:** \$3900  
**Tel:** 719-687-7475  
**Web:** www.angletechcycles.com  
**Design Specialty:** High end custom spec dealer; SWB ASS trikes & tandems.

## Barcroft

**Priced from:** \$1995  
**Tel:** 703-750-1945  
**Web:** www.barcroftcycles.com  
**Design Specialty:** Performance SWB ASS, a tandem and lowracer.

## BikeE

**Priced from:** \$550 +  
**Tel:** 800-231-3136  
**Web:** www.bikee.com  
**Design Specialty:** Full line of CLWB.

## Burley Design Coop

**Priced from:** \$1399  
**Tel:** 541-687-1644; 800-311-5294  
**Web:** www.burley.com  
**Design Specialty:** LWB & SWB ASS.

## Bike Friday/Greengear

**Priced from:** \$1795  
**Tel:** 800-777-0258  
**Web:** www.bikefriday.com  
**Design Specialty:** Folding SWB ASS/USS: A SWB that fits into one case for world travel.

## Boulder Bikes

**Priced from:** N/A  
**Tel:** 303-823-5021  
**Web:** www.boulderbikes.com  
**Design Specialty:** Suspension

## Easy Racers, Inc.

**Priced from:** \$549  
**Tel:** 408-722-9797  
**Web:** www.easyracers.com  
**Design Specialty:** LWB ASS.

## EarthCycles

**Priced from:** \$3300  
**Tel:** 612-335-5048  
**Web:** www.earth-cycles.com  
**Design Specialty:** Tadpole trikes.

## Human Powered Machines

**Priced from:** \$850  
**Tel:** 800-343-5568  
**Web:** www.efn.org~cat  
**Design Specialty:** Affordable custom built SWB, LWB, delta trike, workbikes & trucks: Lots of cool designs, though man of many irons in the fire Jan Vander Tuin needs time to refine them all.

## Lightning Cycle Dynamics

**Priced from:** \$850  
**Tel:** 805-736-0700  
**Web:** www.lightningbikes.com  
**Design Specialty:** SWB (MWB) ASS.

## Penninger Recumbents

**Priced from:** \$2495  
**Tel:** 630-377-1696  
**Web:** www.penninger.com  
**Design Specialty:** Delta USS trike.

## RANS Recumbents

**Priced from:** \$799  
**Tel:** 785-625-6346  
**Web:** www.rans.com  
**Design Specialty:** Full line of recumbents: CLWB, SWB, LWB & tandem.

## Radius USA

**Priced from:** \$1399  
**Tel:** 973-340-9006  
**Web:** www.radius-recumbents.com  
**Design Specialty:** Euro SWB & MWB.

## Reynolds Weld Lab

**Priced from:** \$1850  
**Tel:** 603-432-7327  
**Web:** www.reynoldsweldlab.com  
**Design Specialty:** SWB semi-lowracer & low CLWB.

## Rotator

**Priced from:** \$1735  
**Tel:** 707-539-4203  
**Web:** www.rotatorrecumbent.com  
**Design Specialty:** Low monotube performance LWB & SWB ASS with mid-drive.

## Rhoades Car International

**Priced from:** N/A  
**Tel:** 1-615-822-2737 Ext. 16186  
**Web:** www.4wc.com/?16186  
**Design Specialty:** Four wheeled pedal cars

## TerraCycle

**Priced from:** \$2400  
**Tel:** 800-371-5871  
**Web:** www.terracycles.com  
**Design Specialty:** Custom SWB ASS touring.

## Trek

**Priced from:** \$1650  
**Tel:** 800-313-8735  
**Web:** www.trekbikes.com  
**Design Specialty:** Uprights/one SWB model.

## Turner Enterprises

**Priced from:** N/A  
**Tel:** 520-290-5646  
**Web:** www.turnerrecumbents.com  
**Design Specialty:** SWB USS.

## Vision

**Priced from:** \$1095  
**Tel:** 206-467-0231  
**Web:** www.visionrecumbents.com  
**Design Specialty:** SWB USS and tandem.

## Wicks Aircraft

**Priced from:** N/A  
**Tel:** 800-221-9425  
**Web:** www.wicksaircraft.com  
**Design Specialty:** Homebuilder aircraft parts, SWB USS & recumbent trikes.

## WizWheelz

**Priced from:** \$2300  
**Tel:** 616-948-4693  
**Web:** www.wizwheelz.com  
**Design Specialty:** Entry level/reasonably affordable tadpole trike.

## Yellowbikes

**Priced from:** \$1800  
**Tel:** 888-846-7386  
**Web:** www.yellowbike.com  
**Design Specialty:** Euro low SWB, lowracers and a trike.

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## INTERNATIONAL MANUFACTURERS

### Cambie Cycles—Canada

**Tel:** 604-874-3616  
**Web:** www.cambiecycles.com (Canada)  
**Design Specialty:** Custom built LWB, SWB ASS, LWB ASS tandem, recumbent Trail-A-Bike and kick scooter with a seat.

### Challenge

**Web:** www.challenge-ligfietsen.nl/  
**Design Specialty:** Euro SWB & lowracers  
**Note:** Available from US dealer(s).

### Greenspeed—Australia

**Tel:** +61 3 9758 5541  
**Web:** www.greenspeed.com.au  
**Design Specialty:** Line of tadpole USS trikes.  
**The Company:** Ian Sims & family

### Hotmover—Australia

**Tel:** +1 760 874-8030  
**Web:** www.hotmover.com  
**Design Specialty:** Tadpole trikes.

### HP Velotechnik

**Tel:** ++49 (0) 61 92 4 10 10  
**Web:** www.hpvelotechnik.com  
**Design Specialty:** Euro SWB & lowracers  
**Note:** Available from US dealer(s).

### Inspired Cycle Engineering—England

**Tel:** (011 44) 1326 378848  
**Web:** www.cycling.uk.com/bikeshop/trice.htm  
**Design Specialty:** Trice tadpole trike  
**Note:** Available from US dealer(s).

**M5 Ligfietsen—Europe**

Tel. +31 (0) 118 628759

Web: M5-ligfietsen.com

**Design Specialty:** Compact, SWB, lowracers, faired racer & tandem.**Pashley—England**

Web: www.pashley.co.uk

**Design Specialty:** SWB ASS & trike based on same; builder of the Moulton APB/Land Rover full suspension 20-inch wheel bike, purchased the designs from Counterpoint. The Presto became the PDQ and the Triad the PDQ3.**Thijs Rowing Bikes—Europe**

Tel. +31 (0) 118 634 166

Web: zeelandnet.nl/thijs

**Design Specialty:** SWB with rowing motion.**Windcheetah**

Tel. N/A

Web: www.windcheetah.co.uk

**Design Specialty:** Tadpole ASS trikes.**Recumbent Tech**

Tel. 613-823-5481

Web: www.recumbenttech.com

**Design Specialty:** Shaft drive SWB.**ZOX/Flux/Anthrotech**

Web: www.liegerad.com

**Design Specialty:** FWD lowracers**Note:** Zox available from US dealer.**NEW MANUFACTURERS****Note:** These are new manufacturers that we are aware of. Some have recumbent bicycles in production, others are in process.**Big Cat HPV**

Tel. 407-293-1626

Web: www.catrike.com

**The Company:** New manufacturer to have new trike model for 2001. Design has changed from that listed in ad.**Crank-It**

Tel. 888-747-2038

Web: www.crank-it.com

**Design Specialty:** Offroad quad and a the Scorpion trike.**Cycle Genius**

Tel. 713-666-BIKE

Web: www.cyclegenius.com

**Design Specialty:** CLWB from \$500.**Joule Cycles**

Tel. 800-476-0922

Web: www.joule.com

**Design Specialty:** SWB ASS with mid-drive at swing arm pivot. This bike was not in production as we went to press, though they have a very nice color brochure.**SEEN & NOTED****Note:** These are companies that we believe to be still in the recumbent business, though we have not received current information from them for 2001.**Bilenky**

Tel. 800-213-6388

Web: www.bilenky.com

**Design Specialty:** upright/recumbent tandem.**Infinity (Bike Emporium)**

Tel. 480-991-5430

Web: www.infinityrecumbent.com

**Design Specialty:** LWB USS alum. (square).**Haluzak**

Tel. 707-544-6243

Web: www.haluzak.com

**Design Specialty:** SWB USS**Just Two Bikes**

Tel. 651-426-1548

Web: www.justtwobikes.com

**Design Specialty:** Sociable quad & delta trike**Lightfoot Cycles**

Tel. 406-821-4750

Web: www.lightfootcycles.com

**Design Specialty:** Industrial models, LWB, delta trikes, quads, pedi-cabs, and trucks.**Longbikes**

Tel. 303-471-6700

Web: www.tandembike.com

**Design Specialty:** N/A**Linear**

Tel. 319-252-1637

Web: www.bikeroute.com/linear

**Design Specialty:** Aluminum CLWB & LWB.**Lowrider (formerly Backsafer)**

Web: www.lowrider.com

**Design Specialty:** CLWB ASS 12-spd.**Recumbent Barn/Blackbent**

Web: www.recumbentbarn.com

**Design Specialty:** N/A**Sidewinder Recumbent, Inc.**

Web: www.sidewindercycle.com

**Design Specialty:** rear wheel steer trike**Trailmate**

Tel. 800-777-1034

Web: www.trailmate.com

**Design Specialty:** kids & rental trikes.

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# Popular Recumbent Model Info

## Angletech

**Category:** Well established high end custom recumbents & trikes

**Company:** Kelvin Clark & company have been recumbent specialists for years. They do stock bikes, custom spec and custom high end production bikes.

**Models:** **Altitude:** A Kelvin Clark/Rich Williams (Boulder Bikes) designed full suspension SWB ASS

**MC2:** A Kelvin Clark/Mark Colliton (Exeyed, V-Rex & Barcroft SWB co-designer)/Mark Nobilette (fabricator) designed performance SWB ASS with an unusual circular seat base.

**Quadrapped/TriSpeeder:** A Gary Hale designed, Richard Rau refined, Mark Nobilette fabricated and Kelvin Clark finessed hand/foot powered trike. A cool trike that will be the single most intense recumbent workout you'll ever experience. The TriSpeeder is the foot crank *only* version of the Quadrapped (rare low BB trikes).

**Pro:** Top notch service and spec for the distinguished buyers.

**Con:** Long lead times on custom bikes; Altitude has higher BB than in the past (extreme); We haven't ridden an MC2 or TriSpeeder.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Excellent

## Barcroft

**Category:** Small builder of performance recumbents

**Company:** Bill Cook started this company in his retirement. The frames are built by Outback Bicycles, have Rans seats and ASS.

**Models:** Dakota, Virginia and Columbia (tandem) and a SWB prototype

**Rumors:** A LWB called the Barcroft "California" (no prototype exists...yet).

**Pro:** The Barcrofts are bikes that are not quite lowracers, but lower than most of their SWB brethren. A popular bike with those looking for something more than a V-Rex/Rocket.

**Con:** High price, small company, frame is subcontracted, Rans seat + Flip-it ASS.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Very Good

## BikeE

**Category:** Well established entry level recumbent line + tandem

**Company:** BikeE is the largest recumbent manufacturer in the world today.

**Models:** **CT:** The best buy on the recumbent planet. Look for a new seat base and new lower price and powdercoat paint

**AT:** Rear suspension version of the classic BikeE CT.

**RX/FX:** The only true offroad recumbent. It works great offroad (FX). The RX is a road version of the FX. It has a non-3x7 drivetrain, pull back stem and very fat tires. It has a very comfy ride and suspension. It is also the only front suspended LWB we know of (optional).

**E2:** Yeah, it looks goofy, but you gotta hand it to BikeE. They have come out with an affordable quality tandem that is particularly

well suited for families and novice tandemists.

**Pro:** We love BikeE's for their user-friendliness, quality and value.

**Con:** Seat base is not comfy enough; beware of BikeE sizing, especially on the FX/RX. If you are anywhere near 6 foot tall (or are 6' with a 44.5" x-seam like me) consider an "XL" frame.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Good

## Burley

**Category:** Upright manufacturer with new recumbent model(s)

**Company:** The tandem manufacturer from Oregon has come into recumbents bicycles.

**News:** The Limbo is in production, the Hepcat/Django (new SWB) is due soon.

**Rumor:** A dual 20 hardtail CLWB/LWB ASS?

**Models:** Limbo LWB ASS and Hepcat/Django SWB ASS

**Pro:** The Burley recumbents are particularly high quality. They are built in Eugene, Oregon.

**Con:** Word is that the seat foam is a bit hard, though we sure liked the shape and overall comfort feel of the Limbo seat; lacks back support for strong "pushing into" style riders; pogo on Limbo is a problem; bike is tall.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Good

## Cambie Cycles

**Category:** Canadian recumbent shop that does custom fabrication

**Company:** Longtime recumbent specialist in downtown Vancouver, BC, Canada.

**Models:** Recambini (SWB) and Recamboni (LWB)

**Pro:** With the Canadian exchange rate, these bikes are excellent buys for nearly custom quality recumbents. The tandem looks cool.

**Con:** Cambie seat is similar to S & B but with a big base pad (Rans opt.); LWB has more frame flex than an Easy Racer.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Fair-Good

## GreenGear

**Category:** Upright travel bike manufacturer with recumbent model

**Company:** Greengear is a direct marketer of travel bikes from Eugene, Oregon.

**Models:** Sat R Day folding SWB

**News:** An eccentric bottom bracket for primary chain adjustments has been added.

**Rumor:** A folding recumbent tandem?

**Pro:** Great travel bikes. Travel is the key word—the claim to fame is folding into a suitcase.

**Con:** If you don't need a folding recumbent, stick to bigger wheels; not the most comfortable recumbent seat.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Good

## Greenspeed

**Category:** Full line of tadpole trikes

**Company:** Ian Sims & family from Australia.

**Models:** GTR, GTO, GTS, Exp., Tdm., etc.

**Pro:** Ian Sims builds tough and fast trikes for many uses. The steering geometry, design, refinement and quality are exceptional

**Con:** Laid back seats & high BB's, integral seats (choice of recline), costly as imported, MIG welding (not really a con, but different).

**RCN Reader Rating:** Excellent

## Easy Racers

**Category:** Well established medium to high end touring and performance recumbents (EZ1 is entry level and is built under license by J & B Imports/Sun)

**Company:** Gardner & Sandra Martin have been building cool and fast LWB ASS recumbent bicycles in Freedom, CA. for years.

**News:** The folding/rear suspension Gold Rush will be a 2001 model. An upgraded aluminum EZ1 will be available in 2001.

**Rumors:** An EZ1 prototype tandem?

**EZ1:** Easy Racers licensed the EZ1 to J & B Imports and sold through ANY bike shop with a J & B account under their "SuperCruiser" brand. Though rather heavy, the classic Easy Racers handlebar/steering feel and large seat base has won over many compact customers, as well as pushed the envelope for entry level pricing.

**Tour Easy EX:** The pride of the fleet and the Harley Davidson of the bicycle world. This bike has low gearing, V-brakes and fat tires and is our favorite. The SS has skinny tires including a 451mm front wheel. This makes the bike ride and handle a bit quicker.

**Gold Rush:** Available in SS & EX configurations. The Gold Rush is lighter, faster, and has a slightly softer ride without losing any power to the flex of the aluminum frame.

**TiRush:** Delaire welds up the Titanium frame. It has a slightly more lively feel, but most say its faster than the aluminum and steel models. This is a real ego trip for Easy Racers fans. The Easy Racers LWB ASS models are among the finest recumbent bicycles available in the world today. They are the fastest bikes for the "average Joe."

**Pro:** The best service, quality and durability; the highest rated recumbents in RCN by readers and staff (me); The Easy Racer bikes offer a near perfect mix of user-friendliness, tourability and high performance.

**Con:** Some see classic design as needing some updating; bikes are expensive.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Excellent (highest rating of any manufacturer)

## EarthCycles

**Category:** Small builder of high-end trikes

**Company:** Shean Bjoralt

**News:** The Sunset lowracers is still being prototyped. A second batch will be available in the late Spring.

**Models:** Dragonflyer trike and lowracer

**Pro:** Suspended rear end to soften the harsh trike ride, adjustable recline seat, built in the USA (closer).

**Con:** Long lead times, delays, communication problems, product changes, growing pains.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Very Good



### **Human Powered Machines (HPM)**

**Category:** Custom SWB, LWB, trike and workbikes

**Company:** Jan Vander Tuin and HPM are part of the non-profit Center for Appropriate Transport.

**News:** We plan to review the new folding Phaser soon.

**Models:** Tritan delta trike; Trick (SWB); Roadster (LWB); Workbikes.

**Pro:** Near custom build quality at reasonable prices.

**Con:** Long lead times; the SWB & LWB models lack the refinement we see in other lines, but are nonetheless good values. The workbikes are exceptional.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Good

### **Lightning**

**Category:** Well established high end performance SWB

**Company:** Tim Brummer is a real-life rocket scientist. We like the multiple frame sizes, low seat heights and light weights.

**Models:** T-bolt, Phantom, P38, F40 and R-84.

**Pro:** Multiple frame sizes, increasing wheel sizes (with rider heights); multiple custom options and spec levels; the textbook performance SWB ASS design.

**Con:** We continually hear complaints about the service from both dealers and customers. Our road test experiences with this company have been poor—but the designs are classic.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Excellent

**Note:** look for a reader P-38 test in RCN#63.

### **Rans**

**Category:** Well established full line of recumbents

**Company:** Randy Schlitter and company build and sell experimental airplane kits and recumbent bicycles and have done so for years.

**News:** Look for fatter tires on most models, fatter main-tubes on others and everything is supposed to be built in Taiwan this year.

**Models:** **Wave:** Now with dual 20-inch wheels. This bike is overpriced in its market (BikeE CT & EZ1), though it is lighter, has a better seat and should outperform the 20/16 compacts. The BB has been raised with the new front wheel.

**Tailwind:** An affordable performance CLWB/LWB. Owners are very enthusiastic about this bike. The Tailwind has a higher BB than most compacts.

**Rocket:** The best handling SWB ASS bike and a phenomenal deal. The only real concern is the mediocre front shifting due to the large chainrings (20" drivewheel).

**Vivo:** A suspended Rocket. We had the prototype for 18 months and loved it. The bike now has Rocket spec and a lower end fork and a more active coil/oil shock. At this new low price, this model should be VERY popular.

**V-Rex:** This is the classic SWB ASS. It gets better over time and has a very loyal following. Still the leader of the pack. Just look at all the designs that it has inspired (and some even use the seat & ASS). This bike shines because it is very stable, has a stiff frame and is a better all-around recumbent (and SWB) than its competition. V-Rex are also strong climbers.

**Limbo:** A 20/20 longer version of the Tailwind with rear suspension. Near perfect ergonomics, but lacks pizzazz.

**Stratus:** A classic LWB ASS with an excellent seat and drivetrain. It is now made in Taiwan, but is a better value than its competition.

**V2:** A LWB ASS performance machine with a high BB/V-Rex riding position. SWB riders will appreciate this hot new design.

**Screamer:** The best recumbent tandem made. It doesn't work very well for child stokers (or shorter riders).

**Pro:** A great line of enthusiast oriented recumbents that have received critical acclaim from nearly everyone.

**Con:** Some owners complain about seat slippage; Taiwan production switch-over woes; seat mesh and cover woes.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Excellent

### **Reynolds Weld Lab**

**Category:** High performance low SWB

**Company:** George Reynolds passes every roadie he can. His bikes represent that "everything for speed" attitude. They aren't the most polished, nor are they the most comfortable, and they do have that very high BB and laid back seat.

**News:** A new dual 700c model. Ask George about his performance data about wheel sizes, aerodynamics, etc.

**Models:** 26/20 USS performance low SWB and has a new dual 26-inch or 700c version that he says, "guaranteed to send other dual 700c machines back to the 19th century."

**RCN Reader Rating:** Very Good

### **Rotator**

**Category:** Established small builder of high performance SWB & LWB ASS

**Company:** Steve Delaire is the subcontract builder for Easy Racer TiRush frames and Lightning Phantom frames (formerly Stealth).

**Pro:** Unique hand-built performance bikes; passive (frame flex rear suspension).

**Con:** Hose clamp seat attachment—ours stripped out during the road test; rear-end frame flex.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Very Good

### **TerraCycle**

**Category:** Small builder of custom SWB ASS touring recumbents

**Company:** Pat Franz and company build one of the nicest SWB recumbents you can buy. This is truly a hand-crafted bicycle with lots of custom details to prove it. Even the handlebars are custom width to suit the rider.

**News:** The 3x7 quick release production seems to have hit a snag with the new redesign and "clickbox" that is supposed to be on the '01 SRAM 3x8/9.

**Rumors:** Pat is working on a LWB.

**Pro:** Most finely crafted SWB we've seen; Rans ASS + seat; a super deluxe Rocket/V-Rex style SWB.

**Con:** Only a few lucky owners will get to experience this custom recumbent buying experience.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Very Good

### **Trek**

**Category:** Upright manufacturer

**Company:** A big bike manufacturer

**News:** No changes for 2001

**Rumor:** We have heard a rumor that Trek will cease production of the R200. We've heard this rumor from a half dozen sources, including one who was called by Trek who was selling the rest of their Rans seats (or maybe they will introduce their own recumbent seat).

**RCN Reader Rating:** Fair

### **Turner**

**Category:** Small builder of performance SWB USS recumbents

**Company:** Milton Turner has built recumbents for years. He got his start as a principal in HyperCycle years ago.

**Models:** T-Lite and T-Lite Deluxe

**Rumors:** We've heard reports of a sporty Turner LWB USS.

**Pro:** Milt Turner's bikes have improved over the years.

**Con:** Marginally comfortable "pushing" seat (at least to this rider); no idler bearing; and hyper extended control reach unless you add bar ends.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Fair

### **Vision**

**Category:** Well established line of recumbents

**Company:** NW Corporation builds recumbents, wheels, handlebars and assembles mountain bikes.

**Models:** **R40:** The best Vision model. It is reasonably affordable and is the best value in the line—and best selling SWB in the USA.

**R32:** A closed riding position, though heavy MWB. The appeal is the fighter-jet cockpit feel; a SWB with no boom.

**R44/45:** A lighter framed version of the R40.

**R50/54:** We're excited to try this newly redesigned model. The feedback we've heard is good. Look for an upcoming RCN review.

**Saber:** A lower price for 2001. This road-bike-like recumbent is tall, light and fast. We haven't tried one yet, though are looking forward to it.

**Double Vision:** The Double Vision received a redesign for 2000. We have not ridden it yet, but have heard good things.

**Pro:** A dedicated recumbent manufacturer; USS models are best; built in the USA, reasonable values; excellent Shimano specs, great support and owners seem to love them; from what we have heard, everything has been steadily improving at Vision. The seat offers adjustable recline and is a hybrid sling/mesh. It likes to be reclined.

**Con:** Most designs have a more forward c.g. (required for direct USS); Vision seat has a seat horn (less noticeable as seat is reclined); Wheels are built with no dish (non standard, though stronger build); the SWB are more responsive (twitchy?) than similar models; the seat is comfy, though larger riders may feel the frame beneath; seat has seat horn and foam is mediocre, though an optional Thermarest inflatable pad is available.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Very Good

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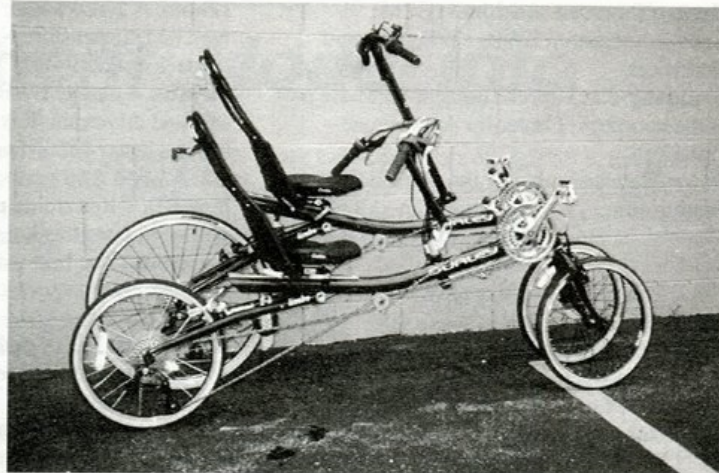
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Wheel & Sprocket's Euro-Limbo dual 20/20 with Euro bars  
Photo by Harry Wozniak

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### Wicks Aircraft

**Category:** USS SWB & trikes & kits

**Company:** Was to be a licensed USA builder for Greenspeed. The negotiations ended and the design was changed and trike renamed. However, it is tough to tell the difference.

**Models:** Trike and SWB USS

### WizWheelz

**Category:** Small trike manufacturer.

**Company:** Some nice guys from Michigan who work hard to build affordable trikes.

**Pro:** A respectable and reasonably affordable trike; built in the USA

**Con:** Extreme chain line; needs to be assembled by a bike shop.

**RCN Reader Rating:** Good

### Yellowbikes

**Category:** USA agent/importer for Optima recumbents

**Company:** New direct marketer for Optima (Netherlands). Rob English and Barrett Skrypeck are the folks who promote this line of "horizontal bikes" (their term for recumbents). Yellowbike is a safe bet as they allow a 45-day or 250 km road test/return policy.

**Rumors:** Championships. One thing we have learned is that this ultra laid-back Euro riding position is not for everyone.

**Models:** Several low SWB, lowracers & trike

**Note:** A few recumbent bicycle manufacturers choose not participate with RCN. The fact remains that we are the *ONLY* recumbent bicycle specific paper publication there is. From the best that we can tell, our database is the largest recumbent rider database in the world.

This lack of participation has made it increasingly difficult to compile this information, to even do a buyers guide and especially to get road test loaners. Understand that we have an open door policy and welcome back any manufacturers if they choose to come back to the fold.

Please let manufacturers know that you heard about their product in Recumbent Cyclist News #62—the 2001 Season Preview issue. ♦

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# Bob Bryant's Top Picks for 2001

Welcome to my 2001 Top Picks of recumbency list. In my 15 years as a recumbent rider, I have ridden nearly every recumbent bicycle that is available in North America (or am in the process of trying to ride it). I have strong opinions, but what may differentiate me from others is that I respect everyone's right to decide what works best for them.

The following are bikes that I feel stand out in their design style and represent the best of what recumbency has to offer.

If I have not ridden the bike, look for the notation (NR).

## Short Wheelbase (SWB)

- ✓ **Best All Around Enthusiast SWB**—Vision R40 (also best seller)  
Runner Up—Rans Rocket
  - ✓ **Best Performance SWB ASS**—Barcroft Virginia GT
  - ✓ **Best Performance SWB USS**—Vision R44/45
  - ✓ **Best Touring SWB ASS**—Rans V-Rex
  - ✓ **Best Touring SWB USS**—Vision R40/44
  - ✓ **Best Suspension SWB ASS**—Angletech Altitude
  - ✓ **Best Suspension SWB Deal**—Rans Vivo
  - ✓ **Best Suspension Deal**—Vision R50
  - ✓ **Best SWB ASS**—The TerraCycle Terra Za ASS with custom handlebars is the best we've tried (TerraCycle also sells handlebar & stem combos).
  - ✓ **Best SWB USS**—Vision R44/45  
Runner Up—Rans: The Flip-It is classic ASS.
  - ✓ **Best SWB Bargain**—The Rans Rocket  
Runner Up—Vision R40
  - ✓ **Best New SWB Model**—Burley Hepcat/ Django (not ridden)
- ✓ **More SWB Bests:**  
Best SWB Seats—Lightning, Rotator and Rans  
Best SWB Handling—Rans Rocket  
Best SWB Rider Ergonomics—TerraCycle Terra Za

## Long Wheelbase (LWB)

- ✓ **Best All Around Enthusiast LWB**—Easy Racer Tour Easy
  - ✓ **Best Performance LWB**—Easy Racer Gold Rush & TiRush  
Runner Up—Rans V2
  - ✓ **Best Touring LWB**—Easy Racer Tour Easy  
Runner Up—Rans Stratus
  - ✓ **Best USS LWB**—Ryan Vanguard (currently not available)
  - ✓ **Best ASS LWB**—Easy Racers
- ✓ **More LWB Bests:**  
Best LWB Seats—Easy Racer Kool Back, Rotator and Rans  
Best LWB Handling—Easy Racers  
Best LWB Rider Ergonomics—Easy Racers

## Compact Long Wheelbase (CLWB)

- ✓ **Best All Around Enthusiast CLWB**—BikeE RX (upcoming test)
  - ✓ **Best Performance CLWB**—Rans Tailwind  
Runner Up—BikeE RX
  - ✓ **Best Touring CLWB**—BikeE AT XL
  - ✓ **Best Suspension CLWB**—BikeE FX/RX
  - ✓ **Best CLWB Bargain**—Easy Racer EZ1
  - ✓ **Best New CLWB Model**—BikeE CT redesigned for 2001 (NR)
- ✓ **More CLWB Bests:**  
Best CLWB Seats—Rans Tailwind/Wave  
Best CLWB Handling—Tailwind/Wave  
Best CLWB Rider Ergonomics—Rans Tailwind/Wave

## Trike

- ✓ **Best Trike** (tadpole high BB)—Greenspeed GTO (ships affordably)
- ✓ **Best Trike** (tadpole low BB)—Trice Explorer
- ✓ **Best Trike** (delta)—Hase Spezialraeder (NR)
- ✓ **Best Trike Deal**—WizWheelz

## Tandem

- ✓ **Best Tandem ASS**—Rans Screamer
- ✓ **Best Tandem USS**—Vision Double Vision
- ✓ **Best Tandem Deal**—BikeE E2

## Lowracer

- ✓ **Best Lowracer**—Yellowbikes (NR) I haven't ridden one yet, but the return test ride policy is enough reason. Also, this company is serious and out promoting recumbent bicycles.  
Runner Up—Challenge & HP Velo. Choose a good dealer and get specifics in writing about the return policy due to fit and ergonomic concerns (not a bad idea for any mail order purchase).

## Manufacturers

- ✓ **Best SWB Manufacturer**—ATP Vision
- ✓ **Best LWB Manufacturer**—Easy Racers
- ✓ **Best CLWB Manufacturer**—BikeE
- ✓ **Best Trike Manufacturer**—Greenspeed
- ✓ **Best Tandem Manufacturer**—Rans

**Note:** Besides reading RCN, check out the Internet recumbent websites: [www.recumbents.com](http://www.recumbents.com) and [www.bikeroute.com](http://www.bikeroute.com) and [www.bentrideronline.com](http://www.bentrideronline.com). The newsgroups are: ("hpy list" at [www.ihpva.org](http://www.ihpva.org) and [alt.bicycles.recumbent](http://alt.bicycles.recumbent)). You will also find other lists for individual recumbent brands by looking around sites like eGroups. Lastly, go ride lots of bikes—and then go ride them again. ♦



The gold standard—Easy Racer TiRush (titanium version of Gold Rush photo courtesy of Easy Racers, Inc.)



The WizWheelz TerraTrike—a cool trike that is built in the USA and is significantly less expensive than its competition—photo courtesy of WizWheelz



The Rans V2 LWB



The Rans Stratus LWB



The Rans Rocket SWB

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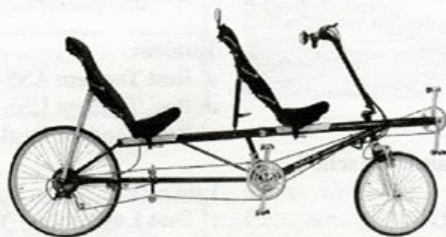
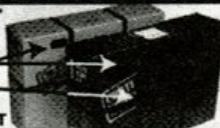
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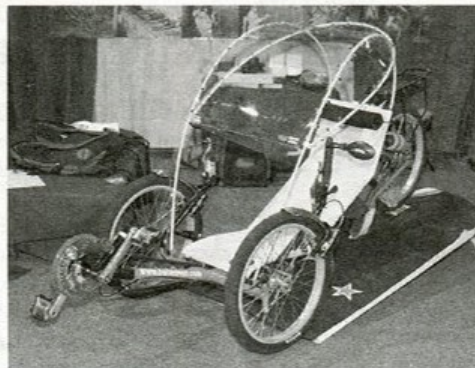
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The Rans Screamer tandem



The HPM Tritan Trike



Hotmover trike with fairing—John Riley



The classic Lightning P-38—as close to a recumbent Colnago as you can get photo courtesy of Lightning Cycle Dynamics

"A real hoot"  
Bob Bryant, RCN



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The Vision Saber with dual 24-inch wheels photo courtesy of Vision

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# Recumbent Market Overview

by Bob Bryant

## SWB Model Overview

If there is a typical 'does everything' SWB it is the Rans V-Rex. It was recumbency's answer to a SWB that was more diverse, a better value and more widely available than a P-38 Lightning which still is the benchmark for performance SWB. From the V-Rex, we move to the Rocket, which some believe has better handling than a V-Rex thanks to its dual 20 wheels, though 20-inch drivewheel gearing slightly detracts from performance. Once you update to a 3x7 hub to improve gearing, you may as well buy the V-Rex. The Lightning has the best seat (full sling/mesh), though the comfort can be offset by the upright seat back and high BB (closed pedal position). The Rans seat is considered very comfortable and it reclines more and easier.

We have never seen a Lightning T' Bolt, but it is suggested by many the Rocket is a more refined product. The Phantom also has a difficult time competing with Vision and Rans values, however, the bike does have a performance heritage that is unmatched. The low seat, higher BB and multiple frame sizes are strong selling points.

The Barcroft SWB is a lower and more stretched out version of the V-Rex. They come with Rans seat and steering and upgraded components. They seem to be best for riders who want a lower stance than a V-Rex, but not so low as a lowracer or those who want more ergonomic adjustment than a Lightning or more bike than a Rocket or V-Rex.

The Vision SWB are fine bikes. They seem to appeal to a rider who wants a "magic carpet feel" of floating on the pavement with nothing out in front of you and a perfect view of the road ahead.

Visions typically have a more open and comfort oriented riding position (more reclinable seat + lower pedals/BB). Due to the direct (non-linkage) USS, the rider and center of gravity must be moved forward. This makes the front end a bit heavier (and rear lighter). It can also make the cockpit more claustrophobic (ASS model). The Vision seat has a seat horn, no lumbar curve and most ride with their seats more laid back than others. We'd love to see Vision offer bar-end extension type of USS controls.

The new SWB ASS Vision Saber is a bold new lightweight roadie style SWB ASS. It appears to be best suited to athletic build riders. We're looking for a Saber owner who would like to do an RCN test of the bike.

Vision recumbents are built in the Seattle area by American craftsman. Their primary business is building and selling recumbent bicycles and we like this. As other companies cheapen their products and move production overseas, Vision recumbents are improving by leaps and bounds and moving ahead of their competition.

The Vision seat is fixed to the frame. The Rans slides on a track. Seat slippage is a problem for some riders. Boom bolts have their own set of problems (breaking bolts, centering, and removal/addition of chain links to size the bike). The Rans seat is very good, but is somewhat over rated. With its Taiwan build, quality may have suffered with reports of premature mesh/seat cover material wear.

USS steered bikes are less aerodynamic, a bit slower, have more forward c.g.'s. The lighter models are lighter and more flexible, but not necessarily that much faster as compared to SWB models in general.

We have never tested a Delaire/Rotator Tiger, but owners seem to love them. It is probably the single most under rated SWB model. The low seat, Euro-U-bars and mid-drive make it very unique. The full sling/mesh Rotator seat with its "bungy" seat base lace cord is one of the best made for comfort. We're still not fans of the hose-clamp mounts, but compared with some of the other seat woes (slippage, premature mesh wear, seat horns, etc.), it's not so bad after all.

The Euro bikes are finding their way into the USA. The ergo hard-shell seats ARE NOT as comfortable. The laid back riding positions are more extreme and if you suffer from neck fatigue, steer clear of these. Some of these bikes are very heavy as well. We are actively seeking reader reviews of these models.

There are other special niche markets such as folding SWB (Greengear Sat R Day) which is the only true folding recumbent. The TerraCycle Terra Za is a custom built touring SWB. The high end Angletech suspension Altitude is both a high end suspension SWB and travel bike. These are all fine bikes for their suited purpose. The Terra Za is like a very high end Rocket, the Altitude is like a very high end Rans Vivo suspension model.

Longbikes purchased Ryan Recumbents in 1999. In the Spring of this year, Longbikes abruptly canceled our two planned test bikes and all ads. We have not heard from them since. In November, Dick Ryan took back his company. He is currently looking for a licensed builder for the DuPlex and Vanguard. The fate of the Longbikes designed SWB models (non-Dick Ryan designs) is up in the air. We did not receive any 2001 model information.

## CLWB (Compact) Model Overview

The new J & B EZ1 Supercruiser has taken the entry-level recumbent market by storm this past year. Wheel & Sprocket has sold nearly 300 of the estimated 3000 sold in 2000. Despite their heavy weight, riders get on and immediately fall in love with that wide comfy seat base and Easy Racer style bars (bike design is licensed by Easy Racers) and road-feel. Though BikeE sells more bikes, they seem to have been surprised by this. They have

responded with a redesigned CT model to sell at a similar price. This new BikeE is said to weigh 28 pounds (lightest BikeE ever?), and has a new seat base, and even refined handling.

BikeE offers a full range of compact (CLWB) bikes that include the base CT (above), a rear suspension recreational model (AT), mountain bike model (FX), road model (RX) and recreational tandem (E2). BikeE offers excellent quality and value with a line of accessories second to none. They are the most mainstreamed recumbent company and they sell more bikes than anyone else. If there is a downside, it is the seat base and neutral (quicker) handling. Despite several incarnations, the seat base still isn't as comfy as the Rans or EZ1. Calhoun Cycle in Minneapolis saw a market here and offers a Rans seat base modified to fit a BikeE seat. We have yet to try the 2001 CT seat base, which is said to address the market competition from the EZ1.

The BikeE CT and AT offer the classic BikeE geometry (though slightly refined for 2001, according to BikeE). The RX/FX have shorter frames, a higher BB position and steeper head angle. If sized properly, the FX/RX are first class (riders under 6' may need an XL—taller riders maybe an XXL frame!).

Rans 20/20 CLWB perform better, have a longer wheelbase and that comfy Rans seat, the Wave and Tailwind are performance bargains. The one downside to these models is similar to our experience with the FX/RX. When you move the seat all of the way back on a one-size-fits-all CLWB, you have 75-80+% of the weight on the rear end. Seasoned LWB riders will notice this right away. Newbies may not mind. It does become a concern in high speed riding. However, all of the compacts (CLWB)'s listed above are excellent bikes and values.

## LWB Model Overview

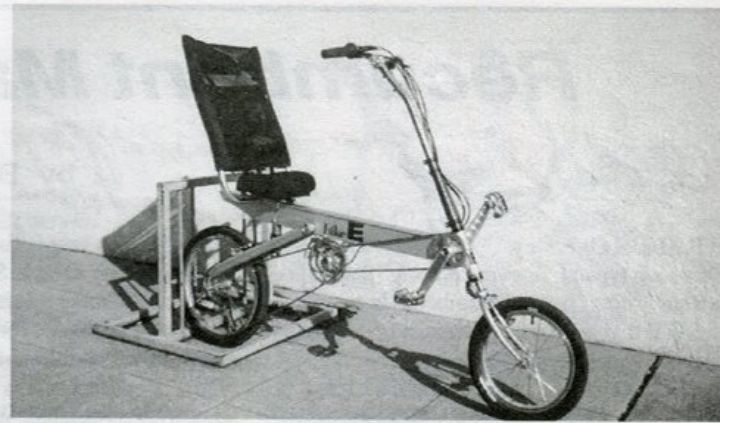
The king of the road and gold standard is Easy Racers. All of the models are excellent performers, tourists, commuters and recreational models. All are suited for beginner or advanced riders. The bikes get better the more money you spend. The new Kool Back seat takes Easy Racers to new levels. This seat is the best quality of its type available. They are hand-made in the Freedom, CA shop and have layered and glued foam. Since the bike begs for a rather upright riding position, the comfort of the Kool Back really shows its colors. However, some riders will never be comfortable in this upright position (recumbent butt) though few will ever experience tingly feet or toe numbness.

The secret to the Easy Racers success is the multiple frame sizes, exceptional handlebar design and low BB/pedals. The bike is also stable at speeds unthinkable on SWB or compacts. Yes, the LWB ASS is far more stable than any CLWB we've ridden. It is not just us,

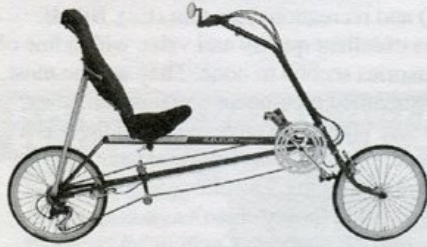


Yellowbikes (Optima) Barcon (above) and Lynx (right)

photos courtesy of Yellowbikes



2001 BikeE RX



Two of the most affordable recumbents: The Rans Wave/Tailwind (left) and J & B Supercruiser EZ1 designed by Easy Racers (below)



The venerable Vision R40 can be had with ASS or USS. It is the best selling SWB in North America. It is also made in the USA—photo courtesy of Vision



The Trek R200 (left)

The Linear Compact (below)



The coolest photos that are submitted to RCN come from RCN reader C.W. Smith (SmithFoto) who recently did the "Chopper" cover (RCN#59). Above is the venerable Rans V-Rex which is considered the best all around SWB recumbent. This bike offers an excellent mix of performance, durability and value—only to be outdone by the Rans Rocket.



The Angletech Quadraped hand/foot power trike. A similar foot crank only version is the TriSpeeder

Easy Racer recumbents are the highest rated in our publication by readers as well.

By any other standard, the Rans Stratus is a very good bike. However, when you compare it to an Easy Racer, it is only a better value. The more flexible T bars and half as many frame sizes are two of the negatives. The Rans seat is very comfortable, but is not at its best on a low pedal LWB (designed for the V-Rex).

The new V2 has brought a lot of excitement into the LWB market. It is a good looking, classy new LWB with a SWB (V-Rex) riding position. We did not find that it performed any better than other LWB, so it will come down to personal choice about pedal height. For me, it did not outperform the Stratus or Tour Easy.

The rear suspension Rans Gliss is an under rated bike. There is a rumor that it may go away if sales don't pick up. The Gliss is more like a extra-long Tailwind with rear suspension. The added stability found in classic LWB ASS bikes is not apparent in the Gliss.

The Vision R40 LWB has always been a minor player. Originally marketed as a "LWB Kit" for SWB riders. This bike has a telescoping frame and linkage steering. Vision is rumored to be considering a LWB specific model.

The Linear and Infinity are really keeping a low profile over the past few years. We are unsure whether the LWB USS design is just becoming less popular, or if maybe it is these two manufacturers lackluster marketing and PR. Despite their odd seat-back, I always liked the Linear as a fun, casual recumbent ride. The same can be said for the Infinity, though the frames have a history of breakage (and an equal history of a manufacturer who will fix them without question). We're not sure what is

up with Infinity. The best Linear models are the LWB and CLWB. Ask about the non-lumbar seat and optional telescoping seat stays.

#### Tandem Model Overview

The Rans Screamer SWB ASS is the tandem from which all others are judged. This is primarily due to continued refinement and staying the course. Every other tandem is either new, redesigned or unproven. The only drawback to the Rans is that it doesn't work well for families (shorter stokers), it's expensive and now made in Taiwan. However, with other Rans models this has not been an issue as frame quality goes.

The Double Vision is the choice for USS tandemists. It was redesigned last year, though we have not had a chance to ride it. It is made in the USA, and at least the one we tried previously worked better with a shorter stoker.

The Barcroft's tandem looks interesting. It is about as short as a tandem can be with the stoker sitting right over the rear wheel.

With its reverse front fork, the BikeE E2 is a goofy looking tandem. The bike is best suited for casual, recreational riders and families. BikeE has quickly moved into the position of best selling recumbent tandem.

We're not sure if the Ryan DuPlex will be available in 2001. We'll keep you posted.

#### Trike Model Overview

It is best to carefully consider ergonomics (seat type, reclinability, and bottom bracket height along with quality level, cost (+ shipping/customs/duty/shop set-up/exchange rate fluctuations,) when selecting a trike. A live road test is very important. To check up on the company you plan to deal with, find the

Internet list for your chosen brand and see if there is any news/updates/problems that you need to know about. The trike market is ever changing and a time proven reputation means a lot. We hear great things from Greenspeed, Trice and WizWheelz (bargain hunters) customers. All have received excellent reviews in RCN. Builders are spread around the world, some are spec'ed by the dealers and often favorites have long delivery times. Watch for a Greenspeed GTO test upcoming.

#### Lowracer/EuroSWB Overview

We've tried the Zox FWD and Challenge Hurricane and HP Velo Street Machine. I am the wrong person to make determinations about these extreme bikes. The Zox has an industrial-esque build quality with the rectangular steel frame. The Challenge is sleek, sexy and low. I found the riding positions to just be too extreme to be comfortable. And those Euro-seats—they require a bit of getting accustomed to. Several manufacturers discuss the touring possibilities of these bikes. Most people who try the Euro seats and riding positions develop a definite opinion about them. A test ride is absolutely essential as generalizing about extreme riding position bikes is a bad idea. I was neither comfortable, nor would I consider one for a tour. We received similar comments from some of our correspondents.

As for the lowbikes, all of them seem to require a lot of personal tweaking and fitting to get them right. If you like extreme riding positions, and disagree with my more mainstream ideas of recumbent comfort, you may love them. We have a few lowracer articles in the works (not by me...). ♦

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# RCN Reader Survey & Info

Compiled by Bob Bryant

## Current sales numbers:

I would place recumbent sales for 1999 at 20,000-25,000 units. Overall, I do not think this has changed for 2000.

The perceived popularity and acceptance of recumbent bicycles is growing, however sales numbers have not taken a dramatic jump in between the 1999 and 2000 seasons. Many manufacturers did not meet 1999 sales figures, others have had a good increase.

There currently is a glut of recumbents on the market. The direction of the market seems to be taking a step backward to a more "educated enthusiast" driven market (vs. a mainstream market).

## Design Style Breakdown

This is my best current guesstimate:

Compact 49%  
SWB 24%  
LWB 14%  
Tandem 5%  
Trike 5%  
Lowracers 3%

## RCN Readers' favorite designs

Tandem—1%  
SWB—42%  
CLWB—11%  
LWB—42%  
Trike—10%

## RCN Readers Prefer

Under-seat steering (USS)—27%  
Above-seat steering (ASS/OSS)—73%

## RCN Reader Recumbent Ownership

On average 1.75 recumbent bicycles. Many don't own a recumbent yet. Others own several.

## Recumbent Purchases

43% of RCN readers plan to buy a new recumbent bike within a year.

## RCN Readers Mileage (per year)

<1000—40%  
1000-3000—39%  
5000-10000—17%  
over 10000—4%

## Sex

6% of RCN readers are female.  
94% are male.

## Income of RCN readers

High—29%  
Mid—50%  
Low—21%

## Age of RCN readers

70-90 5%  
60-70 17%  
50-60 35%  
40-50 30%  
30-40 8%  
20-30 5%

## Cost of RCN

66% think RCN is too expensive.  
80% would prefer a less expensive option if it were available.

## Internet

84% of RCN readers have Internet access.  
96% of readers prefer a mailed paper RCN.

## RCN Article Popularity

Yes=like; Maybe=Undecided; No=Don't like

## Editorial License and Bob Rants

YES 66%  
MAYBE 13%  
NO 21%

## Road Tests (Bob Bryant)

YES 95%  
MAYBE 5%  
NO 0%

## Road Tests (other writers)

YES 91%  
MAYBE 9%  
NO 0%

## Reader Road Tests

YES 88%  
MAYBE 28%  
NO 0%

## Anthology (interviews)

YES 60%  
MAYBE 31%  
NO 9%

## Letters to RCN

YES 72%  
MAYBE 24%  
NO 4%

## Touring Narratives

YES 61%  
MAYBE 26%  
NO 13%

## Technical (Zach tires)

YES 84%  
MAYBE 13%  
NO 3%

## Design History (like Crank-It!)

YES 61%  
MAYBE 30%  
NO 9%

## Recumbent History (Mochet)

YES 58%  
MAYBE 30%  
NO 12%

## Articles You'd Like to See in RCN

Modification/do-it-yourself YES 68%  
Bike Homebuilder Articles YES 50%  
Industry/politics editorials YES 54%  
Riding technique/fitness YES 71%  
Bike Comparisons YES 91%



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## Who Should Be Riding a Recumbent?

by Peggy Nebbe  
peggy@thebikebarn.com

One might say I have a different perspective of bike riding from the seat of my BikeE recumbent than I had in the pre-BikeE days (before the summer of 1998.) Now I look for excuses to ride. I run errands around town on my BikeE. I ride just for the pleasure of riding and not just for the pleasurable and companionable activity of riding with my husband Doug. I am enjoying bike riding for pleasure, for transportation, for recreation and for exercise. I have even done a little winter riding, probably because I feel safer being closer to the ground.

Recumbent bicycles are not a gimmick, not a fad, but a useful alternative to the upright bicycle. They can solve many of the complaints of bike riders, the most common one being seat pain. Some men have pain (I have been told) and even medical problems from sitting on traditional bike seats for extended periods of time. Women, I know from experience, also have pain, and although it generally doesn't cause permanent damage, it certainly detracts from the pleasure of riding.

Another concern in traditional upright riding is the discomfort in back, neck, shoulders, arms, wrists, or hands. Because of the clinging position on a recumbent bicycle, there should be no crick in the neck, no pain in the shoulders, arms and wrists, and no numbness in the hands. Even with above-seat steering, recumbent riders' hands and wrists need not feel pressure or be in an awkward position. Back pain can be from many causes, but I believe generally if you don't have back pain sitting in a comfortable chair, you won't have back pain riding a properly adjusted recumbent bicycle.

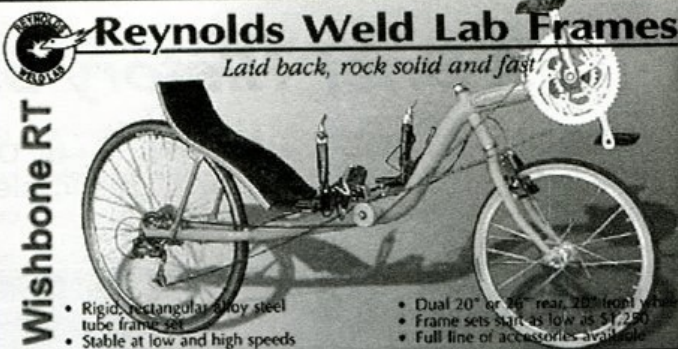
I have been asked if I get sore sitting on the recumbent seat for a couple hours. I get about as sore as I do sitting on the couch. If I sit for too long there I just get achy from being in the same position for too long—just part of getting older.

While a recumbent bike is wonderful for some of us, it is not for everyone. If a person is comfortable on their upright bike I would never recommend a change to a recumbent except for the fun of it. If you can ride your bike as long as you want to without any undue discomfort, you are not a good candidate for a recumbent. They cost more so why spend more if it won't give you any more riding pleasure.

The person who really likes to ride—who really wants to ride—who may continue to do so even with pain—this person is a good candidate for a recumbent bike. The avid rider who has had to cut back because of the seriousness of the pain is a good candidate for a recumbent bike. The person who never became an avid rider because of the discomfort is also a good candidate for a recumbent bike.

Doug rides a recumbent for fun or to ride tandem with me but he still spends more time on his traditional, upright bike. I, on the other hand, ride only recumbents and can't imagine myself going back.

That's my perspective from down here close to the ground. Just call me PeggE. ♦



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**RCN#51** Trice & Greenspeed Trikes.

**RCN#52** Vision R32, Lightning R84, Velocar Part 1.

**RCN#58** EZ1, Radius C4, V-Rex, Rohloff and 20/20 Vision.

**RCN#59** Angletech Altitude, Boats & Rat's Homebuilt LWB.

**RCN#61** Trice trike, Sat R Day folder, Recumbent Design by DGW.

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# A Brief History of Ryan Recumbents

by Dick Ryan  
ryancycles@erols.com



Dick Ryan at the Yreka, California IHPSC 1992—RCN

My history with recumbent bicycles dates back to the early 1980's with the Avatar. The Avatar was the first commercially produced LWB USS recumbent in the USA.

I had a 5% part of Fomac (company that built the Avatar). The principals in the company were Prof. David Gordon Wilson, Richard Forrestall and Harald Maciejewski. When they stopped building the bike I continued on with building a redesigned version of it—more or less as a hobby.

I incorporated in 1989 and started looking for someone who could build the frames. I found a small BMX builder in TN. I went back and forth a few times, helped them build a couple of prototype frames. They wanted \$4000 deposit on first batch of frames. I paid them, they sent 4 frames that were useless and then told me they decided they didn't want to build them. My lawyer told me it would cost more than \$4000 to get my money back.

I found a builder in Oregon. They sent a sample frame, looked good. I ordered the frames. They were okay—so I started assembling and shipping bikes from my cellar. I started to run out of money, so I talked to a company in Oregon. They suggested we do a joint venture. So I moved to Oregon. The joint venture didn't work out. I borrowed money

from a friend, paid off the debt. I borrowed more money from another friend, bought equipment and started building the frames myself.

My son decided that the law business was too sleazy and came out and worked with me. After two years my son decided that he wanted to go back east so we packed up and moved to NH. We worked out of Nashua for two years. We then moved into space in Hampstead, NH with Ted Wojcik Custom Bicycles. We were still trying to find someone to build frames. I contacted Richard Schwinn in Wisconsin and spent week working with them to set up to build frames. Six weeks later they decided they couldn't do it.

After a year of sharing space with Ted Wojcik we rented space across the street for another year. Two hours a day commuting got to be too much so we moved to Melrose, MA. Just a few blocks from my house. Another two years and my son decided that he needed to make a living. We had been trying to find someone to invest in the company for years. We had a consultant in the bike industry write a business plan and try to find someone in the bike industry to buy or invest in the company. After a year of effort it became obvious that it wasn't going to happen. Also during this time

we had with the help of this person developed a new bike in Taiwan. This was a great deal; they were willing to front us a container of bikes—no payment due until we ordered the second container. They would also build the Vanguard at about one third the price of what it cost to build it here. So here we were with a company that had some very good products, a great deal waiting in Taiwan but no way to take advantage of it. (My son had to leave in order to take advantage of an opportunity that was too good to turn down.) At the last moment we found a buyer. Greg Peek of Longbikes in Littleton, CO. He bought the company in January of 1999.

The idea that he wouldn't take advantage of the Taiwan deal never occurred to us. When he made it clear that he wasn't interested in the Taiwan deal and was determined to build a high end American made product we knew the venture was unlikely to succeed. In effect he was doing the same thing we were doing except his overhead was much higher. At a time when almost everyone else was going to Taiwan in order to lower costs he had to raise the price of the Vanguard from \$1850 to \$2300. In effect, pricing the bike out of the market. He was unable to meet the terms of our agreement and has signed the company name back over to us.

Over the years we had help from a number of individuals and companies. I'd like to thank Kurt Jensen, Fred Greenwood, Jay Townley, Ted Wojcik, Bob Bryant, Dave Wilson and of course my wife who put up with all the stress of a small business and also paid the household bills. The companies that were extremely helpful were, Green Gear (Bike Friday), Burley and Co-Motion. Suppliers, Quality Bicycle Products, J & B Importers and Security Bicycle Accessories. Ten years part time, ten years full time, about \$60,000 of my money about \$20,000 of a friend's money. Average work week: about 70 hrs. Number of weeks of vacation over the ten years in business: three. Average pay: about \$2.40 per hr. Some of it was fun but most of it wasn't.

## Avatar & Ryan Sportrike

Fomac had a patent on the bike on the Avatar. LWB USS. Within two years of its introduction there were at least seven companies building on the market. (Now the Tritan from Human Powered Machines in Eugene, OR).

## Ryan Fleetwood/Duplex tandem.

The Fleetwood/Duplex was the first commercially produced recumbent tandem. I don't think it's unreasonable to claim that we created the recumbent tandem market.

The company is currently for sale. ♦

# Recumbent Rider Groups

- ▲AL Hokes Bluff: First Sat/Mo 9am, City Hall, Dave ☎ 205-492-3454
- ▲AL Mobile: Rob Nykvist 334-653-9064 or email robnkvist@netzero.com
- ▲AZ Phoenix Area: BRAG Bent Riders of Arizona: Recumbent Central
- ▲AZ Tucson Area: Bruce Tucker ☎ 520-299-7146 BentOne@aol.com.
- ▲AZ SW AZ R'bent Riders Montage (SWARRM) Meets in Sonoita, AZ, once/mo. Robert Miller: n4nrk@theriver.com William Sykes: wdbsykes@juno.com
- ▲CA Fresno R'bent Society: Bill Bruce, 923 W Santa Ana, Fresno, CA 93705 ☎ 559-225-3551, bilbyke@psnw.com
- ▲CA LA Area: 3rd Sun/Mo 10 am@Burton Chace Park, Mindanao Wy, Marina Del Rey. Chris Broome ☎ 310-823-2464, cbroome@usa.net
- ▲CA San Dimas: Larry Scheetz: lscheetz@access1.net and Ed O'Donnell: edodonnell@earthlink.net
- ▲CA San Luis Obispo: Carole Leone ☎ 805-466-4111, translo@fix.net
- ▲CA San Diego: Last Sat/Mo Mission Bay Visitors Center Bill Volk, bvolk@inetworld.net
- ▲CA San Diego: Easy Rider Recumbent Club—Rides Tues, Thurs and 2nd Sat. Richard Parks ☎ 619-235-0854, r2parks@earthlink.net or Jim Rudolph ☎ 760-749-2192; bencycler@aol.com; http://home.earthlink.net/~r2parks
- ▲CA Sacramento: Rides along the American River. 1st Sat/Mo. Dave ☎ 916-483-4435 or SacBent@aol.com
- ▲CO Boulder: Front Range Recumbent Riders, 3rd Sun/mo. Greg Poole, gpoole@att.net, ☎ 303-402-1248
- ▲CT Yankee Pedalers: 2nd Sun/Mo @ 9am. Dave Tipping ☎ 203-484-2937 or nz1j@juno.com
- ▲HI Hawaii: The Hawaii Rainbow Riders meet every Sunday for a ride on the island of Oahu. Extra bents available for visitors. Contact Lynn Miller millerL004@hawaii.rr.com 808-456-5707 98-1382 Hoohonua St. Pearl City, HI 96782
- ▲IA Des Moines: Team Romp (R'bents out Mega Pedaling) meets sat. 9am Apr.-Oct. Botanical Center, 909 East River Dr., Lori Leporte ☎ 515-287-5556 or greenbikespike@home.com
- ▲IL Chicagoland R'bent Riders, www.mcs.net/~gkpsol, Schedule & locations www.mcs.net/~gkpsol/ridingschedule.html, Ed Gin ☎ 773-237-6624 rides year round.
- ▲IL Champaign/Bloomington/Peoria: Central Ill. R'bent Community (CIRC), http://my.ispc.hannel.com/~billw1/circ1n.html, billw1@ispcchannel.com, Bill Webster ☎ 309-274-4234
- ▲IN Ft Wayne: Wendell Brane ☎ 219-749-5610 or WBrane@Ctlnet.com (51)
- ▲KS Lawrence: John Dreiling, Box 1342, 66044-8342. ☎ 785-832-9757 (53)
- ▲KY Louisville: Last Sat/Mo @ 8am Central Park (6th & Magnolia). Rain cancels. Mike Reilly ☎ 502/491-0328 or mreilly@bellsouth.net
- ▲MA North Shore + SE NH: 2nd Sat. Recumbent Riders Bob Hicks ☎ 978-774-0906
- ▲MA Boston: 2nd Sat/Mo 10am at Herter Park public theater, 1175 Soldiers Field Rd., George Reynolds ☎ 603-432-7327
- ▲MD WASH. DC AREA: W.H.I.R.L. 8am Sat (9am-winter) @Viers Mill Rec Center. www.recumbents.com/whirl
- ▲ME Portland area call Michael 781-637 races this fall sprints and time trial.
- ▲MI MHPVA: Wally Kiehler 533 Hawthorne, Grosse Pt. Woods, MI 48236 or Kiehler@aol.com, www.lmb.org/mhpva
- ▲MI SE: Wolverbents 2nd Sat @ 9am—Willow Metropark Pool shelter, @ 9am (Mar-Nov). Bob Krzewinski ☎ 734/487-9058, BobMich@compuserve.com
- ▲MN Minneapolis: MnHPV Minnesota HPV Assoc. 2nd Wed @ 7pm Lk. Nokomis Com. Ctr. Ride 6pm - Mar.-Oct. Mark Stonich ☎ 612-824-2372
- ▲MO St Louis: SLABS St. Louis Area R'bent Society, John Werner ☎ 618-931-0557 or bentrus@usa.net
- ▲NC North Carolina R'Bent Riders Assoc. getbent@jahoopa.com
- ▲NJ NY/NJ/PA/CONN ares MARS Metro Area R'bent Society: John Tetz ☎ 973-584-6481 or jgtetz@att.net
- ▲NY Hudson Valley: looking to start a rider group. Contact Justin Horowitz ☎ 914-658-3401 or dandjhorowitz@cs.com
- ▲NY Long Island: Looking to start rider group. Contact Artie Johnsen ☎ 516-325-3516
- ▲NY Rochester: R.A.R.E. Weekly rides. Hank Walck ☎ 716-217-9450/Michael Berisson ☎ 716/461-5084/Dave Larson ☎ 716-235-4116 /Brian Managan ☎ 716-872-1751
- ▲NY Western: www.bluemoon.net/~padelbra/the\_recumbenters.htm or Paul Bigelow ☎ 716-896-1626; Ed Weiss ☎ 716-634-9660
- ▲OR Portland/Vancouver (WA): PURR Portland United Recumbent Riders, 1st & 3rd Sat., 9am, various locations, Connie McAyeal ☎ 503-647-2438 or oyyesbent@hotmail.com; Jeff Willis ☎ 360-254-3736 or jwill@pacifier.com
- ▲PA Philadelphia Area: Contact: ☎ 1-888-998-7010
- ▲TX North: 4th Sat/Mo www.rbent.org
- ▲TX Houston: 2nd Sun. @ Katy HS. Pat ☎ 281-347-3627 (D)
- ▲TX Refugio (South): R-BEST R'bent Bicycle Enthusiasts of South Texas. Bob Dillard ☎ 361-526-2977, wildlife@write.com, http://pages.prodigy.net/bobexotic
- ▲WA Snoho Co. AARC: (All R'bent Riders Club) 3rd Sat/Mo Harvey Field in Snoho City. ☎ 206/632-6955 or bradrick@serv.net ☎ 206-632-6955
- ▲WA SE: WRTW<sup>2</sup> Two Wheeled, Recumbent Riding Trombone Teachers of Walla Walla. Bill Gilbert VonBruno@bmi.net
- ▲WA SeaWheels (bike Builders): Subscribe at www.bikelist.org/mailman/listinfo/seawheels or call Nick Hein ☎ 425-255-7560.
- ▲WI Milwaukee: SE Wisconsin Recumbenters www.recumbenters.com Tony Hunter ☎ 414-475-9081 Rides generally start in the suburban Milwaukee area.
- ▲USA Human Powered Vehicle Association: Contact: www.ihpva.org mail to: president@ihpva.org ☎ 877-333-1029 (toll free)
- ▲CAN CANADA—Calgary R'Bent Rider Group: Sol Candel ☎ 403-250-7588 or mail@moviepostershop.com
- ▲CAN CANADA—Toronto: HPVs of So. Ontario (HPVSO) www.hpv.on.ca, Bruce Buttimore, bruceb@inforamp.net ☎ 416-449-6731 Ext. 289 6pm to 8am EST

## ▲Recumbent Shop Rider Groups

Several recumbent shops support rider groups. Check with your RCN advertising local recumbent specialist to help you find your local recumbent riders.

Do you have a rider group or are you scheduling a recumbent event? Non-commercial listings are free of charge—please send to: bob@recumbencyclistnews.com.



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Road tests, reviews, comparisons, tours, event reports or home-builder stories. We recommend 1000-3500 words with 2-3 photos or drawings. For road tests, feel free to use our template which can be taken from any recent road test (Please *do not* use this for any other purpose besides RCN).

We do not accept article inquiries, queries or sample pages. If you would like to submit an article to RCN—please just do it!

Here is how:

1. **Write** your article and print out a copy.
2. **Photos:** Take 2-3 (no more than 5). Please select the best photos (a sideview, a photo of you riding or standing by bike and a detail shot or two). See photo requirements below. Photo Specs: Color or B/W prints or Digital photos. We require Color or Grayscale 150 dpi JPeg files of 3" x 4" approx. size photo. **Note:** You must start from a high-resolution/best quality JPEG. You can not get 150 dpi from a previously scanned 72 dpi website JPEG. If you cannot submit digital photos in this manner—please get a disposable camera and let us scan the photos.
3. **Text:** Save the file and email text, simpletext, ascii text or any other *basic* text (no MS Word, PLEASE!). Place text file on CD or zip disk and/or email to us.
4. **Package:** Send to RCN within 1 week of emailing text.
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We do our best to return things to you (if you ask), however, we cannot guarantee it, so please do not send originals. Articles submitted are *NOT* guaranteed to get published. We prefer *NOT* to run articles that have been on the Internet. If timing is a concern, we request that writers offer us a 12 month right of refusal on all article submissions. At this time, we are 6 months or 3 issues out on placing articles in issues. We are hoping to speed this process up in 2001.

## ■ COMPENSATION

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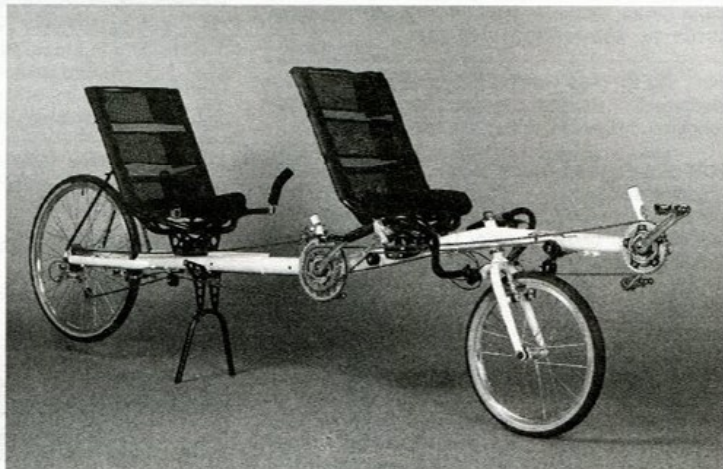
## ■ GETTING IN TOUCH WITH RCN

Your best bet to get a touch with us is via email. RCN is still a two person business and we cannot get to all of our phone calls (or nothing would get done). By letter send an SASE for reply.

Mail to: RCN, Bob Bryant  
PO Box 2048  
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The custom TerraCycle TerraZa "Eddy"—photo courtesy of Peter Lewis



The Double Vision—photo courtesy of Vision Recumbents

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# RCN Classified Ads

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**FOR SALE: 2000 Longbikes Slipstream:** This bike is flawless. Only has 300 miles. Owner has knee pain w/recumbents and must sell. \$1900 plus shipping costs. Call 602-430-7200 Or contact at rex@getnet.com

**FOR SALE: BikeE AT Early '99** with Sweet seat, fairing, underseat pannier rack, 2 accessory mounts and box, fenders, flag, flasher, shockpump, spare tubes. Red (polished frame) size XL, very good condition, only a few hundred commute miles. \$1000. Eric 360-923-4080 (wk) lathyus@thurston.com (62)

**FOR SALE: 1997 DOUBLE VISION**, red, independent pedaling system, 21-speed, Phil Wood hubs, Arai drum brake, fenders, low miles, great condition, \$3100. Tel. 206-725-7831 (WA/62)

**FOR SALE: 1999 RAHMEN**, from Germany, silver, Shimano STX RC gears, fenders, low miles, excellent condition. \$1000 Tel. 206-725-7831 (WA/62)

**FOR SALE: 1999 RANS V-Rex.** \$1350. Excellent condition and less than 500 miles. Bought 4/00 from local dealer for \$1700. Includes fenders, kickstand, rear rack, seat bag, and mirror. Danny (541) 752-6435 or danny\_kugler@hp.com (WA/62)

**FOR SALE: 1998 Rans Gliss**, 3x7 hub, Angletech fenders, Magura brakes, kickstand, computer, Vredestien tires, approx. 1000 miles; exc. cond. green color. \$1900. Call Will Tel. 707-441-8809 (days) 707-445-4229 (eve), or willd@reninet.com. (63)

**FOR SALE: 2000 Easy Racer Gold Rush frameset**, black, medium, includes: frame, fork, headset, handlebars, Kool Back seat, front & rear wheels, good condition, \$1200 obo. Call 801-594-3267 (UT/63)

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## Classified Ad Info

**Subscriber Rate:** FREE (to 40 words)

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(See article in upcoming RCN#63)

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**FOR SALE: 1994 Ryan Vanguard LWB;** red, USS, 20" front wheel, 26" rear wheel, touring rack, spare tires and tubes, original components, over 8000 happy miles, well maintained, \$800? or make offer. Please call before 9pm Idaho time. Klara 208-652-3239 (ID/63)

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"The Recumbent Bicycle," a book by Gunnar Fehlau—the only general overview of recumbent bicycles, their history and racing action. Covers the wide diversity of HPV types and handling properties. Tips for consumers and homebuilders. 7.5" x 9"; 180 pages; many photos; color cover and center section. Note: Two cover options! Choose a Tour Easy theme or M5 Lowracer! Preview at [outyourbackdoor.com](http://outyourbackdoor.com). \$24.00. Postpaid US orders (Can. \$2+; Oz/Euro \$7+). Out Your Backdoor, 4686 Meridian Rd., Williamston MI 48895. (MI/65)

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**FOR SALE: KneeSavers**, As seen in RCN#57. Used 100 miles, almost new. \$23 including postage in con. US. Email [charliediane@webtv.net](mailto:charliediane@webtv.net)

**FOR SALE: Used Zzipper Fairing** for Easy Racers. Very good condition. Includes mounts \$100. Call 801-594-3267 or [swalters@cs.w.l-3com.com](mailto:swalters@cs.w.l-3com.com)

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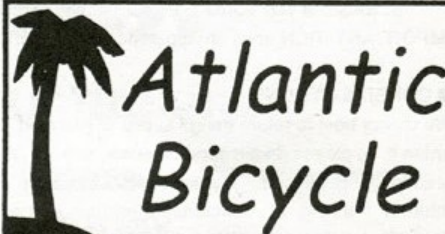
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## LATE BREAKING NEWS

### Bike Expo 2001

- Wisconsin Fair Park (south Exhibit hall)
- April 5th -8th, 2001
- Over 2,000 bicycles & recumbents to choose from
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# Easy Racers: Our Customers Speak

## NEW GOLD RUSH I'M IN HEAVEN

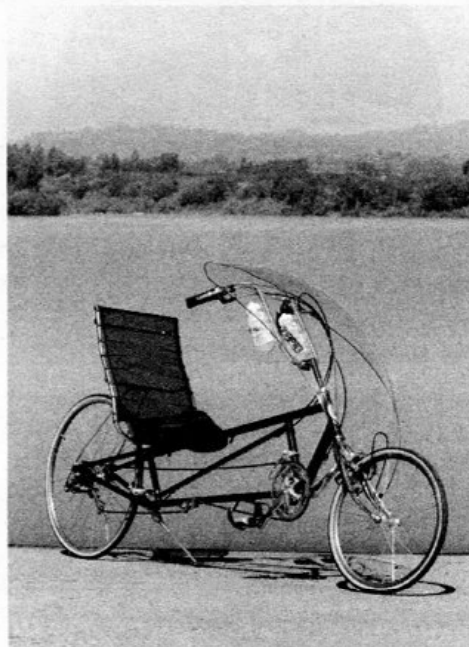
(Another customer/friend speaks)

This past Wednesday I drove down to Freedom, CA., to pick up my beautiful new white Gold Rush. I have owned a Brand X recumbent for the past year or so, unfair or not, that is what I have as a comparison. I have only put about 50 miles on the GRR but it has made such a strong impression on me that I have to share it.

I have to start with the buying experience. Gardner Martin will treat you royally. He gave me a full tutorial on the bike from adjusting the derailleurs to truing the wheels. Here's probably the biggest name in recumbent bicycles and he is accommodating, friendly, down to earth, and absolutely chock full of recumbent knowledge. He takes his time with you and makes sure that you are completely satisfied and comfortable with the bike.

Ah, the bike. The bike is a revelation, a marvel, one of life's gifts. I knew that it felt good from my test rides but now that I have ridden it on my familiar bike paths I have a much better feel for it. Is it faster than my Brand X recumbent? Whoa baby, this thing kicks ass! It feels like the hand of God has come down and given me a push. There is an overpass near my house with a gentle descent. Brand X recumbent—29.5 mph, GRR 33.4 mph without fairing.

This morning I put on the fairing.



The Gold Rush Replica Black Gold—RCN#45

I then took a ten mile ride on a very familiar loop where there is a three mile stretch that is flat and straight. I normally ride it at 20-22 mph pushing pretty hard. I spun up to 20 mph on the GRR and was astounded at how easy it was. I pushed a little harder, looked down at the speedo and I was cruising comfortably at 25 mph.

At that point I must have broken the world's record for recumbent grins. I pushed a bit more and was sailing along at 27 mph. Now I

am beside myself and even though I knew the Gold Rush was good I had no idea it was this good. I backed off a little to enjoy the ride and when I got home my average was 20.2 mph. This included a few stops and one small climb and as we all know the computer average is not the cruising average so I am ecstatic. It has been a goal of mine to average 20 and even though this was a short ride I feel good about it.

I am also very pleased by the ride quality of the GRR. It is one smooth bike. I was curious if I would notice more road shock being used to my suspended bike but the long wheelbase soaks up the bumps wonderfully. I have also had no problems with maneuverability zipping around posts and going around sharp corners. The bike handles beautifully.

One final note is how well the GRR climbs. There is one very steep hill that I climb often. It is only 2/10 of a mile but it must be about a 12% grade. I go up it fine except for the part about being near death at the top. The first time up it on the GRR was shocking. I just spun right up and not even in the lowest gear. I was breathing hard at the top but not gasping like I usually am.

A 47 year old stable family man probably shouldn't have such passionate feelings about an inanimate object but if anyone will understand, you guys will.

Posted to [alt.rec.bicycles.recumbent](mailto:alt.rec.bicycles.recumbent)

by Michael Cvetich.



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