

# The P.O.R.C. Press

Winter/Spring 2001  
Newsletter #2

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## Inside this Issue

- Letter from the Prez
- PORC Etiquette
- Carl's Appalachian Adventure
- Trail Maintenance 2001
- Tsali Mecca
- Changes to the Rock Trail
- Udidawhat?
- Local's Gear Guide
- Membership Application



## PORC's Efforts Have Helped to Improve Area Trails

Geez, a year goes by quick. March 22nd will be the first anniversary of the founding of Pensacola Off-Road Cyclists. We had no idea what we were getting ourselves into, but we've learned a lot over the last twelve months. I'm looking forward to the next twelve. Thanks to all who have supported us in improving the riding at UWF.

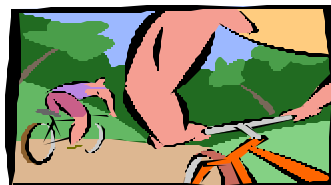
I've run into several riders lately that were new to the area or were visiting. Two couples from Panama City took a chance and came over last month to ride something different. I say took a chance because they had heard from some of their riding buddies that the trails were not well marked, poorly maintained, and pretty much sucked worse than an American mountain biker at the Olympics. Jon T. and I took them out for 10 miles or so, and they remarked several times how well maintained the trails were and how we must have a dedicated bunch of people working on them. At Chickasabogue Park, I talked with some folks from Ft. Walton and they raved about how greatly improved our trail system was, in particular the signs at the trailheads.

And I recently met a couple of guys newly stationed at NAS who mentioned right off the bat that the local bike club was doing a nice job on the trails. As we've gradually made some improvements, we maybe don't notice the results of our work as much as someone who doesn't ride here all the time. While we still have a ways to go, it's really nice to hear that positive feedback.

The trails are definitely getting increased usage. In seven years of riding at UWF, I've never seen as many bike racks in the water tower parking lot. That's a good thing, and I'm glad that more people are discovering and/or rediscovering the sport. As more of us use the trails, it's more important than ever that we all keep the Rules of the Trail in mind. In particular, be sure to yield trail to horses and hikers, and control your bike without skidding. A little courtesy goes a long way.

Hope to see you on the trail!

*Ed Sarfert, President of PORC*



# The Do's & Don'ts Of Off-Road Cycling

Every sport, hobby, or established activity has its *do's and don'ts*. Mountain biking, of course, is no different in this regard. However, the risks are higher because most of our trails actually belong to someone else and access to those trails is in the hands of those who represent the "owners of the land". In many cases, this may be a privately owned trail, a city or county trail, or a trail owned by a governmental park service. In our case, the owner of the Pensacola trails happens to be the University of West Florida ([www.uwf.edu](http://www.uwf.edu)).

What this means is that access is out of our control, and a few negative incidents could result in restricted or diminished access. As such, it is paramount that all off-road cyclists understand the most basic rules or etiquette of the sport. It would also be nice if the purchaser of every new mountain bike be provided with some version of the *IMBA's Rules of the Trail* ([www.imba.com](http://www.imba.com)) by the bike shop representative (*hint, hint*). Aside from IMBA's rules, here are some simple things to consider the next time you take to the trails:

**Always yield for hikers and equestrians.** If it's a hiker, be sure to pass with care and keep your speed at a safe pace. If it's single track, stop and get off your bike, and let the hiker pass. If it's a horseback rider, stop, and dismount your bike and allow the equestrian to go by. If the horse gets spooked, someone could get hurt so do whatever the horseback rider requests.

**Try not to slide or skid around corners or down slopes.** This may be the most common offense of some inexperienced riders. Sometimes skidding is unavoidable, but pointless skidding represents reckless and irresponsible cycling. What's worse, skidding quickly damages the trail which causes erosion and increases sandy areas. For our trails this is especially important because of the loose, sandy soils. Once soil is plowed and the dead leaves and pine-straw are removed by skidding, the trail will fall victim to the area's intense heat and heavy rains. The result is gullied trails with lots of sand.

**Never trail blaze or short-cut.** Stay on the original bike paths or trails. Trail blazing ruins a good trail by making it into a confusing matrix. Additionally, riding off trails destroys vegetation which may increase erosion.

**Don't Leave Trash.** This one is a no-brainer. Also, if you happen to see where someone else has tossed their container or some other piece of trash, stop and remove it from the trail.

**Yield for the mountain biker going uphill.** Sure, the rider screaming down-hill has a harder time stopping, however, it is much easier to regain speed when gravity is on your side, unlike the poor rider struggling up the hill. Again, be sure to keep your speed at a safe pace while passing other riders.

**Be friendly to other trail users.** It does not hurt to speak to those you encounter, and it only benefits the perception of cyclists as a whole. Always remember to be sensitive to how others perceive off-road cyclists. This will assure a positive image for the sport and minimize the restrictions that follow confrontations and negative encounters.

## IMBA's RULES OF THE TRAIL

### 1. RIDE ON OPEN TRAILS ONLY.

Respect trail and road closures (ask if not sure), avoid possible trespass on private land, obtain permits or other authorization as may be required. Federal and state Wilderness areas are closed to cycling. The way you ride will influence trail management decisions and policies.

### 2. LEAVE NO TRACE.

Be sensitive to the dirt beneath you. Even on open (legal) trails, you should not ride under conditions where you will leave evidence of your passing, such as on certain soils after a rain. Recognize different types of soils and trail construction; practice low-impact cycling. This also means staying on existing trails and not creating new ones. Don't cut switchbacks. Be sure to pack out at least as much as you pack in.

### 3. CONTROL YOUR BICYCLE!

Inattention for even a second can cause problems. Obey all bicycle speed regulations and recommendations.

### 4. ALWAYS YIELD TRAIL.

Make known your approach well in advance. A friendly greeting or bell is considerate and works well; don't startle others. Show your respect when passing by slowing to a walking pace or even stopping. Anticipate other trail users around corners or in blind spots.

### 5. NEVER SPOOK ANIMALS.

All animals are startled by an unannounced approach, a sudden movement, or a loud noise. This can be dangerous for you, others, and the animals. Give animals extra room and time to adjust to you. When passing horses use special care and follow directions from the horseback riders (ask if uncertain). Running cattle and disturbing wildlife is a serious offense. Leave gates as you found them, or as marked.

### 6. PLAN AHEAD.

Know your equipment, your ability, and the area in which you are riding -- and prepare accordingly. Be self-sufficient at all times, keep your equipment in good repair, and carry necessary supplies for changes in weather or other conditions. A well-executed trip is a satisfaction to you and not a burden or offense to others. Always wear a helmet and appropriate safety gear.

# A PORC SAFARI TO THE LAND OF THE NOON DAY SUN

by Carl D.

Day one Barbara and I spent driving to Tennessee and gorging on thanksgiving dinner and beer. Our friends Mike and Luanne are the caretakers of the Ocoee YMCA summer camp in Ocoee and since it was winter there was nothing for Mike to do but cater to my mountain biking needs.

Day two Mike and I drove to the Ocoee white water center outside Ocoee where the Olympic kayaking was held. It's an incredible area with a suspension bridge going over the river. We crossed the river and climbed about a mile on single track and jeep trail, did a loop and then rocketed back down. Watch those hikers! It was about seven wet and foggy miles. There were some guys doing trials on the large rocks surrounding the river. Pretty neat. We left there and went to another trail not far away. I can't remember if it was Clemmer or Chilhowee but the trail had some sweet jumps and a waterfall. It was another cold wet ride. We went home where we ate leftovers drank more beer and slept well.

Day three took us to Pigeon Mountain near Chatsworth. The drive to the top of the mountain was treacherous which was a hint at what the trail was like. The fog was thick, about 100 feet of visibility, so it was lucky I brought my GPS. The first part of the trail was downhill in the middle of a rock littered stream. No dabbing! The rest of the trail was very rideable with long slow climbs and great downhills. One stream crossing was over knee deep and the water was freezing. We rode about 14 miles finishing up in

an even thicker fog. The GPS and a map of the trail saved us hours of wandering around. We weighed our bikes at the bottom of the mountain at the check in station. Mike's bike weighed 10lbs more than mine so I quit teasing him about how slow he was on the climbs. A quick stop at the local convenience store/head shop (they sold milk, beer, and other accessories) for a beer and we headed home.

Day four Barbara and I left Mike and Luanne and took a road trip to the Ellijay area. I met with the guys at the Cartacay bike shop in Ellijay. Super nice guys with a great shop. They hooked me up with a ride the next day at Fort Mountain State Park west of Ellijay.

Day five at Fort Mountain was another wet day. Lots of fog and a light rain. I rode with two guys whose names I can't remember. One fellow rode a Moots Frame and the other guy had few teeth and rode a James Dakar. Both of them rode me into the ground several times over. The trail is awesome. Incredibly long and difficult climbs consisting of miles of single track and fire roads. My granny gear was used more on one climb than the whole time I've owned the bike. The downhills were plentiful and long. One was so steep and scary I got cramps in my forearms from braking so hard. The view of Chatsworth and the Talc Mines were worth the effort. I hear they used to mine sequins there for all the old Nashville country stars.

Day six I rode part of Bull Mountain and Jakes Mountain. Another killer

trail and easier than Fort Mountain. Lots of jumps and easier climbs. I got lost trying to follow the map and the trail signs. One didn't agree with the other. The GPS saved me again. I got back just as Barbara was going to look for me.

Day seven we started heading for home. We stopped at the Conyers Horse Park and I rode the trail there. I think for \$5 they could afford to put up trail signs. It's a cool trail with wicked climbs and downhills but they are short so it's a good warm-up for the actual mountains farther north. I think they are going to sell the park to developers so go visit soon.

All my trail maps I got from Mountain Biking In North Georgia. It will be in the Duellman wing of the PORC Library. The guys at Cartacay Bike Shop are even better at recommending which trails to ride than the book. When they say there is a three-mile climb they are not kidding! Also beware of hunters and which days are hunting days. Wear lots of orange and carry enough food, tool and supplies to get you back. Try to leave an itinerary with someone, too. A GPS is also a good idea because there are miles of jeep trails that go god knows where. Use new batteries for each ride as they discharge fast.



# THE FIRST TRAIL MAINTENANCE EVENT OF 2001

PORC has had some very successful trail maintenance days the year 2000. Since the beginning of the club in April of 2000, the Trials, Rock Trail, Chute, and Gorge have been greatly improved.

The first trail maintenance day of 2001 also proved to be better than was expected. For starters, a record number of folks consisting of P.O.R.C. members, non-members, and the UWF Mountain Bike Club members showed to give a helping hand in improving some of the trails off of Pate Road.

The highlight of the maintenance day was the resurrection of Carl's Trail, which for a long time has not been given the care needed to make it a practical off-road trail. Once the work was done, Carl's trail turned out to be a jewel in that it prevents cyclists from having to get on Pate Road in order to make it to the trail head of the *Pate Road Trail*. In addition, the technical aspects of the trail make it a little different then the other trails in that same area - - a test of one's technical skill indeed.

Also worth mentioning was the much needed water breaks which were built on the first half of the Pate Road Trail. This trail has suffered in the past from erosion which has resulted in more than a few sandy sections. With erosion under control, we should see the trail improve with the passage of time. Another nice improvement made during the day was the tweaking of some of the bermed corners.

To reward the efforts of everyone's hard work, free ClifBars were given to the masses. What's more, a very nice hydropack ( compliments of supergo.com ) was raffled off that day as well. Members were automatically enrolled in the raffle

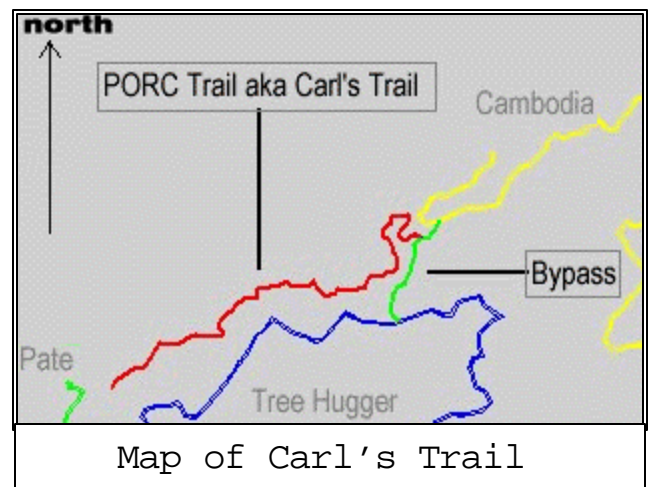
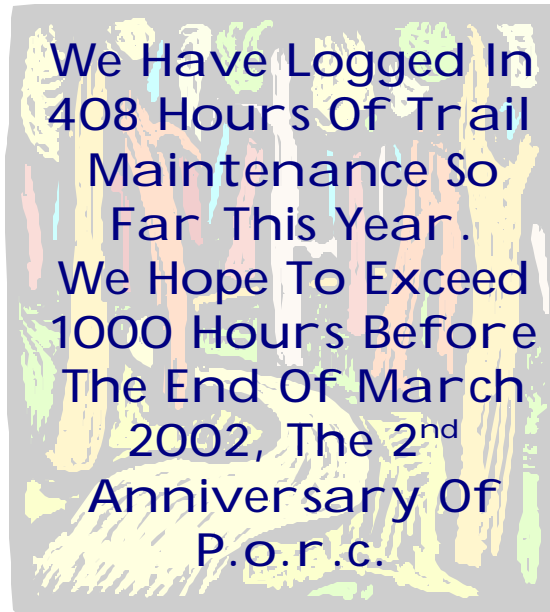
while non-members were able to get in on the fun for a \$2.00 fee. Jon Edwards, PORC Member, turned out to be the lucky winner

So far, we have logged in 408 hours this year. We hope to exceed 500 hours before the end of March 2001, the anniversary of PORC. As such, we are encourage everyone who can to be at the March 11 trail maintenance day.

All in all, the efforts put forth by all who contributed are surely appreciated by all trail users

who make use of the trails.

Our last big trail maintenance day before the club's first Birthday is March 11, 2001. This event hopefully puts us over the 500 hour mark, which is a great achievement for all PORC Members and volunteers.



## Tsali- MTB Mecca of The Southeast

If you have plenty of gas and about 10 hours to spare for the drive, then consider making a road trip to Tsali, North Carolina. This place is a mountain biking Mecca with miles & miles of well manicured trails which meander around an Appalachian Mountain Lake like an endless roller-coaster ride. It's best to allow two full days of riding, because the trail use alternates between equestrian and mountain bikers. As a result, if you can only ride for one day, you will miss out on 50% of the trails.

Camping at the trail head is primitive, but adequate. Showers, bathrooms, and water are available within the campground. If you attempt to shower in the late afternoon, however, expect to wait because everyone wants a shower after the long ride and there is only a couple of showers for the entire campground.

There is no lighting, and at night the campground gets as dark as..., well, let's just say you can't see your hand in front of your face so be sure to bring a flashlight with fresh batteries. Also, try to get there before the weekend, or you may not find a camping site because during the peak season the place fills-up fast.

In case you don't care to sleep in a tent, there are some nice cabins in the area too. Check out the Internet for more information.



Another great thing about Tsali is the white water sports which are nearby along the Nantahala River. For \$25 bucks you can rent a "ducky" (inflatable kayak) and ride the white-water river at your leisure. While you are there, be sure to visit the Nantahala Outdoor Center ([www.noc.com](http://www.noc.com)) which sells all kinds of outdoor equipment, including lots mountain biking stuff at surprisingly reasonable prices.

Before you make the trip, however, be sure to go to the "Members Only" section of the club's website ([www.porc.org](http://www.porc.org)) and print out our map(s) of the Tsali Trails.



### The Challenge of Tsali

Probably the most popular features of Tsali Recreation Area are the 39 miles of trails suited for mountain bikers and horse-back riders, as well as hikers. The 4-loop system offers a variety of landscapes. You can climb 1-foot wide rugged paths or travel flat, well-beaten roads. The four trails--Right, Left, Mouse Branch, and Thompson Loops--meander through mixed pine and hardwoods on a peninsula stretching into Fontana Lake.

Hikers may travel the trails any day, but mountain bikers and equestrians, the primary users, are kept separated by alternating use of trails. A schedule is posted at all trailheads. There is a fee for mountain bikers. Check in at the Cheoah District Ranger Station.

Here's a preview of what you'll discover on the Tsali trails:

- **Right Loop**  
Length: 11 miles  
Highlights: Single track, views of Lake Fontana, creek crossings, shorter 4- and 8- mile loops possible.
- **Left Loop**  
Length: 11.9 miles  
Highlights: Longest Tsali trail, single track, creek crossings, views of the Smokies and Lake Fontana at the overlook.
- **Mouse Branch**  
Length: 6.5 miles Highlights: Single track and old logging roads, potential views of wild turkey, deer, and grouse in forest wildlife openings, old home sites.
- **Thompson Loop**  
Length: 7.7 miles Highlights: Single track, potential views of wildlife, overlooks, stream crossings, old logging roads, old home sites.

#### Tsali Campground

Showers, flush toilets, and 41 campsites are offered at this campground. Bikers can head straight from the tent door to the trails.

## Student Baptist Center “Gets a Piece of the Rock” - - Trail.

The location of the new Student Baptist Center ended up on a wooded plot just south of the UWF water tower along University Drive which just happened to be the portal to UWF’ s trails for many area riders.

Entrance to the Rock Trail must now be diverted along University Parkway to the infrequent openings to the trail, or along the power easement to the south of the Rock Trail, sometimes referred to as "Church bell Alley". This comes on the heels of another recent trail loss east of University Parkway due to the construction of the new UWF Dorms about two years ago.

"We are losing more and more", states one PORC Member during a recent meeting. This belief seems to be strong among many area off-road cyclists. While it is true that campus expansion will continue, the pace will be moderate, at best.

Furthermore, with continued support and healthy attendance during PORCs trail maintenance events, there should be adequate means to resurrect overgrown trails which will help to compensate for the ones which are sacrificed for development.

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## Ididaride 2001 – 50 Off-Road Miles!

*by Dale L.*

We all like to ride our mountain bikes. Sure some of us like to ride more than others, and most of us wish that we could ride more often than we do. How many miles do you get to ride per week? Personally, if I am real lucky, I might get in 40 or 50 miles. Usually, however, I am lucky to get out once a week for a grand total of 10 to 15 miles. Sure some of you may think that is an exceptional amount of mileage, but for me, it sucks. That being said, I would like to now get to the point, Ididaride 2001. At this point you are probably wondering what in the hell I am talking about. Good, keep reading.

Each year the Suwannee Bike Association (SBA) hosts a 50 mile off-road challenge ride (not race) in beautiful White Springs, Florida, affectionately referred to as the Ididaride. This year was no exception, as the Ididaride V kicked off on January 20, 2001. The ride has a 200 rider limit and this year there was a full house. The weather was pretty cold and wet, but the trails were still in great shape.

The course consisted of lots of single track, and lots of dual track jeep trails, and some paved roads. The paved roads and dual track were about what you would expect, but the single track was pretty awesome. The topography in this area is basically flat and the single track sections are very fast and hard-packed. Pretty sweet stuff.

The ride kicked off with a Continental breakfast. There was a hot lunch, at about the half way point with soup, crackers and other snacks. At the ride conclusion, there was a BBQ dinner. There were also sag stops at 18 miles and 40 miles, complete with snacks, water, and Gatorade. The sag stop at 40 miles had wine and cheese. Let me just say, that for me the only thing that got me to 40 miles was the thought of wine and cheese, and after about 45 minutes of wine and cheese, the last ten miles were a piece of cake. All of this for a modest \$40.

PORC was well represented with a total of 6 members in attendance, all of which finished I might add. Post race activities were pretty low key, as most of the PORC crew was sluggish, but we still managed to wreak havoc on a local Mexican restaurant. Next year we hope to see you at the Ididaride VI.





# LOCALS GEAR GUIDE



**Locals' Gear Guide** is a new feature to the PORC Press. The format will likely change from issue to issue, but here's the basic deal: We'll badger a local rider about the bike stuff he or she blew all their money on in the last year, and try and extract some useful information from them about it. Yes, *Bicycling Magazine* has a similar feature. But instead of some doofus in California talking about how his new tires work so well on the hardpack, you may actually know the doofus I'm talking to. And we'll be discussing how the products work in *our* area. See why this is better? Let's begin.

**Local of the Month - Carl Duellman.** Carl is two things on a bike: Fast, and tall. And he never crashes. That's why I don't trust him. Still, I asked Brother Carl for some insight into the gear he acquired this year and this was his story.

*As most of you have heard, several months ago my bike jumped off the roof of the car and onto the interstate at 70 mph. Needless to say I have almost all new stuff for my bike. Apart from two new wheels & tires, derailleur, gore ride-on Teflon shifting cables, grip shift shifters and a monkey lite carbon bar, the best new thing I've tried are my new Magura hydraulic brakes.*

*They are more expensive (\$180) and heavier than traditional v brakes and harder to set up, but they feel oh so plush. And the brilliant red color matches my shoes and helmet. I decided to try them last summer but I couldn't afford them so I tried gore ride-on Teflon brake cables instead. They worked well but it was my v brakes that eventually wore out. I upgraded to the Magura and have gotten lots of attention ever since.*

*Even though set up is only done once it was hard to figure out. They give lots of photos and directions but I think it's the translation from German to English where some of the information is lost. Once I figured out how the system went together, putting them on the bike was a chore. Each side has to be assembled independently of the other and then they have to be connected together with the brake booster. The rear didn't take too long to assemble, maybe an hour, but the front was tricky. Since each side is assembled separately, getting the left and right side to look the same was arduous. I thought my fork was bent or maybe the wheel was not centered properly but victor at Truly Spokin' said they were ok. I'm still not happy with the way the front looks but it works great.*

*The hydraulic fluid is just mineral oil but Magura calls it 'blood'. Mineral oil can be bought at any drugstore in the laxative section (really). Shortening and reconnecting the hydraulic lines is easy and I didn't have to bleed the system afterwards.*

*The levers feel smooth with just enough resistance to let you know they are there. Adjusting the travel and the brake pads is an easy, on-the-fly operation. The system has way more braking power than you will ever need but it's easy to modulate that power. I've had no trouble with skidding or getting launched over the bars even with semi-slicks. I've also heard that the system is low maintenance. There are few moving parts and the hydraulic lines are very sturdy. Brake pads just pop out for easy replacement with no adjustment necessary. My only complaint with the final product is the washer that is required on each brake pivot. Removing a wheel requires unlatching and removing one side of the system. It's very easy and reassembles faster than v brakes. But if you forget to replace or lose that washer you are screwed. They recommend siliconing it in place which I've not done yet.*

*Aside from being tricky to set up and the washer issue I would recommend Magura. They are easy to maintain and wheel removal is no problem. There is also no brake squeal! They feel and look great and they are definitely different.*



# We Won't Forget Our Good Friend

We all lost a good friend on December 11, 2000. Matt Wantz was probably our most well known and well liked member. For those of you who haven't seen it, the following article appeared in the *Velonotes* section of the January 8, 2001 issue of VeloNews magazine:

*Matthew Wantz, a member of the Phat Sam Cycling Team, was shot to death while working at Bikes Plus bicycle shop in Pensacola, Florida, on December 11. A week after the shooting, 19-year-old Joshua Rosser was arrested in Dallas, Georgia, and charged with Wantz's murder. Rosser was denied bail and remains in jail pending his January 5 court date.*

*Wantz was the manager of the store, which was owned by his father in law.*

*At the time of his death, the 27-year-old Wantz held a 24-second lead in the Southern Fall Classic Cycling Series. The final race in the series, held December 17, 2000, in Mobile, Alabama, was dedicated to Wantz, and his family was presented with the series' first-place prize, a Festina watch.*



Anyone reading that VeloNews article could see that this was a tragic event. But the article didn't and couldn't tell you about the person we knew. About the guy who didn't talk bad about anyone. The guy who always took care of your bike when you messed it up. The guy who most of us could never hope to keep up with the occasional time he wasn't holding back for us. Wheezing up a hill with Matt last year, I was suffering way more than he appeared to be (as usual). I joked that I almost had to shift out of my big ring for that one. Matt replied without missing a beat, "I thought I was going to have to pedal with both legs." We all have our own memories of Matt, and we won't ever forget him.

The bridge at the bottom of the Rock Trail has been named the Matt Wantz Memorial Bridge and the section of trail across from the lower end of the Chute is now known as Wantz Way. For anyone who would like to make a donation to benefit Janet Wantz, you can go into any Regions Bank and contribute to the Matt Wantz Memorial Fund.

