



Club Newsletter

WINTER 2003
Newsletter #5

See the ONLINE version of this newsletter with pictures and more at www.porc.org

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LETTER FROM THE PREZ

Cold weather is here - time to push the road bike aside and get that mountain bike back to its proper place as your main ride! The local trails are mostly in decent shape, although the rainy weather we've had over the last couple months has definitely affected them. A lot of the sand is packed down pretty well, but some areas have been replaced by mud, while others have been washed out. The waterbars, runouts, and other techniques we've used to improve drainage and reduce erosion have been working well. One of IMBA's themes is to "Get the water off the trail, and get people on the trail." The first part of that is more of a challenge than the second part. There are lots of riders out there enjoying the trails, but there's a lot of trail for our clubs to maintain. We need your help to keep improving the riding we have here.

November's trail maintenance day was a big success, 13 people came out, worked hard and we got a great deal accomplished. Thanks to all who helped out. Remember, you don't need to be a PORC member to come to a trail day, everyone is welcome. We always have spare tools for you, and it's a good way to meet more of your fellow mountain bikers. Hope to see you at the next one!

Happy Trails,
Ed Sarfert

PORC EMAIL

JOINING PORC

How does one become a member of PORC? Thanks, Darryl

*Darryl,
Thanks for asking! Almost everything you need to know about joining PORC is located on our website at www.porc.org/joinporc.htm*

There you can find info about the club, on-line forms, and even a method of paying on-line via credit-card. Also, check out the local bike shops for an application or e-mail us at join@porc.org and we will send you whatever you need to join.

PANAMA CITY TRAILS?

Are there any decent biking trails in the Panama City area? It sounds like there are some good ones in Pensacola, but that's a bit of a drive for me! Thanks. Jan

Hey Jan. Pine Log is the only trail I know of over that way, but there may be others.. In fact, there was a 12 hour race at Pine Log a few months back. There is a website for this trail, it is

www.fl-dof.com/state_forests/Pine_Log.htm

HELLO FROM AUSTIN, TX!

Hello to all and congratulations on the promotion of mountain biking in Pensacola. I, along with my family, was one of the original members when the club started before being transferred by the Navy in the summer of 2000. It's good to see the changes the club has made in Pensacola and that the club is growing. I am currently in Austin, Texas and have lost the e-mail addresses for fellow riders. I just wanted to let you know what a great job you are doing. My daughter, who started mountain biking on the Trials at UWF and rode her first race at the Bump n Grind as a PORC member in 2000, has finished second in the Texas State Championship Series for the Spring and Fall series. I bet you didn't know you had Junior Racer Development! I have spoken to riders in the Austin area and some have met members of PORC in Mobile and Birmingham as well as gone riding at the PORC trails at UWF. I look forward to riding the trails again next summer when I return to Pensacola (I may need to update the old yellow and black PORC sticker on my bike though!) Sid

*Got a question, suggestion, gripe, or comment?
Feel free to drop us an email anytime at newsletter@porc.org*

OF INTEREST

FAT TIRE CHALLENGE 2003

Rumor has it that the race coordinators at the UWF MTB Club are considering another mountain bike race in Pensacola this Spring. Keep your eye on the PORC Message Board for up-to date info.

By the way, the University of West Florida Mountain Bike Club has a new website at a new location. Be sure to checkout www.uwf.edu/mtbclub and tell em PORC sent ya!

GONERIDING.COM IN 2003

The race promoters at www.goneriding.com have posted the race schedule for 2003 on their website. There are a number of different series, one bringing a race as close as Tallahassee, FL and Anniston, AL.

BUMP & GRIND 2003

The great southern mountain bike race is scheduled for June 1, 2003. The race at Oak Mountain, near Birmingham, AL, is one the best races in the southeast. For the last few years, legendary racer Tinker Warez even participated. Registration, photos, and more information about this race can be found at www.bump.org

VIRTUAL TRAIL RIDE ONLINE

Recently, varying technological elements have come together to allow mountain bikers all over the country to video their riding experience and put it out there on the web for the whole on-line world to see. This is great because instead of reading about a trail or seeing pictures, you can actually see a free video (which is almost as good as being there).

Of course, PORC is trying to get in on this phenomena as well. Check out the 4 minute helmet cam video at www.porc.org/images/ to see a quick "B" rated movie of our local trails.

Better videos from better mountain biking locations are available too, such as red-haze.com or pinkbike.com, just to name a few.

TRAIL BLURB ALAFIA STATE PARK, Near Tampa, FL

The Alafia MTB trail was created in 2001 in an old lime mining field south of Tampa. The entire trail loop contains many miles of trail. The trail difficulty ranges from easy and boring to highly challenging and exciting. This trail is a mix between Santos, with its lime quarry, and San Felasco, with its curvy single track. The first thing I noted was a nicely marked trail head with noticeable signage. The beginning of the trail started off somewhat boring in that the trail was a lawnmower path through an open grassy field. This part of the ride, while not that great, makes for a nice warm-up to the 'good stuff' which awaits you.

We soon started with the Red Trail which is the most technical trail of this park. The steep short climbs quickly followed by fast, brisk descents started immediately. Initially, the ups and down were like a kiddie coaster, keeping me alert but mostly fun, no adrenalin. Soon, two of the 3 of us who were riding clipless (instead of cages), I was able to make the climb. As I crested I could hear my local friends yelling something which I could not make out. However, after I crested, I realized my buddies were warning me to stop, but it was too late as I was committed to a HUGE drop which, although tricky and rooty, accelerated me so fast it scared me. Luckily though I made it down okay without crashing. The locals caught up with me to let me know that worse was yet to come. We continued on the Red Trail with continued relentless drops and climbs. We finally made it to the Blue Trail, which is the moderate difficulty trail. This trail was long, tight, curvy, and very rooty due to palmetto roots, but absent of any climbs and drops found on the Red Trail. We skipped the 'Yellow Trail', the easiest of the three trails, as the Tampa skyline darkened and the nightly thunderstorms rolled in. Guess I will have to catch that part next time--a great reason to go back.



For more information, visit the following websites:

www.porc.org - pictures of this trail in the "photos" section of the website

www.geocities.com/grubby2day - "Mountain Biking in the Southeast" - - info about this trail, plus many others.

www.swamp.org or www.dep.state.fl.us - official websites for this trail.

SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS

Here I go again.....searching for the perfect machine that will "make the difference". You know.....trying to "buy" speed. Every couple years you get the new bike bug. Something that will help you make the podium or at least turn some heads in the parking lot. In my case, I want to put a little something in my pocket at these out of town races so I have gas for the trip home. About two years ago I bought my last bike.....well.....last "mountain" bike. And I think it was money well spent as I have seen a definite improvement in my lap times. Finally people weren't smirking at me at the starting line (that was getting old). I finally had a real, no kidding, full on race bike. I've enjoyed the minor successes I've had with it but as of late it seems like something is missing. My latest results just ain't at the level I want them to be (I'm sure I'm one of hundreds, maybe billions with the same problem). In other words, I've been coming home from the latest out of town races with just fumes in the gas tank. Well, maybe it's not that bad, but I certainly have not seen the podium recently. If I trained any more I would fall victim to overtraining. So it's gotta be the bike.it's gotta be.

I currently ride a soft tail. But I ask myself "is the soft tail soft enough?" Maybe a full suspension Fuel, Sugar 1, NRS, S-Works FSR or Ultra Light would do the trick. Maybe I need that new Specialized Epic that everyone is talking about. Yah, that would be good, then I could float across those roots and rocks slashing away precious seconds every lap. Or is my Light Speed soft tail just too damn heavy. Yah, that's gotta be it. In fact I've felt like my climbing prowess has been suffering lately. It feels like I'm pulling a wagon full of Rhino poop up every hill. Of course..... I definitely need to be back on a hard tail! THAT'S IT! But not like the 25 lb. Fuji I used to ride, but some exotic one off 20 lb fly weight. I feel like I have a little dude sitting on each of my shoulders arguing back and forth, FULL SUSPENSION! HARD TAIL! FULL SUSPENSION! HARD TAIL!..... My god, it's getting so bad I wake up in the middle of the night in a cold sweat trying to get through this ordeal. What a dilemma!

Maybe I'm just way off the page. Maybe I'm just too beat up by the time I get to these races because of the subpar ride quality my 92 Honda Wagon offers. Yah...that's it. My spine endurance capacity is already whittled down fifty percent before I even belly up to the registration table. Should I go for the big Toyota SUV or maybe a Ford Excursion as the new bike hauler. Geeeee, can life be anymore difficult? WHAT'S IT GOING TO TAKE TO BE "THE MAN"? I can't be the only guy in Pensacola having this nervous (MTB related) breakdown. Talk to our PORC Prez. I think he may be able to relate. I could see the same type of pain in his sunken, blood shot eyes after the Tallahassee AMBC race in October. And there's also this old timer with a French sounding name who keeps popping up at all the away races (rides a GT full suspension). I think it's LeBoon or LeBum (something like that). He's a fierce competitor who has the determination of pitbull. But continues to fall short of the big win. This guy has GOT to be searching for answers! Gosh I'm glad I'm not alone.

No answers,
Dave H.

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Interested in supporting PORC?

Many of the trail improvements you may have noticed are a direct result of volunteers' hard work and our member's support. Individual membership starts at only \$20. By joining, not only do you help to improve the trails, but you also get special benefits, such as member discounts at participating bike shops. Check out www.porc.org for more information, or write us at 1708 David Street - 32514.