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Odyssey World Cycling Tours™ 2003 Rider Handbook

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I n t r o d u c t i o n

Welcome!

Welcome to Odyssey World Cycling Tours™ 2003. We are confident that this ride will prove to be one of the highlights of your life as it was for our Odyssey 2000® veteran participants. *Being able to maintain a flexible attitude and an openness to explore, experience, and to learn, will increase your rewards exponentially.*

Your Rider Handbook

Your *Rider Handbook* is very detailed and will answer most of your questions about preparing for Odyssey. A quick glance at the Table of Contents will tell you that there is plenty to know about preparing your body, equipment and mind to travel around the world. Please take the time to read this handbook and keep it as a handy reference. It will help set the groundwork for the adventure of your life.

Segment Rider info

For those riders not doing the entire world tour, TK&A will furnish detailed information on your specific segment(s) as the starting date for your tour draws near. We will tell you the dates and times of meeting the rest of the group, pick up and shuttle information predicated on your flight arrivals, and a brief on-site orientation to help integrate you into the rest of the group.

Why Does Odyssey World Cycling Tours™ produce a long-distance event of this magnitude?

Each year tens of thousands of people dream about long-distance cycling. But most people don't have the time or resources to pull it off. Long ago, we recognized this need and Tim Kneeland & Associates produced its first long-distance cross-country cycling event in 1987. Our goal has always been to produce an enjoyable and challenging ride that is within the scope of ordinary cyclists wanting an extraordinary adventure. In 1993 we decided to produce the ultimate long distance tour....around the world for an entire year. The year 2000 was our maiden tour and proved to be the adventure that most cyclists can only dream about. With our experiences from Odyssey 2000® we have created Odyssey World Cycling Tours™. A more accessible event with 12 stages and 22 segments, allowing for more exploration and leisure time. Welcome aboard for the adventure of a lifetime!

E x p e c t a t i o n s

One of our greatest challenges is to communicate, as clearly as possible, what each participant can expect from Odyssey and what Odyssey World Cycling Tours™ expects from each rider on a tour of this magnitude. Even though "clear expectations" are often hard to communicate, the following will make it easier for you to fully prepare for your adventure.

Odyssey World Cycling Tours™ takes great care in the planning of all the day-to-day details. We have also created a fun and flexible environment, which helps insure that you can find the time to enjoy and appreciate the daily cycling adventures, close friendships, communities, wonderful people, and finally, life as a member of a traveling community.

You can expect the following on an Odyssey World Cycling Tour (OWCT)

- North America's most experienced long distance cycling management team.
- Friendly staff and volunteers willing to support your cycling adventure.
- Nametag and two bicycle tags for identification.
- **World Riders: Two Ride Jerseys (Starting and Finishing) and Cycling Shorts.**
- **Segment Riders: One Ride Jersey**
- An official T-shirt.
- *Finishers Certificate of Completion* for both world and segment riders
- All dinners and breakfasts, including a vegetarian selection
- Some evening entertainment
- A gear truck to carry your tent and your duffel bag of personal gear
- 50% overnight camping accommodations and 50% beds which include hotels, dorms or hostels (over the year)
- Daily Route Guide's (DRG's) and map so you can navigate to your next destination
- Road Support during the day from staff driven vehicles equipped with cell phones and sophisticated amateur radio communications
- Showers every night
- **Massage Therapist (one free massage for every 3 weeks of touring) ????**
- A daily telephone number for use during an emergency and to keep the staff informed of a change in your plans
- Mechanical support in camp and along the road
- Basic emergency first aid support
- Mid-day checkpoint
- End of day check in
- Memories, adventures, and friendships that will last a lifetime

Getting the most out of your experience:

Whatever the weather, cycling conditions, road conditions, traffic levels, shape of the terrain, shape of your body, the mood of the other riders, or more importantly, your own mood, don't let anything get in the way of the best time of your life. Enjoy each moment of every day, be flexible and roll with your adventures and challenges.

Here are some thoughts and ideas you may find helpful:

- Recognize that YOU are responsible for getting the most out of your bicycling adventure.
- First and foremost, ride legally, safely, courteously and in control at all times.
- Identify what you want from your trip and go for it.
- Maintain a positive mental attitude.
- Be flexible and handle everything, both the expected and unexpected, with style.
- Remember to ride at your own pace, not the pace of others.
- Stop and smell the roses, grasses, trees, hills, fields, water, animals, etc.
- Get to know people by riding with everyone in the group at one time or another.

- Be spontaneous and take advantage of opportunities that pop-up along the route.
- Take lots of pictures.
- Hug your volunteers and staff and give them a big thank you now and again - it really helps.

What is expected of participants:

TK&A has created its events to enable each rider to have as much freedom as he or she desires during the entire trip. Consideration for others is however, always necessary. In light of our need for "movement with harmony," we ask every member of our group to do his or her share to make the trip safer and more enjoyable for every rider, volunteer, community vendor, local citizen, and staff member involved. And we ask each member to do his or her part to make it easier for TK&A to track and manage the overall movement of the group and to arrange the hundreds of logistical details necessary each and every day of the ride.

TK&A asks every rider to:

- Ride legally, safely and courteously at all times.
- Ride as comfortably and energy efficiently as possible to help you:
 - a) *increase your enjoyment of the experience.*
 - b) *remain more alert, especially as the miles add up each day.*
 - c) *ride more safely in all conditions.*
 - d) *build your endurance.*
- Always wear your helmet when you are on your bike, even around camp or on a test ride.
- Keep your name tag with you at all times. It makes it easier for everyone to get to know you and is used to gain access to meals.
- Wear some type of bright clothing to be more visible.
- Use a mirror to increase your awareness of traffic and other cyclists. **Mirrors are required!**
- To increase visibility, bring a flashing red light for your bike (for foggy weather and long, dark tunnels).
- Bring your bike to the start of the event in top condition (recently serviced) and with new Kevlar or Continental Top Touring tires.
- Consider installing a triple crank allowing "90 RPM spinning."
- For easy identification, mark all your clothing and equipment.
- Carry extra gear on your bike for unexpected weather changes.
- Carry the basic tools for changing your tires and making bike adjustments.
- Perform a quick safety check on your bike each and every day.
- Sign in at midday checkpoint.
- Sign in as soon as you reach "end of day" checkpoint.
- Call TK&A's cell phones (numbers are provided on the DRG's) or, if no answer, our 800 number and leave a message to let us know if you are off route, running late, have a problem, or need assistance.
- If you choose to drink alcohol, do not drink until you are finished riding for the day.
- Never bring alcohol onto school grounds. Most schools are designated as drug free zones.
- Remove your cleats when off your bike. Carry a set of shoes or sandals with you to prevent any slipping as well as to avoid tearing up floors.
- Please don't lean your bike against any vehicles. Bikes will easily scratch any surface or even worse, the driver may inadvertently run over your pride and joy!
- Read the "white board" for meal information, messages, community services, and special notices.
- Please clean up after yourself (bathrooms, rooms, under beds, in drawers, around your tent, etc) especially after you have packed up to leave in the morning. Guaranteed, you will find important things you are about to lose, even before you lose them!
- Pay attention to any signs that are posted each day giving directions and guidance.
- Please be courteous of your surroundings and make sure you don't leave anything behind.
- Check the lost and found each and every day. You might find items you didn't even realize you lost.
- Load the gear truck so that it can leave on time, usually no later than 8:30 a.m.

- Plan each day for maximum enjoyment by factoring the following: the time you want to get up, meal hours, distance to be covered, weather, daylight, activities along the way, your expected pace, how you feel, who you want to ride with, etc.
- Please note meal hours. Our vendors are working hard to offer plenty of great food at the times indicated.
- Please do not expect them to extend their hours because you are running late.
- Pitch in and offer to help. We can use it.
- Maintain PMA (positive mental attitude).

G e n e r a l I n f o r m a t i o n

Cycling conditions:

TK&A selects routes that provide the most beautiful and best all-around bicycling experience for you. Please keep in mind that the length and distance change each day, as do weather and road conditions.

Always try to savor the beauty tucked away in each and every mile - from the loneliest stretch of road to the largest city, from the flat terrain to the views at the top of a major climb, from the narrow road to the freshly paved smooth shoulder, and from a hot headwind day to the nudging of a refreshing tailwind. Also remember, regardless of what you encounter, please ride carefully and legally at all times.

Mechanical Services:

The condition of your bicycle is your responsibility. Have your bike inspected and tuned just before the start of the ride. This will increase your confidence as you start your trip and will save you lots of grief. We provide the necessary mechanical support to keep all the bikes on the road. Most services are provided for free, but you will need to pay for all your parts. You will also pass bike shops along the route. Most will work on your bike and be more than happy to sell you anything that you need.

Emergency & daily communications:

You will be able to contact the road staff via cellular phones. Every day, our cell phone numbers will appear on your DRG. If for some reason we don't answer, leave a message and also call our Burbank, CA office at (800) 433-0528 or (818) 556-1540.

In addition, our support vehicles will be equipped with amateur radios for staff communication and for your safety. Anyone who uses amateur radio equipment has to have earned and received an appropriate license from the FCC.

Keep staff informed:

Each day, we support the road until everyone is at "end of day" and/or accounted for. Please use our communications systems to keep the road staff informed. Here are some particular times you should definitely call:

- You (or someone else) needs assistance, has a breakdown, has an emergency, or needs a lift.
- You are going to miss or be late getting through the midday checkpoint.
- You are going to be late getting into camp.
- You decide to go off route for some reason.
- You are lost (or a little mis-oriented).

Medical & health:

It is vital that anyone with a medical condition makes it known to us before departure. Very few conditions would eliminate anyone's participation in a TK&A event, yet TK&A reserves the right to disqualify any rider at any time during

the trip if the rider's continued participation will compromise the safety of the individual and/or the group.

All TK&A support vehicles are equipped with first aid kits. Medical services provided by the staff will be emergency services only, limited to basic first-aid and life support procedures within the staff's capacity. There will be no physician on staff, (with the exception of SE Asia where we will have a full time medical staff member) but all TK&A staff are First Aid & CPR trained. When possible, our vehicles will provide transportation to medical care facilities for medical or dental conditions requiring the care of a professional. Local emergency transportation will be called in other cases. Each participant is responsible for costs of any medical care beyond the basic services provided by our staff. Transportation home or to catch up with the ride in the event of a medical leave will be the responsibility of the rider.

Important: Please make sure that you bring a supply of any medications you might need on the tour. Make sure all medications and supplements are kept in their original containers for customs inspections.

Medical Insurance:

It is mandatory to have medical insurance. If you don't have coverage, please feel free to contact Dan McKay at McKay Insurance. McKay has been providing our customers with short term policies throughout the years.

Dan McKay, Certified Insurance Counselor

www.mckayinsagency.com or dmckay@mckayinsagency.com

McKay Insurance Agency, Inc.

106 E Main

Knoxville, IA 50138

(641) 842-2135 bus

(800) 942-0283 toll free

(641) 828-2013 fax

Accommodations

All accommodations are provided by TK&A from the night before a stage begins through the last night of a stage. Over the entire year of Odyssey we will be providing approximately 60% beds and 40% camping. The actual number of beds to camping varies from stage to stage. For instance, in Asia we supply 100% beds as camping is not a viable option. And some stages in Europe will have 60% camping to 40% beds as campgrounds in Europe have many amenities. Most of our campgrounds around the world are commercial sites, but be prepared for some school fields, gym floors and some primitive campsites. Camping gear (waterproof tent, sleeping bag, ground pad, and personal items, including, but not limited to flashlights, ground cloths, etc.) are the responsibility of the rider. "Beds" consist of hotels, college dorms, hostels, and private camps with bunk beds. Some college dorms and hostels do not furnish linens with their beds, so you will need your sleeping bag.

Room changes

All room changes in hotels and dorms must be made through TK&A. If a rider chooses to make a room change on his or her own, he or she will be charged the cost of the room.

Miscellaneous hotel charges

When you check into a hotel room, submit your credit card for room incidentals. TK&A takes care of the room and tax and you take care of everything else. (phones, room service, laundry, movies, etc.). Work with your roommates to fairly divide the incidental costs.

Dinners and breakfasts

The world tour begins with dinner on January 1 and ends with dinner on December 31. For Segment riders dinners and breakfasts are provided beginning with dinner the first night of any stage and ends with breakfast the day a stage ends. Limited vegetarian and conventional diets will be provided for. Vegetarians please note: We try our best to accommodate you, however, a lot of the world does not understand what a strict vegetarian requires. It is highly recommended that you bring protein supplements with you for those times when suitable vegetarian protein is not readily available. We do not recommend this tour for vegans. *If you are not a vegetarian please leave any designated food for the vegetarians.*

Not included:

Personal liability or medical insurance (required), free transportation to the beginning or from the finish of the ride, lunches, alcoholic beverages, laundry charges, phone calls, souvenirs, and other items of a personal nature are to be provided by the rider. Lodging and meals for family and friends visiting riders along the way, and alternative lodging or meals chosen by riders, are not included. We will, however, do our best to let you know about a few of the local services, such as cafes, grocery stores, restaurants, and restrooms in the area.

Gear:

Use your designated bag space wisely - 17X17X35 inches, a little larger than an Army duffel bag. All your gear, except for your tent, should fit into one large bag, or two medium bags. Two medium bags are preferable as weight quickly becomes important. Remember, even though the truck will haul your gear from one location to another, **you will have to haul it from the truck to your campsite** (or room) and back each day. *A good idea is to bring along a small backpack for carrying just the gear you need for the night, especially if you are heading to a local hotel.* The security of your gear is your responsibility, so please make sure it goes with you or it is neatly packed away on the truck which will be locked each night. Don't leave gear lying on the ground near the gear truck. It will get wet if it rains and will create a hazard for anyone walking around camp.

Generally, the gear truck leaves for the next day's destination no later than 8:30 a.m. Every rider is also expected to be off the grounds of the previous night's stay and on their way no later than 8:30 a.m. as well.

Age

Every rider must be at least 18 years old the day they join Odyssey, unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Smoking:

TK&A rides are smoke free events and we ask everyone to abide by this. If you choose to smoke, please do it privately.

Money:

Please arrange to have access to enough cash to fulfill your needs throughout the entire trip. Credit cards and use of cash machines are the easiest ways to access money overseas. A good rule of thumb for world riders would be to have between \$1,000 and \$1,200 per month available to them. Realistically, this would cover the cost of an occasional extra hotel room, City tours, museum admissions, entertainment, souvenirs, postage, film, etc. You can manage with less, but under \$25 per day does not allow for emergencies such as major parts replacement, tent repair on the road, replacing lost items, etc.

Would anyone ever be asked to leave an event?

Hopefully not! TK&A, however, reserves the **total and complete right** to ask anyone to leave the tour if their continued presence will, in our opinion, have an unsafe outcome or disruptive impact on the event or the people involved in the event.

Here are some likely circumstances:

1. Illegal or poor riding protocol, especially after being asked to ride more carefully.
2. Medical reason that would make continued participation dangerous.
3. Alcohol abuse or use of illegal substances.
4. Abusive nature to riders or staff or a lack of concern for others or facilities.
5. Obnoxious and/or loud behavior.
6. Breaking the law.
7. These conditions apply to all staff members as well.

B i c y c l e e q u i p m e n t & a c c e s s o r i e s

Your bike:

What is a perfect bike, anyway? One that fits you well and has lots of gears (preferably 24 to 27) for energy efficient cycling, especially in the climbing mode! If you are on the world tour, your bike will be included in the cost of your tour. It will be a relatively light weight road bike, modified especially for our tour. If you are a segment rider, you may purchase an Odyssey bike at a discount, depending on the number of stages you are riding.

Since 1987, we have seen all types of bikes on our long distance events - touring bikes, sport bikes, racing bikes, mountain bikes, old bikes, new bikes, borrowed bikes, cheap bikes, expensive bikes, and a couple of old boat anchors as well. Even though it might be possible to pedal nearly anything, we would rather see you comfortable and have a better chance of enjoying the experience.

Tips for selecting your bike for Odyssey:

Expense - Figure at least \$1000 for the bike and a few hundred dollars for accessories. Of course, if you want to be really impressive, you can spend several thousand dollars and be the envy of everyone you meet. Even though high-cost equipment has plenty of value and lots of prestige, we do not recommend extremely valuable bikes, for longer stages of Odyssey. Bikes are often loaded on and off of ferries, boats and planes, and nicks and scratches are pretty much guaranteed. An alternative is to purchase a really great used bike, which could be a great deal if it has the right components and it fits you properly. Your local bike shop should be able to help you.

Frame - A good choice is a light sport touring bike. They are quick and easy to pedal, but designed to carry some gear and plenty of water. It would be preferable if the frame fits at least a 700 x 28 tire that holds at least 95 pounds of air pressure.

Mountain Bikes - Mountain bikes are not generally recommended except for the South American segment, where we will all want to use wider tires. You will expend more energy pedaling one. We advise changing to a narrower wheel and slick tires to help reduce road friction if using a mountain bike.

Fit - This is the single most important factor in making a long ride comfortable. Get your shop to help make adjustments and learn about proper seat height and handlebar position.

Seat - Get a comfortable one and ride on it as much as possible. A few bucks spent here will help. Butt acclimation only occurs with time in the saddle, so expect feedback from your posterior as you increase your daily mileage.

Water Containers - The ability to attach at least two large water bottles to your bike is a must. Three are better. Hydration packs (a container designed like a small backpack to carry water), are highly recommended.

Rack or bag attachment - You'll need a bag to carry your daily necessities. Make sure you have a secure and safe method for attaching the bag to the bike. A rear-rack bag is usually a little more stable than a front bag and provides ample room for your repair kit, supplies, and extra goodies. Also consider adding an under-the-seat wedge bag for a little extra room.

Fenders - Not required. Fenders have pros and cons. Most people don't use them. However, they do keep your back from getting sprayed with muddy water in the rain. Strictly a personal decision, but, they also add weight on those long climbs!

Padding - A little extra padding on your handlebars or on your seat, can be useful to make long miles more comfortable and to help reduce numbness.

Spare parts - In addition to the supplies you may bring, we carry lots of spare parts, including tubes and tires of various sizes. While parts are for sale, most mechanical services are complimentary.

Gearing - We recommend a triple crank. If you are using a road bike, the traditional chainrings in the front are 52-42-30, while the back cassette should be at least a 12 - 27, but 11-32 (with a mountain bike derailleur) is highly recommended. This gearing should get you up any mountain you climb without putting too much strain on your knees.

Componentry - In order for our mechanics to maintain your bicycle and supply replacement parts, we recommend two brands: A) Shimano 105 or Ultegra or B) Campagnolo Mirage or better. If this is all Greek to you, don't worry, your bike shop will know what we mean. If you decide to use gears larger than 12 -27 on the back (which we recommend) we suggest a mountain bike rear derailleur such as a Shimano XTR be used.

The right stuff - a special commentary on gears:

Most riders seek plenty of advice about the type of equipment they need. Gearing is always at the top of the list! TK&A has watched many cyclists arrive with a mere 10 to 12 gears. Many even stated that they asked "experienced cyclists" or store owners for advice and were told that two front gears were going to be enough. If you are exceptionally well trained and don't mind standing up on the hills, then maybe two chain rings are enough.

TK&A recommends that every rider install a triple crank resulting in at least 24 to 27 gears. This provides the low gearing necessary for a seated cyclist to climb the passes while maintaining 90 revolutions per minute - the ideal cadence for energy efficient riding. Soooo please, listen to our advice, and install a triple. If you don't like it, you can always remove it later.

What's needed while riding:

We get lots of questions about what to wear and what to carry on your bike. Here is some insight into both:

Helmet - Goes without saying, even when on a short, in-camp test ride. We recommend yellow helmets, which provide high visibility.

Bike gloves - Prevent scrapes, blisters, slivers and help to cut hand numbness. Helps to keep hands clean and promotes an unusual tan. Use polypro or rainproof gloves over your biking gloves, or cotton gloves underneath, on those cool mornings.

Bike shorts - Essential for comfort and "butt kindness". Those pesky seams in normal shorts will do you in.

Shirt - Bike jerseys, or a favorite shirt. Visibility counts here, Be bright, especially early in the day and late in the afternoon.

Toe clips or cleats - Dramatically improve riding efficiency. Cleats should be adjusted correctly to avoid knee problems. Carry sandals, slippers, or other shoes for walking around to prevent trashing your cleats and delicate floors. Never wear your cleats on gym floors, ferry decks, and other surfaces which may be damaged.

2-3 large water bottles - Attached to bike. Add ice and wrap in foam, old socks you know the history of, etc. to help keep your water cool. Investigate the hydration packs that carry like backpacks.

Tire pump- Bring a pump that attaches to your bike and has the correct adapter for your tire's valves - consider a dual action pump that pumps in both directions.

Basic tool kit - Patch kit, tire irons, small screwdriver & wrench, Allen wrenches, 2 spare tubes, plastic bag for putting chain back on (keeps hands free of grease), cloth, chain oil, and anything else that might be necessary for making

minor repairs or adjustments.

Bike lock - No need for a 5 pounder. Consider a small cable and padlock for a lunch break or snooze in the park, especially in cities and near colleges. It also helps to rest a couple of bikes together and hook helmet straps around the frame and wheels. We recommend locking up your bicycle whenever you're not cycling.

Mirror - On handlebars or helmet-*is required! Please use one, just like you would in any other vehicle.*

Bike bag for gear - Handlebar bag, trunk bag on rear bike rack, seat wedge bag or rear pannier. A popular combination is a seat wedge and trunk bag. Some have even used a small backpack and secured it snugly (carefully using line or bungee cord) to their rear rack during travel.

Extra clothes - We recommend carrying a wind/rain jacket and pants on your bicycle every day.

Food supply - A small supply of goodies such as figs, candy and fruit is always advisable. On long remote days, especially ones that fall on Sunday, plan to purchase and carry your lunch with you. Carrying energy drink powder to add to your water is also a great resource.

Medical kit - Aspirin, bandaids, gauze wraps, sport tape, elastic bandage, compresses, alcohol wipes, etc. that might be useful for scrapes, headaches, or even a medical emergency.

Sun cream - You will get lots and lots of sun. PABA 15 plus is normal. Might try higher levels and several colors for your nose.

Sunglasses - For protection from the sun, wind, dirt and flying bugs.

Mosquito repellent - Won't need it everywhere, but when you do, it's invaluable.

Toilet paper - Might be able to sell some to someone in need!

Wallet, money, and ID - Wrap in ziplock bag.

Daily Route Guide (DRG) - TK&A provides these helpful directions daily. There are plenty of creative ways to carry your DRG. TK&A even sells DRG holders that attach to your handlebars and are ideal for reading your DRG easily.

Camera and extra film - If you don't carry a light weight camera and use it, you will be sorry for the rest of your life.

Zip-lock bags - Carry a handful of heavy duty, sandwich size bags. The inside of one of these bags may be the only dry place in the country. Some handy uses include—keeping your wallet dry, collecting loose money, containing items you want to find easily, putting chains back on, inexpensive ice bags, keeping winning lottery tickets dry, sealing up clean or dirty clothes, or handling your DRGs.

Your bike needs love:

To ensure the trustworthiness of your bike, begin preparing it as soon as possible for your extraordinary adventure. Don't wait to change your handlebar tape, install new derailleurs or adjust your seat height. Find your best fit now, and get your bike in top mechanical condition. Make sure that you have plenty of rubber on your tires. We promise you won't be sorry.

"Better than new" is a phrase sometimes used to describe machinery that has all the kinks taken out. For a bicycle, this means you won't have to worry about the new parts stretching or loosening. Nor will you have to worry about worn bearings, frayed cables or weakened tire rubber. Because you have taken the time to finish repairs and improvements, "better than new" describes a time when you won't have to worry about repairs.

If you are considering getting your bike overhauled, (or doing this yourself), we suggest at least the following eight adjustments:

1. Have all the bearings repacked and make sure your headset and crank are tight.
2. Check all your cables for wear and replace as needed.
3. Replace your tires if they have more than 1,500 road miles.
4. Replace the freewheel and chain if they are more than one year old or have 2,000 road miles.
5. Check your brake shoes for wear and replace as needed.
6. New, bright, handlebar tape for safety is inexpensive and a wise investment.
7. Check your derailleurs for needed adjustments or replacement.
8. True up your wheels and replace or repair any loose spokes.

These eight steps are basic to most bike shops' overhauls and are common road repairs. No one can guarantee what repairs you may need, if any, but these are a good place to start.

Keep it clean:

Many cyclists take the time to keep their bike scrubbed and their chain cleaned and oiled. This helps insure getting the maximum performance out of their vehicle and really impresses people. Simply a dry cloth or a little soap and water can work wonders, as does a chain cleaning kit. Carefully avoid steam cleaning devices, they will de-grease some very important parts of your bike.

Daily bicycle safety checklist:

Here's a simple routine check for all the essential safety related systems on a bicycle. It takes only a few seconds, so it's easy enough to do before you start each day's ride. It will uncover the things that are working loose, wearing, or about to fail, so that you can get them fixed before they become serious and expensive repairs.

Apply the front brake and rock the bike back and forth. Check for proper brake adjustment; the brake lever isn't bottoming on the handlebar, the brake shoes hit the rim and not the tire, and the brakes feel solid. Rock the bike back and forth with the front brake applied and feel for the "clunk" that will tell you there is too much play in the headset. Release the brakes and check that the brake shoes aren't dragging on the rim.

Raise the front wheel off the ground. Squeeze the tire to check the pressure to see if your air went anywhere-after a few days your fingers will get calibrated so you can tell if air is needed. Wiggle the wheel sideways and feel for excessive looseness in the bearings. Spin the wheel and check the tire for cuts and imbedded glass. Notice whether it is in "true" and runs smoothly and that the brakes aren't rubbing. Then, do the same for the rear wheel.

Grasp a pedal and wiggle. Any excessive play in crank bearings? Cranks or chainrings loose? Pedals turn freely? Any crunchies? Get your crank problems taken care of right away to save you big hassles and bucks.

Shake your bike vigorously or pick it up and drop it 8 inches. Anything fall off? Any abnormal rattles? Check all over for loose nuts and bolts. Anything missing? Where DID you leave your pump? Zippers zipped?

Then continue to pay attention to your bike while you're on the road. Listen for unusual noises, pay attention to anything that feels strange or different. If you catch it before it fails, you can get it fixed when you want to rather than in the middle of the day when you would rather be pedaling.

One bike only:

We do have our limitations. As you can imagine, we are not able to carry extra bikes for any participant. You can envision how quickly the space in our truck would evaporate to nothing. And, if we did it for one, we'd want to do it for everyone.

C l o t h i n g & E q u i p m e n t

Think it through:

Your cycling adventure will present a variety of conditions each and every day of the trip. It is possible, however, to take all you need and still travel relatively lightly by using the tricks of seasoned travelers. Layer your clothes for versatility. Whenever possible make your gear do double duty. Be creative about what to take and what you decide to leave home. There are plenty of laundries along the way to avoid repulsing your fellow riders.

The ideas below are our recommendations. You might want to make some slight modifications based on your own experience, preferences and creativity. Daydream your way through a couple of days of the trip and see if you've left anything out, or if you have included anything you won't really need. Keep visibility and safety in mind at all times. Make allowances for the time you will be pedaling and expending lots of energy, as well as the other times when you'll be a tourist, walking and gawking, and in need of walking footwear and additional clothing.

Don't forget to keep the combined measurement for all your gear to about 16X16X35" Throw in a few zip-lock bags for separating out dirty clothes. Wrap all your clean clothes in plastic bags to ward off the unexpected downpour.

Mark your bag with your name, in large letters, so you can find it in a pile of look-a-like gear bags. In fact, mark all your stuff, at least the stuff you want to keep a handle on. Labeling your luggage makes it easier for both riders and staff to identify luggage.

Clothing & Equipment - Use as checklist. Remember, everything must fit into a relatively compact space!

Riding apparel - (Remember to think visible-bright, bright, & bright)

Helmet - Make sure your helmet is an ANSI approved model. Some helmets may not be adequately tested for crash protection, so make sure your helmet is ANSI tested, has no cracks or dents and fits snugly on your head.

Riding gloves - Cushions your hands and provides protection in case of a fall. Consider thick padded gloves. Use a light polypro or wool glove over or under your gloves in cool weather.

Riding shoes - Stiff-soled bicycling shoes are best. Cleated shoes if you are accustomed to wearing them. If necessary, carry other shoes for walking and exploring.

3 pairs of riding shorts - Bicycling shorts with a padded crotch. Running or walking shorts are not the best idea. Irritating seams exist between your seat and the bike's seat. Remember, no underwear under bicycling shorts.

2-4 jerseys - Jerseys are breathable and are great for keeping you warm or cool when needed. In addition to t-shirt style jerseys, you may want to bring a long sleeve jersey or arm warmers, as well as, a sleeveless jersey.

1 pair of tights - Cycling tights will keep your knees warm while cycling in cool weather.

4 pair socks - Athletic socks are more efficient than regular socks and soak up less rain water. Booties or Gore-Tex socks come in handy when rain is pouring.

1 long sleeve light colored shirt - For keeping the sun and bugs off.

Raingear - Waterproof nylon or Gore-Tex type materials are best. Plastic raingear is easily torn. Jacket and pants, and

don't forget some type of shoe covering to help keep your feet warm and dry.

Leg bands - To keep long pant legs out of your chain.

Eye protection - Helps keep the sun, bugs, dust, and dirt out of your eyes.

Other clothes for comfort, style, and function:

You may find the following items enjoyable options to choose from after cycling all day.

Walking shorts

Long pants, sweat pants or jeans

2 shirts or 2 blouses

3 sets of underwear

Shoes - walking shoes and plastic slippers for showering

Outerwear - jacket, coat, windbreaker or sweater, whichever suits your preferences

Swimsuit

Other Essentials:

Toilet articles - soap, razor, tooth stuff, floss, contact lens supplies, chapstick, Vaseline, talc, mosquito repellent, sunscreen, Tampons, etc.

Towel, hand towel, & wash cloth.

Prescription medicines - in their original marked containers with enough for the entire trip, plus a little extra.

Extra prescription glasses or contact lenses - don't leave home without them.

Addresses & phone numbers - of people you want to contact, both along the route and back home.

Journal, pens, stamps - etc., etc.

Reading material - if everyone brings one paperback, we'll have a great library.

Bandannas - useful as a sweat band, handkerchief, napkin, and much more.

Medical supplies - build a basic portable kit that can deal with normal irritations and even emergencies. Aspirin, Advil, tape, bandaids, gauze, athletic wrap, alcohol wipes, cotton balls, ace bandages, etc. are all things that you might need. Zip-lock bags (freezer strength) are ideally suited as ice bags for knees, ankles, etc. 2" tape and non-adhesive sport wrap is great if you need your ankles wrapped. TK&A's limited supplies are for medical emergencies, so please pick up your own supplies along the way.

Duct tape - billions of uses.

Zip lock bag supply - several in different sizes for wrapping those items you want to keep dry.

Garbage bags - a handful of these for your laundry, to line your duffel bag, to toss dirty or wet laundry in, etc.

Bank Card - obvious uses. It is easier to have someone put cash into your bank account for you to access via a cash machine than to get cash in any other way.

Pictures - of your family and loved ones who made the trip possible.

Optional goodies - things that you know you will need - nah! Think carefully, take only what you know you will need. Not a penny more.

C a m p i n g E q u i p m e n t & T e c h n i q u e s

It's a blast:

Camping your way across major portions of Washington is a brand new experience for many cyclists. Selecting the proper gear, using it correctly, staying dry, drying out, sleeping comfortably, and pitching and repacking your portable home can have many challenging moments.

The following information will help both the experienced and inexperienced camper be a little more comfortable, a little quicker at setting up and tearing down, and will increase his or her ability to stay dry in the pouring rain.

Selecting your camping equipment:

Price is always a factor and should be carefully considered when making your purchases. If you can't afford the money, take extra care to make cheap equipment work for you. Or, better yet, borrow some equipment from a friend. If you borrow it, take good care of it, keep it as dry as possible (dry daily) and return it clean and in good repair. The following is a list of items we recommend to help you enjoy camping.

Tent

Tent ground cloth

Sleeping bag

Insulating ground pad

Sheet & Pillow

Flashlight

Line

Duct tape

Stuff sacks

Sleeping warm, comfortably and getting a good night's sleep:

Shelter...your tent - Select your tent carefully since it will be your "home away from home." Bring a roomy self-standing tent that will be relatively easy to put up and take down. Practice setting it up at least three times (living room, lawn, and in the wind) before you leave home. Make sure all the parts (nylon, poles, lines, stakes, stuff sack for storage, and any other gizmos) are present and accounted for and that you can find a use for each piece.

A good quality self standing tent (often a dome configuration) is going to set you back at least \$125, unless you score a sale or negotiate well. A 2-person dome-type tent is inexpensive, roomy, stands on its own, and most important, is quick and easy to put up. Make sure it has mosquito netting that will cover all the openings to insure peace at night. A waterproof rainfly is required as well. A rainfly is a separate waterproof covering that goes over most of your tent. Make sure the fly isn't in contact with your tent or it will "sweat" at that point of contact inside your tent. The tent itself isn't waterproof, except for the floor and a few inches up the sides. Use a seam sealer to make sure that the seams in the floor, lower sides, and rainfly don't leak. Your rainfly is your first line of defense in keeping you and your belongings dry from rain and heavy condensation.

Select a heavy piece of plastic or heavy "space blanket" for use under your tent as a ground cloth. This helps protect your tent floor from dirt, sand, gravel, pine needles, running water, and condensation. Be careful not to let your

ground cloth stick out past the walls of your tent. Instead, take any extra material and carefully roll it under itself toward the ground. This system helps insure that rain runoff, if headed for your tent, will seep under the ground cloth, and not pool directly under your tent floor.

Sleeping bag - A light weight bag (1-1/2 to 2# down bag is great but hard to dry, a 3# fiberfill bag is about perfect). A dry, fluffed up, and properly insulated sleeping bag is a warm and comfortable bag. For a change, try placing a sheet on top of your pads and use your sleeping bag as a "blanket". This is an excellent technique for hot and humid evenings.

Insulating ground protection (3/8" or thicker) - for padding and insulation from the cool ground. Tent floors and sleeping bags offer little, if any, protection for the cool ground that's waiting to suck the living heat out of you. So design a sleeping pad system that combines insulation, comfort and one that is large enough to keep you insulated even if you move around a lot. A closed cell (doesn't suck up water) ground pad such as blue foam or ensolite, coupled with a Thermo-rest type air mattress makes for a great combo. Big air mattresses, unless they are really good quality and you have a great pump (or plenty of extra air) are not usually satisfactory. Don't forget a sheet and a pillow for extra comfort.

Flashlight - We won't state the obvious on why they are needed. Please bring plenty of spare batteries.

Line, cord, parachute cord, rope, string.

Whatever you call it, bring a couple of hundred feet along. Get the bright stuff so that you won't trip quite so many people. Use it for drying lines, tying things, fixing things, renting out, attaching things, etc.

Duct-tape. Another miracle for modern camping.

Stuff sacks - with compression straps are great for shrinking the volume that pillows and sleeping bags consume. Products made by companies like Eagle Creek and Granite Gear have great compartmentalizing supplies.

Comfort Techniques that will make you come back for more!

Tent tips

Locate a flat spot so you won't be climbing uphill all night long. Find a smooth surface for your tent to minimize the need for body contortions. Find relatively high ground so that rain won't cascade its way down to your shelter. Stake your tent securely, even if the ground feels like petrified pine trees. If needed, use rocks as anchors. If you choose to leave the fly off your tent on a gorgeous night, keep it handy. The weather knows what you are trying to get away with. Many a damp morning will necessitate the need to stuff away a wet tent and fly. No problem, just set it up as soon as you get to camp and it will dry in no time at all. If you leave a wet tent or sleeping bag stuffed for a few days, each will give birth...to mold. Keep them aired out and dry them well when you get home. Organize your tent before you nod off to make it easier to find your flashlight, get dressed the next morning, and locate all the essentials like your ID, money, pocket knife, favorite souvenir, etc. Place your clothes between your sleeping bag and tent wall to help keep your bag dry by preventing the moisture caused by touching a waterproof surface. Don't put plastic over your sleeping bag unless you want to get wet from lots of condensation. To help cut condensation, place really wet clothes in a plastic bag until you can dry them the next day. Whenever possible, keep your tent doors unzipped several inches to increase air circulation and reduce condensation. Zippers make a lot of noise so practice your quiet opening technique unless you want everyone to know you are heading for the bathroom in the middle of the night. Mosquitoes know we are coming to town so use your netting and repellent to ward them off.

If possible, air your bag out every day. The moisture from your body, your breath, the air, and wet clothing and equipment will settle into the fibers of any sleeping bag. Stuffing it in your stuff-sack also causes the moisture to spread to drier parts of the bag.

You can air a bag in the sun on top of your tent, across a bike (watch for grease), over a rail, fluffed open inside your

tent, on a carefully placed line that won't cut anyone's head off or trip them up.

Drying your wet clothing

Use the same techniques as described for your sleeping bag. Some riders actually dry certain items as they pedal to their next destination, obviously taking care not to have the items flapping into their spokes. Most things dry quickly. If a few days of wet weather hits, just fluff your stuff and lay it out in your tent. You can also try a laundromat.

Laundry

Laundry is your own responsibility. There are a few of laundromats along our route. Consider washing and rinsing out your cycling clothes in sinks along the route.

Sleeping comfortably

Follow the suggestions above and keep your stuff dry. Sometimes people take a nap during the day to give them a little more energy at night. The best technique for sleeping well is to finish a hard ride, select a level surface, get your insulation properly organized, go to the bathroom, climb into your dry sleeping bag, and relax. You might try writing your memoirs, or someone else's, to make you fall asleep more quickly.

Snorers

If you are a heavy snorer, you will become known. You might consider warning unsuspecting campers of your enthusiasm for inhaling the night air.

Night trek

Before you go to bed, its helpful to know where the closest restroom is located or any other facilities of importance to you.

Wake up call

There are several techniques for waking up. Alarm clocks, alarm watches, zippers sliding open, just naturally waking up with the sunrise, and of course, camping close to the gear truck. If you want an informal wake-up call, the gear truck is the place to be. Some riders will be up and packing before *you* might feel that civilization should be allowed to function.

Smiling during adversity

A great technique to master. Fellow cyclists and staff will be impressed when you appear to be enjoying the cool wet weather or the hundred degree headwind day. Smiling is contagious and keeps people wondering.

View camping as a sociological experience

One huge advantage about camping on a cycling adventure is the natural interaction that occurs between everyone on the trip. You will meet people more quickly and share many additional experiences together. People pitch in and offer a hand putting up shelters and taking care of miscellaneous chores.

TK&A hopes that you will enjoy the experience and will be quite happy to pass on information and techniques that will make you a "happy camper".

S a f e C y c l i n g

No doubt about it, TK&A is *firmly and inflexibly committed* to insuring that every participant rides safely, legally, courteously, and in as much comfort as possible, all the time.

Safe cycling saves lives:

Safety is the single most important factor when considering the elements necessary to produce a successful bicycling event. Skillful and courteous riding helps insure that cyclists ride defensively and in control, eliminating many tight and dangerous situations. The bottom line, of course, is that each participant has a greater chance of safely negotiating long distances on a bicycle.

Our events also bring visibility and interest wherever we go. It is our intention to have an extremely positive impact on each and every community we pass through or visit. Courteous, safe, legal, polite and predictable riding practices leave an extremely positive impact on both local drivers and the communities at large.

The basics riding protocol:

Please try to follow these widely accepted, safe bicycling practices. Remember, just like in your regular life, you alone are responsible for your own safety while on your bike, so please be alert at all times.

1. A "safe riding attitude" should always be a higher priority than speed, sight-seeing, impressing others, etc.
2. Ride for enjoyment and at a speed that is safe for your interest, ability, and the conditions at hand.
3. Be particularly alert when riding around cyclists that aren't as conscientious or knowledgeable about safety as you.
4. Always wear your helmet, gloves, and use your mirror.
5. Obey the same laws that motorists must follow:
 - Stop at stop lights and signs.
 - Yield where appropriate.
 - Signal your turns.
 - Ride with, not against, traffic.
 - Stay as far to the right as road surfaces, parked cars, and traffic conditions allow.
7. Make eye contact with other drivers to insure that each of you knows the other's intentions - to turn, yield, stop, etc.
8. Ride single file and in short lines (5 or less) to give cars an opportunity to pass. It is illegal to ride 3 abreast, so don't!
9. Two abreast is legal and okay in most states on lightly traveled roads, but move to single file when a car approaches from the rear. Spread the word "car back" up the line.
10. When you pull off the road, *pull waaaay off*, so no one in your group gets caught in the road. You also don't want to force other cyclists into the traffic lane.
11. Pass only where it is safe and after you communicate your intentions. Generally, only pass other cyclists on the left.
12. Never wear a radio headset- they are illegal in most states and are not allowed while pedaling a TK&A ride.
13. Avoid pacelines and drafting unless you and the other riders know exactly what to do and are prepared to do it. Keep your lines less than 5 riders.
14. Tell other riders your intentions to pass, about road conditions, traffic, RR tracks, dangerous situations, etc. Communicate loudly, clearly, and frequently. Say "on your left" instead of "left".
15. Watch for opening doors from parked cars.
16. Use your Daily Route Guides - maps and written directions.
17. Consumption of alcohol, in any amount, is strongly discouraged until you have completely finished your day's ride.
18. Lights are required, by law, until 1/2 hour after sunrise and 1/2 hour before sunset. We discourage riding during darkness.
19. When braking suddenly, shift your weight to the rear for increased stability.

20. Critique your buds. If someone is doing something incorrect, perhaps even embarrassing you and the group, you should feel that it is within your right to say something! *We would even suggest that you have a responsibility to say something.* If you are uncomfortable saying something, let the staff know and we will.

Traffic Laws:

In most jurisdictions the traffic code says that bicycle riders "... shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to a driver of a vehicle . . ." You have a right to a place on the roadway, but riding irresponsibly and unpredictably only reinforces the notion held by many drivers that bicycles are children's toys and belong on the sidewalk. A group as large as this trek can make a very powerful statement, but only if each of us rides *SAFELY and LEGALLY*. Specifically this means:

Obey traffic signs and signals. Stop at stop signs and red lights and yield when directed. Take responsibility for your own behavior at intersections rather than waiting for someone to yell, "Clear!" and swarming through the stop sign.

Signal your turns. Make turns from the appropriate lane and give hand signals to make sure everyone behind you (bicyclists and motorists alike) knows what you intend to do.

Establish eye contact with approaching drivers before you turn to insure that you have been spotted and that allowances will be made.

Ride single file whenever traffic is present. It's difficult to hear approaching traffic with the wind in your ears and conversation around you, so we require a mirror to make it easier and safer to check for overtaking traffic.

Ride as far to the right as safety and road conditions allow, so overtaking traffic can easily pass. If the lane is too narrow to allow traffic to pass safely, move far enough left to encourage drivers behind to wait until the other lane is clear before passing.

How far is too far right? If you are in danger of getting nailed by an opening car door. If you can see your reflection in a rearview mirror. The road is too rough. Obstacles such as glass, traffic control bumps that separate lanes of traffic and define lane boundaries, grates, water, lumber, nails and other debris are in your path. Poor or dangerous shoulder surfaces. Dangerous drop-offs and railings. As you can see, you should be prepared for a variety of circumstances, so always use your best judgment.

Keep the roadway clear when stopping for a break or to check your DRG. You don't want to force other cyclists or overtaking traffic into the oncoming traffic lane. Every time you pull off the road, think. "A.m. I going to force others into a dangerous situation?"

Pacelines:

Riding in a pace line (following close behind another rider) is not encouraged. Most of the accidents on our rides occur from a brief inattentive moment while riding close to another cyclist (the rider behind usually touches the other's rear wheel). If you do choose to paceline, pay attention, and be sure everyone else in the group is also paying attention. Sight-seeing and casual conversation are incompatible with "sucking on someone's wheel."

Railroad tracks:

They'll getcha, so be careful on every single set, especially when they are wet, or when they angle, or if they look deep and wide. Negotiate each track as close to 90° as possible, but only after you make sure that the coast is clear of traffic, cyclists, trucks, trains, planes and ships.

Riding after dark:

The best policy about riding outside the hours of daylight is, DON'T. Riding in the dark on roads you are not familiar with, where motorists aren't expecting to see you, is not just a bad idea, it's a really bad idea. And getting into camp late

will probably be an unpleasant end to the day. Services like showers and meals may not be available, and you will have to set up camp in the dark.

If you choose to ride after dark, you must use lights. A legal set of lights includes a white headlight and a red rear reflector (must be a light in some states). We recommend a rear light because it is much more visible than a reflector. Light-up times are from a half-hour before sunset until a half-hour after sunrise. If you expect to have an early morning or late day, carry lights with you. If you are caught unexpectedly by darkness, one of the support vans can give you a ride into camp. You can make up the miles the next day, if that is a concern of yours. *Riding after dark without lights is illegal and is not an option.*

Alcohol:

It is important for a cyclist to maintain awareness, even at the end of the day. You might be tired, locals might be in a hurry to get home, road conditions might be poor, and the weather may have made an ugly change. This is the time to remain as alert as possible, not become impaired via alcohol, even if only a couple of beers or a glass of wine. So, please, refrain from drinking any alcoholic beverages until you have completely finished riding for the day.

Think of it this way - who is the "designated driver" for your bicycle? If a "cold one" is part of the end of your day, check in at camp, park your bike, and find a brew.

Visibility:

When you buy clothes, please remember to buy as much bright stuff as your wardrobe allows. If possible, always wear something fluorescent, regardless of the temperature. Consider "bright dots" for your shoes and strips for your bike. Think visibility! Think safety!

Radios:

Leave your Walkman for evening entertainment. Never ride with one. They take away most of a cyclist's awareness of his or her surroundings. They are also illegal in several areas, and should be in all others.

Communicating your intentions:

Communication skills are very important to any cyclist. Most of us know some basic sign language that communicates displeasure (on very rare occasions, of course) with the conduct of others. This may not be enough, however, to communicate all the messages that need to be passed on for safe cycling. When riding with others, be sure to communicate freely with the riders behind (and in front) of you about such things as debris in the roadway, that a stop is coming up, that an approaching car might make a sudden turn, that a door might open into the roadway, that a tire-grabbin' grate is waiting a few feet ahead, or that a law enforcement officer with radar is hiding in the bushes.

When you overtake and pass a walker, runner, cyclist, etc., it is important to tell them your intentions. We suggest that "passing on the left" communicates a lot more than just saying "left". This is a great habit to get into, and necessary for safe and courteous cycling.

Policing cycling conduct

If we can do anything to help you become a safer cyclist, we will let you know what we think. We also ask, since it is impossible for the staff to see how people ride during the day, to please consider it your responsibility (and right) to help keep all riders cycling safely and please let us know if someone's actions concern you. This may be difficult, but the safety of all of us is at stake. So please, when you see something odd, especially if it is done repetitively, say something.

If you are uncomfortable saying something or it doesn't seem to be doing any good, let the staff know and we will ask for improvement. TK&A's staff can't stress safety enough and will not compromise in this arena!

What about bicycle helmets?

It is common to see people involved in sports wearing head protection like football players, rock climbers, river rafters, and hockey players. All for good reason - each sport presents a risk of head injury. Bicycling presents similar hazards and requires similar precautions. About 80% of all bicycling accident fatalities each year result from head injuries. Many more cyclists are permanently impaired from running their heads into curbs, poles, and the pavement. Scrapes and broken bones heal, but scrambled brains may not. A lot of this tragedy is preventable. The simple precaution of wearing a bicycle helmet may prevent severe injury and save lives.

Many serious bicycle accidents happen on "quiet" residential streets, in parking lots and on bike paths. A large number (95%) of bicycle accidents don't even involve automobiles. Accidents also aren't a problem of just beginning riders, or just experienced riders, or just young riders, or just older riders. Every bicyclist should wear a helmet, regardless of their age, and whether they are riding across the street, or across the state.

On all of the events TK&A has produced, we have never had a serious head injury result from a fall, even though plenty of folks have taken a tumble. These stats would be significantly different if we didn't require helmets. We were the first to require helmets on our events, and it has paid off. Please never let us remind you to put yours on or to strap it up. Thanks.

E n e r g y C o n s e r v a t i o n

What's the story on being able to keep my energy up and pedal the distances required each day of the trip? Good question. Here are some of TK&A's suggestions for comfortably squeezing more miles out of the food you eat and the rest that you get.

1. **Drink a lot of fluids, and often.** Long distance cycling can easily evaporate away a gallon or more of water on a hot day, requiring you to conscientiously refill your large water bottles at every opportunity. Alcohol is a no no, of course! Coffee and some soft drinks can act as a diuretic and actually cause you to lose water. Nothing replaces plain old water, energy drinks, and juices. Ask for ice when you fill 'em up.
2. **Eat a lot, and often.** Long distance cycling can easily burn 6000 to 8000 calories of food and snacks each and every day of the trip. Now is your excuse to eat up, as much as you want, as often as you want. Eat your way through Washington State! Such a deal! Only the most dedicated consumer of everything edible will actually gain weight during their trip. If you have it in you, go for it.
3. **Stretch.** Take a few minutes to stretch before you start the day's ride or after a long break. This helps to reduce injuries such as tendinites, strained or pulled muscles, etc.
4. **Cover up on cool mornings.** Leggings, long underwear over your biking shorts, gloves over or under your riding gloves, etc. can make for a much warmer, less stressful, and much more energy efficient start on a cool morning.
5. **Start out slowly.** Avoid the tendency to get caught in rapid starts and pushes at the beginning of the day's ride. You may quickly find that you have expended much more energy than you intended to, and you will likely have to pay extra "tired dues" for the remainder of the day. Instead, start each day slowly and consider the remaining in your smaller chain ring for easier spinning for a few miles, perhaps 10 to 20 miles or until you have warmed up.
6. **Practice setting a reasonable pace** for yourself and holding it. If traveling in a small group, set a pace that's comfortable for all the members of your group, especially the slowest rider. If the group is a little fast for you or you've had enough, let them know you are dropping off and that you will see them later.

Remember, if you are hurting, you're working too hard - shift down, slow down, or stop and rest. Save today's

energy so that you can "blow them away another day."

7. **Rest.** Great idea. Rest at convenient intervals throughout the day, say every hour or so, but especially when you are tired. At lunch. When getting snacks and refilling your water bottles. Or whenever a quite "power lounging" moment presents itself.

You will be more efficient and cover greater distances on a "given tank of fuel" by riding slowly and steadily for longer periods of times. Cranking fast, then resting, cranking fast, then resting again isn't very efficient. Instead, select the right gear and maintain the correct cadence while riding at a steady pace.

8. **Don't ride in "high gears"** that will cause strain to your body. Learn to shift down so you can get pretty good at holding your rpm's at about 90 (that is, your foot completes 90 full revolutions every minute). To do this, shift down as you start going up an incline or as you become tired. You will be able to ride hours longer and feel less burned out if you get used to shifting down and maintaining a proper "cadence."

Proper cadence is really important for keeping excessive pressure off your poorly designed knees (nothing personal). When your cadence drops, the pressure increases on your knees and you are much more likely to experience an "overuse injury." Practice makes perfect! Make 90 rpm's a habit, all the time.

How about standing up? Great idea. Practice shifting up and slowing your cadence and lift off your saddle for a refreshing change of pace. This technique offers variety, relief for a sore butt and makes it easier to climb some inclines.

8. **If a day is too tough** because of an illness, injury or you are simply exhausted, consider taking a ride in the van. You can make up the miles, if you are so inclined, over the next couple of days or on a layover day.

T r a v e l i n g

Traveling in a group:

Most of us have never traveled very far with a sizable group. As we travel, we will develop into a community. Our community will have familiar aspects found in any community, and it will also have some aspects unique to our group.

We are not simply individuals who happen to be traveling together on a bike ride, we are also a group representing the bicycling community at large. For the most part, people along the way will interact with us on an individual basis, but they will react to us and remember us as a group. It is our goal to have a positive and pleasant impact everywhere we go.

It is also our goal to create a supportive community for each other as we travel together. The staff is on hand to give support where needed and to encourage, but not to relieve you of your own resourcefulness and self-responsibility. Keep in mind that most of the staff are volunteers who have given their time and resources to provide support on the ride.

Courtesy:

Every single community in which we stay puts in a considerable amount of time and energy, much more than most of us realize, to make our stay as comfortable as possible. Therefore, a simple thank you to any local person is always appreciated. If you find it easy to thank people, especially those who serve us, you will make the communities remember us as a unique and appreciative group.

Concerns:

If you have concerns or suggestions, please bring them to one of the staff in charge. We will be happy to talk with you.

Quiet times:

Quiet times at camp are 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. This time is important to the health and well-being of many of your fellow riders. Also remember that other, campers not with our group may not be ready to get up when we are getting ready to hit the road in the early morning. Please keep your voice down in public areas before 8 a.m.

Clean-up:

Because we are outside most of the time, it would be good to develop a habit of always putting your garbage in a trash can or carrying it with you until you find one. Even a few riders can leave a mark if they are not conscious of their trash. Hopefully, we can leave every single campground cleaner than when we arrived.

Be particularly conscientious about cleaning up after meals, at stores along the way, after a shower, and in public restrooms. Everybody will forget sometime, somewhere, so we need to have tolerance for each other. Please don't hesitate to clean up after each other if necessary.

Mutual respect:

We each come with our different needs and expectations, and we need to respect these differences. People have different levels of tolerance, ability, flexibility and experience. We believe that each person on the tour desires to see the event succeed. We assume that personal differences which create problems can be settled in an adult manner. We would prefer to hear about any misunderstandings and help you resolve them before they have any serious impact on you or other members of our community.

Visitors:

We hope your trip will enable you to connect with people and places you haven't seen for a long time. If you are going to leave the ride to visit friends or relatives, please let us know. For logistical and financial reasons, it may be difficult to provide food or accommodations for your friends or relatives who wish spend time with you. Please ask.

Others riding along:

We recommend that you do not invite friends to join you to ride during your TK&A adventure. Our tour and services are for the paid participants of our events only. Whether it's a close friend or an stranger you met on the open road who wants to join in on the fun, its not fair to the tour's paying customers to allow a person to join us free of charge.

If you must have someone ride with you, you have a few options. The person may be able to pay a per day price to participate, which would include road support, meals and camping if arrangements can be made. We would have the same expectations of your guest as any registered rider. This means that the individual would have to ride legally and safely, with a helmet, and with medical insurance coverage. Please inquire with TK&A about such a possibility and fees.

Your other option is that you can go off route with your buddy and rejoin the group later. If this is the case, we ask that you please let us know your plans.

Daily Route Guides (DRGs):

Each morning you can pick up your DRG at the gear truck. You will probably quickly discover that your DRG is a more reliable way of navigating to your next night's destination than following a fellow cyclist, or a staff vehicle (that might be running an errand off the route). The DRG has a written description on one side and a map of the route on the other. Emergency telephone numbers will be printed on the DRG.

The route outlined on the DRG is the official route and will be the only route that will be serviced with our vehicles and road staff. If for some reason you choose a different route, you should inform us and make sure that you are capable of supplying whatever you will need for the day.

Bulletin board:

Look for daily information posted or written on a bulletin board (usually a white board). Laundries, community events, road conditions, etc. can be found on our boards. In addition, most of this information can be found at the bottom of you DRG.

Midday checkpoint and end-of-day check-in:

We ask that you conscientiously check in at two locations every day. The first will be the **mid-day checkpoint**, roughly half way through the day's travels. The second will be the **end-of-day check-in** at camp. These important check-ins allow us to keep a handle of everyone's general location, know which part of the route to support, and enables us to get messages to riders more quickly.

Remember, if you are planning to choose an alternative route, inform us as soon as you know so that we don't commit vehicles and staff looking for you.

Your bike number:

Every participant has a special number that must be attached to both the front and rear of their bike via a 5" square bike tag. This number quickly becomes a very important part of your experience. You will sign in at midday and end-of-day checkpoints by your name and rider number. Messages will find their way to you via your number. This information will also be on your name tag to make it easier to meet everyone.

Bike tags:

It is important that your bike tags are always secure and visible on both the front and rear of your bike. Those white tags (your numbers are written on them) are **extremely important** in managing the road. They enable us to quickly note that you are one of our riders, it makes it easier to recognize and track you, it prevents us from chasing down a cyclist that isn't part of our group, it makes it easy to spot you whether we are coming toward you or coming up from behind, it provides a good deal of visibility to your bike and it also lets us know that your bike belongs to "one of us" even if you are away from it. If your tags get trashed, well give you new ones. Please take care to keep your tags in order and readable. We will love you forever!

Questions:

If you have any questions or concerns or ideas, give us a call at 1-800-433-0528 most any time. We are usually at or near the office.