

how well coached they were, not only in cycling matters, but in gratitude, respect, teamwork, and following orders. All in all it was a blast to experience the joys of cycling with youth and pros while helping support Team Swift. Thanks to the SRCCers out there supporting the event. Congrats to Laura for such a nice event. She and the Team are a real asset and have a bright future.

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## A PBP DNF

— Mike McGuire —

415 miles isn't bad! 754 would have been better, but you take what you get and don't feel bad about the outcome. My first try at Paris-Brest-Paris was a terrific partial success. I learned a lot, had a great time, and saw countryside and train stations I would not have seen if I had stayed home.

Being rather a novice at long-distance riding, and relatively new to cycling (coming over from running), I learned as much as I could in a short year before PBP, and then went forth! My rides around the North Bay, brevets here and there, and gathering what advice I could from riders and magazines gave me some confidence that the event was doable for a 62-year old rookie. It almost worked out.

As Donn King has said, it did rain a bit and wind did blow and the miles were long, but with an event that comes once in four years, you take what you get. As our 10:15 PM start time neared, the sky darkened and the feel of impending rain was strong in the air. Within minutes of rolling out, it started. I went to my bag for my rain pants. They proved to be cumbersome, a bit noisy, and probably unnecessary.

Somewhere along the way the rain stopped, off came the pants and on we went to the first *controle*, about 100 miles from the start, Mortagne Au Perche. Card stamped, food, adjustments, and back on the road. *Controle* time management was on my mind, but, still, 30 minutes got gobbled up. Thirty minutes here and there along the way, of course, adds up to time irretrievably lost. That was not to be my downfall, though.

Every ride has its quirks. My front derailleur would not keep the chain on the big ring. (Learn to make the adjustment. I had the bike worked on by a *controle* mechanic. 30 minutes.) The plastic cleats on my shoes would not clip into the pedal. (Check wear before departing home. I stopped at an excellent bike shop outside of Brest which had the same pedal setup and got a replacement. 30 minutes.) The sun came out. (Could not find my sun cream. Stopped at a pharmacy and bought some exotic cream. 20 minutes.) Rotten stomach. (Maybe a food and drink combination at the end of 600 km. Could not find Tums in my pack and could not burp up, throw up, or otherwise get rid of the bowling ball in my gut. Various stops probably totaling an hour.) And the clock keeps ticking.

I brought four complete sets of clothing. One to start. One in my bike bag. Two in a drop bag. Changing from wet clothes to dry clothes at a *controle* when it was still raining proved silly. I now had a soon-to-be-wet outfit and a heavy already-wet set to stuff into the bike bag.

I had other wet weather ideas. Wear plastic bags between my shoes and socks. Great idea if one's feet don't perspire. At a *controle* I poured out half cup of warm sweat water from each plastic bag, the socks were, of course, drenched. Another good idea (on a warm sunny day) is to wear loose fitting rubber gloves over my bicycle gloves to keep my hands warm and somewhat drier. Again, perspiration played a trick. The finger tips of the gloves filled with sweat and, while my

fingers stayed warm enough, they nearly drowned. (The idea might work if the tips of the gloves were cut off to allow drainage.)

Don't let these "learning opportunities" give an impression that I did not enjoy the ride. I certainly did. Just as Edison found 500 ideas that didn't work before his light bulb became a success, I learned many things that will benefit me in 2011.

I finally sagged out about 50 km outside Brest on the return. The rain had stopped some time before. There was a bit of wind and lots of overcast. I found "a high windy moor," put on some nice wool clothing, took out my Space Blanket, wrapped up and had a pretty good night's sleep. (I called my wife to say "Good Night." The phone reception was excellent.) At 7:30 I stretched, looked around, and was amazed to see a PBP rider passing my location. (I immediately felt terrible: here was a rider who struggled on through the night in true randonneur fashion, well past the close of the next *controle*, and I had wimped out by going to sleep.) The rider turned out to be from my hotel near Paris. She had slept in a ditch about 100 yards below my resting spot! We rode and took trains together for the next two days to get back to the start and our hotel. Our trip, after we had abandoned, was an adventure on its own. No one enters PBP to ride the train, but, one finds adventure where ever there is opportunity!

The distance from Santa Rosa, the expense, wet clothes, stomach ache, and back ache were an easy-to-bear cost to be part of such an experience as PBP. Only 46 months until 2011. I'll probably learn some things between now and then.

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## Test Drive our new On-Line Membership System

With the club growing ever larger, maintaining our membership filing system—currently processed by hand—is becoming increasingly time-consuming and cumbersome. At the direction of the Board, Gordon Stewart has been experimenting with an on-line registration system that could be used by the club to manage memberships, replacing the current system.

The system is produced by a Canadian company called Wild Apricot. Their service is designed to automate much of what non-profit organizations usually do by hand. Gordon has set up an experimental sample site for the club which can handle memberships, discussion groups, and other tasks. You can even include a picture of yourself. At present, it contains membership data on about 200 club members, randomly selected for this experimental sample. The website is [www.srcc.memberlodge.com](http://www.srcc.memberlodge.com).

If you are on the database, the system assigns you a password. To get your password click "Forgot Password," enter your email address, and the system will send you an email with your password in it. It may tell you that it does not recognize your email address which means that you are not one of the 200 on the database, so click on "Join SRCC" and join up as if you are a new member. Since this is just a test, there is no fee for signup but the membership is not real either.

Once you have logged in, you can cruise all around the system and check things out. In the "Upcoming Events" section you can sign up for the New Year's Picnic and list your potluck choice. This is a real signup; don't do it unless you plan to come to the event. All the details are there. (Or look elsewhere in this newsletter for New Year's info.)

Once you've seen enough, go down to the "Chatty Forum" and make some comments about the system. You can open a new discussion topic or comment on an existing one. Snoop around, you'll see how it works. Let us know what you think of it all.