

A Little Goes a Long Way

by Max Langeveld

Fellow bike riders:

Let me share with you my new founded pleasure in bike riding. Bike riding by itself is already a delight for me. It relieves stress and improves my physical condition. I even lost a few pounds in the process. Also important to me, to be together with a bunch of pleasant people with the same interest in what the sport has to offer.

However; I personally have noticed one downside of this great sport: muscle fatigue. Sure, I read the volumes of sport related articles on how to improve my physical condition; the science of how to measure the bike; me in relation to my bike including the adjustments of the various components and the proper nutrition, and the tips and guidance of well meaning fellow bicyclists. Nonetheless, I always ended up with some type of ache, cramp, or soreness after a substantial riding distance – although satisfied, but painful! I felt I was in desperate need of some golden rule, or words of wisdom, or perhaps the secret trick.

Since I have accumulated a lot of miles over the past two years, I decided to go at it more aggressively. After all, by now I am a Pro with adjustments having done so many of them myself, albeit with meager results. Only one thing left to fix – place a shim under my cleats. Of course, like the pro I knew from looking in the mirror and elaborate measurements that I was for sure ¼ inch shorter in my right leg, due to extensive knee surgery I had done many years ago. Only 24 hours away from bliss, I was going to be in bicycle haven. Already cut the material, set up the whole pattern and only needed to install them (The Solution).

Then came March 15, and everything I knew or thought I did got flushed down the toilet. For those of you who missed the March 15 meeting with our guest speaker, Mike McKovich, I want to share the following information: Mike showed the members how to fit a person to a bike. His very professional attitude and down to earth explanations made the meeting very interesting. The information given

by him let many members re-evaluate their position on having a real Pro do the fitting. So did I. Therefore, I decided to use Mike's service to get a fitting on his terms.

It was on Saturday, March 18, at 10:00 am, at Don's Bike shop in Rialto when I met with Mike for about 2 ½ hours. I was being fitted and educated on his vast array of equipment, and most of all, properly adjusted to gain maximum efficiency and comfort out of my bike. The adjustment done by the Pro included a shim under my left cleat to alleviate the outside angle; moving my right cleat out and forward; adjusting the right cleat so that my knee was in a straight line; placing insoles in my shoes; move my seat forward one inch and doing several measurements of my limbs for flexibility and length. By the way, I was way off with my homemade recipe for measurements of the leg. In reality I was 1/16 of an inch shorter, not the ¼ inch I predicted. Mike also advised me to work on my left leg hamstrings for more flexibility and to correctly position myself over the center of my seat (I was leaning approximately an inch to the right). Ouch! – now I know where that pain came from.

I did the Solvang double seven days later and folks let me tell you something: I gained an enormous amount of climbing strength and endurance! I even dare to say 20% overall. (Mike's data states peak power of +6% and overall cycling efficiency of +5%). It sure feels different to me, Mike! However, that was not what impressed me the most. "I have no more pain!!!" after 200 miles. I felt no discomfort whatsoever. All smiles!

If you have any questions or difficulties with your new "fit", call Mike. He will answer your call promptly – he did for me.

This was the smartest investment I made in myself pertaining to riding a bike. I urge all of you fellow bike riders, who are unsure or know for a fact that something is not quite right, to get a Pro to look at your position on your bikes.

Yes, you can ride pain free and smile doing it without using medication.

I do hope the abovementioned information was as valuable to you as it was to me and I persuade you to call me anytime if you have more questions on this subject.

RIDE ON AND SMILE

V.P. Max

P.S. The following article is from the magazine Bicycling, May 2005 edition

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NO PAIN, MORE BRAIN
Researchers at Chicago's Northwestern University studied the brains of 10 people with chronic back pain as well as 20 pain-free subjects and found that those suffering from chronic pain had lower brain density-equivalent to the amount of gray matter lost in 10 to 20 years of normal aging. Bottom Line: Whether or not you believe the research, it's worth rechecking your equipment and positioning if you have a chronic sore neck or back-the better your bike fits, the longer and more often you'll ride.

