

Four Great Brake Upgrades For Your Tandem

TANDEM

M A G A Z I N E

\$3.95 U.S. / \$5.95 Canada
Fall 1994

**The 7th Annual
Duet Cycling
Classic**

**Full-Suspension
Tandems by:
Boulder Cycles
Thomas Bruni
Burley Design**

**Adventure:
The Northern
Territories
San Juan Islands**

**Inside
Co•Motion
Cycles**



Ridin' Rob

A Seat With a View

by Rob Templin

One of the advantages of growing up in Southern California was our family's annual summertime excursion to Disneyland. My favorite attraction was — and continues to be — the Matterhorn Bobsleds.

Riding the Matterhorn meant handing over a coveted "E" ticket from the coupon book that Disney used at the time. As you might figure from the name, four riders are seat-belted into a "bobsled" for a thrilling high-speed descent down a concrete "Swiss Alp" mountainside, careening through ice-cold waterfalls for the finale. By current, can-you-top-this amusement park standards, the ride is a bit dated; but on a sweltering summer day, life didn't get much better for an 11 year-old.

I've been told more times than I felt was really necessary that my childhood continues to be an ongoing process. Only now, bicycles and

tandems have become my new Magic Kingdom. Maybe you have friends or relatives who have expressed a similar concern for your two-wheeled passion?

When it comes to tandeming, I often find myself taking the stoker position. I guess that's one of the costs of being small. Not that I mind. I've always felt that stoking a tandem offers one of the best seats in the house when it comes to cycling. Maybe part of the reason I feel that way is the same reason I got such a big kick out of the Matterhorn Bobsleds: you turn the controls over to someone else and then

hang on for the ride of your life enjoying the view along the way. (Please, no "Letters to the Editor" on this one. I know the stoker contributes mightily to the tandem experience.) Unlike amusement park rides, however, the only true safety features a stoker enjoys are the common sense and trust one places in the captain.

Sometimes all it takes are a few challenging rides to help realizations like this hit home. The '94 Duet Cycling Classic (DCC) was that challenge. The DCC is America's only "full service" tandem stage race (end of blatant plug for my partners at Burley).

For this year's edition, I was paired with a teenager from my old Southern California stomping grounds. Eighteen year-old Shane Carney made the journey north with dad Dale and several other tandem aficionados, including Pete Penseyres and his wife, Joanne. It was a great group to hang out with over a holiday weekend. While not a seasoned pro by USCF Senior Men's high

mileage standards, Shane is a natural on two wheels. He should be; he's been cycling since he was a pup. The DCC was to be our first time together on a tandem. And as usual, I was the stoker.

Before the first stage, Shane and I talked about the single most important element of any successful tandem effort: accepting the fact that each person doing their best is what counts. Corny, but simple enough, eh? That's what tandeming is all about after all. Compromise, communication, and teamwork.

Somewhere along the way, though, I forgot this. Maybe you've done the same with a partner during a particularly tough ride or tour. Been a bit too intense. Maybe didn't fully appreciate the efforts of your teammate. Much to Shane's credit, and belying his youth, he didn't complain or argue when "crunch time" came during each day's racing. He just kept giving it his best shot. I couldn't have, shouldn't have asked for anything more.

In the criterium stage, Shane would have our Bossa Nova leaned over at improbable angles as he maneuvered the machine around the tight corners, only occasionally using the pedals to feel how close the pavement actually was. Never recklessly out of control.

During the final road race, he'd stick tricky 50 mph plus descents while some of the best tandemists in the country tried to hold his wheel. I remember one sharp, off-camber turn in particular, a posted 20 mph where Shane said simply, "Trust me." I did, and we negotiated it at well over 30. What a blast, carving turns like some two-wheeled hotshot downhill skier. What a view!

Yep, Shane gave me the best seat around for this particular July 4th weekend. Some of the lessons I learned during the DCC had nothing to do with cycling. You ever notice how that happens sometimes with this sport we call tandeming?

Thanks, Shane. The pain of competition, the miles . . . those things became secondary to the sweet spots where everything fell into place. Really. You gave me some of the best "E" ticket rides I've had in a number of years. For a 39 year-old kid on a hot summer weekend, life doesn't get much better T