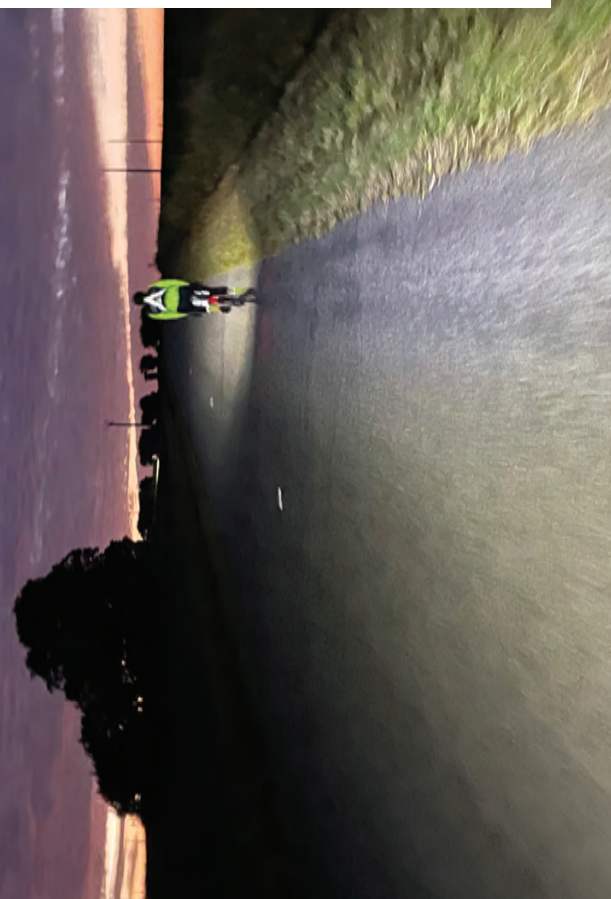


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BICYCLE LAW



ROLLING RESISTANCE

ISSUE #7 | FALL 2023 | PRIDE AND PARIS

PRIDE CAT, THE RIGHT HOOK, LEGISLATIVE WINS, PARIS-BREST-PARIS, AND MORE ►

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Bicycle Law's lawyers practice law through Coopers LLP, which has lawyers licensed in California, Oregon, and Washington State, and can affiliate with local counsel on bicycle cases across the country to make sure cyclists benefit from cycling-focused lawyers.

Front cover photo: Richard Hoang / @rhoangphoto
Back cover photo: Zachary Morvant / @zmorvant

As we put the finishing touches on this issue, we can't help but notice the hints that fall is nigh. The morning crispness, the shorter days, the brown edges to the leaves. Time to make sure those high-powered lights—front and rear—are ready for dawn and dusk commutes, and that the rain gear is readily accessible.

In this issue we have a conversation with Alana Mari about her Pride Cat alleycat race, transgender support, and the ongoing racing challenges for the trans community. On the safety front we examine the Right Hook, one of the top five injury-causing collisions for cyclists. We examine 2022 legislative wins with the recognition 2023's hard work will be yielding new laws for cyclists in short order. And adventurer-in-residence Zach Morvant provides insight on successful preparation for Paris-Brest-Paris, cycling's oldest event. Because for those thinking about a 1,200km (745 mile) ride, it is never too early to start thinking about the every-fourth-year event's next evolution in 2027.

Whether you're commuting, alleycatting, randonneuring, e-biking, adventuring, cyclocross racing, unicycling, good old-fashioned road riding, or any variant thereof, we hope the wind is at your back with car-free roads ahead.

*Hoping you keep the rubber side down,
Miles B. Cooper, Maryanne B. Cooper, Bob Mionske,
and everyone at Bicycle Law*




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Photo: Zachary Morvant / @zmorvant

PRIDE CAT: RACING FOR THE TRANSGENDER DISTRICT

By Zachary Morvant

We recently sat down with Alana Mari to talk about the third edition of the Pride Cat, an alleycat race she hosts during Pride month in San Francisco.

Tell us about Pride Cat. What is it?

Pride Cat is a fundraiser alleycat for queer people and allies benefiting the Transgender District in SF (transgenderdistrictsf.com). For those who don't know, an alleycat is a checkpoint race/scavenger hunt on bikes originating from bike messenger culture. Racers don't know where they have to go until the race starts.

There is also an educational component to Pride Cat: every checkpoint is some kind of queer-related clue. Last year every checkpoint involved facts about transgender women who were pioneers in some way. This

year I focused on queer-owned businesses around SF. At the end of the race, during the podium ceremony, they also shared a little bit about what they learned.

What's Pride Cat's origin story?

I was at my first alleycat a few years ago and fell in love with them. I love navigating and going fast with other people. Someone suggested I host one for Pride, and even though I was new to the scene, I got a lot of encouragement and support. That made me start thinking I could do this. Then I had the idea of making it a fundraiser for an organization that helps the LGBTQ+ community.

How did you find your beneficiary, the Transgender District?

I'd been aware of their work from following other queer groups. At the time, the Transgender District was seeking historic landmark status for the Tenderloin. I thought it'd be important to support the transgender community specifically because they're the most at-risk in our community.

Pride Cat racers gather in Dolores Park. Photo: Richard Hoang / @rhoangphoto.



Another thing that appealed to me about the Transgender District is it is founded and led entirely by trans women of color. I wanted the organization we benefited to be run by people who are from and understand the needs of their community.

That's awesome. How much have you raised for them so far?

This year, we raised just over \$2,000. Combined with the previous two years, we've raised over \$5,700 in total. Not bad for a local alleycat race!

What's your favorite thing about Pride Cat?

I think my favorite thing is that we bring people together from so many different backgrounds. A lot of people come together through bikes, also queerness or being an ally. It's cool to see so many different people from the bike community mingle: messengers, commuters, professional racers and see them come together for a good cause.

Organizing an event like this is never easy. What's your biggest challenge?

This year I realized I struggle with delegating. This is not just a one-person job. So I made an effort to recruit volunteers earlier on. Every year I learn something to help make it a little smoother, a little better and I'm looking forward to applying those learnings to next year and work closer with whoever wants to get more involved and take on more of the planning of it with me.

What are your goals for the future of Pride Cat?

I don't think I have any big goals in terms of scaling it. I've been very happy with it. I think keeping it among the people, for the people, is the most important part to me. That said, I've played with the idea of a company potentially matching what we raise. That'd be a cool thing to pursue. If you know any that might be interested, please reach out!

What do you think about the UCI's (Union Cycliste Internationale, bike racing's global governing body) decision regarding gender categorization?

Highly disappointing but not entirely unexpected. I think that's a lot of people's response at the moment. It's really tough when it seems like

they already decided the solutions they want to find, and are now finding the "science" to back up their transphobia.

But some people—especially some trans people I know—their heart is in racing. And this is a huge step back. It goes against the International Olympic Committee's guidelines for inclusion in sport.

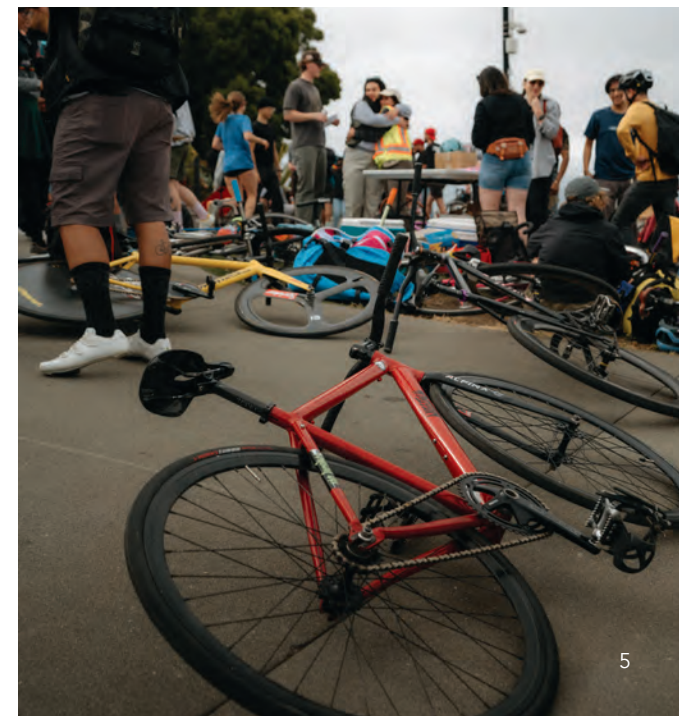
How can race promoters be more inclusive in this regard?

I think language is important. Not naming fields just "men's" or "women's" can signal a queer-inclusive environment. But there's a dance you sometimes have to do; I have personally experienced being barred from using WTFNB (Women, Trans, Femme, Non-Binary) in my promotional materials for USA Cycling races.

I think the underground racing scene has always been more inclusive by nature. Alleycats, events like Mission Crit, tracklocross, even the track has a lot of potential. Anything that doesn't have to use the UCI or its structures gives us more freedom, and helps us get more people on bikes, which is the real goal in my opinion.

Interested in volunteering for the next Pride Cat? Follow Alana on Instagram @tamagoshawty for updates.

Race organizer Alana Mari announces the winners. Photos: Richard Hoang / @rhoangphoto.





DODGING THE RIGHT HOOK

By Kent Klaudt

No, we haven't suddenly shifted gears and become boxers. Read on to learn how to avoid one of the most common collisions that bicycle commuters face!

What is a right hook?

A right hook collision happens when a motorist makes a right turn at an intersection into the path of travel of a bicyclist traveling in the same direction near the vehicle making the right turn. This type of crash is a real issue for urban cyclists, and a recent Canadian study analyzing crowd-sourced bicycle data found that right hooks accounted for 27% of collisions in which the bicyclist was traveling in a straight line prior to the incident.¹

What factors contribute to right hook collisions?

In a recent study, researchers investigated the specific factors leading to right hook collisions by observing study participants using a driving simulator. The situational awareness of these "motorists" was measured while they made right turns in the presence of a bicyclist in an adjacent bike lane. The study found that the position of the bicyclist significantly influenced motorists' overall situational awareness, and that motorist perception of bikes degraded when oncoming vehicles were nearby and the bicyclist was approaching the motorist from behind. Similarly, motorists' ability to "project" future positions of a nearby bicycle also degraded when the bicyclist was ahead of the motorist and oncoming vehicles were present.

This study concluded that the motorists were more focused on cars in front of them than on bikes in their peripheral vision and thus a common cause of crashes in the simulator was motorist failure to even detect the bicycle. According to this study, a bicyclist approaching a motorist from behind is the most vulnerable to a right-turning motorist.²

Another study by University of Toronto researchers used sophisticated eye-tracking technology to examine motorist-versus-bicyclist right turn

collisions. The age of the participant motorists was 35 to 54, and all had more than three years of driving experience. The study observed the drivers make right turns at both a signalized four-way intersection and an uncontrolled T-intersection leading to a smaller road. Both locations involved making right turns across dedicated cycling lanes. Most of the motorists in the study (11 of 19) failed to visually check for cyclists to their right and behind their vehicle before making a right turn. These attentional failures were more common amongst drivers who were familiar with the neighborhood.

Even when a motorist does see you prior to overtaking you and your bike and making a right turn, you may still be at risk of a right hook collision if the motorist fails to properly estimate your speed and the distance between their vehicle and your bike before turning right.

What can I do to reduce my right hook risk?

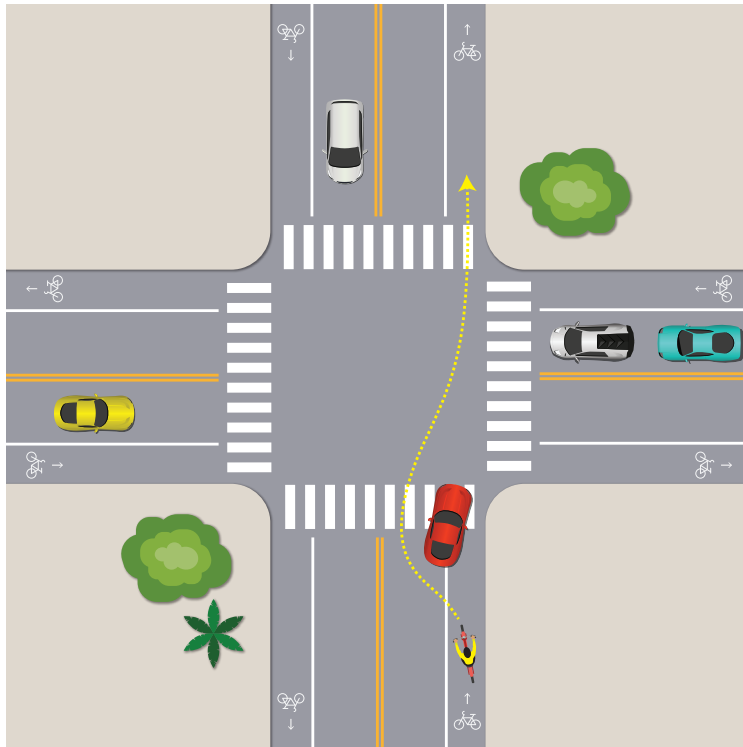
As bicyclists, we know from personal experience in urban riding that motorists often turn without signaling and without checking for bikes. Research confirms our lived experience cycling on city streets. So, what should we do as riders to minimize the risks of a motorist-induced right hook collision?

A. Riding Technique

Approaching a red light or stop sign:

As you are approaching an intersection, take a quick glance over your left shoulder to see if a car is about to overtake you to begin a right turn into your path of travel. A mirror can be helpful here.

If you do see a car signaling a right turn – or you think they may be preparing to turn right – you can signal left and take the lane if you have enough clearance to safely do so and believe the driver is slowing down and won't hit you while doing this. This assumes that you are cycling in a jurisdiction like California that allows you to take the lane on a city street. Taking the lane makes your presence to the motorist unmistakable. If there isn't enough time to take the lane, no worries, slow down, and if safe, go around the left side of the car that is turning right.



If safe, go around the left side of the car that is turning right.

Stopped at a light:

If you are already stopped at a light and a driver pulls up to your left, assume it is a driver who (1) will be making a right hand turn and (2) won't see you. Watch for turn signals (used far less often than they should be), head turns to the left to watch for clear traffic to turn, edging to the right of the lane, or wheels turned fractionally to the right. In these situations, expect the driver to turn right as soon as possible, likely over you if you proceed on the same green. Better to pause and wait to see what they do before going.

Approaching a green light:

If you are near or at the intersection and a careless driver begins making a right turn into your path of travel, and you do not have time to safely brake to avoid the collision, consider attempting an "emergency right turn" to follow the car's motion, go right with it, and avoid impact.

B. Visibility

As bicyclists, we cannot control or even predict the actions of inattentive motorists. We can do some things to make ourselves more visible to them, however. Fluorescent clothing, ankle bands (or other clothing) containing reflective materials, and front and rear-end lights can all help to make you more visible to motorists. Should we have to strap on day-glow and armor simply to commute? No. But the consequences for us on bikes are far greater when we get hit than for those driving cars. Until roads are less car-centric, we are forced to take steps to protect ourselves that should be unnecessary.

A Danish research project in 2018 used a randomized controlled study involving 6,793 cyclists to investigate the effect of bright-colored clothing on bike crashes. Riders who wore yellow jackets during the study period reported 38% fewer multiparty collisions than the control group that wore ordinary clothing.³ Fluorescent orange or yellow clothing is more effective in daylight, and reflective materials are more effective at night.



Fluorescent clothing containing reflective materials can make you more visible to motorists day and night.

¹ Fischer, et al., *What does crowdsourced data tell us about bicycling injury? A case study in a mid-sized Canadian city*, Accident Analysis & Prevention Volume 145, September 2020.

² Jannat, et al., *The role of driver's situational awareness on right-hook bicycle-motor vehicle crashes*. Safety Science, Volume 110, Part A, December 2018, Pages 92-101.

³ Lahrmann, et al., *The effect of a yellow bicycle jacket on cyclist accidents*, Safety Science, Volume 108, October 2018, Pages 209-217.

LEGISLATIVE VICTORIES FOR BICYCLISTS IN CALIFORNIA, OREGON AND WASHINGTON IN 2022

By Kent Klaudt

California

With the 2023 legislative session wrapping up, let's look back at important legislative victories in Sacramento in 2022 affecting cyclists and pedestrians—spearheaded by the California Bicycle Coalition (CalBike), an organization advocating for bike-friendly laws and transportation infrastructure in California. If you live in California and ride, don't forget to renew your CalBike membership!

CalBike sponsored the Plan for the Future Bill (SB 932, Portantino), which requires counties and cities to include a map of high injury areas in their General Plans and identify and prioritize safety improvements that address serious traffic collisions. The bill also creates a grant program to provide funding to cities and counties working to decrease bicycle, pedestrian, and other human-powered transportation injuries and fatalities. The bill passed the legislature and was signed into law by Governor Newsom.

Another CalBike-sponsored effort, The Freedom to Walk Bill (AB 2147, Ting), became law in 2022. The new law partially decriminalizes jaywalking and prevents police from issuing tickets unless the street crossing is truly dangerous. Calbike reports that this “is a welcome first step to stop the over-enforcement of an outdated statute invented a century ago by car companies.”

“Jaywalking laws do more than turn an ordinary and logical behavior into a crime; they also create opportunities for police to racially profile. A jaywalking ticket can turn into a potentially life-threatening police encounter, especially for Black people, who are disproportionately targeted and suffer the most severe consequences of inequitable law enforcement,” according to Jared Sanchez, Senior Policy Advocate for CalBike.



A pedestrian crosses a busy street in San Francisco's Chinatown. Photo: Cristian Marin, Unsplash.

Oregon

In November 2022, cyclist advocacy group BikeLoud PDX filed a lawsuit against the City of Portland alleging that Portland has failed to create bicycle infrastructure required by an Oregon law that has existed since 1971. This law requires that pedestrian and bicycle access be included when streets are constructed, reconstructed, or relocated. BikeLoud notes that “in 1995 the Bicycle Transportation Alliance successfully used this law to require Portland to include bicycle lanes for the Rose Quarter.”

BikeLoud PDX volunteers identified twenty-two streets constructed or reconstructed since 1971 without safe bicycle access. Public records requests identifying additional locations were refused by the city; thus, the total number of streets is unknown.

The Oregon Encyclopedia explains that the 1971 law was “the first of its kind in the United States [and] the Bicycle Bill foreshadowed the national



A cyclist commutes across the Broadway Bridge in Portland.

Complete Streets movement that began to take hold three decades later to encourage the adoption of policies aimed at providing safe access to the streets for all users.”

We’ll be following the lawsuit and hope to see it successfully expand bike infrastructure for all.

Washington

On July 1, 2022, a new law went into effect requiring Washington state highway planners to use “Complete Streets” designs on projects costing more than \$500,000. The goal is to improve safety, mobility, and accessibility for all road users, not just motorists. This requirement applies to state highways (aka State Routes), which pass through population centers.

“Incomplete streets” fail to consider the needs of all road users. The Complete Streets requirement was included in a transportation funding package approved by the Washington State Legislature in early 2022. The new law provides \$1.3 billion in spending for “protected bike lanes, multi-use trails, Safe Routes to Schools, biking and walking infrastructure, and a new statewide school-based bicycle safety education program,” according to advocacy group Washington Bikes.

The Complete Streets requirement is an important part of the Move Ahead Washington legislation. “This directive will accelerate and enhance WSDOT’s efforts to become more multimodal. And it puts Washington at the forefront of the Complete Streets movement,” says Vicky Clarke, policy director for Washington Bikes and Cascade Bicycle Club.

In November 2022, Washington Bikes announced its policy and legislative agenda for 2023 and called for action on a variety of new laws, including lowering the state’s blood-alcohol limit for motorists to 0.05, banning motorist right turns on red lights in areas with high pedestrian and bicycle traffic, requiring driver education as a precondition for getting a driver’s license, and raising fees for the heaviest and deadliest vehicles.

PARIS-BREST-PARIS: A NEWCOMER'S GUIDE TO CYCLING'S OLDEST EVENT

By Zachary Morvant

If you're friends with any randonneurs (riders of long-distance cycling events called brevets), you've likely been hearing a lot of chatter about PBP, or Paris-Brest-Paris. Whether you're thinking about giving it a go yourself—it happens every 4 years, so you've got lots of time to train before 2027—or just curious to know more, this guide endeavors to answer many (but certainly not all) of your questions.



What is Paris-Brest-Paris?

Paris-Brest-Paris is the granddaddy of Grand Randonnees (that is, randonneuring events 1,200km or longer). It is one of the oldest cycling events still in existence, having started in 1891—pre-dating even the Tour de France, which wouldn't come along until 1903. Initially a race for professionals, since the mid-1900s it has been (officially) a non-competitive timed ride, the domain of dedicated amateurs.

I say "officially" because any time you get a group of folks with bikes together, a race is bound to break out. And while there is no official winner of PBP, there is a "first finisher," and some people come to the start line intent on "winning" this "non-race." (I'll confess I came with the goal of finishing much more quickly than I did—you can read all about my experience in a separate post on the Bicycle Law blog. (bicyclelaw.com/blog))

Qualifying

Before one can even register for PBP, one must qualify. To do that, you need to complete a Super Randonneur series during the same year as PBP. A Super Randonneur series comprises a 200km, 300km, 400km, and 600km brevet, each of which must be completed within a time limit on a route determined by the club offering the event.

Training

Finishing PBP in the time allowed (you can choose to have as little as 80 hours or as many as 90 hours to finish, depending on the starting group you select) is a massive challenge that requires a high volume of training. Individual approaches vary, and we won't go into specifics here given the complexities of the subject. Barring anything else, doing long rides with friends (or on your own) and working your way up in distance through your local randonneur club's rides can provide a solid skeleton for a training plan.

Beyond physicality, there is a whole host of other knowledge and mental training that benefits a good randonneur. Knowing the ins and outs of your equipment so you can be as self-sufficient as possible in the event of mechanical mishaps is a boon. Having the mental fortitude to ride long distances, often at night or in inclement weather, is key. Knowing your limits, and when you need rest, is critical.



Bike parking at the control in Loudéac.

Parlez-vous français?

According to many PBP veterans, English speakers are more abundant than ever, but it's a good thing to know some rudimentary French. It's useful. It's courteous. And it can make the experience feel that much richer.

At a minimum, I recommend knowing *please* and *thank you*, how to ask for food/water/coffee/beer(!), where to find the toilet, and where you can sleep.

Also, if you know "*bonne route!*" or "*bon courage!*" you'll realize that people yelling at you from cars and windows aren't cursing at you like they tend to in the US—they're cheering for you! (You will hear this hundreds, possibly thousands of times. It's truly incredible.)

The Route

As you probably guessed, the route starts in (or near) Paris, heads west to Brest, and then back. The route occasionally undergoes some small changes, but the controls (or checkpoints—see below) are generally the

same, and the terrain profile is one of mostly flat roads and rolling hills. That said, the elevation stacks up quickly: this year's edition saw over 39,000 feet of climbing over its 757 miles.

Expect all kinds of weather. Rain and fog are common (even in summer), especially near the coast. (San Francisco and Bay Area folks will be well prepared for this.) This year saw a shift in adverse conditions: no rain, but lots of heat and humidity in the middle of the day that caused many riders to struggle (your humble author included).

Controls

Roughly every 60 miles or so, you will have to stop at a **control**, where you will have your brevet card (a tiny booklet you carry with you—keep it safe!) stamped to verify your passage. Lovely volunteers will greet you and wish you *bonne route*.

After getting your stamp (which I advise is the first thing you do at a control, so you don't forget, which is nonzero possibility as PBP significantly taxes your mental faculties), do what else you need to do. Fill your water bottles. Use the bathroom. Maybe find some **food** (see next page) or a comfy place to **sleep** (also next page).



Folks in the French countryside often set up roadside stands with free food.

Food

There is an abundance of food at PBP. You can go to the “rapide” station for quick things like pan au chocolat, ham and cheese baguettes, juices, and coffee. If you prefer something more substantial, you can find the restaurant with plates of pasta, rice, soups, and other items.

But be warned: food is NOT included in the price of admission, which is something American bike racers may not be used to. Additionally, card readers can be slow (or not present), so bring plenty of euros to keep yourself fed. (I did not do this, and had to be very strategic with my meager cash reserves, in addition to relying on the kindness of friends.)

There is also some “sports food” lurking at some of the controls if you need more bars, gels, and the like, but I advise bringing plenty of your own when it comes to that stuff.

Sleeping

Most people doing PBP need to sleep at some point. There are a freakish few who don't, but odds are, you're not one of them—so here are some options.

Most of the controls have dormitories. You could pay roughly 10 euro to sleep and (where available) an additional 4 euro to shower. If you're



Riders line up for food at one of the many cafeterias.



Riders can pay to sleep in a cot, or sleep for free wherever they can.

feeling a bit more frugal, home is where you lay your head. I saw people sleeping in the grass, in hallways, and upright in their chairs at cafeterias. “Ditch naps” along the sides of road are somewhat popular as well.

I myself sought refuge in a ruined bus shelter and wrapped myself in a space blanket for a bit of shuteye. (Some people call this joining the “Foil Fraternity” or the “Burrito Brotherhood.”) After enough hours of pedaling your bike, you'll be surprised at your new tolerances for comfort.

People

When PBP veterans reminisce about their experience, it is often the people they remember most fondly and talk about most vividly.

The kindness and hospitality of the French people along the route is legendary: from the volunteers staffing many of the controls, to the courteous drivers who—almost without fail!—give you plenty of room when passing while cheering you from open windows, to villagers who applaud you and wish you “bon courage!” from the side of the road, to the kids who hold out their hands for high fives. It's a kind of magic you don't see in the States.

Additionally, some kind folks set out tables with (usually free) food and beverages, which (given my poor financial planning mentioned above) I certainly took advantage of, practicing my shaky French while I was at it.

Fin

That's hardly everything, but hopefully enough to give you a taste of the PBP experience, and perhaps answer some questions for the curious.

If you'd like to know more, there's a trove of information you can search for, many of it living in previous attendees' ride reports. By the time this article is published, my own report will be live on the Bicycle Law blog (bicyclelaw.com/blog).

Au revoir for now,
—Z

Your humble author at the start line in Rambouillet.



SAVE THE DATE: THE SUPERMARKET STREET SWEEP!



The annual bike race benefitting the
San Francisco-Marin Food Bank is back!
Join us November 4, 2023
for a good time for a great cause.



Learn more and register at supermarketstreetsweep.com,
or get updates on Instagram @sfstreetsweep.