

Lightning F-40 Reader Commentary

Subj: P-38 Speed
94-06-13 01:37:17 EDT
From: BentAnimal (from Internet)

A non-F-40 riders narrative of an F-40 rider by "BentAnimal."

When a rider of an (Lightning) F-40 finishes a ride ahead of other cyclists, he says to himself (and often, out loud, to other cyclists), "once again, I have demonstrated the (superior?) speed of my bike," in whatever exact words he chooses, that day. Sometimes he only thinks it, but the smile on his face "says it for him" on the days when he doesn't.

Others (nearly all other riders?, recreational & bent' heads) are not thinking this. Their thoughts run more along the lines of: "you don't think that plastic and fabric F-16 fighter jet fuselage thing you got attached your BIKE, is what really got you to the finish line first?" That's what all the riders except the one on the F-40 are thinking.

The non-F-40 riders are incredulous the rider of the "thing" believes his "Bike" is faster. The biggest difference between them and the F-40 rider is that F-16 fighter jet fuselage thing. And the guy riding it says his BIKE is faster??? They will refuse to believe there is even a bike inside the "thing" unless shown it. And if shown it, many will still not concede the point that what they are looking at (inside the fuselage) is actually a bike.

Most of the riders do not necessarily believe his bike is slower. Some will feel the F-40 rider has cheated on them, and feel justified (have motive to believe?) his "bike" must be slower. That he is "USING" his jet fuselage thing to mask the poor performance of his bike. But most will be fair minded and believe the speed of his bike, is as yet, "undetermined."

But it doesn't end here. Now the F-40 rider attempts to convince the others that his bike is faster due to technical (design) reasons. As he does this, the others believe he ignores the obvious and is instead bombarding them with techno-mumbo-jumbo. They think/say among

themselves "methinks he doth protest too much." They believe he is "thin skinned" because of previous and similar, discussions.

In all of the above there is an additional "something" going on. People are "speaking past" each other because of differences in knowledge levels and in the meaning of the word BIKE (in different "bike worlds"). It is as if they are from 3 separate countries and the word bike means very different things.

When the F-40 rider initially said my bike is faster, recreational cyclists didn't even know he was on a bike, and bent' heads knew, but were not willing to admit his "BIKE" was faster, because that has not yet been established to their satisfaction. And because 'bent heads understand the performance difference between full fairings and partial fairings and no fairings.

When the F-40 rider tries to explain why his bike (design) is faster, most bent' heads, knowing of the overwhelming importance of aerodynamics, still believe he is basically ignoring the obvious, and bombarding them with (HPV specific) techno-mumbo-jumbo. This particular F-40 rider "IS" a very serious HPV enthusiast and sincerely believes (most?) of what he is saying. In other words, in the HPV world these things he is saying might even be obvious, but he doesn't realize he is talking with people ('bent heads) who are in a different world. When he mentions the effect of bottom bracket height while seemingly ignoring effect of a full fairing, nearly all the 'bent heads are thinking "man, he's really going off the deep end on this." Nearly all the bent' heads think "methinks he doth protest too much," (if only one has the courage to say it.)

Now the F-40 rider is about to (shout as loudly as he can) "that's not what I said, play back the tape recorder." He should in fact reconsider the exact words he did used. The idea he tried to convey could have been said in a way that bent' heads WOULD NOT interpret as (also?) meaning "full fairings don't make much difference concerning the speed of a bike."

Bill Dowling

Subj: Re: F-40 Impressions (from Internet)
Date: 94-05-12 12:51:36 EDT
From: tmahood@netcom.com

I just converted my Lightning P-38 over to F-40 status, and I thought I'd share my impressions. I've had the P-38 for over a year and put about 3,000 miles on it. When I got it, I ordered it with the F-40 stub on the front boom, just in case.

Through a bit of amazing luck, I was able to acquire all the components, used, but in good shape, from several sources. The differences between my bike and a "stock" F-40 is I don't have a suspension fork or hydraulic brakes.

Much to my surprise, I will probably convert the bike back to its P-38 condition except for "special occasions." For me, I found the increase in speed (which is FANTASTIC!) not worth the negatives associated with the fairing.

First of all, I generate a lot of heat when I ride. I found the F-40 far too warm even on 65 degree days. It was a rolling sauna, even with the top zipper open. I should point out that the particular nose cone I have even has a vent in it over the light opening, unlike stock noses. Still not enough. Climbing steep grades became a whole new kind of misery! At 10 mph, I was getting essentially no flow through. In fairness, when I got up to cruising speeds of 25-27 mph (very common) the cooling became almost adequate. However, the only time I was able to zip the top zipper and not feel like a Butterball turkey was on descents. In all these instances the temperature was 65 or less, pretty cool.

The bike with fairing takes up a LOT of room. Difficult to store in the garage. I found I couldn't carry two bikes anymore in our 4Runner. I also had to switch to my MTB (ugh!) to commute to work since the F-40 wouldn't fit in the elevator.

Another aspect I didn't consider is who I was going to ride with? My usual riding buddies couldn't keep up, otherwise I had to force myself to ride slow (Yeah, I know...What a problem!).

Continued on page 29.

PRAIRIE DESIGNS
HPV
SUPPLY

**FOR THE OWNER-BUILT RECUMBENT
TIRES ♦ WHEELS ♦ COMPONENTS ♦ FRAME-BUILDING SUPPLIES**

SASE for more information:

PRAIRIE DESIGNS

RT 2, PRETTY PRAIRIE, KS ♦ 67570 ♦ (316) 459-6237

Awake Again Part II

are also extremely responsive to the needs of those who have already bought. Besides their newsletter, they listen very carefully to the needs of their customers and with some of the data they've collected they even have folding bike and 63-speed options on the drawing board.

If we're going to heal a planet that is truly dying, we've got to get people to leave their cars behind. And since the upright bicycle will continue to cause older Americans to leave that job to the kids, we must spread the recumbent gospel. But the recumbent that will get more of the planet on such a means of two-wheel conveyance must score high marks on all four factors below.

- 1) Fun. Most recumbents are. BikeE ☆☆☆☆
- 2) Comfort. Most recumbents are. BikeE ☆☆☆
- 3) Ease (Transportability, Rideability & Learnability). BikeE ☆☆☆☆
- 4) Style (Will I look as cool as I do on my upright?) BikeE ☆☆☆☆

I say BikeE has truly come to the rescue. I know their bike will bring great numbers of people back to cycling while also being attractive to those outside of the sport. It will allow people such as transportation planners and those concerned about the environment to walk their talk.

I'm excited because these multitudes will then bring untold resources and skills to cycling. No longer excluded from the joy riding a bike, these people will surely help us build the National Bicycle Greenway (NBG).

The NBG is the car-free playground that will ultimately stretch up and down both sea-boards and criss cross America from east to west and north to south. It will utilize a network of abandoned rail lines and highways as well as river causeways and active utility rights of way. On the main Greenway, one will be able to find restaurants, lodging and other support services such as showers, campgrounds, and bike shuttles and bike taxis. It will be bordered by attractive landscaping, rest areas and information kiosks. Markers will give directions and mileages as well as explain the history and geography of the various regions one passes through. In time, roller skaters, hikers, joggers and the physically challenged will be able to play on it.

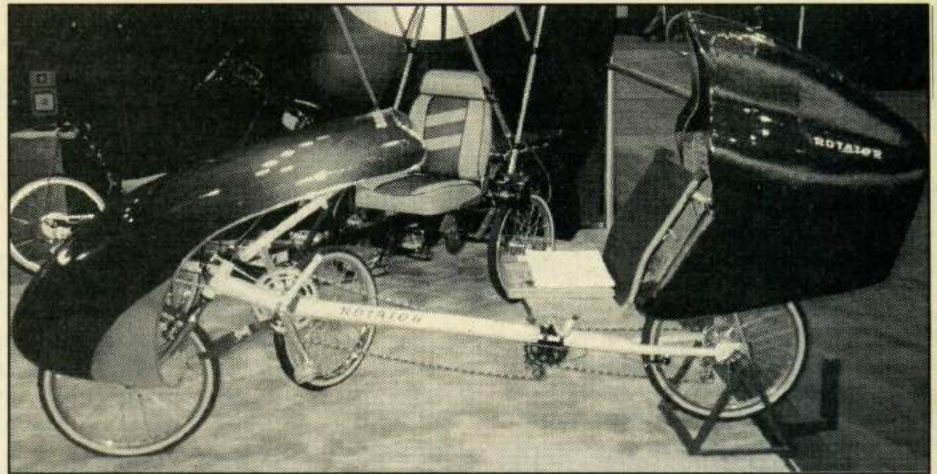
I want you, the reader, to help me build that playground. I want to show you that our dreams really are real. Next summer I will do a fund raising ride across America to help build the National Bicycle Greenway.

We need to raise enough money so we can employ a grant writer. We will need funding for a feasibility study and cost estimate. We also need cash reserves for mailings and the construction of a nationalized computer data base and for a newsletter. We also need a professional booth for trade shows, bike events and summer fairs as well as a video explaining the NBG opportunity to corporations. If you would like to bike

the US with me, pledge whatever you can per mile or state to what I ride in 1995, or contribute your resources, time or expertise to the NBG, call me at 408/426-7702. You can help me make the world a better place to live. You can even do it on a recumbent bicycle. You can even do it in comfort!!

Martin Krieg's new book, *Awake Again, All the Way Back from Head Injury*, is available at

bookstores everywhere. He will be biking across the US for a third time next summer. His next *TransAmerica crossing will benefit the National Bicycle Greenway*. If you can't locate his book, would like to ride with him in 1995, or would like to help Martin with the 501c3 nonprofit National Bicycle Greenway, you can reach him c/o Cycle America, 147 River St. S. #222 Santa Cruz CA 95060. 408/426-7702.



The 1995 Rotator Interceptor

Continued from page 13

RCN Crew Goes to Interbike

pushing "heel out" you could get your foot out quickly. Lighting systems are getting more plentiful, powerful and all at a lower cost. A new twist on the "Vistalite type" flasher was a completely sealed unit that used no batteries made by **Leader**. This system was operated by a magnet in the spokes, similar to a bike computer, but larger, that supplied the power and regulated the flashing. **Ortlieb**, a german manufacturer of touring bags/panniers were showing their waterproof and fully submersible panniers. These are constructed similar to inflatable rafts and have no sewn seams. Quality was excellent. These should be a real consideration for the hard core bike tourist. **Gullwing** displayed a rear suspension unit which retrofits to the rear of mountain bikes. It is a parallelogram system utilizing elastomers. We have ordered one of these systems to refit to a Tour Easy, I hope to give a test of this product in a future issue.

Now that I have had a few of days to digest all that was seen, heard and felt at the Interbike show I can see just how trend driven the American cycling market really is. Light, fast and colorful could have been themes to most of the items at displays. Are recumbents going this way and possibly becoming more "trendy." Maybe. Colorful anodized Linears, three color fade V-Rexs and 22 pound recumbents are putting the market in a better position, but then I bet that if Arnold..... rode a machine gun wielding recumbent in Terminator-10, everyone would want one the next day!

Relax and Ride.....BJ

Continued from page 23.

F-40 Reader Commentary

I found the Lycra shell to be a real hassle (very easy to put holes in), especially when lowering the landing gear (feet) through the slits. I suppose it would become second nature after a while.

Winds were spooky! I found I had to pay attention to wind direction and gustiness when I rode. Several times, I cancelled rides because it was too windy. In slightly windy conditions, I found I was lucky to stay within a track 3 feet wide and found myself getting shoved left and right. Passing trucks tended to suck me into the travel lanes. I had been warned about this: The guy I bought the stocking and tail-cone from had been completely blown over on his side on at least three occasions.

For me, the hassles were not worth the increase in speed. I absolutely LOVE my P-38, particularly its simplicity. I have a new appreciation for sitting there in the breeze. I think by going to the fairing, I gave up more than I got. This is subjective and will of course vary with individuals. And I certainly don't intend to flame the F-40 as I think it is an awesome machine, and am totally impressed with what Tim Brummer has done. However everything I've ever seen about it was so glowing, a report of some of its drawbacks is important.

Tom Mahood