



Report from Interbike 2007

by **Ron Burkitt, PCI # 488**

IPMBA Industry Liaison

Hilliard (OH) Police Department

As I sat in a room swirling with purple and gold shirts, I looked down at my plate to find pounds of boiled crawfish waiting to be eaten. It was the last night of the conference in Baton Rouge and my thoughts floated to Las Vegas and Interbike. This had been my first full conference as a board member and I'll never forget it. The East Baton Rouge EMS and all of their supporters had set the bar high during the past week. The vendors in the hall and those that donated to the silent auction went above and beyond with products. During the week I was again elected to the position of Industry Liaison. This time I had some idea of what to do and what to expect.

In 2006, I'd arrived at in Las Vegas for the first time in my life. My goal was to experience Interbike, talk to vendors who already support IPMBA in various ways, make contact with potential vendors, and scout out new and interesting products. That trip resulted in a newsletter featuring reviews of products available to you at discounts through the Product Purchase Program (PPP) and a taste of Interbike. I had come away from the show feeling somewhat overwhelmed by the possibilities and the challenge of visiting every booth that seemed to offer something for IPMBA members.

I began to plan for Interbike 2007 right away, getting approval to bring an additional board member and making reservations early. The question of who to take had many possible answers. The list included people I owed, some who offered bribes and one individual who said, "I'm the President of IPMBA and I'm going with you!" As I heard those words, I decided to ask Jim Bowell, President of IPMBA, to accompany me to Las Vegas, and we started to plan our handling of this critical incident. We enlisted some help from our Treasurer, Kurt Feavel, who was in Las Vegas for a separate conference. We then headed into the Sands Convention Center with our manpower in place.

The first order of business was to get the "lay of the land" as Interbike can be more than a little overwhelming. While walking the aisles, we stopped to say hello to many of our vendors and thank them for their support of IPMBA. There was Kryptonite, Lin, Kenda, Fuji, Sigma Sport, Cycle Source Group, ProGold, Brave Soldier, Kuji, Marwi, Cane Creek, WTB, Do Wrap, Terry Precision Cycling, and Rudy Project, just to name a few. All of the reps were glad to see us and thanked us for stopping by. However, they hadn't spent all that time and money at Interbike to talk, they had three days to sell as much product as possible, and so we moved on quickly. As with last year this took the entire day.

"Divide and conquer" was the theme of the second day. Jim spent the day making contacts with companies which seemed likely prospects for the PPP. When we met for dinner, he handed me a stack of business cards. The prospective vendors included the Soze Group (a sole insert company), Camelbak, Rhino Socks, Lizard Skins, Genuine Innovations (CO2 inflators and pumps), Hydripedes Insoles, Seattle Sports Outdoor Gear, Inertia Designs (cycling packs), Chrome Transport (urban riding gear), Bugaboos, Tifosi, and Axley Sport Optics (eyewear), and more. Look for the PPP to grow this year from these great contacts.

I spent the day with Kurt searching for specific vendors. We found Pletscher, a Swiss company that makes kickstands that could work on some full suspension bikes; they also make a rear rack system with a hard shell pack. We talked with Illuminite, a familiar company that makes retro-reflective clothing. One vendor contacted Maureen at headquarters and requested we stop by. The company, Brake Director, manufacture a one-handed braking system. They have already enrolled in the PPP. Several companies



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were offering products for flat tire reduction. We were more than a little intrigued by a company called Tire Balls that had an original concept; instead of a single inner tube, the tire is filled with several tennis ball sized pouches that hold air. When a ball is punctured, you only lose a small amount of the air in your tire. While talking to the folks at Rudy Project, we were shown a new set of shades with lenses that are clear and darken within 1.5 minutes of walking outside. Rudy designed these lenses after requests from a number of IPMBA members. We are looking forward to getting products from each of these companies to review for future issues of *IPMBA News*.

Jim and I were left by ourselves for the final day of the show. We spent half of the day working and half looking at stuff we wanted to see. The working half of our day was spent going to any and all light and lube manufacturers. Our industry has grown by leaps and bounds in both areas. No longer do we use WD-40 or generator lights on our machines. We are planning to write a comparative article of the different options available in this ever-changing marketplace. We talked with lube manufacturers TriFlow, Finish Line, Purple Extreme and Pro Gold; and lighting companies Nite Rider, Nuville, Marwi, Sigma, Cat Eye and Cygo Lite. Hopefully we will be able to get all of these products to compare and contrast.

As you can imagine, there was plenty to see and do. We have a lot of work in store as we try to provide you, our members, with news of new and interesting products to make your duty time safer and/or easier. As our Product Purchase Program grows, I'd encourage you to make use of it each and every time you can. Our vendors must see that IPMBA members use the products they sell. I look forward to seeing many of you in Indy this year and bringing you the information you need on the products you want.

Ron has been with the Hilliard Police Department for 16 years, including 11 on bike patrol. He enjoys off-road riding and has been an IPMBA Instructor since 2001. He is currently serving as IPMBA's Industry Liaison and can be reached at ron_burkitt@hboe.org.

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