

Victim Impact

Cycling Authors Sign Books

In the mid-1970s, some folks in Marin County started dragging their single-speed, beach-cruiser bikes up the local hills, the most famous one being Mount Tamalpais. Then they rode down. As they did this more and more, they realized their equipment was woefully inadequate, and some of them began customizing their bikes.

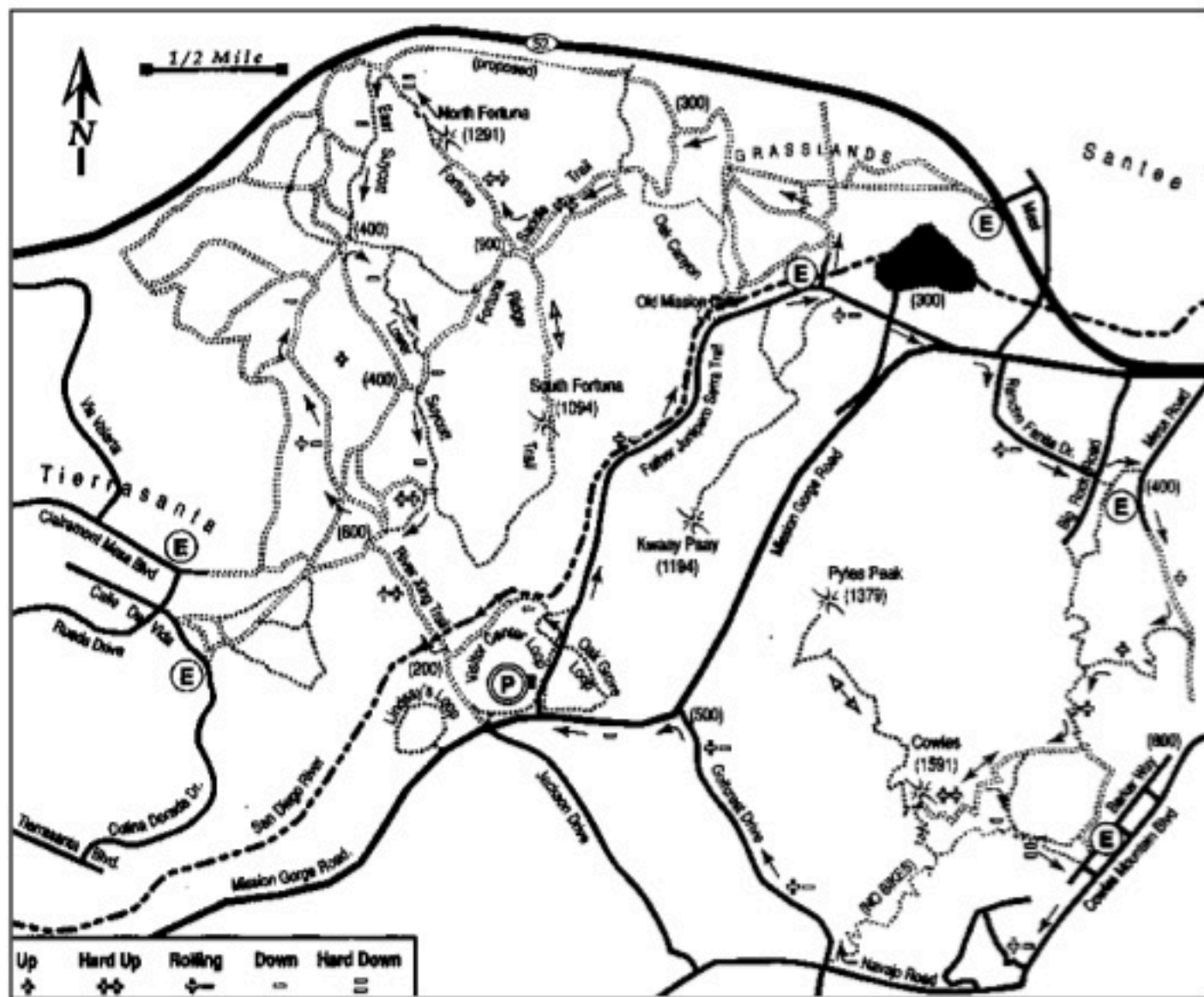
Daniel Greenstadt of Golden Hill is describing the birth of mountain biking as he drives back from the family farm in the San Joaquin Valley.

Brakes and gears needed the most improvement on these clunker bikes, says Greenstadt on his car phone. "Gears

needed to be much smaller, so cyclists could get up those hills, and brakes needed to be much better, so you could get down without killing yourself." Eventually manufacturers began to sell what could be called the first modern mountain bikes to a brand-new market. "People who loved the outdoors, including hikers and equestrians, were discovering this alternative, human-powered, non-polluting, quiet way to explore the backcountry." It was also attractive to people looking for a novel physical challenge.

The 38-year-old business-development consultant bought his first mountain bike in 1983, when he was living in Santa Barbara County. For the past 12 years, he has been riding in San Diego County; in 1998, he published the *San Diego Mountain Bike Guide*.

The sport is growing, to the regret of some who chose it because they



Bicycle trails of Mission Trails Regional Park, from the San Diego Mountain Bike Guide

wanted a solitary experience in the backcountry. Expect a relative crowd at Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and Mission Trails Regional Park, says Greenstadt, naming two readily accessible venues. Another popular place, though it's more remote, is Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, which, unlike the other two, provides a mountainous experience at an altitude reaching 5000 feet.

East of Alpine, some large, undeveloped tracts can provide a mountain biker with more "adventurous" experiences, according to Greenstadt. Parts of the Laguna Mountains and the Cleveland National Forest have rustic trails, too, he says. Among those, he names the Indian Creek Trail and the Noble Canyon Trail as nationally famous among mountain bikers.

There are even less traveled areas in the Jacumba Mountains, which are visited by few trail users of any kind, says Greenstadt. "The experienced cyclist will find abandoned roads there,

although I recommend that they travel in pairs."

One place for mountain bikers of any level is the Tri-Canyon area — Rose Canyon, San Clemente Canyon, and Tecolote Canyon. "Tri-Canyon spares the novice too many steep or overly technical trails," says Greenstadt, using the two major descriptors of the mountain-bike experience. "A nontechnical road would be a fire road; it may be very steep, but smooth. On the other hand, you may have a flat trail that's considered very technical, because it's full of bumps, rocks, and roots."

On Saturday, Greenstadt will sign his book at a local bookstore. Along with him will be another San Diego author, Mark Manion of Clairemont.

"The road was straight. We had lights all over us. It was ten o'clock at night, but we were very visible," says Manion, describing conditions before the bike accident in which he and his cousin were involved on the fourth day of what they expected to be a four-

month trip from San Diego to Minnesota.

It was August 1974. Manion's bike was a powder blue Gitane Interclub. His cousin's was a purple Motobecane. Both of them had specially chosen their tires, seats, handlebars. They were on a highway in Bakersfield when they were hit by a drunk driver. "I was 19; my cousin was 18. He went under the car and was killed. My skull actually came off my spine. It left me totally paralyzed from the neck down."

Eventually, Manion could walk with a cane; but, suffering from balance problems, he fell and broke his neck a second time, in 1991.

Competing in wheelchair sports, Manion says he has met many people who were injured doing everything from skydiving to falling out of trees. "I know all the horror stories. But my best friend is a quadriplegic because he was the drunk driver. A couple of weeks ago, we spoke to students in Ramona. So the kids got it from two different angles — somebody who wrecked

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Daniel Greenstadt

Calendar

LOCAL EVENTS

himself up and somebody who was a victim."

Manion also speaks to convicted drunk drivers. "The judges sentence them to something called a Victim Impact Statement. The last time, there were about 500 of them."

In *Unfinished Miles: One Man's Unthinkable Journey*, Manion describes forgiving the driver who injured him and killed his cousin.

Another victim, who was in a similar biking accident, asked him how he possibly could. "I will never forgive the guy who killed my best friend," he said. I could feel the bitterness coming off this guy. But I'm a Bible kind of person." Manion thinks even drunk drivers should forgive

themselves. "Sometimes that's the hardest thing of all to do," he says.

—Jeanne Schinto

Local Author Signings

Daniel Greenstadt,

"San Diego Mountain Bike Guide"

Mark Manion,

"Unfinished Miles"

**Saturday, May 25,
2:00 p.m.**

**Barnes & Noble,
Hazard Center**

Free

Info: 619-220-0175

Events that are underlined occur after May 30.

HOW TO SEND US YOUR LISTING:

Contributions must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the week prior to publication for consideration. Do not phone. Send a complete description of the event, including the date, time, cost, the precise address where it is to be held (including neighborhood), a contact phone number, and a phone number (including area code) for public information to READER EVENTS, Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186-5803. Or fax to 619-881-2401. You may also submit information online at www.SanDiegoReader.com by clicking on the events section.

BAJA

"El Aire Oscuro," author Daniel Téllez will read from and sign his new book at the Tijuana Cultural Center today, Thursday, May 23, at 7 p.m. Find the center at Paseo de los Héroes and Mina Street in the Zona Río. For more information, call 011-52-664-687-9600. Free. (TIJUANA)

The Play *Mades Medus* will be performed by La Madeja Theater Company today, Thursday, May 23, at 8 p.m., at the Tijuana Cultural Center (Paseo de los Héroes and Mina Street, Zona Río). Tickets are \$6 U.S.

Call 011-52-664-687-9600 for additional details. (TIJUANA)

"Exile and the Skin of Our Memories, from Buenos Aires to Tijuana" — this art installation by Pablo Bransburg and Daniel Carrillo opens with a reception on Friday, May 24, at 8 p.m., in the Multifloro Gallery at the Institute of Culture of Baja California (ICBC), located at Centenario Avenida 10151 in the Zona Río. Admission is free. For information, call 011-52-664-683-5922 or 619-563-8444. (TIJUANA)

A Concert is planned by OV7 on Saturday, May 25, at 6:30 p.m., at the Monumental Bullring by the Sea. Tickets are \$17, \$22, and \$28 U.S.