



Basherama!

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Kuala Lumpur Mountain Bike Hash

Committee

Basher-in-Chief
Azizul (Joe) Adnan
253 2511 (h)
253 0379 (o)
253 5522 (f)
012 268 2613 (m)

Vice-Basher
Peter Bloomer
253 5043 (h)
777 9377 (o)
777 9322 (f)

News-Bash
Richard Aubry
255 0611 (h)
635 7191 (o)
635 7193 (f)
rplaub@pc.jaring.my

Bash-Piss
John Spencer
836 1494 (h)

Events—Races
Ian Miller
456 9764 (h&f)
221 8317 (o)
miller@pc.jaring.my

Events—Hashes
Peter Robinson

Bash-Cash
Barry Hills
424 4230 (h&f)
249 6318 (o)
barry@pc.jaring

Hare Raiser
Clara Chin

Hare Raiser
Gordon Fraser
253 7742 (h&f)



Bash Caps

Not only will the next bash be a barbeque bash, but also haute couture Bash baseball caps will be available (as well car stickers for those who didn't make it to the Haze Hash) free to members. Non-members will be fleeced RM20 to be associated with the rest of us misfits.

More hares please!

It seems even the promise of the miracle hare tonic (free booze... er, drinks) is not enough to stir bashers into volunteering to become hares, although admittedly the KLMBH ranks have witnessed the departure of many stalwart bashers. To assist "outing" of bashful bashers (and as a response to the Jonathan's charge that "Follow the paper" is an over-simplification), Gordon Fraser has kindly written the Idiots Guide to Bashing which appears in the following pages.

Tuan Mee Estate, Batu Arang—September 28

This was really a gathering of naughty schoolboys all desperate to ignore the official advice to stay indoors, although not surprisingly there were no children and as far as could be judged it was an "all male" event. Reading the following history recently, perhaps it is as well not to make judgements of this kind.

"...cycling brought the sexes together for the first time in an unchaperoned way, particularly after the development in the 1880s of the Rover safety bicycle. Public cries of alarm at the prospect of moral chaos arose from this and from the evolution of women's cycling attire, which grew progressively more masculine"

After deciding to ignore the API, it was not reassuring to see the returning hare sporting an industrial grade heavy duty filtration mask complete with exhalation valves. This equipment apparently guarantees protection against most chemical and biological weapons and so it will come in handy for those long sweaty rides even after the haze has cleared.

There were no takers for the short run, so Gordon's efforts were in vain, although we did see a lot of his paper. This was vaguely reassuring, although we had been told on no account to follow it. Before setting off, we were treated to useful tips on the finer points of hashing by the hare but this was condensed to a single piece of advice to "follow the paper", which even though I am quite new to hashing, I had not heard put so briefly before and I suspected it might be an oversimplification.

The first obstacle encountered after only a few yards, was a stream with a very soft looking bed and a thin trickle of dark brown effluent in the bottom. Surprisingly nobody wanted to get their shoes dirty this early on, so we all waited for someone else to try jumping in, which eventually they did and it turned out to be less squelchy than it looked.

As suspected, the initial advice from the hare turned out to be completely false as the first check contained an evil false trail. Suspicions should have been aroused when paper was found only about 20 metres from the check, heading in the "obvious" direction (straight ahead). The trail led out onto an inviting, gently downhill sloping,

Barbeque Bash

Bukit Chera—26 October, 9.30am sharp

Head West on the NKVE towards Klang and Shah Alam. Exit at Bukit Raja at the end of the NKVE. Reset trip meter to zero at the toll. Proceed straight ahead, towards Port Klang and Bukit Raja. At 1.8km take the left slip road for Port Klang and merge into contraflow roadworks. At 3.5km turn left (signposted Meru), and after further 100 metres turn right at T-junction signals. Proceed straight through signals on B1 until Meru. At 11km turn right at cross roads traffic signals then almost immediately left for Empangan Tasik Subang. At 14.5km under arch for Kg Budiman. At 15.9km turn left for Kem Bina Negara Meru. Parking Area at 17.8km on earthworks platform on right of road. Journey time from Damansara Utama is 50 minutes.



Jonathan Startin Steve Ellison

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cleared area with pretty bushes, which almost promised a view, but spirits lowered as the track gradually narrowed. By my reckoning it was about 200 metres downhill from the check to the "cross" marking the end of the false trail and at least 800 metres slogging back up to the check again and much steeper on the way back. Almost the whole pack got caught and there were some grim faces. Good idea to get that sort of thing out of the way early on so that memories have time to fade before the riders return!

A couple of times I was travelling at speed with an over-confident group only to find that there had in fact been no paper for ages and the real trail had dived off several hundred metres ago. This was obviously some kind of haze induced mirage, but thanks go to the hare for anticipating this and adorning selected trees at diffi-

cult locations. Was it the sound-deadening effect of the haze, or were there just a lot of sore throats? Whatever the cause this seemed an eerily silent hash with very little calling. I was grateful for whatever it was with the whistle and perhaps fog horns should now be standard issue. The area had a dense network of inter-connecting tracks, so for example at one check with a choice of five routes the "on trail" was found by several scouts simultaneously who had set out along different converging trails. Using a cunning system of short cuts at zero gradient, Joe managed to pop up a different points without showing any exertion, while the rest of us were dripping.

As for hazards, a two foot vertical face at the end of a narrow downhill joining a logging track is always tempting, but

somehow the bike got the upper hand again and ended up on top of me. A few riders including Paul "turnover" Booth who was just ahead of me got caught out by the camouflaged wheel sized holes which must have taken quite a bit of digging on the part of the hares, but I can record that it was time well spent. Through some erosion and shrinkage phenomenon on the surface of the home trail looked and felt like a tank test track and front suspension is now high on my Christmas list.

Thanks to the hares for doing the business yet again and I hope I have learned a few tricks when I step into the hot seat for the October hash.

Jonathan Startin



Stuff for sale

Breezer bikes, Singletrack Mind clothes and Ritchey cantilevers

Three 1997 Breezer mountain bikes are available for sale at pretty much the distributor's cost price from AZ Customcraft in Ipoh, which is the authorised distributor for Breezer in Malaysia. Breezer is one of the small boutique American brands famous for its quality workmanship and thoughtful—if sometimes conservative—designs. A more aesthetically appealing Ritchey, if you will.

Breezers are also known for their quick handling and roomy top tubes. The Jetstream and the Thunder also have seat tubes that extend beyond the top tube intersection, so the sizing can be a little misleading: the 17", for example, feels more like a 16½".

These three bikes were brought in before the 30% slide of the Ringgit, so expect 1998 models to cost at least that much more.

Available also is clothing from Singletrack Mind, who make normal-looking mountain biking wear for those of us who feel uncomfortable being seen in tight Spandex® or Lycra® in public. I bought the Epic shorts (RM132), which have built-in padding, and was surprised by how comfy it is. It is also cut in such a way that the seam does not run down the middle and chafe your perineum, as normal shorts do and quite painfully too. Some of their Coolmax™-lined cotton jerseys are quite spiffy too, in an earthy subtle kind of way—ideal, really, if you want to avoid the stinky petrochemical by-product roadie look or aspire to be a California surfer dude. Contact Major Jaafar of AZ Customcraft (☎ 05 549 5051).

Of special interest to the tight-fisted holdouts who have yet to convert to V-brakes is a special offer from Bike-Pro of RM80 for a set of 4 Ritchey cantilever brakes. The arms are made of cold-forged aluminium, and come with a set of 4 black Ritchey brake pads. A pair is just RM45. Sounds like pretty good value—not very long ago just the pads would cost about that much! Tan Boon Foo ☎ 705 1989.

	Jetstream	Twister	Thunder
Size (centre to top)	17"	17"	18.5"
Frame	Chromium-molybdenum	Full suspension (sweet spot URT design), 7005 aluminium alloy front triangle, with chromium-molybdenum rear triangle	Aluminium alloy
Fork	Rock Shox Judy XC	Rock Shox Judy XC	Rock Shox Indy C
Component highlights	Mostly Shimano XT stuff	LXXT mix	STXXT/Avid mix
US retail price (US\$)	2,195	2,295	1,495
Bash price (RM)	4,294	4,423	2,693

The Idiot's Guide

to Setting a Bash

Introduction

It is said that way back in the annals of time, the Kuala Lumpur Mountain Bike Hash was established as a means by which able bodied young men and women could gather at an appointed time and demonstrate to each other their prowess upon the all-terrain bicycle.

Well this was sort of the idea, but it actually evolved during a late night back in 1994 when a few of the lads, having partaken of copious quantities of gaseous amber liquid, thought it would be a good thing to go out on their bikes the next morning, rid themselves of their hangovers and have a general thrash about. The result was the birth of the "Basher".

The Kuala Lumpur Mountain Bike Hash meets at 9:30am on the last Sunday of each month at a predetermined run site. Occasionally the run is put back due to unforeseen circumstances but time and date have been established to suit most people and, although it screws up any chance of a lie in, it doesn't clash with KL adult running hashes or the junior hash (mainly because they meet at much more sociable times).

Two runs are normally set. Long Run and Scenic Run, either on different circuits or largely the same circuit with paper of differing shape or colour for each run.

The main guidelines for setting a run can be summarised as follows—

- Long Run—approximately 18km, varied terrain, steep hills, interesting downhill, single track etc.
- Scenic Run—approximately 8km, as above but avoiding excessive hill climbs or dangerous descents.

Runs should be rideable i.e. on your bike pedalling as opposed to on your feet climbing with bike on shoulder. This rule is somewhat more relaxed for the long run where, as a hare, it's nice to see the poor sods wading through a river or struggling up the contours—but don't overdo it. For obvious reasons avoid crossing standing or stagnant water, rubbish tips and planter's gardens. Try and keep the Scenic run less arduous but nonetheless interesting.

Reconnoitre

There are acres of good unexplored plantation within easy striking distance of KL. No need to go miles outstation, although Sunday morning is a good time to drive and new sites are always welcomed.

To set a good run you will need to reconnoitre the area thoroughly, anything from three to five sessions. Make sure there is a reasonable parking area where roads / tracks will not be blocked by bashers parked cars. A shady area is preferable (given that some bashers seldom appear in daylight). Send your run site directions to the Bash News Editor two weeks before the run—remember that simple instructions with trip-meter mileage work best for bleary bashers with Sunday morning hangovers.

Allow yourself plenty of time so that by the Saturday before, you are familiar and comfortable with the area. Plan the ride to cover a wide area within the distance limits. If its too tight and convoluted your false trails will overlap and confusion will reign.

Remember that despite logic, bashers will overrun the end of "falsies" by up to 50 metres or more in the desperate hope that paper will magically re-appear. Also, when bashers fan out from a check they can cover an area up to half a kilometre in diameter!

The Perfect Bash Trail

No such thing of course but a variety of terrain keeps everyone's interest—hill climbs, fast downhills, single track, challenging downhill tracks for the adventurous and of course a bit of mud! Don't worry about taking riders off the main tracks along contours etc. although remember the "ridicable" ethic.

Make sure that its not too easy such that everyone breezes round in half an hour. The Long Bash should take 1½ to 2 hours, the Scenic about the same but at a slower pace, all including time taken to break checks.

Checks

Set five to six checks on the Long Run, three to four on the Scenic. The theory is that the front runners will arrive at a check and start looking for the route, allowing the slower riders to catch up—thus a complete peloton rides away as one once the check is broken. Well, not at all really but that's roughly the idea.

Checks are established by dumping a pile of (biodegradable) paper at one point with only the lead-in trail visible. Choose a place where there are several options as to where the real trail could continue. Lay some false trails with paper starting not more than 60m from the check and lasting not more than 100m of false paper. If practical mark the end of the "falsie" with a paper cross or crossed branches etc. The true route should also start approximately 60m from the check. Pleasant tricks are to lay "falsies" starting tantalisingly at the bottom of a steep hill so that the poor bashers have to cycle back up to the check, or down single track so that everyone hares off only to end up in a crumpled mess as they all try and turn to come back.

Back Checks—Where bashers will check the obvious routes leading from the check but then realise that they have to go back on their in-route to find the real trail. Alternatively lay it up a dead end where they know they will have to back track.

Circular Checks—Lead them up a hill, round in a wide circle, then they'll meet themselves coming round, needing a trip back down the hill to find the real trail.

Normal Checks—Lead the trail to a pile of paper at a junction of several tracks, then set "falsies" and the real trail as before.

Remember not to lay checks or "falsies" too close to where bashers may find another part of the run and end up going the wrong direction or shortcut the course.

Bash Trail Paper

Shredded paper or sliced up squares / triangles / strips etc., different colours if you feel inclined. Try and lay sufficient to mark the trail without going OTT. It is biodegradable but only after some time. On straight tracks one piece every 5–10 me-

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tres is sufficient but in long grass or mud you will need to lay more.

False trail end crosses stuck to trees rather than on the road are better but make sure the trail leads to the tree and that its stuck on at cyclist's eye level—bashers sometimes suffer from tunnel vision. Chalk can be used on tarmac surfaces. If your run is in a popular hashing area make sure your paper is different from all the other stuff on the ground.

Laying The Trail

To be safe, plan to lay the paper on the Saturday afternoon before the run. There is a danger that it may get washed away by overnight rain, but its a lot quicker to freshen up a trail on the Sunday morning than to lay it from scratch (unless you start at 5:00am with a torch).

Get to the site early on the Sunday of the Bash, allow yourself enough time to whizz round most of the run and make sure the trail is intact.

Pre-Bash Briefing

Once the gathered masses have arrived you will need to give them a briefing or at least tell them what kind of paper to follow, point out any dangers etc.



Pocket Profile on... John Spencer

A new, character-assassinating series by Vibrator

The haze threatened to make the last Bash a non-event, but more than the usual number of diehards turned out on the day. However, on just the day when the intrepid Bashers could have done with a few tubes of amber nectar to sluice the kilograms of ash from their throats—there was no Bash-Piss! This caused a rumpus the like of which has never been since Basil Oliveira farted upwind in an MCC dressing room.

Bash-Piss was spotted on the Saturday at a KL watering hole, and just prior to sliding under the table, informed our undercover correspondent that he might not be able to make to the Bash on account of the haze. Well, three is obviously a contradiction here, whereby drinking 35 pints of Anchor draft in one session is not considered detrimental as breathing diluted wood smoke at a rate slightly above that at which you would be breathing it anyway, whilst lying in one's pit.

So, just who is this "Bash-Piss"? We thought that this was the perfect opportunity to introduce our new "Pocket Profile" series where we expose the innermost secrets of Bashers, especially those with dark and embarrassing secrets.

Also known as	"Captain Paralytic", "Bash-Piss", "Northern Man"
Education	Degree from the University of Getting-the-shit-kicked-out-of-you
Occupation	Precision Civil Engineer, works to the tolerance of +/- half a brick
Religion	Seventh Day Horizontalist
Favourite drink	Anchor Beer
Favourite food	Anchor Beer
Favourite sport	Biting the heads off whippets
Favourite Music/Artist	Led Zep's Greatest Hits (this is the tape welded into his car's cassette player)
Favourite film	Bambi
Pet Hate	Music by the Spice Girls
Ambition	To give away the last bottle from that crate of stout

Make sure you nominate two volunteers to do the bash write-ups for Long and Scenic and that every one has checked in for whichever run they are doing.

On The Bash

Make sure everyone goes off in the right direction, not up the On-In Trail. You should then have time to get to the first check and see how they break it. Remember, if total confusion reigns you may have to give a clue, but resist all threats. Make sure that checks are closed (lay paper to join the route) once they have been broken, slow riders coming up behind will have a hard time finding the trail if not. Discourage enthusiastic bashers from closing checks unless they are absolutely sure its not a "falsie". If a basher is struggling, give him / her a shortcut if you can but don't get them lost because you will have to go look for them if they don't check in.

Bashers should keep calling "On-On" as they ride round on paper. At a check they should respond to the call "Are You" by replying "Checking" if they are testing a "falsie" or of course "On-On" once they've found the trail. Other calls you will hear are what they think of the Haze—if its unprintable you've done well!

On-On,

The Bash Committee.