

HISTORY OF DOUBLE DATES

The Gospel According to Saint John

PRE DATING DATES

In the beginning there was no tandem club. Although history will reveal that Rick Dixon formed a tandem sub-club as part of the Richardson Bicycle Touring Club (now Greater Dallas Bicyclists) sometime in the 1970's. Rick's club was called Texas Touring Tandems. Each team had to lead a ride a month, distances of 80 miles or more were encouraged and each team had a "handle" like CB Radio operators. Understandably, TTT didn't last very long.

Through the 1980's Rich Dewell maintained a list of tandem riders at Richardson Bike Mart. Rich and the Bike Mart would sponsor a ride once or twice a year, but there was no formal club.

FORMATION OF DOUBLE DATES

I became a tandem owner in September 1989 and heard that tandem riders from Houston were riding out of Nacogdoches later that month. So we went. The first people we met were Bill and Debby Bailey, also recent tandem owners from Dallas. At dinner on Saturday night, we discussed forming DOUBLE DATES. I'm not sure where the name came from. Maybe it was the good wine we were drinking. Or maybe Rich had already invented it.

Bill and Debby took charge, organized DOUBLE DATES and sponsored the first ride out of their house in Carrollton on February 4, 1990. There were 5 tandems and one single. One couple had just bought their tandem and didn't know how to start. It was hilarious watching her run alongside trying to jump on.

Bill and Debby had very definite opinions about how DOUBLE DATES would be run:

- There would be no meetings; this was a riding club.
- There would be no dues; we'd get sponsors for the newsletter.
- There would be no officers. In fact, the Baileys didn't want help in running the club.

The second DATES ride was the St Patrick's Day ride in Ellis County, one of our most repeated rides. (Except we don't count the year that Carroll Mayhew organized it as the "St Patrick's Day BBQ Ride". Carroll, St Patrick doesn't do BBQ!)

I am the only person from the first roster who is still in the club. I believe the only currently active DATES members who joined and became active that first year are the Hoyt's, the Bloomers and the Dixon's.

The Bailey's no-dues rule didn't last long. When they added Rich Dewell's list to their "roster", the postage became expensive and there weren't enough sponsors. By 1991, we had a club membership fee of \$10 annually.

In 1991, Bill and Debby put on the first Southwest Tandem Rally in Waco. Everyone was surprised at the turnout, about 60 if my memory is correct.

EARLY YEARS

By the end of 1991, the Baileys wanted to “retire” from running the club. Both had new jobs, which were going to occupy much more time. Another couple, Joe and Barbara Barton took over the club. We were all surprised at this since none of us knew the Barton’s. They had recently moved to Dallas from California.

The Barton’s broke another of the Bailey’s rules – they scheduled a meeting. The first one was in their house, although subsequent January (now February) meetings were at a restaurant. The Barton’s wanted to publish the newsletter, which did not yet have a name. But they wanted someone else to coordinate rides.

Also in 1992

- The Southwest Tandem Rally is hosted by HATS in Palestine. The restaurant is so small we have to eat in shifts.
- There were 14 club rides in 1992, including the first Holiday Lights Ride which is probably THE most repeated DATES ride.
- In October, we sponsored a 5-day tandem tour of North Texas. Ten teams participated.
- In November, we had the first campout.
- In the years 1992 through 1995, DATES had many Moonlight Rides. These were at Joe Pool Lake around the time of a full moon and ended with dinner at a marina.
- We also had the first re-occurring weekly rides; and these were also at Joe Pool. Later (1996?) there were re-occurring rides at Plano Schwin led by Rick Gurney and at the Bike Mart (“Rhonda’s Fast and Furious Rides”).

In 1993

- DATES once again sponsored the Southwest Tandem Rally in Nacogdoches. Although it rained all weekend, this rally set a new standard for SWTR in terms of food and facilities. Over 120 teams participated.
- In the summer, Tracy and Scott Glick took over responsibilities for membership. By December, they became newsletter editors and I took over membership. The newsletter had a new look and a name” DATE LINE”. Although it’s not clear if we had a ride coordinator at this time, there were club 17 rides in 1993.
- And the Barton’s disappear as quickly as they had appeared.

DEVELOPING YEARS

In 1994:

- We had a DATES ride on Friday before the start of the Southwest Tandem Rally in Brenham (sponsored by HATS). We rode to the Blue Bell ice cream factory but spent most of the time underground because of tornados in the area.
- DATE LINE is now up to six pages on most issues. The Glick's really improved our newsletter.
- Sometime in 1994 Warren and Audre Casteel became Ride Coordinators. In the two years of 1994 and 1995, they increased the number of club rides from 22 to 42!
- Sometime in 1994 I put together a committee to design the first DATES jersey. Jim Hoyt told me that these committees always are contentious. We were no exception. In the end, it turned out pretty good. I remember a picture (1995) at the Southern Tandem Rally in Pineville, La and 80% of the teams were wearing DATES jerseys.
- In October, Herb and Sandra Bloomer started one of the most popular DATES weekend rides, the Halloween Ride to Tyler.
- In November we had an "Internet Tandem Rally." We rode in small groups from three locations in the metroplex and then reported on our ride to each other via email. Ok, I'll admit this dumb idea was mine.

In 1995:

- A brochure advertising a "Santana Southwest Tandem Rally" in Tucson caused a stir here because of the use of our rally name. After this was brought to Santana president Bill McCready's attention, he issued an apology at Tandem@Hobbes. Since Bill never makes mistakes, his apology is printed here for the record
THE APOLOGY (from Bill "don't call me O.J." McCready): I'm guilty. Because the title of our previous named event, The Santana West Coast Tandem Rally, didn't seem appropriate for a rally 500 miles inland from the West Coast, I personally selected Santana Southwest Tandem Rally as the official name for the above one-time-only tandem event in Tucson. Unfortunately, this was a thoughtless and unintentional infringement on the established name of a tandem rally held in Texas every April since 1990. Oops. My sincere apologies to all the hard-working Texans who've organized the Southwest Tandem Rally over the past six years.
- Phil and Louise Shambrook, a tandem couple from Britain who are on a round the world tour spent a week in Dallas and joined us on two rides. On one ride, we stopped to let the slower riders (including the Shambrook's) catch up. When they finally did arrive, Phil lights a small stove and makes tea. You should have seen DATES' members' reaction to this!
- The *real* Southwest Tandem Rally is in Ardmore Oklahoma organized by DATES members Rick and Kay Watson.
- In August, Carroll and Bobbie Mayhew become Ride Coordinators. The Glick's took over membership. I become editor and rename the newsletter DATES-LINE. The current newsletter logo is adopted.
- A wedding invitation (Number 1) is printed in the August issue of DATES-LINE from Arkansas members Jay and Becky Lewis. Several teams go to the tandem wedding in Fayetteville and end up on national television.
- Our end-of-year membership grows from 85 in 1993, to 150 in 1994 and then 160 in 1995.

In 1996:

- DATES-LINE in April reports a committee decided we would have 6 officers: President, Rides Coordinator, Special Events Coordinator, Secretary, Treasurer and Newsletter Editor. But subsequent newsletters never mention a president. Hmmm.
- John and Marcia Lucido become Membership Coordinators, Clyde and Fran McKinney become Treasurers and Dave Douthett and Missy Magunson become Special Events Coordinators. We've really lost touch with the Bailey's "no officers" club. From here on in this article, I'll not attempt to keep up with who does what. We have many, many people involved in running the club. We still have no elections or formality, people just volunteer.
- DATES once again sponsors the southwest Tandem Rally in Nacogdoches. No rain this time.
- The June/July DATES-LINE is 12 pages. We have 46 club rides in 1996. It now cost \$15 annually to be a member.
- In November 1996, we have our first meeting other than the Jan/Feb annual meeting.

MATURING YEARS

In 1997:

- Dues go up to \$18.
- By February, we have a DATES web site.
- The Southwest Tandem Rally is in Tulsa.
- In May, Tom Shaddox and Brenda Hursin sponsor the first of another popular weekend, Stoker Appreciation Weekend.

In 1998:

- HATS sponsors the Southwest Tandem Rally in Waco – back to Bill Bailey's original site but with better routes.
- George Patterson and Pauline Smith invite DATES members to their wedding. (Number 2)
- In June, the Althaus' lead a ride which includes a lap on the Texas World Speedway.

In 1999:

- TEX-CAT's host the Southwest Tandem Rally in New Braunfels.
- In April, Mike Parker reveals a new DATES jersey. It keeps the original jersey theme but is much more professional looking. At least most members think so.
- In December, Carol Croy and Bruce Hudson become DATES-LINE editors and take the newsletter to a new high.

In 2000:

- At the Stoker Appreciation Ride, Roane Logan's poem includes a proposal of marriage. Boy was Juanita surprised. And the nuptials (Number 3) were a club event in October.
- Bobby and Carroll Mayhew, along with a cast of thousands, plan and coordinate 10th Southwest Tandem Rally in Tyler.
- In conjunction with the rally Brenda and I organize a 5-day SWTR Pre Tour. We get more business than we planned for (18 tandem teams from across the US and Canada) so we recruit assistants: Rick and Kay Watson and Jim and Rhonda Hoyt.

In 2001:

- DATES members Rick and Kay Watson once again host the Southwest Tandem Rally at Lake Murray Lodge in Oklahoma.

In 2002

- For the third time, the Southwest Tandem Rally is in Waco, with HATS hosting.

- Larry and Nancy Gingrich organize a ride and Bar-B-Q out of Lone Oak Winery. They have one of the biggest turnouts for a club event, probably 50 participants - at least for the wine tasting. A smaller number rode their tandems.
- Tom Shaddox and Brenda Hursin organize our first ever tandem century.
- A week later Tom and Brenda Shaddox (finally) get married (Number 4) and the club is invited.

OLD AGE

Well, what would the Bailey's think of DOUBLE DATES now? Would they be turned off by the many meetings, the officers and the high dues? Or would they be proud of one of the most active tandem clubs anywhere?

Answer - Bill saw this article on the web site and sent an email from Belews Creek, N.C.:

"I am glad the club has continued and grown and happy that we took the chance in 1990 to start a tandem group in Dallas-it seems like it was longer than 2 years of cranking out simple newsletters on the old timey word processor. The web site is great and the club is lucky to have an old guy like you as historian. Dates has come a long way since the February brunch ride at our house in Carrollton. Best wishes for the continued success of DATESs."

FUTURE

Let's make this a "living history". Send other newsworthy historical or hysterical DATES events to John_j_McManus@yahoo.com . We'll update the web site periodically.

PART TWO

2005

It's the 15th anniversary of the Southwest Tandem Rally and also DATES' time to organize the rally. John McManus & Brenda Cole form an initial planning team of Chuck and Kris Carlson, Mindy and Scott Mashburn and Kevin and Linda Vinson. Plans are to have the rally in Fredericksburg and to include a pre-tour, a full-day's ride on Friday and provide professional jerseys. The rally was a rousing success.



2005 SWTR Pre-Tour Group



Kevin & Linda model the SWTR jerseys



Happy Hour at Marketplatz was a big success



Santana president Bill McCready



Only tandem rally to have its own wine?

2007

DATES takes its first international tandem tour, *Cathedrals and Gardens Tour of S.W. England*, organized by John & Brenda's CTC friend Chris Davison. In spite of much rain, everyone had a great time.



Off we go on the left side of the road



Bar-B-Q at McCubbins flat in London

2008

DATES members again go international, this time to the Canadian province of Nova Scotia.



First stop, Peggy's Cove



Picturesque Nova Scotia coast



Typical B&B sure beats camping



Eight teams made this 2-week tour

DATES adopt a new logo:



MORE TO COME