

Cue sheet

Scroll down for the cue sheet. If it's too verbose, feel free to make yourself a condensed version. Mileages were recorded firsthand from a calibrated computer, but naturally yours could vary, so adapt as needed. See www.midnightcentury.com for a map link and helpful advice. I clip my cue sheet to my stem like this, with staples top & bottom to keep it from slipping through the clip:



Bail-out

Know your bail-out options, just in case. As long as you're still on the Centennial Trail, you can just turn back. After that, the bail-out points are:

- Highway 27 or Dishman-Mica Road at mile 49.
- the Palouse Highway at mile 53.
- Valley Chapel Road at mile 59.
- Highway 195 at mile 66.
- Beyond Highway 195, there's not much to gain by bailing out, but you can divert to Cheney at mile 80 to buy stuff.

Tires

First-timers: try this loop as a tire test: <http://www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=3963050> Safety's more important than speed, and you don't want to be delayed by pinch flats on the rocky sections either, so pick tires that work well for you on gravel and rocks. It's a grass-roots fun ride, so be practical and try not to obsess about rolling resistance on pavement.



Headlights

Plan for at least 6 hours of runtime. Carrying a backup is a smart idea. Super-high light output isn't as important on pitch-dark country roads, since your night vision gets a chance to adapt properly, but as a reality check, try your lights on the tire-test loop at night: <http://www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=3963050> Email me at mechbgon@gmail.com if you want some ideas on lights.

Taillights

There are lots of good red blinkies these days. As of 2010, I like the SuperFlash. If you turn off your taillight on the deserted parts of the route because it's disruptive to your buddies, then remember to turn it on where there's potential for traffic, especially on the highway sections.

Reflectivity

To be street-legal at night (so you can sue someone if they hit you), you'll need a red rear reflector that shows up from 600 feet in high-beam auto headlights, **even if you have a taillight already**. Besides conventional bike reflectors, there's also red reflective tape (Fred Meyer has good DOT Conspicuity Tape in the auto-parts section). In addition, reflective legbands are good add-ons since their motion attracts the eye, plus they're useful for keeping your pants out of the chain in cooler times of the year.

Suggestions

- Lube your chain well, because the dust from the gravel roads depletes chain lube.
- You might want to bring some pain-relief tablets.
- Bring appropriate gear if it might rain, perhaps a light Value Village merino wool sweater and a windbreaker.
- On the fast descents, keep your speed conservative going into the corners, both paved & gravel. There are corners where you can get in over your head if you just let the bike run, and guess how I know THAT ;)
- Bring lots of water and/or energy drinks. Personally, I consume about 6 quarts of Gatorade for a night lap, plus some water. The cue sheet mentions three reliable water sources where you can top off, but go fully prepared.
- If you've got a hydration pack, or bottles in your jersey pockets, use them up first. Let the bike carry as much of the weight as possible.
- You want your cue sheet to be waterproof (in 2009, mine got hit by a rogue water sprinkler about ten minutes into the ride, and in 2010 we had unexpected rain). Print it on a laser printer, photocopy it, bag it, or laminate it.
- If possible, familiarize yourself with the route in daylight first.
- Eye protection's a good idea, since there are lots of bugs in some places.
- If you ride a flat-bar bike, you can save some energy at medium-to-high speeds by resting your palms on top of your handlebar as close to the stem as practical. This channels air around your body, instead of funneling it in. I call this the [supercruise position](#) after the ability of the latest fighter jets to supercruise (supersonic without afterburners).
- Remember: the porcupine ALWAYS has the right-of-way ;)

Q & A

Q: Why does the route keep changing?

A: The 2009 route map had an error on the Henry Road section, and it didn't show the Barker construction detour that was necessary at the time. So for 2010, the MidnightCentury.com site recommended the 2008 route instead, but it had issues of its own: it didn't start or finish at The Elk, leading to confusion; it included the Barker detour, which is no longer necessary; and the last section was more complex than you need after enduring a gruelling all-night ride. So the route represented here is the 2009 route, minus the unnecessary Barker construction detour and the Henry Road glitch.

Q: Any post-ride festivities?

A: In 2008 people had breakfast at Cafe Maron, but it's closed now. We should figure something out, a post-ride hang would be awesome. Maybe Pedals2People could provide space for a post-ride pancake breakfast. Check MidnightCentury.com for the latest.

Q: How many people show up?

A: About 20 so far.

Q: What kinds of bikes do they use?

A: A really wide variety, ranging from full-suspension mountain bikes to single-speeds to cyclocross and road bikes. Interesting variety, get there early so you can check everything out.

Q: I'd like to buddy with other riders, any way to find someone in advance?

A: I'm not aware of a forum or email list for this, but if you simply start with the main group and see who's going a similar pace, you can assimilate into an impromptu group. But make sure you're prepared to navigate solo (GPS, cue sheet, or learn the route by heart).

--Tom McFadden

0.0	From <i>The Elk</i> , go east on Pacific, then left onto Maple, which curls onto 1st Avenue. Follow 1st Ave. one mile to Bernard.
1.2	L onto Bernard, get onto the Centennial Trail at the Opera House breezeway, and head east.
3.2	The Centennial Trail joins Upriver Drive. Follow Upriver Drive about 6 miles east to Farr Road, beyond the Argonne stoplight.
9.4	Turn R onto Farr Road, turn L onto Maringo after 0.4 mi, and get back onto the Centennial Trail at the trailhead, crossing the bridge to the south side of the river after about a mile.
22.8	WATER is available at the Spokane River Rest Area on your right, just before you turn onto Spokane Bridge Road. The next known water option is at mile 30.4 in Liberty Lake.
23.0	Leave the Centennial Trail and turn R onto Spokane Bridge Rd, follow it under the freeway and continue straight on.
23.6	Branch R at the Y of Riverview Drive, descending slightly.
24.3	L onto Holland, then R onto State Line after 0.3mi. After this, you'll pass by the intersections of Hardison and S. State Line on your left, and then the road will change to gravel.
25.5	L onto Idaho Rd. (gravel & downhill) as Mission angles right (paved & uphill).
26.5	Stay right at the weird blue house at Sprague & Idaho.
27.2	You reach the top of the Idaho Road climb and begin a fast descent. Partway down the descent, you'll pass the intersection of Green Ridge Rd. (stay left and keep descending).
28.9	L onto Neyland, which takes you downhill into Liberty Lake.
29.7	Neyland curls left and becomes Sprague.
30.4	L onto Molter. <i>If you need more water, go ninja and sneak through the hole in the fence to the nearby golf-course building, which has a water fountain. The next known 24-hour water stop is at mile 79.</i>
30.8	L onto Liberty Lake Rd. After 0.2 mi, you'll come to a Y.
31.0	At the Y, take the right fork (straight ahead) to stay on Liberty Lake Rd , which climbs up the valley. It undergoes several name changes along the way, from Garry to Molter to Quinimose, so don't worry if you see these names on street signs or mailboxes.
32.8	Stay on Quinimose (straight ahead, still climbing) as you pass the Molter intersection on your right. You're nearly to the top.
33.2	You reach the top of the Quinimose climb and start descending. Be ready for the sudden right turn onto Henry in 1.4 miles.
34.6	R onto Henry, then ha.Left onto Saltese Lake Rd. after another 0.5mi of twisty descent. Saltese Lake Rd. eventually becomes 32nd.
39.2	L onto Linke (look at the road signs, as the road takes a left-hand curl just before the intersection and basically morphs into Linke, then 32nd peels off to the right). If you see the fire station on your right, you're on-course.
41.1	Stay on Linke as it turns 90° right at Saddle Ridge Rd.
41.6	Stay on Linke as it turns 90° left at Chapman Rd.
44.7	R onto Belmont. Watch out for deer along here.
45.6	Curl R onto Jackson, then curl L onto Belmont again after 0.2 miles.

46.5	R onto Highway 27, then L onto Dishman-Mica Rd. after 1.2mi.
48.7	L onto Madison Rd, then R onto Sands Rd. just after you go through the little tunnel . You begin an escalating climb.
49.8	R onto Bruna Rd. More climbing.
50.7	Stay on Bruna as it turns 90° left at Houdek. Watch for the next turn in 1.5 miles (onto Excelsior), since it's at the bottom of a descent and it's easy to blow right past it in the dark.
52.3	R onto Excelsior at the bottom of the dip.
52.8	Excelsior curls L onto Dunn Rd, stay on Dunn as it crosses the Palouse Highway.
54.0	R onto the gated-off section of Dunn Rd . <i>The rocky stuff turns back to normal gravel road after about 1/2 mile; take it slow, or walk it if necessary, but don't quit here!</i>
55.6	R onto Elder Rd. Start saving some energy for the Spangle Creek climb in ~5 miles. Eat, drink, stretch, etc.
59.5	L onto Valley Chapel Road.
60.5	R onto Spangle Creek Rd. This is the last major climb. <i>And yeah, it's major. About 500 vertical feet in about one mile.</i>
61.6	L onto Yale.
61.9	Yale curls 90° right , stay on Yale.
64.4	R at Cornwall.
65.4	R onto Watt Rd.
66.3	L onto N. Spangle Rd. If it's after 6AM, you can buy stuff at the Conoco station and/or The Harvester.
67.3	R onto 1st Ave. in Spangle, cross Highway 195, and immediately turn R onto Jennings. Stay on Jennings all the way to Cheney-Spangle Rd.
70.1	Stay on Jennings as it curls right at Philleo Lake Rd.
70.6	Stay on Jennings as it turns 90° left at Parker Rd.
72.2	Stay on Jennings where Rupp Rd. angles off to the left.
74.6	R onto Cheney-Spangle Rd. Clean the dust off your rear lights and reflectors here, since this is a 55mph no-shoulder highway with hills & curves. Turn on your headlight for additional safety.
78.9	R onto Fish Lake Trail and head for Spokane . There's a water fountain on the left after 1/4 mi if you need water.
82.8	At the Fish Lake parking area, turn right and cross the railroad tracks , then take the first left onto the rocky road that roughly parallels the tracks.
83.5	Turn right to cross another set of railroad tracks, then continue parallel to the tracks on the dusty road.
85.4	Watch out for a rusty cable strung across the trail. From here, continue on the Fish Lake Trail all the way to Spokane.
92.9	At the end of the Fish Lake Trail, take Sunset Boulevard east across the bridge, turn left onto Cannon, and cruise back to <i>The Elk</i> .
94.0	😊 ! <i>Note the time of day, if you're interested in your finishing time.</i>