

# First Group Tandem Ride

*By Ed Stokes  
(Edited by Rosanna Stokes)*

I began again riding solo road bike about a year ago, after a ten year hiatus. Cycling is very good for me for all the reasons everyone knows; improved cardiovascular health and the overall sense of well-being. Rosanna has ridden some with me on her solo road bike, but I do more road riding than her. In addition to riding outside, we both enjoy spin class. Rosanna loves to spin and spends most of her cycling time spinning.

So, we thought it would be fun to try a tandem road bike this year. I can get the full road riding experience and Rosanna can spin. We shopped around and found the two road tandems we could afford were both available locally: the Trek T1000 and the Cannondale. In the end, we decided on the Trek T1000 from Bike Line in University City, and we are adding a 3rd party drum drag brake later (parts are on order).

We first took the tandem out last week onto the Huntersville Business Park loop (a great low-traffic place to get used to a new bike). After doing about 25 miles in two evening sessions we felt fairly comfortable and decided to sign up for the Shamrock ride at Bill & Joyce Murphy's house in Stanfield.

Saturday morning was going very well. We arrived in Locust 40 minutes early when I realized my shoes were still in Charlotte. Very briefly, I considered whether I could do 30 miles in Converse All-Stars atop Look pedals, then I wisely picked up the phone and called Bill to tell him we could not make it. He encouraged me instead to go get my shoes in Charlotte and return to the ride. So that's what we did.

Finally arriving at the Murphy's 10 minutes after the "9 AM sharp" start time, we were soon on the bike and away. We thoroughly enjoyed the ride! The pace was good, and the hills were a great workout. I was worried about the brakes, but they functioned fine, even getting us adequately slowed on a sharp right going down a hill when I was not quite ready. We seemed to be keeping up pretty well for the first 23 miles, and were on the home stretch, in the outskirts of Stanfield. Then I dropped the chain, wrapped it around the crankshaft and broke a link. So Rosanna and I waited on the side of the road, and Jay drove my truck back to the scene to pick us up. We were both disappointed not to be able to finish the ride but satisfied that we got our workout in for the day.

Afterward there was a wonderful lunch and fellowship at the Murphy's. Thanks so much to everyone for waiting for us, picking us up, feeding us and generally making us feel very welcome. We hope to ride with you again sometime soon and we'll try not to be so much trouble.

Postlog – We took the bike immediately back to Bike Line, where, besides the broken chain, the small chain ring was found to be bent. It has now been straightened, a new chain installed, adjustments made, and we are good to go again. See you on the road!

*Ed and Rosanna Stokes  
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