

No. **4399**

World Heavyweight Champion

PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG SIPLE STORY BY GAGE POORE

→ SPEND ENOUGH TIME AROUND CYCLISTS and the conversation will eventually turn to weight. While the racer may choose one crankset over another to shave a few grams off his ride, the touring cyclist must think in terms of pounds — often many, many pounds. During my time working at Adventure Cycling’s headquarters, I’ve often enjoyed the anticipatory look in the touring cyclists’ eyes as they wait for us to weigh their rig, and their reaction when they learn how much it actually weighs. With that said, no one, not even world-touring Max Peer of Austria, fully predicted the 280-pound heft of the behemoth he rode in on during his trip from Orlando, Florida, to Vancouver, British Columbia.

Surpassing the previous record by over 100 pounds, Max’s rig consisted of a Tout-Terrain fully suspended touring bike, multiple sets of panniers and bags containing his cooking and camping gear, and a number of electronic devices he charged with solar panels. Behind that he pulled a BOB trailer modified with a 26” wheel so it could hold his 16.5-foot collapsible canoe — a secondary means of transportation capable of holding himself, another person, his bicycle, and all of his gear. “The canoe gives me access to areas which are not accessible by any other form of transportation,” wrote Max. Unfortunately, poor weather conditions limited its use on his trip. “It would have been too dangerous on most waterways alone on a big canoe with all my gear on it, so I had to stay on the bike more often.”

Max, an audio engineer, travels to raise awareness of sustainability and supports a number of organizations in doing so. These include a music camp for underprivileged children in Hungary; MAG International, which removes landmines in Southeast Asia; and the Interaction Design Foundation, which produces free educational materials and online courses. “The basic idea,” Max wrote, “is that everybody should have access to education, no matter their geographical or social background, and that education is the single most powerful way to lift people out of poverty.” With such determination to do good for those around him, Peer’s sense of self-reliance is not surprising. “To be self-supportive is very important to me when I am on tour. My doings should be based on my own abilities and not dependent on the goodwill of others. I don’t think it is fair to put myself into situations where I need the help of others without some sort of exchange.” The scope of his ambitions seems to be reflected in the weight of his rig, something most of us can only imagine carrying around.

From Adventure Cycling’s National Bicycle Touring Portrait Collection. © 2014 Adventure Cycling Association.

Bring the **Bicycle Eclectic** traveling portrait exhibition to your town. Contact Greg Siple for more information: gsiple@adventurecycling.org

Bicycle Eclectic
Adventure Cycling’s traveling exhibition of photos from the National Bicycle Touring Collection can be seen at the Thunder Island Brewing Company, 515 NW Portage Rd, in Cascade Locks, Oregon, May through June.

