



Catherine Walker and David Fuqua

STORY BY ALEX STRICKLAND



REI exec and furniture maker still finding time for the ‘magic’ of tours

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→ WHEN Catherine Walker met her future husband, David Fuqua, in 1994, she hadn’t been on a bike in years. Sure, there was the old Peugeot in college to get around the University of Washington’s sprawling campus and some tandem racing with a former flame, but as with so many bike-mad kids, two-wheeled travel had fallen by the wayside with the arrival of a driver’s license and the prom.

So when David, an avid cyclist, suggested the two ride across Washington as part of an American Lung Association group not long after they met, there was lots to do.

“It was my first touring ride, and it was across the state,” Walker said. “Luckily, David had done lots of longer rides like RamRod (Ride Around Mount Rainier in One Day) and was diligent about training, so he got us trained up.”

The couple was married two years later and began amassing a resumé of cycling trips that included Adventure Cycling-led tours and then, in 2004, a ride across the country from Seattle to Washington, DC, to celebrate Catherine’s 50th birthday.

“It was a paradox,” Catherine said about riding from coast to coast. “There’s this relatively slow mode of travel on the bike. And yet we did it in 48 days — with quite a few 100-mile

days — so it’s not like you have a lot of time to sightsee.”

The cross-country ride, like the couple’s other regional tours, was done as part of a group, which allowed David and Catherine to enjoy the trip support and camaraderie around camp that they most relish about bicycle travel.

“We like to be out there with other people,” Catherine said. “When you’re actually on the road pedaling, you don’t talk much. I like the aloneness of the riding, being alone together. But in the camp it’s ‘Tell me about your day’ and ‘What did you notice?’”

Over the years, Catherine and David have noticed plenty and collected fond memories from their many rides, including the one that prompted them to join Adventure Cycling back in 1995.

“We joined to go on a Great Divide trip through Montana in the fall of ’95, and at the time we were building a house here in Seattle,” Catherine said. “My clearest memory is pulling into these tiny towns and searching for the nearest pay phone to call the architect and the contractor because there was always something going on.”

With that introduction — assisted by David’s familiarity with the organization from riding across the country in 1987 when it was still Bikecentennial — Catherine’s relationship with Adventure Cycling only grew over the years. First, she

Funds from the Life Membership program are put into a special account to provide long-term support for Adventure Cycling Association. In the past, these funds have helped us purchase and update our headquarters building, saving us thousands of dollars in interest payments.

If bicycle travel is an important part of your life, please consider making a lifetime commitment by joining as an Adventure Cycling Life Member. To find out more, visit adventurecycling.org/membership or give Julie Huck a call at (800) 755-2453 x 214.

Thanks to these new life members who joined with their support since March:

- Bruce D Adams Jr., Stockton, CA
- Michele Baber, West Chester, OH
- Michael Barry & Jessica Mattia-Barry, Tucson, AZ
- Ken Berger, Cincinnati, OH
- Glenn & Donna Boutillier, Cincinnati, OH
- Jeff Crouse, APO, AE
- Kim D'auria-Vazira, DPO, AE
- Mike Dillon, Los Gatos, CA
- William M Doumas, Tucson, AZ



- Maryanne Gallagher, Gill, MA
- Langston J Goree, New York, NY
- Sigrid C. Haines, Gaithersburg, MD
- John & Sarah Holman, Morristown, NJ
- Krrish Jiwan, Pharr, TX
- John Mielnik, Roselle, IL
- Zane Jenkins Siple, Lolo, MT
- David A. Waters, Milwaukee, WI

joined the board of directors for Recreation Equipment, Inc. (REI) with Angel Rodriguez, who also served on the Adventure Cycling board. Then she and David signed up for tour after tour, traveling through the red rock canyons of Utah and mountains of Montana. They always found time for a trip or two each year despite increasing demands on their schedules, which were brought on in part by Catherine's position as senior vice president and general counsel at REI.

As the years and the trips grew in number, Catherine and David became interested in life membership with Adventure Cycling. "I'm a joiner. If I like an organization and believe in it, I might as well support it at a leadership level," Catherine said. "Besides, it's one less thing to remember each year! Plus there's the low-hassle factor. We don't have to worry about renewing," she said.

That gives the couple more time to dream up future trips ranging from riding Europe for the first time

— "France, Italy, or Mallorca" — to simply committing to at least one tour each year with Adventure Cycling. The couple also talks about making another cross-country trip, this time at a leisurely pace and with the flexibility to rent a car or take a train through sections they decide not to ride. "No plans, no schedule, nothing," she said.

Regardless of their route, it's unlikely you'll see Catherine and David pulling their bikes up to a hotel anytime soon. They prefer the communal atmosphere of camping to the indoor amenities — and isolation — of a hotel room.

"Even though we're older now and it's getting harder to sleep on the ground, it's hard to imagine going to hotels," Catherine said. "We'd miss that community piece of touring — hanging out and getting to know each other in a little village of tents. There's something really magical about that." **AC**

Alex Strickland is Adventure Cyclist's Managing Editor.

Of course, with only one size offered, the geometry isn't optimized for riders both big and small. But the Tern delivers good, middle-of-the-road handling that made evading potholes easy without requiring constant rider input to keep the bike on a heading.

Thanks to the wide tires, the ride was nice and smooth. If you want a racier feel, narrower tires would help, but that would be missing the point of this bike. It's meant to be robust — a sort of apocalypse bike for the urban jungle.

CONCLUSION

As a commuter bike, especially for someone with limited space at home or at the office, the Tern Eclipse S18 is an exceptional machine. It's ready to roll right off the showroom floor. At \$2,100 the S18 isn't inexpensive, but consider that you're buying a fully equipped bike. Brand-name accessories like the dynamo-powered lights, racks, fenders, an integrated pump, Ergon grips, Schwalbe tires, etc., don't come cheap.

The Tern is a better tool for the urban warrior than for the backroad meanderer though. Its somewhat limiting size will keep some touring cyclists from using it on multi-day jaunts. Another detail that limits the range of the bike is the single water bottle cage mount.

More to the urban assault point, the low-key gray paint, mostly black running gear, and the gray color-matched 24-inch rims kept me flying under the radar, nice for urban settings where flash can lead to theft. I quite like the aesthetics of the Tern. This bike is best suited for riders under six feet tall or those who like an especially upright position and are looking for a ready-made commuter bike to squeeze into their apartment. As such, the Eclipse S18 is sure to please.

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Nick Legan lives in Boulder, Colorado, but firmly believes that adventure is a state of mind and has little to do with geography. As a former pro cycling team mechanic, he's seen parking lots the world over and a few great roads along the way.