

Dog is Man's Best Friend...Ha!

By Mark Owens
Collegian Staff Writer

It's springtime and of course that means the start of many activities associated with the season, like cleaning the yard, the gutters, the car, the windows...maybe winter isn't so bad after all.

For me, spring means the start of training. I do a little bicycle racing and the nice weather lets me out of the cold, dirty basement and into the warm dirty world.

I'm even a little bit ahead of schedule. I've already had three flats and met my sprint training partner Archie.

First I should explain sprinting. Sprinting, as defined in Sammy Rushdeath's *The Satanic Cyclist*, is "going as fast as you can until a) you cross the finish line, b) you hit something or c) your legs melt, your eyes fall out and your lungs, tired of imitating a wildbeast in heat, stomp up to your brain and beat it until you fall down and die."

Now that you understand sprinting, let me describe my partner Archie, who would be able to motivate me to sprint even if I didn't have a bike, or legs for that matter.

He's short, drools a lot (especially around meat), has lots of hair and has this craving for Milkbones. Yes, Archie is a dog.

But Archie isn't just any dog. He's a poodle. He's the Poodle From Hell.

I know a lot of you are wondering "Gee Mark, how can you let a dog, who happens to look like a rat on steroids, affect you, a cyclist who looks like a moose on steroids?"

To understand this, you have to understand the relationship between dog and cyclist. It is very similar to the relationship between me and Calculus - I hate it and it loves to hate me.

Therefore, any dog will charge headlong through rush-hour

traffic to chew on the ankle of a passing cyclist. I think it's a genetic thing.

"But Mark," you ask (I know you didn't, but it's the only way I can finish the article, ok?), "wouldn't a dog the size of a small house be a fiercer opponent than a dog the size of Albania's GNP (which is pretty small)?"

Yes, but smaller dogs are just as bad because they have a complex. Take Archie for example: he's short and his

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Small dogs are doubly vicious because they're smart. Big dogs,

much like a couple of weight lifters I know, just figure they'll bound out and stomp on the poor cyclist. This is why I'm so worried about the new women's bicycles. They're built lower and thus easier for the dogs to stomp on.

Mark Owens

Small dogs have four main methods of attacking cyclists. They are:

1) **Loom:** The dog runs out and attempts to weave itself through your spokes, causing you to panic and plow into a large bus or wall, whichever is more painful.

2) **Cute:** The dog sits at the end of his driveway and smiles (pants) real cute. Unsuspecting riders stop to pet the little doggie, who immediately proceeds to gnaw off the rider's head. Women seem prone to this,

as they're used to being kind to furry, drooling animals.

It's almost like a scene out of a *Friday the 13th* movie. You just *know* the girl is going to get it, but have to sit there and watch her open the door. Is it me, or do most of the characters in these films have partial vacuums between their ears?

3) **Barking:** It has been scientifically proven that the insipid whining and yapping of small dogs, after a prolonged period of time (3.7 seconds) can drive cyclists insane and cause them to choke the dog in question with his (the dog's, not the cyclist's) Milkbones.

4) **Smith & Wesson:** There are reports that small Chihuahuas have passed the NRA's AK-47 Master Marksman Test, which requires the shooter to at least be able to hit the broad side of a barn.

Some of you may get the idea that I don't like dogs. You're right -- I don't. I just can't respect anything that has to turn around

three times before sitting down.

And no, I'm not a cat-lover either. We just have an understanding; I won't bother them and they won't bother me.

But cats do have several redeeming qualities:

- 1) They don't chase cyclists
- 2) They don't drool all over people, furniture, your date, moving vehicles, etc.
- 3) They're pretty clean, as far as licking themselves after scarfing down a can of Tender Vittles goes.
- 4) They're party animals

I'm sorry, but Spuds and Alex aren't party animals. If they're like most dogs, they're home by 9:00 pm, tops.

Cats, on the other hand, routinely stay out until the wee hours drinking, carousing and slashing furniture.

Well, it's time for another ride. And I'm not worried about Archie. I'm wearing my rubberized shorts and packing a pump. It's the Chihuahua next door that's got me worried.

Joe talks Baseball

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games may conflict with Cosby reruns.

In the National League West, an amazing one-in-a-billion event occurs when six teams tie for first place. Cincinnati is eliminated due to Pete Rose having bet that all six teams would finish first. Los Angeles is expelled when it is discovered that 20-game winner Fernando Vanezuella is an illegal alien.

This leaves San Diego, Houston, San Francisco and Atlanta to field an all-star team to face the Mets in the playoffs. When it is realized that none of these teams have any stars, the Mets are awarded an automatic birth to

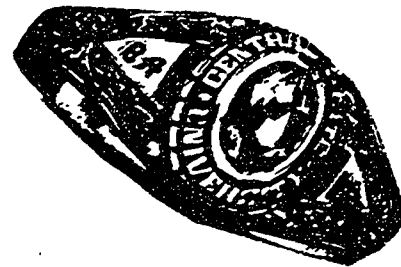
the World Series.

In the American League final Oakland and Detroit battle in game 1 whereupon each team acknowledges the fact that the season is just "too damn long" and agrees to go home and relax before spring training begins the next week. This crowns the Mets as World Champions, although I ask, if they are *world* champions, how come they never play against any team from Japan or the Sudan?

You have all year to figure that one out while I must prepare my highly regarded picks for the coming football season.

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