

Diane's Cycling Yoga and Custom Bicycle

There is a specialized bicycle store called 'HubBub' in Chesterland, Ohio. This store was introduced by 'Bicycling', one of the leading bicycle magazines in the U.S. This store, built by Diane who is one of the pioneering leaders in custom (fitting) bicycle in the U.S., houses all three of my favorites – bicycle, yoga and coffee together under its roof and I couldn't hide my excitement about it.

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Chesterland, where Hubbub is located in, is far away to drive from Tennessee, where I live. However, my enthusiasm (which is totally uncontrollable once I got into something) made me board to Cleveland on June 16.

Chesterland is located in suburb of Cleveland. You have to drive some distance out of downtown Cleveland until you come across spacious green lawns with shopping malls. That is why it is not surprising to find most of people in Cleveland, the main city of Ohio, don't know about Chesterland where the Hubbub shop is.

Finally Arrived at Hubbub in Chesterland

'Is this so small?'

That was my first impression about the shop. I had expected that it would be much bigger because it was introduced in detail by a famous American magazine, 'Bicycling'. But just after I entered the store, I was so excited by "co-existence" of all three of my favorites, bicycle, yoga studio and coffee store [she is really, really excited here, as if she felt like flying over the sky]. If I meet the god after my death, I would beg him to send me to Hubbub.

It was 1997 when Diane, the owner and builder of this store opened Hubbub. At that time people who heard about her idea of custom bicycle told her that the store would not survive without selling bicycles that were produced by big companies in mass production. Her response to it was simple.

"Let's see it."

Diane, who had worked at bicycle industry for 30 years found her interests in bike fitting since around 1980. Since cycling was not that popular at that time, she was treated as an outsider. But the concept of fitting is that a bicycle is upgraded from a simple transporter (or toy) to a serious partner of a cyclist.

Now fitting is very popular, Hubbub became one of the most established store in this area. Brian, a mechanic who has worked here for 9 years said that they sell 50-60 custom bicycles in a year. This man majored in biomedical engineering but was lured to this place by some magical power of bicycles.

Although he settled down in Ohio, he did not put everything from New York behind him, where he originally came from. On the shelf above the counter of this store, you can find beers on display. Those beers are produced in High Peak, or Mt. Marcy, which is the highest mountain in New York. The name of the coffee store, High Peak

Coffee, next to the bicycle store is named after Mt. Marcy. You may have noticed that Diane and Brian like climbing mountains as well.

I asked Brian which is the most important point you keep in mind you're working on a custom bicycle, among function, fitting and durability, etc. He promptly said "everything you listed" and added one more important factor, the customer's taste. A custom bicycle starts with generalized fitting but it can be more customized as much as a client wants, since taste and style vary from a rider to another. While 3,500 dollars seems to be a very high price for the starting price, it seems to be an investment worth the value.

Yoga and Cycling...

The specialized customizing system of this store, which is known to be at the stage of "art", came to be known nationwide via the magazine. However it initially became popular through people's "mouths" [personal recommendation], which guarantee the success of the store. Here the shop also houses the yoga studio and the coffee shop, which made this place more special for me.

There is a yoga class instructed by Diane at 8:30, an hour before the store is open. A maniac in Yoga, as much as in cycling, I could not miss the class (In fact, I have a longer experience in Yoga than in cycling). Since it is Diane, the very person that led people's interest into cycling yoga, who instructs the class, my enthusiasm to join the class became much bigger.

Diane says she prefers yoga to cycling even though she worked with cycles for more than 30 years. It was also 30 years ago when she started training in Yoga but it has been 4 years since she started teaching officially. She says the synergy effect of exercise would be maximized by mixing yoga and cycling. As a matter of fact, it is not surprising that yoga is used as a part of training in cycling.

You might have seen racers stretching before a race in motions that are likely to be used as Yoga postures. Of course, Lance Armstrong is one of these racers. Moreover, muscle strengthening exercise like power-yoga provides strengthening of muscles, balance and flexibility and this is very good for cyclists who race with their body flexed for a long time and doing pedaling strokes constantly.

Yogic breath method that is called 'Ujai breath' using only nose breathing is very effective for up-hill because breathing itself is very effective in producing energy. I experienced this by myself in Tour de Cure. All the postures like worrier position, cobra and pigeon, which strengthen lower extremities are also good for warming up or training during off seasons.

Here is Diane's view on the relation between cycling and yoga. "Yoga is a very effective exercise because people can control themselves according to their own physical conditions and specific circumstances. So it is very good not only for practice but also for recovery after trauma. I believe in self-recovery process of our bodies and yoga facilitates that healing process."

Bicycle → Yoga → Coffee store → Bicycle → Yoga ...

There is a small coffee store outside the door to the classroom which welcomes students who just finished class. Lindsay, barista of the coffee shop, was very busy

making coffee here for crowded customers who just switched from students in Yoga class. While waiting for cappuccino in front of the counter, I was thinking about a very happy question, 'if I worked here, would I work in the coffee store or bicycle store, or would I teach in the yoga class?' On the way out, I discovered a door connected to the bike shop.

Enjoying cappuccino from Lindsay, I went out to the bicycle store, passed the yoga studio and came back to the coffee store and repeated this rotation until I emptied a cup of coffee. If somebody told me to do the rounding (around 3 shops) a hundred times, I would be happy to repeat this exciting experience.

It is crucial to keep encouraging one's passion for something. This is a place that encourages one's passion so that it would not cool down. It is the heaven where we can talk together with people who have the similar tastes and hobby, enjoying coffee.