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John Smith: Writing rider

*Cycling book
now on sale
across nation*

By Paul Svoboda

The Intelligencer

When it comes to bicycling, Belleville's John Smith has covered thousands of kilometres of road and thousands of sheets of paper.

The Moira Secondary School teacher and avid bicycle tourist is now a published author. His first book, **Cycling Canada: Bicycle Touring Adventures in Canada**, recently hit the shelves in Canada, the United States and Great Britain.

For Smith, the book is the culmination of several years of bike touring and three years of intense research. And, he quickly points out, it was strictly a labor of love.

"No," he laughs when asked if he expects a bounty in cash from sales of the book. "You do this just for the enjoyment."

Smith expects the book to appeal to active individuals and families, from dedicated bike marathoners to those simply looking for an easy and scenic weekend spin with the kids.

"We tried to reach all levels in the book," he says, "with long and short tours."

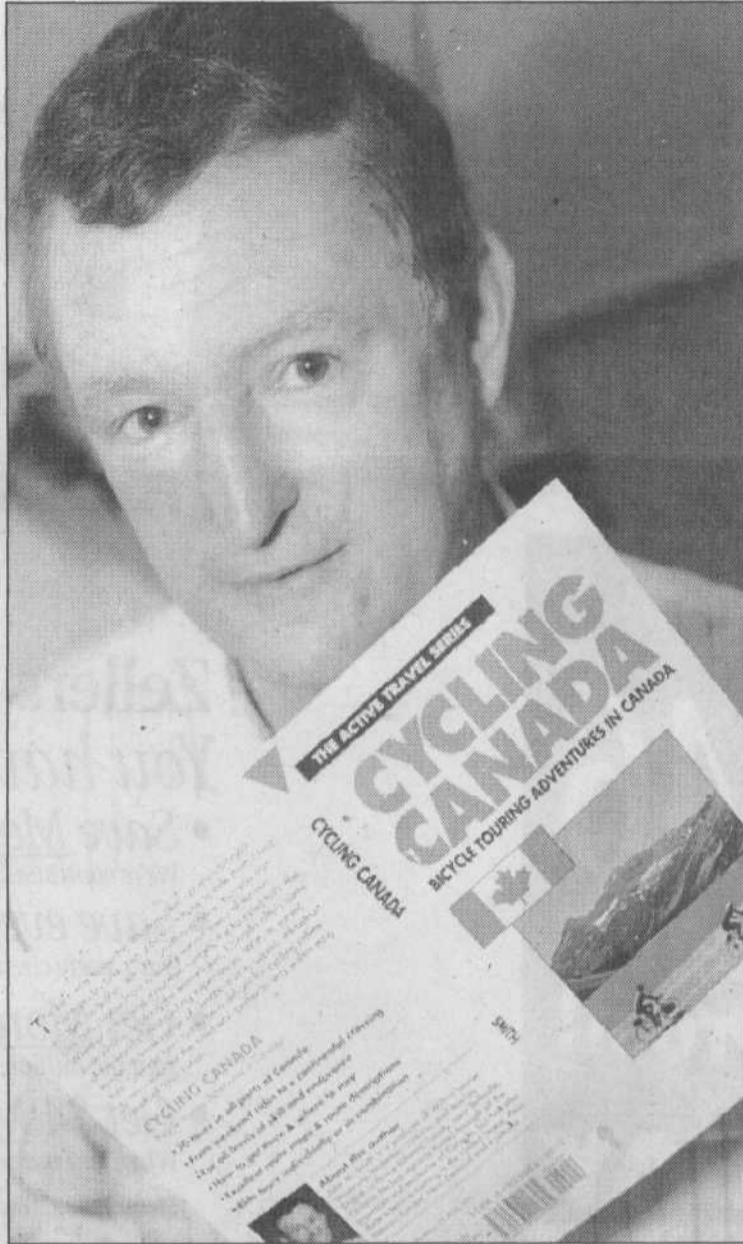
From the gruelling cross-continental odyssey Smith spent five weeks completing two summers ago to a jaunty round-the-bay tour of Prince Edward County, **Cycling Canada** offers maps, descriptions and details of 30 bike routes in all 10 provinces and both territories. Smith's personal favorite is the strenuous Icefields Parkway trip between Jasper and Banff, Alberta.

"The scenery is so spectacular," he raves.

Smith says his publishers (Bicycle Books Inc., San Francisco) anticipate strong sales in the U.S. and the United Kingdom with overseas bicycle vacations becoming increasingly popular with international tourists.

And, he adds, the general growth in cycling across Canada should make the book attractive to weekend riders in all parts of the country.

"In this day and age with so much concern with car travel and pollution it's another form of recreation available to almost everyone," says Smith. "You don't have



Intelligencer photo by Frank O'Connor

Belleville teacher John Smith with his new book.

to be rich and you don't have to be in really great shape."

According to Smith, *Bicycling Magazine* in the U.S. rates Toronto, Vancouver and Ottawa among its top-10 cycling cities in North America.

"Ottawa has always been good and even Toronto has built a lot more trails," he says. "All are hotbeds of cycling right now."

Smith will hit the promotional circuit in March with radio shows already planned in the Kitchener area to flog his book. He's already done a few local slide shows and book signings.

"I'm going to meet some fascinating people," he says. "I've already met a couple who've done my tour of Newfoundland and another one in Alaska. If the book is of use to people like that, it's re-

ally a plus."

With the ink now dry on his first cycling book, Smith admits he's already thinking about a second entry.

"It's possible," he says. "The same publisher is getting me to set up a possible follow-up of cycling in the USA. I'd like that. I've just started working on a brief outline but that would be a long time down the road."

Meanwhile, Smith will continue to make tracks with his trusty bike. Last summer, he did tours of the Adirondack and Catskill Mountains in upstate New York, but he has no immediate plans for any longer hikes.

"I've been very fortunate," he says. "It takes time and it's expensive staying in motels. But it's very enjoyable."