

Robin Hogg—2016 Ride  
Leader of the Year



## 2017 Bikefit Sunflowers Members' Handbook

## Welcome



When Bikefit first opened in 1994 we never imagined our growth would be so rapid. Because our success comes largely from the support of those in the local cycling community we are committed to supporting many worthy causes and organizations throughout our region.

Early on we realized that the bicycle industry catered almost exclusively to men. In our quest to seek new ways to further promote the cycling experience to everyone, we recognized this as an opportunity. We envisioned a woman's specific cycling club. Realizing that this was not a mission that could be carried out by two men, we searched for help. We approached an obvious advocate of woman's cycling with our idea. She enthusiastically decided to come onboard. We shared a combined vision of creating an environment that would encourage women of *all* abilities to ride their bikes regardless of their goals. From that day in 2002 Bikefit's desire to compel more women to enjoy the cycling experience took flight!

As title sponsor we're proud of the accomplishments of the Bikefit Sunflowers and look forward to this generation of Sunflowers sharing our passion.

Happy trails,

John Rikkerink and Matthew Gowling

## Mission

### Sunflower mission

To provide a fun, supportive network of women who love to ride and to encourage women of all riding abilities to get involved in cycling.

## President's Message

How excited am I for this season? I am very excited and happy to be helping our executives to create the best season ever!

We have focused very hard to continue to develop The Bikefit Sunflowers under our club's mantra of encouraging women of all riding abilities to get involved in cycling. Through skill sessions, night rides and more road ride options; we are providing more scheduled club rides each week than ever before (if the weather lets us!!).



Anybody who has ever ridden with me, they know I fall off my bike...quite regularly. I fall more riding Sunflower Sport rides than any other time. Someone once told me "if you're not falling off your bike, that means you're not pushing yourself." I am grateful to have found a riding group that I am so comfortable to try, to push my limits a little and look for improvement. I am so thankful to have a group of ladies who constantly provide this atmosphere for me to learn and grow. I aim to have all Sunflower riders feel this way. At any point of the season feel free to talk to any executive member if you have any suggestion or feedback. We love it.

As you use the handbook to navigate through our season, you will notice all planned rides are listed with ride level accommodated. Please remember that there is a safety aspect to riding and it is very important to have proper accessories that accompany you on the ride (flat pack, tires suitable for the conditions, lights for road rides, no slick tires on the trails, water bottles and a snack). And it is imperative that the Seeds' bikes be safety checked by a BIKEFIT staff member prior to their first club ride.

Remember, always keep your head up and look where you want to go.

*Sarah*

## Vice-President's Message



Welcome to the 2017 season. For those of you who don't know me, I'm Fiona, your VP for this year. This will be my fifth year riding with this fabulous group of women. When I first started with the Sunflowers I had not been on my bike in years. Now I ride whenever I can, both trail and road. While I'm not super-speedy, my joy comes from getting out and enjoying the beauty in the Niagara Region, along with challenging myself to do things I never would have thought I could. And in riding with a group of women just

like me!

Because of my involvement with the Sunflowers I have participated in mountain bike races, charity rides and even a Gran Fondo. The Sunflowers welcomed me with open arms and I have never looked back.

My hope for all of you is that you get out on your bike, have fun, challenge yourself and learn new skills. We have leaders who will help you, no matter what your skill level is or what your goals may be. Be prepared to learn, grow and make new friends. But, above all, to have fun!

There is nothing like cruising through a trail and saying "Wow! Look at what I just did!" Whether it's climbing a hill, riding over a log or just staying on your bike, you'll be proud of yourself.

See you on the trails!

*Fiona*

The Bikefit Sunflowers  
are members of:



## Trail Ride Levels

If you're unsure which trail group you should ride with, here are descriptions of the skills and abilities for each group. This should help you place yourself so you'll have the most enjoyable and safest ride. If you're still not sure, talk to one of the ride leaders - they'll help you figure it out.

### Rec 1 Riders:

New riders with little experience on the trails, who are building skills and endurance **OR** riders looking for a ride that's slower, shorter and focused on skill development. There is lots of regrouping and stopping to work on skills. The Rec 1 rider should be willing to try to:

- Climb and descend small hills
- Ride for 10 minutes without stopping
- Ride low bridges that have a flat, straight approach
- Ride over small roots and rocks



### Rec 2 Riders:

Newer riders who are starting to feel some comfort on the trails and gaining some of the trail skills **OR** riders with some experience who are content with a shorter, slower-paced ride. There is still lots of regrouping and stopping to work on skills. The Rec 2 rider should be able to:

- Climb and descend small hills
- Ride for 20 minutes without stopping
- Ride low bridges that have a flat, straight approach
- Ride over small roots and rocks



## Trail Ride Levels



### Sport 1 Riders:

Riders who are gaining skill and endurance and have the confidence to ride for longer periods of time on more challenging trails. There is less frequent regrouping, but groups may still stop to work on skills. The Sport 1 rider should be able to:

- Climb and descend steeper hills with some roots or rocks
- Ride for 30 minutes without stopping

- Ride low bridges that have a turn or small hill on either end
- Ride over moderate-sized roots and rocks

### Sport 2 Riders:

Experienced riders able to ride for a longer time at a faster pace. There is less regrouping and very little stopping to work on skills. The sport rider should be able to:

- Climb and descend steep hills with lots of roots, rocks and other obstacles
- Ride for 30-40 minutes without stopping
- Ride higher bridges that have a turn or hill on either end
- Ride over larger roots and rocks, as well as logs

Should be able to change a tire on her own.



# Trail Ride Levels

## Super Sport Riders:

Very experienced riders with a high level of fitness able to ride for a long time at a very fast pace. There is less regrouping and very little stopping to work on skills. The super sport rider should be able to:

- Climb and descend steep hills with lots of roots, rocks and other obstacles
- Ride for 30-40 minutes without stopping
- Ride higher bridges that have a turn or hill on either end
- Ride over larger roots and rocks, as well as logs

Should be able to change a tire on her own and navigate the trails fairly well on her own.



## Sunflower Seeds:

Girls, aged 11-14.

Everyone develops at their own pace, so at the beginning of the season we will place the girls in one of two groups based on their skill sets and comfort on the trails. As the newer girls progress, they'll be invited to move up to the next level; as the more experienced girls progress and mature, they'll be invited to also take part in the adult Thursday rides.



Some of the older girls may develop to a skill and maturity level that is beyond what the rest of the Seeds are ready for. In such cases, we may suggest that these girls ride with one of the adult levels. But it will always be up to the individual girl whether she chooses to do so.

*Please note:* All Seeds must have their bikes safety checked at Bikefit prior to the first ride and should be equipped with a tube, water and a snack.

---

## Moving Up

Often it's obvious to everyone in the group when someone has outgrown their riding level. If you find yourself outpacing the rest of the group, pushing the ride leader to go faster and feeling somewhat impatient during stops to regroup, it may be time to move up.

The gap between riding levels can be a pretty big jump, so we ask that anyone trying out a new level for the first time find a rider experienced in that level to buddy up with them. It's easiest to find a buddy by posting it to the Facebook group, but you can also ask a ride leader to help you.

Note too that speed isn't the only factor in whether you're ready to move up. Skill level is just as important. Often members who are very fit find they are able to ride quickly on the easy trail sections, but aren't able to ride the more technical parts. If this is you, try to be patient and work on your skills before trying to move up. The higher riding levels require a higher skill level, so it's in your best interest to give yourself a solid skill base before pushing yourself to do more.

## Membership

Your 2017 Bikefit Sunflowers membership includes:

- All trail rides
- All road rides
- All night rides
- Open Rides - family and friends are welcome to join us
- Special events, including Ride Like A Girl Day
- IMBA membership and insurance
- Discount at Bikefit
- Social events, including our fabulous end-of-year bash

## Stay in Touch

Ride information, including cancellations and reminders will be posted to the Sunflowers Facebook group.

Once you've registered, go to our Facebook group page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/128015940587577/> and request to be added to the group. Once added, you will receive all postings from other members and will be able to make your own postings. It's a great way to arrange extra rides, to exchange gear, share pictures or just to stay in touch.



## Ride Information

### Starting Times:

Weeknight rides begin at 6:00 p.m.

Weekend rides begin at 1:00 p.m.

Road rides begin at 6:00 p.m.

Night rides begin at 9:00 p.m.

PLEASE ARRIVE 15 MINUTES EARLY FOR ALL RIDES TO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE TIME TO GET YOUR GEAR READY.

### Starting Locations:

Please note the calendar for the different meeting places for each month.

- Glenridge Quarry Naturalization Site—on St. David's Rd, near Schmon Parkway.
- Glendale Dip parking lot—on Glendale Rd between Riverview Blvd and Pelham Rd. Entrance is on the right just before the bridge if heading west.
- Wiley Road parking lot—the Wiley Road entrance to Short Hills Provincial Park.
- Decew House Historical Park parking lot—on Decew Rd near Meriville Hwy.
- Rotary Park—on Pelham Rd between Power Glen and Westland Rd.

### Inclement Weather:

Please check Facebook for posted cancellations of rides. Trail rides will only be cancelled if lightning is called for or in the case of heavy rain. Road rides may also be cancelled if there is excessive wind.

### Road Rides:

Every Monday night we hold a road ride for Rec and Sport. Check the ride calendar for start locations.

### Open Rides:

Open Rides are weekend and night rides. Night rides are for more advanced riders and are not officially offered on our 2017 Ride Calendar. Members' guests must sign our waivers, which can be found on our website [www.bikefitsunflowers.com](http://www.bikefitsunflowers.com). The waivers must be printed and signed prior to the ride.



# April 2017

Sunday rides meet at the Lock 3 parking lot at 1 p.m.

Hydro Hill Challenge meet at the bottom of

Hydro Hill on Lockhart Drive at 6 p.m.

Road rides meet at McCaffrey Park at 6 p.m.

**Sun**

**Mon**

**Tue**

**Wed**

**Thu**

**Fri**

**Sat**

						1
2 Doubletrack Ride <b>Tour of Pelham</b>	3 Road	4 Hydro Hill Challenge	5	6	7	8
9 Doubletrack Ride	10 Road	11 Hydro Hill Challenge	12	13	14	15
16 No ride—holiday	17	18 Hydro Hill Challenge	19	20	21	22
23 Doubletrack Ride	24 Road	25 Hydro Hill Challenge	26	27	28	29
30 Doubletrack Ride <b>P2Ancaster Race</b>						

# May 2017

Trail rides meet at the Naturalization Site parking lot.

Tuesday and Thursday rides start at 6 p.m.

Sunday rides start at 2 p.m.

Road rides meet at Lock 1 at 6 p.m.

**Sun**

**Mon**

**Tue**

**Wed**

**Thu**

**Fri**

**Sat**

	1 Road	2 Trail and Seeds	3	4 Trail and Cats	5	6
7 Open Ride	8 Road	9 Trail and Seeds	10	11 Trail and Cats	12	13
14 Open Ride	15 Road	16 Trail and Seeds	17 <b>Ride of Silence</b>	18 Trail and Cats	19	20
21 No ride—holiday	22 <b>Victoria Day</b> No ride—holiday	23 Trail and Seeds	24	25 Trail and Cats	26	27
28 Open Ride	29 Road	30 Trail and Seeds	31			

# June 2017

Trail rides meet at the Glendale Dip parking lot.

Tuesday and Thursday rides start at 6 p.m.

Sunday rides start at 2 p.m.

Road rides meet at Rockway Community Centre at 6 p.m.

**Sun**

**Mon**

**Tue**

**Wed**

**Thu**

**Fri**

**Sat**

				1 Trail and Cats	2	3
4 Open Ride Becel Heart and Stroke	5 Road	6 Trail and Seeds	7	8 Trail and Cats	9	10
11 Open Ride	12 Road <b>Big Bike</b>	13 Trail and Seeds	14	15 Trail and Cats	16	17
18 Open Ride	19 Road	20 Trail and Seeds	21	22 Trail and Cats	23	24
25 Open Ride <b>Ride Don't Hide</b>	26 Road	27 Trail and Seeds	28	29 Trail and Cats	30	

# July 2017

Trail rides meet at the Wiley Rd. parking lot.

Tuesday and Thursday rides start at 6 p.m.

Sunday rides start at 2 p.m.

Road rides meet at Rockway Community Centre at 6 p.m.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Canada Day
2 NCCA Canada 150 Ride	3 No ride—holiday	4 Trail and Seeds	5	6 Trail and Cats	7	8
9 Open Ride	10 Road	11 Trail and Seeds	12	13 Trail and Cats	14	15
16 Open Ride	17 Road	18 Ride Like a Girl Day	19	20 Trail and Cats	21	22
23 Open Ride	24 Road	25 Trail and Seeds	26	27 Trail and Cats	28	29
30 Open Ride	31 Road					

# August 2017

Trail rides meet at Decew House parking lot.

Tuesday and Thursday rides start at 6 p.m.

Sunday rides start at 2 p.m.

Road rides meet at McCaffrey Park at 6 p.m.

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

		1 Trail and Seeds	2	3 Trail and Cats	4	5
6 No ride—holiday	7 <b>Civic Holiday</b> No ride—holiday	8 Trail and Seeds	9	10 Trail and Cats	11	12
13 Open Ride	14 Road	15 Trail and Seeds	16	17 Trail and Cats	18	19
20 Open Ride MS Ride	21 Road	22 Trail and Seeds	23	24 Trail and Cats	25	26
27 Open Ride	28 Road	29 Trail and Seeds	30	31 Trail and Cats		

# September 2017

Trail rides meet at Rotary Park parking lot.

Tuesday and Thursday rides start at 6 p.m.

Sunday rides start at 2 p.m.

Road rides meet at Lock 1 at 6 p.m.

**Sun**

**Mon**

**Tue**

**Wed**

**Thu**

**Fri**

**Sat**

					1	2
3 No ride—holiday	4 <b>Labour Day</b> No ride—holiday	5 Trail and Seeds	6	7 Trail and Cats	8	9
10 Open Ride	11 Road	12 Trail and Seeds	13	14 Trail and Cats	15	16
17 Open Ride	18 Road	19 Trail and Seeds	20	21 Trail and Cats	22	23
24 Epic Ride	25 Road	26 Trail and Seeds	27	28 Trail and Cats	29	30

## Ride Leaders



Consider being a ride leader. It really is fun and a great way to get know everyone. And don't forget the perks:

- Trail orientations to help you learn all the trails, their features and how they all connect
- Spring first-aid basics session: proper bandaging, how to tie a sling, etc.
- Pre-season bike maintenance sessions: fix a flat, get a chain back on, etc.
- Ride leader get-togethers: amazing social events for ride leaders
- Develop your own riding skill and confidence through leading others

## Ride Leaders

### Our 2017 Ride Leaders:

Dawn Cant Elliott	Sylvie Leblanc	Christine Rowntree
Dawn Elliott	Michelle Lucy	Alexis Stupich
Josee Cargill	Rhonda Lucy	Mariette Suk
Bonnie Copeland	Fiona McNair	Kathryn Traynor
Anna May Fisher	Erin Nicks	Roxie Widdicombe
Katelyn Giesbrecht	Sandra Nuckle	Leslie Vandermaas
Sharon Grice	Sarah Pineau	Monica Vermue
Robin Hogg	Joy Postma	Paula Wills

*Thank you to all the Ride Leaders and to the parent volunteers who give their time to help with the Seeds program.*

***We couldn't do it without you!***



## 2017 Executive

**President: Sarah Pineau**  
pino783@hotmail.com

**Vice President: Fiona McNair**  
Fmcnair91@gmail.com

**Registrar: Rhonda Lucy**  
rhondathin@gmail.com



**Safety Coordinator & Secretary:**

**Robin Hogg**

hoggfamily@primus.ca

**Treasurer: Erin Nicks**

13enicks@gmail.com

**Road Manager:**

**Roxie Widdicombe**

widdjack2@hotmail.com



## Sponsors

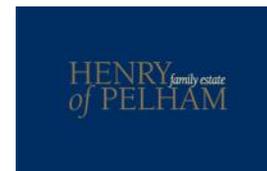
Thank you to our sponsors for their generous support!



Garden City Dental



Dr. Rocco Di Paola Dr. Kevin Woon-Fat  
80 Welland Avenue  
St. Catharines, Ontario  
L2R 2N1  
(905) 688-5334  
www.Gardencitydental.ca



## 2017 Events

### Ride Like a Girl Day

*Date TBA*

We all have that friend/sister/coworker/boss/niece who keeps saying they should give a Sunflower ride a try. Here's your chance to get her out with us. We'll have our usual riding levels and women and girls aged 10+ are welcome to join us. Please note that all non-members must sign a waiver before the ride.



### The Epic Ride

*Date TBA*

It's always sad to see the season end, so we have to send it off with a bang. We start with a 30km+ ride (with abbreviated routes for those not ready to ride quite that far) and add in a surprise twist or two to keep things interesting.

## 2017 Events

### Trail Work Days

We are so lucky to have such amazing trails to ride here in Niagara. But they do need a little TLC to keep them in tip-top shape.

We hold monthly trail work days to help smooth out rutty trail sections and take care of all those face-slapping and thorny branches that start taking over the trails.



## Ride Guide

- Helmets and bells are mandatory on all rides.
- All riders are encouraged to have a flat repair kit and a basic first aid kit.
- All riders must have water and should bring a snack.
- If a severe injury occurs, call or send someone for an ambulance immediately. Do not move the rider if they cannot move themselves.
- Follow the Sunflower Watch — call out which way the group is going whenever a turn is made. And if you can't see the person behind you, stop at the turn and wait for them to catch up.
- Stop for Red lights and Stop signs.
- Stop for pedestrians at crosswalks.
- Use arm signals
- Act predictably—don't swerve suddenly.



## Trail Etiquette

It's important to know trail rules, especially since many trails are multi-use and may be popular with walkers, hikers and equestrians, as well as mountain bikers. For everyone's enjoyment and safety, please consider the following.



- Yield to ALL walkers, hikers and horses.
- Let others know you are approaching by using a bell or a friendly greeting. If it is a large group indicate how many riders are following behind you.
- Downhill riders yield to uphill riders. It is usually much easier to start on a downhill than on an uphill.
- Let those behind you know about oncoming traffic (e.g. runners approaching).
- Do not make a turn unless the person behind can see you or acknowledges hearing your "right/left" call.



## Get to Know Your Bike

**Brake lever** - the hand lever used to activate the brakes. Mountain bike brake levers have reach adjustments to accommodate smaller hands.

**Chain** - it transfers the energy from the motion of the pedals to the back wheel and propels the bike.

**Chain rings** - the wheel(s) on which the chain is held, near the pedals. A bike can have as many as three chain rings and as few as one and they come in many different sizes.

**Crank** - The chain rings are joined to the cranks, which are the main connection between the chain rings and the pedals.

**Derailleur** - bikes with multiple gears often have front and rear derailleurs, which shift the chain to various positions. The front derailleur moves the chain to different chain rings. In the rear, there is a cluster of gears called a freewheel or a cassette. The individual gears are called cogs. The rear derailleur moves the chain from one cog to another.

**Front brake** - the mechanism fastened to the front fork below the handlebars that stops the front wheel when pressure is applied to the front brake lever. Your bike may have disc brakes as shown here or V-brakes.

**Front fork** - attaches the front wheel to the bicycle and aids in steering the bicycle in the direction you want to go. It's also where you will find your front brakes on some bikes.

**Handlebars** - where you hold onto the bicycle to steer it. Handlebars come in many different shapes and sizes that allow you to customize the fit and/or style of your bicycle.

**Headset** - the mechanism that houses the bearings that allow the handlebars and front wheel to rotate on the frame of a bike.

**Hub** - the central part of a wheel housing that allows the wheel to spin around the axle.

**Rear brake** - the mechanism used to stop the rear wheel when pressure is applied to the rear brake lever.

**Rim** - the outer metal support of the wheel that is connected to the hub by the spokes to create the wheel.

**Saddle** - aka - seat - where you sit. There are woman specific saddles that will make your ride much more enjoyable.

**Seat post** - it supports the seat.

**Shifters** - the levers on the handlebars used to shift gears. They differ depending on the type of bike.

**Shock** - a shock helps smooth out the ride. A mountain bike with no rear suspension is called a hardtail. A mountain bike with no suspension is said to be rigid.

**Spokes** - the thin, metal wires that attach the rim to the hub to create the wheel.

**Stem** - the point on the bike that connects the handlebars to the fork and allows one to steer the bicycle.

**Tire** - the inflated, rubber part of the wheel. Tires come in many shapes, sizes, and colors.



## Our Title Sponsor

### Great Products, Service, Advice and Support



- Bikefit stocks women's specific cycling apparel, custom team jerseys and shorts.
- Bikefit specializes in customer computerized bike fitting and sells a wide variety of women's specific road and mountain bikes, providing the best performance and comfort tailored to your budget.
- Bikefit is our information and registration headquarters.
- Bikefit provides a 10% discount to club members on cycling apparel and accessories.

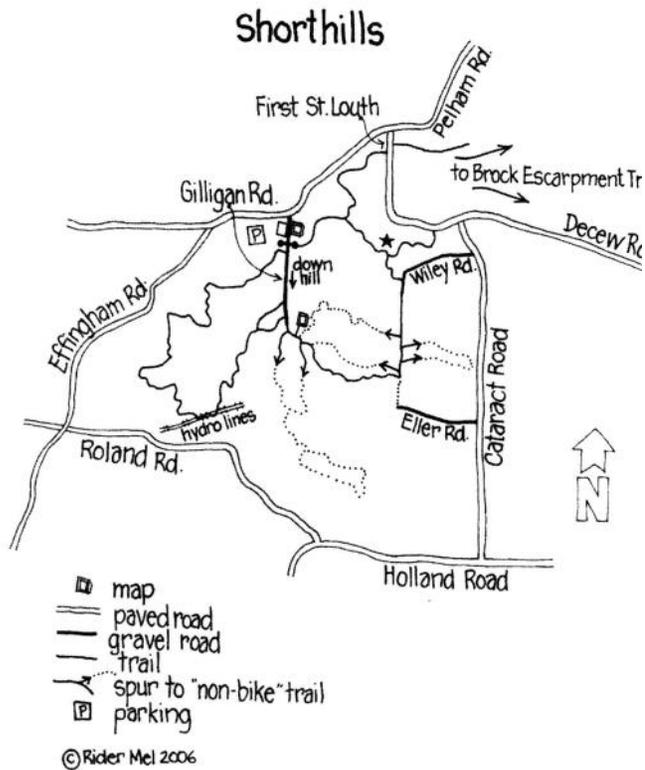
**BIKEFIT**

184 Scott Street,, St. Catharines

[www.bikefit.ca](http://www.bikefit.ca)

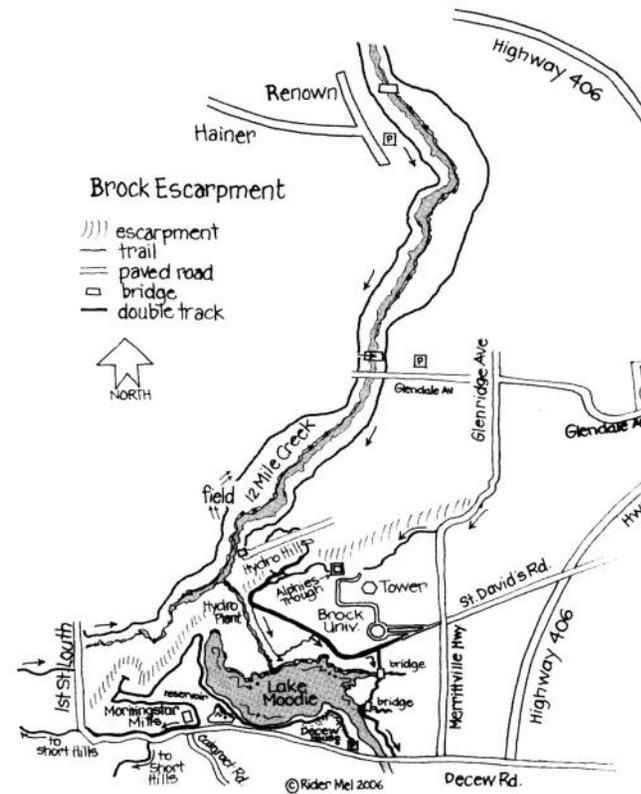
905-646-9396

## Trail Maps



Here are maps of some of the trail systems we'll be riding on this season—Short Hills Provincial Park and the 12 Mile Creek/Brock Escarpment.

## Trail Maps



*These maps were borrowed from Rider Mel's Mountain Bike Guide to Ontario. It's a fantastic guide with trail maps to all kinds of places to ride in Ontario. If you're planning to ride outside Niagara, you should definitely consider buying one. It's available on Amazon.ca <http://ridermel.com/>*