

Explore New England

BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE JULY 16, 2006

On a roll

Through summer storms, from inn to inn, round gentle island loops



BLAIR WALKER FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE



PHOTOS BY GEOFF FORESTER/FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE



PHOTOS BY KARI J. BODNARCHUK/FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

WHITE MOUNTAINS

By Diane Daniel
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

TAMWORTH, N.H. — “At least there won’t be any bugs,” said the clerk at the general store.

She had flashed a look of empathy (or was it pity?) as she saw me wandering the aisles, bike helmet in hand. It was a gloomy, cool, early May day, with foreboding clouds but only a light mist. So far.

“Nice day for a bike ride, isn’t it?” I responded, to make sure she understood that I knew what I was about to do could be viewed as dumb.

But I was excited, partly because I love cycling and also because I had paid for this three-day “Bike the Whites” inn-to-inn package and was trying to make the best of it. I had signed up in February for the first trip out, when spring rates made it a bargain and the weather had a chance of being cooperative.

Alas, Mother Nature pulled a bait and switch. I biked the Whites without ever seeing their faintest

WHITE MOUNTAINS, Page M13

Heading for Silver Lake along Route 41, above, and visiting the Remick Country Doctor Museum and Farm in Tamworth, N.H., below.



By Tom Haines
GLOBE STAFF

HARDWICK, Vt. — Sitting at a wooden booth in a roadside restaurant, Blair Walker, rider of bikes and fixer of things, spies a roll of duct tape on the floor.

“Speaking of duct tape,” he says to me, “you could use it to cover the air holes in your riding shoes.”

Not a bad idea. If only it and the duct tape had arrived three hours earlier, before Walker and I pedaled into the dark deluge of a summer storm on the first of three rides in Vermont’s Northeast Kingdom.

We wait for an iceberg lettuce salad and pizza, staples of the Northern New England diet. The dining room looks as though it has not been remodeled in decades, but on this night two burly carpet-layers begin carting away booths. Our pizza arrives.

“Would you guys mind moving?” one worker asks.

Timing is everything.

7:15 p.m.

Cold rain splats and soaks: hair, skin, and cycling shorts layered with grit spun up from the road. No summer evening this. Get home and stay there.

Pickup trucks barrel up Route 14, blowing water in their wake. In Albany, the stone monument to residents who fought in the Revolution, the War of 1812, and on down to Desert Storm squats, silent. Little purple flowers shudder.

NORTHEAST KINGDOM, Page M13

Passing abandoned rail cars on a track next to Route 5 in Vermont, top, north of Barnet and south of St. Johnsbury, on a 35-mile ride.

THE ISLANDS

By Kari J. Bodnarchuk
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

OAK BLUFFS — A sea breeze catches our backs and gently nudges us forward as we pedal down South Road on Martha’s Vineyard. The only sounds are the calls of a cardinal and several gulls, wind churning the leaves overhead, and the faint crunching of our bike tires as they spin along the pavement.

As we round a bend in the road, a delightful scene reveals itself. To our left is a pastoral landscape that



looks plucked from the Vermont countryside: a gray-shingled farmhouse surrounded by rolling fields marked by stone walls and grazing sheep. To our right, we spot a lone osprey nest high above the sea roses and scrub brush, with miles of ocean as a backdrop.

This is one of the many million-dollar views you can see while exploring Martha’s Vineyard and Nantucket, and one of the most enjoyable, least expensive ways to take in these sights is on a bicycle.

On Nantucket, the Star of the Sea Hostel, above right, and Howard Wright of Portland, Maine, stopping to stretch.

Biking allows you to see the islands’ highlights at

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