

August 21, 1973

Mr. Frank Schwinn
President
Schwinn Bicycle Co.
1856 No. Kostnor Ave.
Chicago, Illinois 60639

Dear Mr. Schwinn:

We met at a medical meeting in 1970 in which we were both chatting with Vince Blockley and I was looking at your then new special exercise cycle. There was even some discussion about my taking one on my Sabattical Leave to Geneva but we didn't proceed with the idea.

At any rate, I want now to contact you about a very personal matter which could conceivably have some commercial possibilities; that is, a special bicycle seat.

I have cycled for years, before it was popular for adults to do so. I have for some years noted some mild irritation and obstructive feelings after prolonged cycling. I won't force the unpleasant medical details on you but I have more recently been afflicted with a painful prostate condition (not of the aging variety) which has made sitting difficult and sitting on a bicycle seat impossible for well over a year. I want to find, or to design and have built, a seat which would allow me and perhaps others to cycle who have painful conditions in that general anatomical area.

I am not suggesting that there are many thousands of men with my condition but there must be many hundreds. There must be many more who are limited from cycling from that less elegant condition known as hemorrhoids. Conceivably bicycle seat trauma might not be all that good for women either.

The peculiar trauma and weight bearing of most bicycle seats is in exactly the wrong place for men, the region called the perineum which contains the prostate and posterior urethra very close to the surface.

I would like to work with the best bicycle seat designer and builder available to try combinations that might shift

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the entire weight-bearing and friction posteriorly and laterally in a horseshoe shape, or better still, just laterally, in two saddle cups for the bony prominences of the lower buttocks (the ischial tuberosities). The spatial angles and distance between these weight bearing points should probably be individually adjustable, in a ball and socket joint for each cup and a V-joint between them.

My chief motive is, you understand, to return to cycling myself. I hope that you'll excuse my dwelling on these anatomical questions probably of little interest to you and possibly even offensive. But I have the need, and others may as well, and I'd like to join forces with a creative enterprise to try to meet this need if at all possible. I would welcome your suggestions where to turn.

Cordially,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

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