



SILCA **Heritage** Pump Stories

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Tom Doughty, Bicycle Author and Champion

By Keith Larson

Tom Doughty (1952-), two-time U.S. Olympic Cyclist and U.S. National Time Trial Champion provides several vintage photos with SILCA pump and tire inflation recommendations in this introduction to bicycle racing and touring. This is a well-written book for the beginning rider with considerations and sound advice for most training situations.

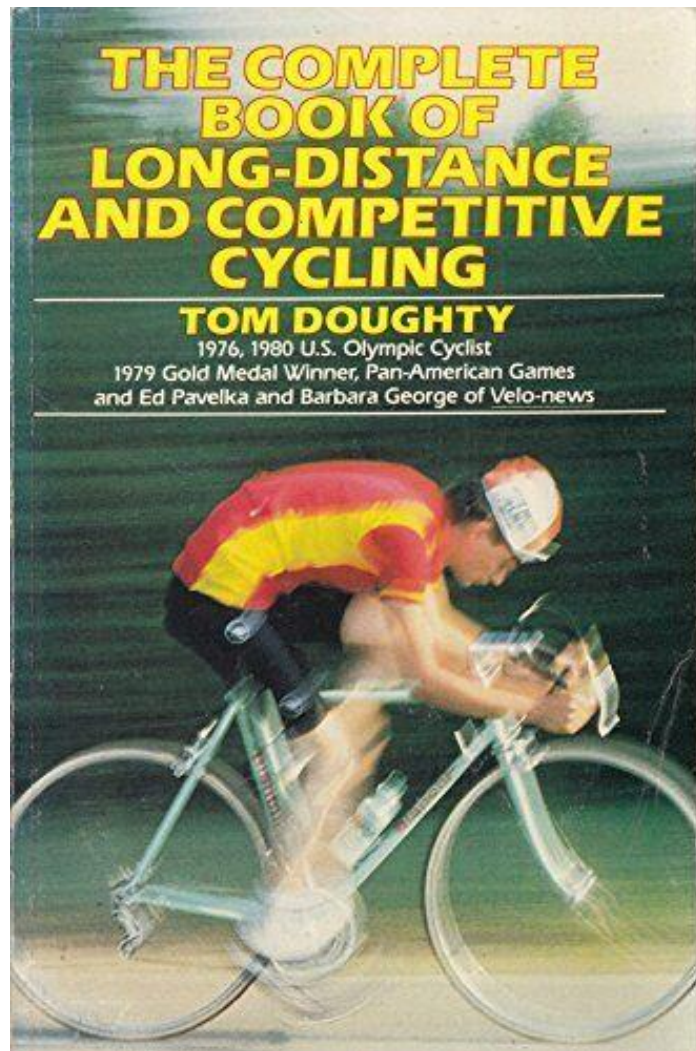
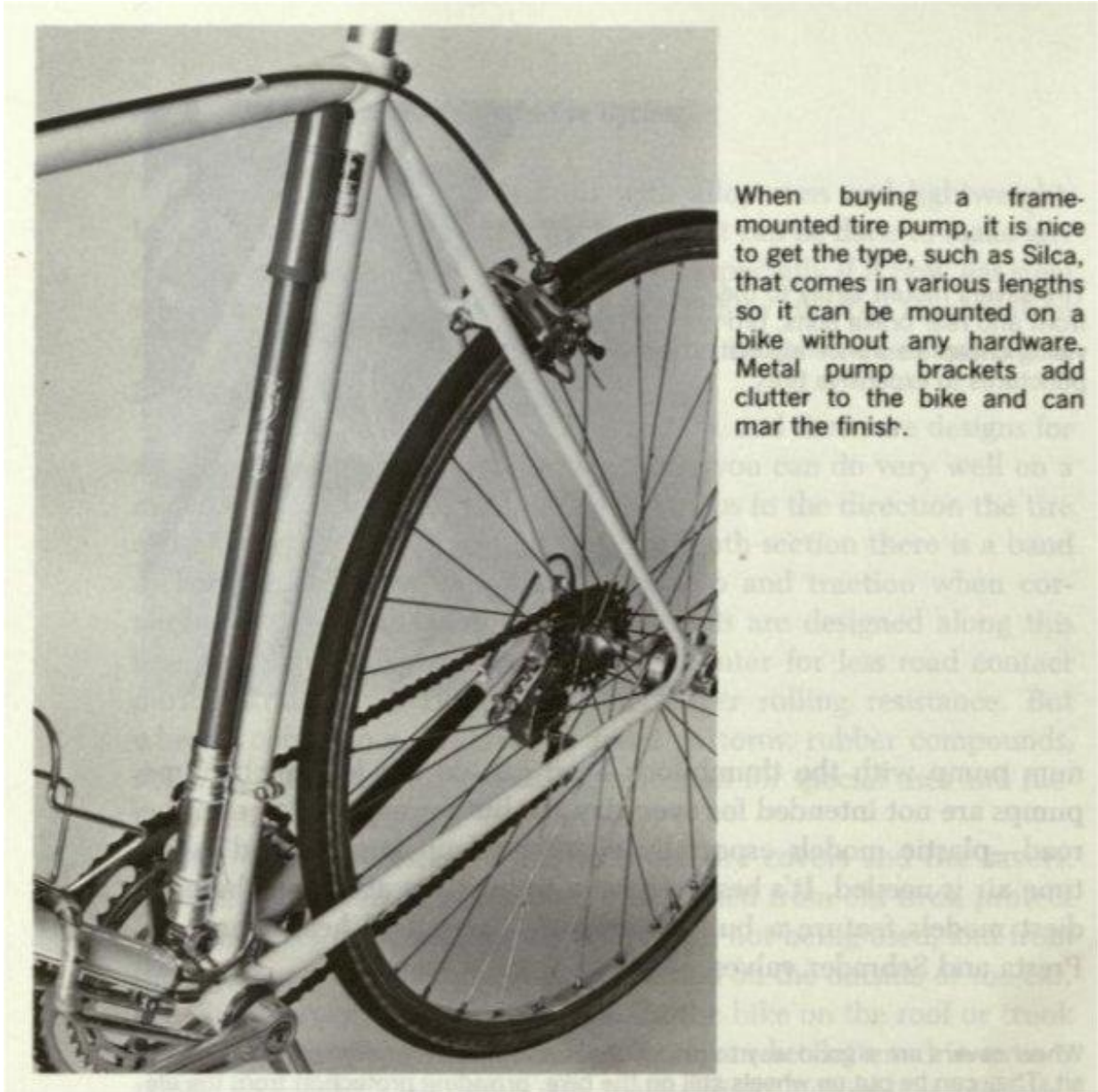


Photo Credit: Doughty, Tom with Pavelka, Ed and George, Barbara. *The Complete Book of Long-Distance and Competitive Cycling*. New York: Simon & Shuster, 1983.

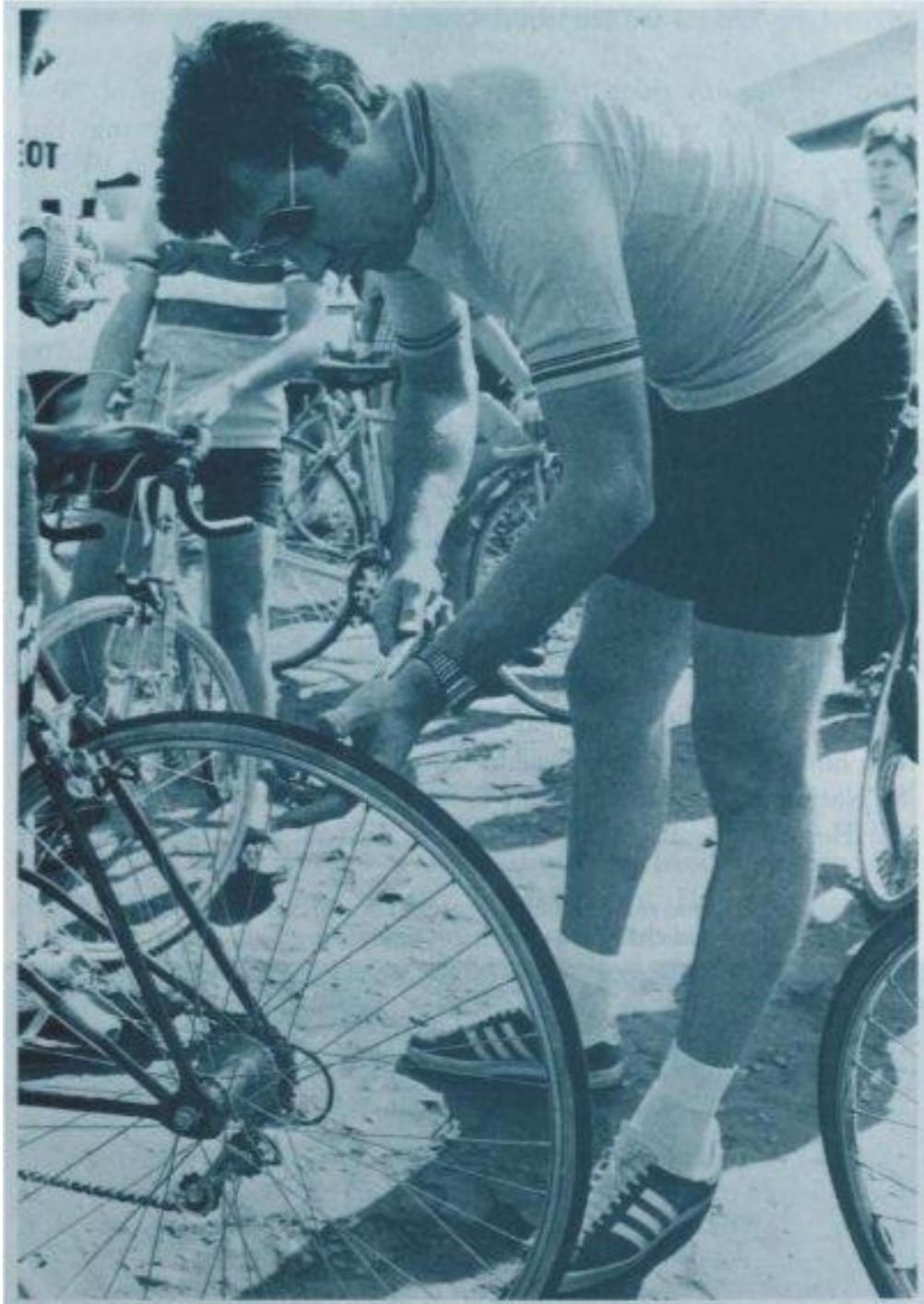
ONE DAY RIDES

“One-day bike trips are great because you can travel so lightly. If you can't carry everything you'll need in your jersey pockets, a handlebar bag or saddlebag should certainly be sufficient. In addition to sufficient food and water for a day in the saddle, items to carry include a small assortment of tools and spokes for emergency repairs, a rain jacket if there is a chance of afternoon showers, walking shoes if you ride with cleats, and a frame-mount pump and spare tube or tire, which can be strapped under the saddle.” [page 98]



When buying a frame-mounted tire pump, it is nice to get the type, such as Silca, that comes in various lengths so it can be mounted on a bike without any hardware. Metal pump brackets add clutter to the bike and can mar the finish.

Photo Credit: Doughty, Tom with Pavelka, Ed and George, Barbara. *The Complete Book of Long-Distance and Competitive Cycling*. New York: Simon & Shuster, 1983, page 228.



This fellow, casually pumping a tire at the Lehigh County Velodrome in Pennsylvania during his first visit to America, is almost universally recognized as the greatest racing cyclist who ever lived. He's Eddy Merckx of Belgium, and this photo was taken in 1978, just four months after he retired at the age of 33. Looking at those spindly legs, you'd be hard pressed to explain how he had the strength to win five Tours de France. But cycling suits all body types, and it takes much more than muscular legs to make a champion.

Photo Credit: Doughty, Tom with Pavelka, Ed and George, Barbara. *The Complete Book of Long-Distance and Competitive Cycling*. New York: Simon & Shuster, 1983, page 19.

THE BIKE AND ITS PARTS

“All tubular tires and some tubes for clinchers have a Presta valve, which lends itself well to inflation with a hand pump. The much smaller diameter of a Presta valve compared to the Schrader (the same type used in car tires) permits a lightweight, frame-mounted pump like the **Silca** to inflate a tire to the required 90-plus psi. Such frame pumps are not intended for everyday use but for emergencies on the road—plastic models especially won't hold up long if used every time air is needed. It's best to have a floor pump at home; the handiest models feature a built-in pressure gauge and heads for both Presta and Schrader valves.” [pages 226-227]

TIRES

“Because correct inflation is so important to safety, efficiency, and tire life, I recommend that you have a floor pump with a pressure gauge at home, and a frame-mount pump for emergencies on the road. I think the reason many people ride around on underinflated tires is that they rely on getting air at gas stations whenever they happen to think about it instead of having a pump handy before each ride. Their penalty is excessive tread wear, risk of rim and tire damage with every pothole or set of railroad tracks that loom up, and a bike that pedals and handles sluggishly. Then when they take air from a gas station's high-volume compressor, they run the risk of blowing a tire right off the rim. It happens hundreds of times a day.” [page 309]

REFERENCE

Tom Doughty raced both as a top amateur and professional from 1976 to 1982. You can review his race results at *Cycling Archives*

<http://www.cyclingarchives.com/coureurfiche.php?coureurid=19611>

His bicycle book is available for purchase and can also be viewed at the *Internet Archive Open Library* https://openlibrary.org/authors/OL1455838A/Tom_Doughty