

? The beginner bike clinics are every other Monday at Tanglewood Park, weather permitting. The clinic begins at 6:30 p.m. and lasts about an hour. To get to the meeting spot, turn into Tanglewood Park and turn left at the first road. Go about one-quarter mile to a gravel parking lot near the soccer fields. To check the status of each scheduled clinic, visit the Triad Cyclists Bulletin Board at www.topica.com/lists/triadcyclists

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Employment	'That is so far from the truth,' said McNeal, 42, 'I can only take you to two or three people who would try what you see on those magazines.'
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Special Sections	
JournalNow & You	'The risk factor is amplified by your aggressiveness,' he said.
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E-Mail Update	
Games	McNeal is a senior product designer at Tyco Electronics. He has ridden road bikes all his life. Eight years ago, he tried mountain biking.
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Speak Out	Mountain bikers can work on endurance while road cycling, and road cyclists can build strength while mountain biking.
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Town Hall	<p>McNeal began the clinics about two years ago after noticing a swell of beginning mountain bikers who wanted to learn techniques.</p> <p>Indeed, mountain biking is a different type of beast. 'You're going slow and your bike-handling skills come into play,' McNeal said.</p> <p>There is no mindless pedaling. You aren't tempted to throw up your hands and yell, 'Look, ma, no hands.'</p> <p>I spent so much time focusing on avoiding trees and keeping my balance that I felt a little mentally fatigued after my ride.</p> <p>Tanglewood's 4.6-mile trail</p> <p>McNeal and our group, which included six other riders with varied experience, rode on the park's 4.6-mile trail. The park also boasts a one-mile and two-mile trail.</p> <p>The trail we rode on is a good novice trail, with lots of interesting challenges such as tight turns, gradual descents into thick puddles of mud, moderate climbs, exposed roots and, of course, lots of trees.</p> <p>We rode over a couple of fallen logs blocking our path. McNeal and another cyclist in the clinic were there to spot those of us a little intimidated by what one person referred to as a speed bump.</p> <p>If such obstacles have you yearning for the smooth, wide-open paths at Salem Lake, fear not. You can always dismount the bike and walk around the difficult parts.</p> <p>The pace of the ride is slow and relaxed. Cyclists from 7 years old to senior citizens have attended the clinic.</p> <p>'The clinic is designed to keep you on your bike and off the ground,' McNeal said.</p>

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Monday, August 25, 2003

Get Out! SAFE BET: Popular view of mountain biking wrong

By Lisa O'Donnell
JOURNAL COLUMNIST



Lisa O'Donnell
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CLEMMONS - I went mountain biking the other week and I didn't slide down a sheer rock face or fall on my face into a mass of gnarled roots.

In other words, there was nothing extreme about my ride on the trails at Tanglewood.

It did feel pretty cool to kick up some mud and work up a sweat. But based on how often I squeezed my brakes, I don't expect to hear from the people at Mountain Dew anytime soon.

During my ride at Tanglewood - which qualifies as my first true mountain-bike experience - I was pleased to discover that you don't have to be a daredevil to have a good time on a mountain bike.

I took the ride with Jeff McNeal, who teaches a beginner mountain-bike clinic every other Monday at Tanglewood Park. Paceline Bicycles sponsors the clinic, which is free and is open to anyone with a mountain bike and a helmet.

The media have unfairly tagged the 'extreme' label on mountain biking, McNeal said.

Images of cyclists jumping over cliffs are splashed on the covers of mountain-biking magazines, leaving the impression that it is a sport for the reckless.

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