

A MEASUREMENT SEMINAR IN BRAZIL

In late October I traveled to Brazil, to assist Rodolfo Eichler in the organization of a measurement seminar for Brazilian measurers. Eichler, and half a dozen others, have been measuring courses in Brazil for the last 17 years, and on the occasions when their work has been checked, the courses have been OK. They know what they are doing.

Rodolfo has studied various schemes for organizing a certification system for Brazil, and has decided to do it according to the North American model, with regional certifiers and measurement open to all. To this end, with the assistance of Globo TV, he brought experienced measurers from various parts of Brazil together, along with a group of novices.

The seminar was held in the city of Belo Horizonte, a city in the mining and agricultural state of Minas Gerais, a few hundred kilometers north of Sao Paulo. It was held in the parking lot of the city stadium.

Measurers were given brief oral instruction. They watched as a 60 meter calibration course was laid out, and then asked to calibrate their bikes and find their way around a serpentine course defined by gates, building columns, metal barriers and concrete blocks. The course was not optimum, as space was in short supply. Nevertheless the students soon got the right idea, and improved their rides as they repeated their measurements.

Next day we met at the start/finish area, and I laid down an accurate 30 meters on the curb, using the calibrated Stanley/Brazil tape. Several tapes were checked, and all fell within a millimeter or two of the 30 meter length. This news was received gladly, as news of the badly-manufactured Brazilian Stanley tape had traveled.

The students laid down two parallel calibration courses, one on the asphalt sidewalk and one on the road. This permitted one-way riding while calibrating the next day saving time and confusion.

In the afternoon a long traffic island was used as the measured course, and students were instructed to ride around it until they reached their own idea of where the 1 km mark should be. There was considerable difference of opinion, caused partially by the fact that the 1 km course took just over 7 laps of the island, and included fourteen 180 degree turns.

On the final day, the real world was introduced. All 13 measurers assembled at the start of the International Pampulha Lake race, a circuit around the lake of about 17.9 km, with many turns. Results were reasonably good. The experts (x) were generally clustered having the lower measurements while the novices (b) had higher values.

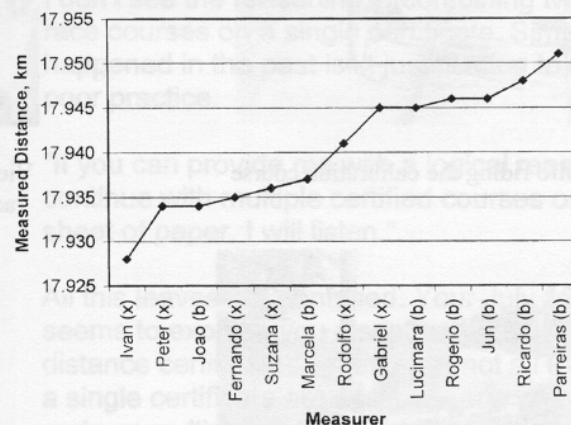
Upon completion of the ride, all measurers recalibrated and went to a lakeside restaurant for needed refreshment

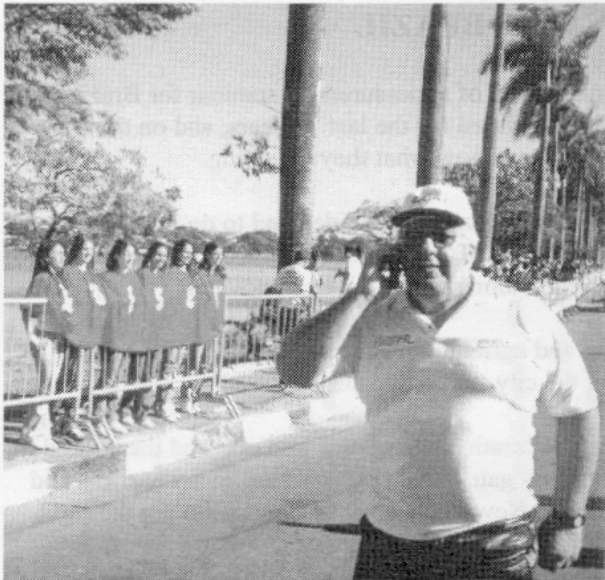
Pete Riegel



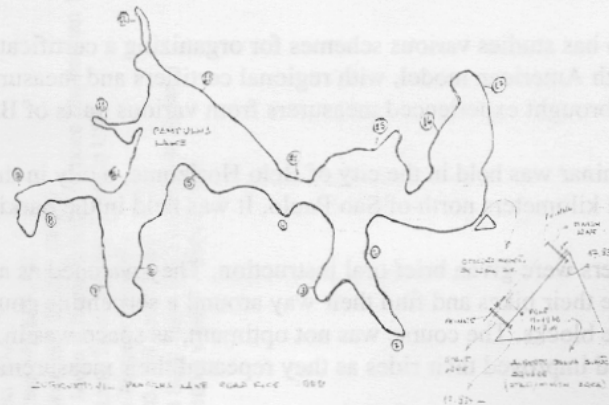
Laying out the calibration courses.

Measurements of Pampulha Lake

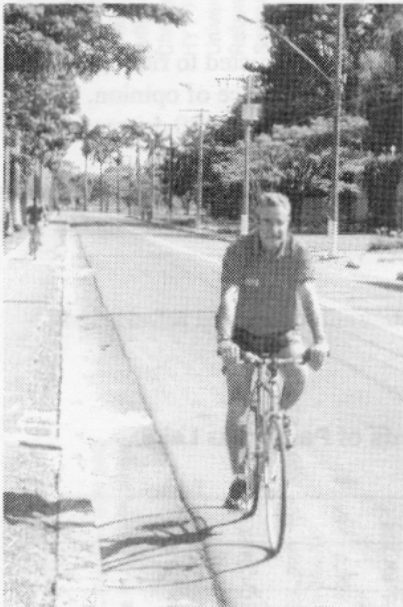




The race was sponsored by Kaiser Beer. The pasta Party featured 100 pretty models. Here are 6 in one t-shirt, while Gabriel Monteiro converses.



The Pampulha Lake course



Rodolfo riding the calibration course



Viewing space was at a premium during the race. Here we see spectators in the trees.



Washing the roads before the race

PICTURES FROM BELO HORIZONTE