

The **Peace Race** or **La Course de la Paix**, also known as **PWB** (Prague-Warsaw-Berlin), **Friedensfahrt** (in Germany), **Závod míru** or **Preteky mieru** (in Czechoslovakia), **Велогонка Мира** (in Russia) or **Wyścig Pokoju** (in Poland), was an annual multiple stage bicycle race held in the Eastern Bloc states of Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Poland. First organized in 1948, it was originally created with the intent of relieving tensions existing between Central European countries following the interwar period and WWII. It was known as **Le Tour of East** and for long time was most important amateur race.



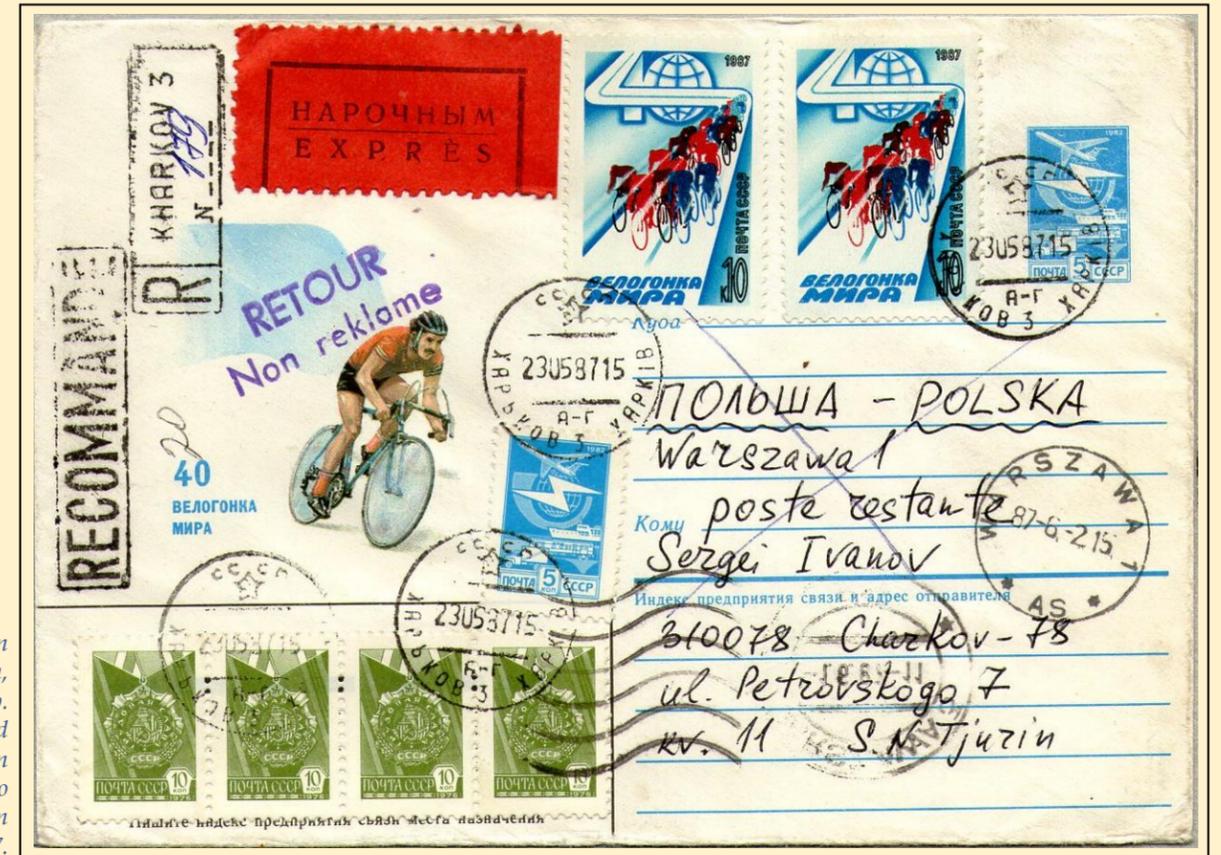
Poland (1948). Registered airmail letter from Poland to USA, franked with 4 stamps of Polish 1st issue of The Peace Race and additionally up-rated with 3 airmail stamps. Used on 25/05/1948.



The fall of communism in 1989 professionalized the race, but quickly succumbed to the difficulty of finding sponsors and be relevant in the European calendar of the UCI.



Russia (1987). 40th edition commemorative aerogram, uprated with issued stamp. Registered, express and airmail letter to Poland on 23/05/1987. Returned to sender from Warsaw on 02/06/1987.



In 01/06/1953, Czechoslovakia declared a surprise drastic currency reform as a response to the black market that devalued the current Koruna (Kc) by a factor of 50:1. New banknotes, printed in the Soviet Union, were issued that day. However, the postal system was not ready and had no new stamps under the new currency until 19th June. At the same time, postal rates were all adjusted and the face value postage rate was 1/5 of the previous rate (in practice, 10 times the previous face value during the transition period). For example, the rate for local mail before 1st June was 2 Kcs, between 1st-18th June was 40 helles (40 h, 2 1/5 Kcs, where 1 Kcs = 100 h) and after 19th June 20 new Kcs (equivalent to 50 times old Kcs). On 19th June new stamps were issued and old ones were not valid.



Czechoslovakia (1953). Letter used on 11/07/1953 during the transition period from the time the monetary reform was declared until the new stamps were issued. Non-local letter (circulated from Podborany to Liberec) up to 20g, with a rate of 3Kcs before the reform, but during the reform need to be franked with old 30Kkcs, which was equivalent to 0.6Kcs (30: 50 = 0.6). Right postage. RARE.



Czechoslovakia (1953). Letter to Portugal, used on 29/04/1953 before the monetary reform, with pictorial rubber commemorative postmark of the race. International postal rate (until 20g) were 3Kcs for postcards and 4 Kcs for letters. Wrong postage.



Czechoslovakia (1956). Set of 8 stationary cards, all devoted to the Peace Race. Sent to USA, 30h inland stationary card uprated to 45h. After the monetary reform the postal rate was 45h (0,45Kcs) for international mail. Right postage.