

# DERAILLEUR

## MAILLEUR

# April 2009

## **Cleaning and Lubricating your Bike**

By Jim Kreps

Keeping your bike cleaned and lubricated, besides making your bike the shiniest one in the club, is the most important habit in maintaining your bike.

### **What do you need?**

Beginning level of maintenance can be achieved using a rag and oil. Save those old shirts for the rag; however, which oil or lube to use probably seems overwhelming. Petroleum based oils or synthetic based (Tri-Flow or Superlube) work the best. Motor oils or WD-40 are either too heavy or attract dirt which makes matters worse by wearing out the chain and gears faster.

### **What do you clean and lubricate first?**

The most important cleaning and re-lubrication should occur on your chain (or the all important drive shaft). First, liberally apply some oil or de-greaser to the chain. This step will make removing the grime and dirt build up a little bit easier. Next, using the rag, wrap it around the chain and hold on firmly while using your free hand to pedal backwards, applying pressure around the chain, until the excess oil, grime and dirt are removed. Old toothbrushes or small sections of rag can be used to clean between the gears of the freewheel. Please note, you can also purchase a chain-cleaning tool, with built-in brushes and a reservoir for the de-greaser. This method may be cleaner, but personally, the rag method is more effective.

Finally, apply enough oil on the chain so that it will not drip yet also not look "wiped" dry. If you think you have applied too much, use the rag to wipe off excess oil but using less pressure around the chain.

Clean and lube the chain as often as possible, but especially after riding in the rain or off-roading in dry and sandy or wet and muddy conditions.

### **What about the derailleurs?**

A little bit tougher to clean, but since they are part of the drive train, a very important element. First, lube them every time you lube your chain. When cleaning them, the following two (2) tools could be found beneficial. The first is the toothbrush (borrow one from your significant other), but also ask your favorite uncle for a pipe cleaner. Typically saturating the derailleur with oil will help with the cleaning away of the grime and dirt using one of the tools mentioned above. When done, apply lube on the spring, pulleys, screw threads and at the point where the cable comes out of the casing. Be careful not to get oil on the wheel rims.

Totally clean and lube the derailleurs about once every three months under normal consistent riding conditions. Clean more often as stated above, under inclement conditions.

### **Does this mean I should lube the cables also?**

Now we are getting into more detailed maintenance. The cables move a lot, causing friction and wear. The casings that wrap these cables also are a holding mechanism for water, and where there is water, there is rust potential. Where the brake cables and derailleur cables enter and exit the external casing, I recommend squirting lube into these openings. Be careful with spray-back in the face by placing a rag over the spray tube (lube in the eyes is not a good feeling, wear safety glasses if you have them).

For exposed cables, oil helps propel water away and slow potential rust build-up. Oil the rag and wipe the exposed cables.

Clean and lubricate the cables routed under the bottom bracket as well. Don't forget to inspect cables for fray and replace them upon the first signs of deterioration. Lube the pivot points of the brake levers and brake calipers similar to the derailleurs above. Also, be careful not to get oil on the wheel rims or brake shoes.

### **What is the extreme end of total bicycle cleaning and re-lubing?**

Besides total replacement of all cables, chain and parts, a total overhaul should include re-packing the bearings in the bottom bracket (pedals and chain-ring area); the headtube (steering post area); and the front and rear wheel hub bearings. If you ride a lot in inclement weather or sandy conditions, have your wheel and bottom bracket bearings checked for wear and re-packed. Sand, for example, will find its way into the hubs and cause extreme wear and grinding on the otherwise smooth services within these areas.

### **What if I get oil on the wheel rims?**

Don't worry, you can easily clean your rims of oily residue and in addition to lubricating the brakes, you can enhance your braking by scrubbing them with soapy water or degreaser using a good sponge or brush. Fine steel wool also works if you don't rub too hard on the tire and don't mind the minor scratchy appearance on the rims. Use soap (such as dish detergent) that will not leave a residue. Degreasers used for the chain will help eliminate greasy grime, but use soap and water for the final cleaning. Also, clean the contact surfaces of the brake pads. Dirt and grit can be picked up by the rim and become imbedded in the pads creating an abrasive surface that will erode the wheel rims over time. Clean the brake pads with either a file or emery cloth.

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# PREZ SEZ

By Anne Alt



I was having a conversation recently about this year's centennial of the Burnham Plan of Chicago and how Daniel Burnham's architecture and ideas changed the city. The quote that most of us remember from Burnham is "Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood and probably will not themselves be realized." It is commonly regarded as the essence of his work.

A good plan can have the power to transform and enrich lives. What is your personal bike plan for 2009? Are you a fairly new cyclist seeing 25-30 miles as a bit daunting? Or a recreational rider considering a bike commute? A middle-distance rider contemplating your first century? An aspiring ride leader? Or a century rider looking to go further? Look for rides that are in your comfort zone or a slight challenge. You may find new friends there with goals similar to you own. Perhaps you can work together to motivate each other and enjoy the ride along the way.

Plans may be broad in scope or very specific. Chicago's far-reaching Bike 2015 plan ([www.bike2015plan.org](http://www.bike2015plan.org)) may help to make cycling in the city better for you. It is a successor to the successful Bike 2000 plan that was developed by the Mayor's Bicycle Advisory Council in 1992. The overall goal is to improve conditions for bicycling in Chicago and encourage more people to consider cycling as a means of transportation.

The organization hosting our next club meeting (April 14, 7 p.m.) is an excellent example of a successful plan. Working Bikes Cooperative ([www.workingbikes.org](http://www.workingbikes.org)) is a not-for-profit group that refurbishes donated or salvaged bikes for use as affordable transportation.

They donate bicycles to charity organizations in the Chicago area and ship bicycles to developing countries. Bike sales at the storefront fund its operations. Most work is done by volunteers.

Make a plan to try new things in 2009. I hope that you will join us at our next meeting, at our season kick-off ride on Sunday, April 5, and at rides and meetings throughout the year.



## Touring Natchez Trace Pt. 4

By Tom Grose

The next morning after leaving Florence, AL we headed back on the Trace for a stay in Belmont, MS. The Trace was dry and warm for a change. When Ron & I pulled into the Belmont Hotel on Sunday afternoon, we had traveled 62 pleasant miles. The Belmont is a quaint 1924 house with 12-foot ceilings and Georgian style features, much better than a typical chain motel.

We slept well and were ready to get to Tupelo, MS, on Monday morning. I kept a pretty quick pace that morning. Maybe faster than wise because my left knee was really bothering me by noon. We stopped at a bottoms overlook about 15 miles out of Tupelo. There we met a pair of bike touring guys who came from Arizona and were headed north to Wisconsin. The amazing part was that they were 62 and 81 years old and on an 1,800 mile one-way bike tour.

By the time I did the 42 miles into Tupelo Visitor Center on the Trace, I realized my left knee was too swollen to bike the next few days. After we checked into our motel, Ron went to a bike shop to get a new tire and I phoned my spouse to give her the bad news about my knee. She kindly came down from Nashville with our car to auto tour the rest of the Trace. We made a plan with Ron to sag for him the rest of the way.

The next morning Ron pedaled off on the Trace, while Jill and I visited the Elvis Birthplace & Museum in Tupelo, a simple wood house (see photo). After this visit we moved on to Jackson, MS, to rendezvous with Ron and have some great BBQ at Pig Out Inn. Our next stop was French Camp, an old settlement right on the Trace. The B&B at French Camp is one of the nicest I've visited. They have log cabins and a wonderful homemade breakfast. The rest of the Trace South is pretty flat and downhill so Ron was doing 80-mile days.

The next day Ron pedaled to Port Gibson, MS and stayed in a B&B. Jill & I motored to Natchez, MS. I managed to save a snapping turtle on the way, dangerously poised in the middle of the Trace highway. We stayed in Natchez that night so we could eat in another Pig Out Inn. On the ninth day of our adventure, we met Ron at the South end of the Trace after some casino gambling on a riverboat. The Natchez Trace is a wonderful place to tour. I would recommend it to anyone who likes touring even if only for a one-day tour.



## April Club Meeting

The Club's April meeting is April 14th at 7:00 p.m. at Working Bikes Cooperative's new location: 2434 S. Western Avenue. Mike Roeser, a longtime Working Bikes volunteer, will give us a tour and explain how the organization collects unwanted bicycles, fixes some to sell locally, and sends others to developing countries. Perhaps he'll even recruit some of us as volunteers.

Cyclists are invited to meet at Daley Plaza under the Picasso statue at 5:30 p.m. to cycle to Working Bikes together. You don't have to be a member of CCC to attend this meeting, but we ask you to consider joining (and to wear a helmet). If you have questions, contact Kathy at [kangarookathy@yahoo.com](mailto:kangarookathy@yahoo.com).



## About the Club

### Mission

To facilitate recreational bicycling in a non-competitive environment in and around the Chicago area; to promote safe bicycling habits and proper bicycling etiquette; to provide bicyclists an opportunity to network with other bicyclists; to encourage bicycling as a safe and viable alternative to other modes of transportation.

### Contact

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### Officers

President: Anne Alt  
 Vice President: Julie Sherman  
 Treasurer: Alice Kroman  
 Secretary: Michael Wasserman  
 Member at Large: Jim Adgate, Art Gilfand  
 Education: Kathy Schubert  
 Newsletter: Justin Sondak, Tom Grose

### Portable Quotes

“The bicycle is its own best argument. You just get a bike, try it, start going with the thing and using it as it suits you. It’ll grow and it gets better and better.”

-Richard Ballantine

## Membership Directory Prep, Redux

By Karen Shiners

As mentioned last month, CCC plans to produce the annual membership directory this spring. Here's how you can help prepare for it:

1) RENEW your membership - if you haven't already! This April newsletter is the last one in the "grace period" - it's as sure a sign of spring as the Champagne Ride (hope to see you there!) Don't get dropped - go to the website or fill out the form on the last page and snail-mail it today!

2) UPDATE your contact info! E-mail any changes to membership@chicagocyclingclub.org and we'll update the database so your directory listing is correct.

3) CONSIDER sharing your directory-making skills! CCC is an all-volunteer organization and we welcome new talent! If you need a chance to use or hone your desktop publishing, directory-making skills and you've got a little time available this spring, the membership directory could have your name in the "credits" as well as on your listing. Drop a line to membership@chicagocyclingclub.org to sign up to help! Hope to see you listed in the 2009 membership directory and of course, on the road!



## STYLE YOUR RIDE



### JERSEYS

Sleeveless .....\$50

(Men: S - XL)(Women: S - 2X)

Shortsleeves .....\$55

(Men: S - 3X)(Women: S - 2X)

Longsleeves ..... \$60

(Men: M - 3X)(Women:

M - XL)

WINDBREAKER - \$60

(Men: M - 3X)(Women:

S - 2X)

GLOVES - \$10

(XS-2X)

SOCKS - \$6

(S-XL)

BOTTLE - \$3

### CLUB MEMBERS ONLY

may purchase these items by contacting Duane O'Laughlin [merchandise@chicagocyclingclub.org](mailto:merchandise@chicagocyclingclub.org)

773-612-8157

May not be shipped

We will meet you at a club event or ride or you may pick up items by making arrangements to do so in advance.

## Cleaning and Lubricating your Bike

(continued from page 1)

### Final word on cleaning

Remember that it's not the cleanliness of the frame that makes a bike function, besides getting you much attention.

Keeping the drive chain cleaned and lubricated will provide you with easier pedaling. Keeping the brakes and cables lubricated will benefit your own safety. Finally, occasionally having the bearings re-packed will make rolling resistance negligible on your longer rides.



## BECOME A MEMBER FILL OUT THE FORM AND MAIL IT WITH YOUR CHECK TO CHICAGO CYCLING CLUB

I, for myself and for any other minor on whose behalf I sign this membership application, agree that 1) bicycling is a potentially hazardous activity and that accidents can occur from negligence or carelessness; 2) ride leaders' maps and/or written directions are provided for my convenience only and not to guarantee a safe route or trip; and 3) I voluntarily participate in club events and assume all risks associated with participation therein, including but not limited to injury, falls, contact with other participants, weather, traffic, and road conditions, all such risks being known and appreciated by me.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Primary

phone \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact/phone \_\_\_\_\_

I obtained this membership application from \_\_\_\_\_

I want to receive a paper copy of the members' directory  Yes  No the club newsletter  Yes  No

I would like to help with the following:  ride planning  newsletter  publicity  meetings  social events

Annual dues:  Individual (\$20)  Family (multiple individuals at one address \$25)

Do not share my contact information:  within the Chicago Cycling Club  with other bike-related organizations

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Chicago Cycling Club Newsletter April 2009



Riders Kick Off the 2003 Ride Season on the Champagne Ride

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CHICAGO CYCLING CLUB

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