

# DERAILLEUR MAILLEUR

## April 2008

### Bicycling Illinois

By Steven Grossman

Are you thinking about a great bicycle trip to Tuscany this summer but deterred by the Euro's strength from attending Ciclisimo Classico? Have neither the time nor money for that Backroads trip to New Zealand? Rob Layton's Bicycle Illinois trip from the southern tip of Cairo, Illinois to Chicago probably won't serve as an adequate substitute. However, if you'd like an almost perfectly organized trip for one week this summer with challenging riding (average 83 miles/day, with climbing on the first 2 days and frequent chip and seal roads for the next 3 days) and gym, camping and motel accommodations, this trip may be ideal. After Rob's presentations at our CCC meetings, I took what turned out to be the best organized non-luxury bike trip I have ever experienced. Rob created the cue sheets using a GPS system, and they were the most accurate I have ever utilized. There were rest stops every 18-25 miles, all extremely well provisioned.

All but a handful of riders departed from Chicago via a very comfortable Amtrak trip arranged by Bicycle Illinois. Rob made sure that every piece of luggage and every bicycle was waiting for us at the gym in downstate Carbondale. The 6-hour ride provided an excellent opportunity for the group to bond, and these excellent relations prevailed throughout the trip and beyond.

We stayed Saturday in Carbondale because there's no place to stay in Cairo. Sunday, Rob bussed us down to Cairo for the 65-mile ride back to Carbondale. Make no mistake about it: southern Illinois is the deep south. As late as the early 70's, Cairo had a population of over 13,000. Now, it is about 3,200. There is one storefront occupied every 2 blocks, and most of the residential neighborhoods seem to be abandoned.

From Cairo, we biked through the Shawnee National Forest, climbing the most challenging hill in Illinois, according to Bicycling Magazine. However, anyone who's climbed Black Jack Hill, just south of Galena, will disagree. From Carbondale we biked to Centralia and spent the night in the town. These 2 days were the most scenic.

When we arrived in Centralia, a small group of us went searching for post-ride beer. In a bar on the main strip selling \$2.50 Guinness, three signs warned customers: (1) No nudity. If you expose yourself, you will be barred for life, (2) No fighting. If you are in a fight, you will be barred for life, and (3) No drug dealing or using. If your deal or use drugs, you will be barred for life. The bartender was a 22 year old woman, with an 8 year old child, who had just come back from Chicago for a guest spot on the Jerry Springer Show. She advised us that the nudity warning applied to her and other female guests who would lift their tops for tips or free drinks. One of the customers advised us politely that we would not feel comfortable there after 7:00 p.m. We did not return.

The next day was a century ride to Champaign, over mainly chip and seal roads. As you can imagine, entering Champaign was the high point of the trip. We stayed in the only luxury hotel designated for this trip, the Hilton Garden Inn. The hotel was staffed by U. of I students on summer break. Our sleep was interrupted at 11:45 p.m. by a false fire alarm, requiring the evacuation of the entire hotel, and we did not get our wake up calls because the student checking us in put the wrong numbers in the computer. Of course we accepted these faux pas in good humor in the morning, knowing that the student-employees did their best.

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### Is your Bicycle Fit for You

By Jim Kreps

It's spring. Some of us are probably starting to look for a new bike. A newspaper ad states "26 inch road bike with 21 speeds....." How many of you think that this is a bike size or wheel size? Many of us fall victim to this common thought before we knew the lingo. Bikes are not sized by the wheel, but by the frame size. Also a bike is fitted via many rules of thumb that each of you could use for selecting the right model. Remember, comfort is the most important factor.

**So, what is the frame size:** When you get fitted for a bike, have the sales person tell you the frame size. Use this for future reference when shopping around. Most frames sizes are determined by measuring from the center of the crank arm spindle in the bottom bracket to the upper edge of the seat lug (where the seat post goes into the frame).

**What's the wheel size:** Although wheel size has little to do with sizing a bike, it affects performance and fit and is the key difference between children's and adult's bikes (especially for differently sized people). Most adult bikes have either 26, 27 inch or 700 mm wheels. Also use this fact when determining where you will do most of your cycling (i.e.: Continental U.S. vs. Europe).

**Bike Fit:** There are many "scientific methods" or "rules of thumb" used to size a bike to match your physical size and frame. Not all methods work for everyone and every type of bike. Again, comfort of all body parts is the key goal in proper bike fit. Below are only a few methods of bike fitting.

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# PREZ SEZ

BY MICHAEL WASSERMAN



On behalf of everyone here at the Club's world headquarters, I'd like to welcome all of you to the 2008 riding season, and to thank you for your ongoing participation. There are so many wonderful things on the horizon, I hardly know where to begin. Of course, that's not entirely true. We are a riding club so the starting point, as always, is riding. As I compose this, we have more than one dozen rides already scheduled for the coming year and many, many more still in production. Most offerings are time-tested crowd pleasers. Some new adventures too. It's very early in the planning process, but there is already something for everyone, so I do hope you can join us (and in the Chicago tradition, early and often!)

I see March as a month of great possibilities for the club, and you are at the core of our potential and our future. As much as your steering committee would like to run the club to suit its own personal needs and agendas, we are keenly aware that we serve at your discretion and are here to provide a fun, safe, dynamic cycling experience. To that end, we would very much love your help in visioning and actualizing our full potential. Here are a few great ways you can join in the fun:

First: Please let us know if you have any great ideas for ride themes, routes or destinations. Those previously mentioned time tested crowd pleaser rides? Where do you suppose they came from? We are able to offer such a diverse schedule of rides precisely because we have such a diverse membership.

Combine your "other" hobby or avocation with a bike ride. If you design it, they (we) will come. Submit your suggestions to the ride committee:

[rides@chicagocyclingclub.org](mailto:rides@chicagocyclingclub.org).

Second: If you have led a ride in the last year or two, please share your "cue sheet" with us so that we can update our ride library. Most often, we find that newer ride leaders rely heavily on this resource. The ride library is a great way to help these folks who *want* to lead a ride (or venture out on their own) but who may not have *designed* a good route themselves. Perhaps one of the greatest flatteries in the club is to see someone else co-opt your ride and make it their own. Help us out by submitted your cue sheets to the crypt keeper, Anne Alt: [anne.alt@gmail.com](mailto:anne.alt@gmail.com)

Third: Help us to implement your great ride idea (or keep someone else's great ride idea alive) by hosting your own ride event! No prior experience necessary, but training is available and suggested. You can always look to veteran club riders for help and advice, or be matched to a mentor with an introduction from the ride committee. Still unsure? Consider sharing the fun with a co-ride leader. All our ride leaders are volunteers (just like you). Everyone starts out with a first ride lead (just like you). All any of us have to do to get started is contact our intrepid ride chair, Corina Schusheim, at [rides@chicagocyclingclub.org](mailto:rides@chicagocyclingclub.org).

This fourth truth can now be revealed; some of us may not have great ride ideas or be willing to lead rides. That's OK, still plenty more ways to be of assistance. We are always looking for new ways to **promote the club**. If you are willing to share your marketing skills, or media contacts, or promotional ideas, let's have at it.

We would warmly welcome these contributions as well. Help us get the word out to those poor innocents who have not yet discovered what we already know about Chicago Cycling. Feel free to hit me on this at [pres@chicagocyclingclub.org](mailto:pres@chicagocyclingclub.org).

Still not finding the right fit? We can ALWAYS use help promoting club activities at several annual cycling events throughout the year. Our club is a proud participant at Bike the Drive, the Mayor's Bike to Work Rally, the Boulevard Lakefront Tour; and we intend to participate at several other regional fairs and events this year. This is a great way to spend time meeting with other cycling enthusiasts who are our potential fellow riders and club members. Help spread the good word about your Chicago Cycling Club at any of these events. Again, please let me know if you can lend a hand.

This list is far from complete. There are plenty of other ways that you can lend a hand, and we will be glad to accept your help at any level you are willing to offer.

Please let us know how *we* can make the club better. Better still, let us know how *you* can help us do that.

Regards from the road.



## Is Your Bicycle Fit for You

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**Top Tube Height:** Stand over the frame of the bike, straddling the top tube. Lift the bike's front wheel off the ground until the top tube reaches your crotch. Assuming the top tube is not sloped, if the wheels are between 1-1/2 to 2 inches above the ground, you have achieved an appropriate basic fit for a road or touring bike.

A 3 to 4 inch clearance might be more appropriate for a mountain bike.

### **Top Tube Length / Handlebar Stem:**

Many different rules of thumb dictate this area. With your hands in the drops, the view of your front axle should be obstructed by edge of the handlebar. You can place your elbow against the nose of your saddle until your outstretched fingers touch the inside of the handlebar. Or make sure your back is at an angle less than 45 degrees when your hands are in the drops, or at 45 degrees when on the top of the bars. With a mountain bike, your elbows should have a slight bend while riding. A properly sized top tube will keep your back and neck from becoming tired and sore.

**Saddle Height:** Start by setting the height to allow full leg extension with the heel on the pedal at the 6:00 pedal stroke position. Next, slide the seat horizontally on the seat rails either forward or backward so that your front knee is over the pedal spindle when the cranks are in the 9:00 or 3:00 positions. When all is adjusted and your forefoot is on the pedal at the 6:00 position, you should see a slight bend at the knee. Also check that while seated, at least one foot can touch pavement when stopped or you will tip over. These positions allow for the proper relationship of the knee, femur and pelvis with the bike frame and cranks. Ask about a "FitKit" to scientifically determine these positions for you at a bicycling shop that has this service.

**Saddle Angle:** Holding the saddle level, observe the "low points". If the low point is towards the front, you will find yourself sliding forward while riding. If the low point is towards the rear, you will slide the other direction and potentially also lose feeling in certain parts to remain unmentioned. The broadest area of the saddle should be level when you sit on it, not the overall saddle. To achieve this leveling of the broadest area, it may be necessary to tilt the front nose up, but never more than 5 degrees. You also might find it necessary to adjust the height after the angle adjustments.

**Handle Bar Height:** Raising the handle bar to just below the seat height to allow for a more upright position (45 degrees) while on the top bars will allow for easier breathing and increased oxygen capacity since you're not compressing your lungs. When you need the aerodynamics, you should go into the drops. Position the angle of the drop bars by rotating them with brake hooks slightly upward. Leaning over into the drops will give you increased leg power and less wind resistance.

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## 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

Snailmail: P O Box 1178, Chicago, IL 60690-1178

Website: [www.chicagocyclingclub.org](http://www.chicagocyclingclub.org)

General: [info@chicagocyclingclub.org](mailto:info@chicagocyclingclub.org)

Newsletter: [editor@chicagocyclingclub.org](mailto:editor@chicagocyclingclub.org)

Rides: [rides@chicagocyclingclub.org](mailto:rides@chicagocyclingclub.org)

Telephone: 773.509.8093

### Officers

President: Michael Wasserman

Vice President: James Adgate

Treasurer: Alice Kroman

Secretary: Jennifer Richards

Member at Large: Frances Austin,

Steve Grossman

Education: TBD

Newsletter: Justin Sondak,

Tom Grose

Rides: Corina Schusheim

### Portable Quotes

"When I see an adult on a bicycle, I do not despair for the future of the human race." -H.G. Wells

"Think of bicycles as rideable art that can just about save the world."

- Grant Petersen



## Bicycling Illinois

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When leaving Champaign, we could do naught but contemplate the wit and ingenuity of those who selected the nickname "Fighting Illini" for the athletic teams. Did Harvard ever think of naming its teams the "Fighting Harvardians?" How about the "Fighting Michiganders?" This is just one of the many reasons that the U. of I is the envy of every other university in the U.S. [Note: The author received his undergraduate degree from the U. of Michigan]

From Champaign, we rode on not particularly scenic country roads to Effingham, Kankakee, and finally Chicago. About halfway to Chicago we commenced riding on the Old Plank Trail, and followed many bike paths to Wolf Lake, and then, the lakefront to downtown Chicago.

Overall, this ride was well organized, cheap, challenging, and enjoyable. This year's ride runs from July 5-11. Check out the web site at [www.bicycleillinois.com](http://www.bicycleillinois.com).



### Is Your Bicycle Fit For You

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Overall, the goal of proper fit is comfort, riding smoothly and powerfully up to all day if need be without pain in the hands up to the neck and down to the ankles. Let your body give you the signs of a good fit versus a fit in need of adjustment.



## 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.

## April Meeting

Our April 13th meeting will feature Marcus Moore of Yojimbo's Garage (bike shop). Marcus is also a sponsor the XXX Racing team and founder of the Tour Da Chicago race series. He will Show 'n Tell about Six Day Bicycle races. We understand that he has an extensive collection of souvenirs of this sport which was the focus of the March meeting's film *Six Day Bicycle Rider*.

The meeting starts at 7 p.m. at the Lincoln Park Library, 1166 West Fullerton.



## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL FORM TO: CHICAGO CYCLING CLUB, PO BOX 1178 CHICAGO, IL 60690-1178

# Chicago Cycling Club Newsletter April 2008



CCC riders paused in front of the  
Union Stockyards Arch at Peoria & Exchange Ave.

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CHICAGO CYCLING CLUB  
**DERAILLEUR**  
MAILLEUR  April 2008

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