

DERAILLEUR MAILLEUR

April 2007

CYCLING IN ARUBA

BY RICK PAVIA

A friend and I went on a mini-vacation with to the island of Aruba in January. Aruba lies 15 miles north of Venezuela and Colombia. Initially I was told that the resort we were staying at rented bikes for free. But when I saw what they were renting, I decided to go off-site and pay to rent a better bicycle. I spent most of a day riding around the northern half of the island. Aruba is tiny, measuring about 19 miles from north to south and about 5 miles across at it's widest point. Several Arubas would fit within the city of Chicago. With all of that, I couldn't believe the number of cars, trucks and buses on the island. Most of the roads were two lanes so I had to squeeze over to the shoulder when a car passed me: not an abundance of traffic signals either. If you ever travel there, bring your own helmet. I didn't and opted to wear my White Sox baseball cap for lack of better protection. Just about everyone is multilingual and can converse in Papiementu [the "official" island dialect comprised of Dutch, English and Spanish with a smattering of indigenous words] along with English, Dutch and Spanish.

I met a guy at a McDonalds treating his kids to Happy Meals who, seeing my lycra, asked me
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HOW TO BE A RIDE

LEADER

BY BRIAN BIRD

Well, another ride season of thrills, fun and excitement is almost complete and I've managed to survive cold weather, early rising on Sundays, embarrassing falls and tire punctures, and even the task of being a ride leader on a Sunday CCC ride. For those who have already done this, I tip my cap to you for your dedication and sacrifice to make this club the best cycling club in Chicago. For those who have yet to become a ride leader, I hope this article will show you that ride leading is not as difficult as you might think and, quite often, can be a lot of fun. I lead a number of CCC rides and think I have distilled the aspects of ride leading into ten easy-to-follow steps that can make anyone a competent CCC ride leader.

1. Volunteer Early: Just like your old high school or college speech class, he or she who volunteers early gets it over with first. You might get your selection over with so you don't have to mull over whether or not you will need to lead a ride. You also spare yourself an unannounced midnight knock on the door by a member of the Ride Committee. Check out the new ride leader resource page at www.chicagocyclingclub.org/rides/leads.asp for open dates.
2. Choose a Familiar Area or Theme for the Ride: Think of a ride route that is of interest to you. You'll be surprised at how many CCC members will follow you because the route is unusual and different. This is the time for you to be creative (for example, ride to stops with the word "green" in them for a St. Patrick's Day ride, do a tour of the many Chicago

parks, hit all the Chicago 1920s gangster sites, etc.). Remember: novelty + planning = fun.

3. Plot Your Route Using A Good Map: Sit yourself down with a Rand McNally Chicagoland atlas or any map showing the streets in minute detail and devise your route (contact street maven Art Gilford for questions about directionality). This is what is known as the Dedicated Cyclist Method of Route Plotting. There is another method called the Lazy Bum Cyclist Method of Route Planning that involves the following:
 - 3a. Contact the Ride Committee for A Pre-Drawn Map: Committee members can get you a pre-arranged route map to get you through your tour, but your ride will not be novel and unique, although it will be fun, nonetheless. But the choice is yours.
 4. Pre-ride Your Route: Go out a week or so before your ride date and take most of that day riding your route. This will uncover any unforeseen road changes, construction problems or route points where vehicle traffic might cause problems. It also offers you the opportunity to inspect the eating and drinking establishments for deciding where the rest stop and ride-ending eatery should.
 5. Make Copies of Your Route Sheet and Waiver Forms: Plan for up to 30 participants for Sunday social rides, 20 for others. Any extra copies can go to the Ride Committee to be put in the CCC ride route library. It also helps to remember to bring them with you to the ride.
 6. Relax the Night Before the Ride:
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PREZ SEZ

BY MICHAEL WASSERMAN



In which Mike feigns intellectual acuity by quoting random sages of the ages...

Welcome to the riding season! The Champagne and Winthrop Harbor rides have kicked off what will be a truly spectacular year. Let the festivities begin. Thank you to Thomas Berube and Steve Kramer, the "big dogs" that lead the way for the rest of us every year.

In the Pirkei Avot, a Jewish guide to ethical living written between 350 B.C.E. and 200 C.E., we are told to both find a teacher and study at his feet and to make and hold onto friends (with whom to study). Our club motto, "Never Ride Alone in Chicago," seems to fit nicely with this rabbinic wisdom. Club rides offer a wealth of opportunity to make good friends, to share experiences and explore the city together and to learn (and teach) about bicycles and cycling from each other. Club rides take us new places, in new ways. Our riders learn new skills and get ample opportunity to practice them, and then share what they have learned with others. It's not just about the cycling. Our erudite and diverse membership offers much accumulated wisdom on a wide array of topics. Learn about riding, sure; but there is a lot more going on in the conversations within the peloton. The ancients may not have themselves ridden bicycles, but surely they would approve! Let's all take advantage of our club's ride schedule, let's strengthen the bonds of our

existing friendships make some new friends too, let's learn and teach each other along the route.

I'm not sure whether this falls into the category of "learning" or not, but I was recently reminded of how much I really enjoy riding along the lakefront and just how dangerous it can get. The Lakefront Trail is only thinly used during the winter months and my dabbling in winter bike commuting got me feeling a little greedy about having it all to myself. The empty, or near empty path allows lots of time for quite reflection and close observation of the lake's beauty and the skyline's majesty. But as much as I enjoy that sort of solitude, I take particular delight in seeing other faces on the first warm days this spring. This year has been no exception. No doubt, I wore a pretty goofy grin last week as I tried to make eye contact with everyone. I want to let them know how much I enjoy watching them enjoy themselves, that it is so nice to see them all coming out of hibernation and to welcome them back onto the lakefront again. But my revelry proved to be short lived. Some knuckle-headed jogger stopped short for no apparent reason. I swerved and skidded, narrowly avoided an ugly mess for sure. Moments later, a commuter on a bike took a phone call, decelerated and began swerving erratically trying to ride no handed - just as I started a pass. We rubbed elbows but both remained upright. A roller blader straddling the center line, swinging both arms and legs wildly forced everyone around her to the gravel shoulders. A car blew the stop sign at Wilson, near the skate park. Arrrrrrgh!

The lake front trail's an absolute treasure and an absolute terror. As much as I want to, I just can't blame the dog walkers or bladers or tourists or parents with little kids. How can I get upset that other people want to spend time at the

lake as much as I do? Who wouldn't be distracted by all the colors and activity and that warm, warm sun? But as much as I want everyone in the city to pursue whatever tickles them, to get outside and be active, would it kill them to leave me my eight foot wide swath of asphalt??

In years past I would have been the guy cussing and screaming and making unkind gestures at everyone who was infringing on my superior rights of way. Old me: "Shoot, it's a bike path and I'm on a bike - GET OUT OF MY WAY!" Today, I'm a little more Rodney King: "Can't we all just get along?" As the warmer weather coaxes us to ride more and more each day, please recognize that the risks of riding along the lakefront are increasing as well. The only way we are going to co-exist in this crowded environment is to ride smarter, ride safer, and yes, perhaps even ride slower. (Friends don't let friends ride recklessly?) Let's resolve this year to lead by example. Let's do our part to make the lakefront path a safe and inviting place to recreate and let's teach others to do the same. Most importantly of all, in the words of Hill Street Precinct's Sgt. Phil Esterhaus, let's be careful out there!

I'd like to hear your thoughts on this issue. What can you and I do to help make the lakefront a safer riding environment. What are you doing to avoid the inevitable conflicts and collisions on that route? How can we help encourage others to be more considerate amid the lakefront congestion? Let us know on the chat list: ccc-chat@yahoogroups.com.

In the meantime, who am I kidding? If it gets any more crowded on the trail, I'm moving my commute over to the relative safety of Clark Street. At which point, I'll hope to truly, see you on the road.



CYCLING IN ARUBA

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if I was a professional cyclist. He then invited me to join him and a neighbor later that afternoon to ride to the south side of the island. I never did find his house as he didn't give me a street number or name. But it was a nice gesture which shows



NEXT CLUB MEETING

The next meeting will be a "show and chow" at Mercury Café, 1505 W Chicago Avenue, Tuesday, April 10 at 7 p.m. We'll discuss the exciting rides in store for the 2007 Ride Season and Robert Layton from Bicycle Illinois will speak on this summer's "Tri-State Tour." Food and drink will be available for purchase.



CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Club members are needed to man the Chicago Cycling Club booth at the Chicago Bike Show at Navy Pier, Saturday April 14th and Sunday, April 15th. All volunteers receive free admission to the show, and can sign up for 2 hour time slots (or 3 hours for the final slot on Sunday). All volunteers will promote the club and recruit new members, riders, and ride leaders. Please contact Jim Adgate at jadgate@yahoo.com or (773) 551-8242. We will contact volunteers the week before the show with final details.



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

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.

RIDE OF SILENCE

Wed, May 16, 2007
 Start 6:30 - 7:00 p.m.
 Location: Daley Plaza
 (corner of Dearborn and Washington), Chicago.
 Distance ranges from 8 to 12 miles.

The Ride Of Silence is a free ride where cyclists are asked to ride no faster than 12 mph and remain silent during the ride. There is no brochure, no sponsors, no registration fees and no T-shirt. The ride, which is held during Bike Safety month, aims to raise the awareness of motorists, police and city officials that cyclists have a legal right to the public roadways. The ride is also a chance to show respect for those who have been killed or

injured. Participating cyclists are asked to wear black armbands for this silent, 10-mile bike procession, which has been endorsed by the Chicago Cycling Club and the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation.

Registration on day of event is allowed. Contact: Elizabeth Adamczyk at rideofsilence.chicago@gmail.com



HOW TO BE A RIDE

LEADER

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- Do some non-strenuous activities the night before the ride (like see a movie, attend a show, shoot pool or dress in motorcycle gear and slam dance at the Exit Lounge on West North Avenue.) Just make sure you're bright-eyed and bushy-tailed for the next day's ride.
- 7. Arrive Early on the Date of Your Ride: This is to allow for ride participants to preview your route sheet and to sign the waiver forms without delaying the departure of your ride. Show up at the clock tower 15 minutes before ride start and you'll do just fine.
- 8. Complete Ride Leader Things Before Leaving: The ride leader should introduce his or herself, describe what the ride is about, and review the signaling, cycling etiquette and Illinois rules of the road while making sure all participants have a route sheet and signed the CCC waiver form.
- 9. Finally, ask for a "sweep" to bring up the rear, and, if you have a very large group (over 20) it doesn't hurt to designate a "scout" who can scoot ahead to inform the leader of problems in the pack. Once this is complete, you're ready to hit the road
- 10. Be Vigilant But Have Fun: keep looking back to see that everyone in the group is within sight of you and make sure to obey all traffic laws that vehicle drivers must obey. At the same time, be sure to enjoy yourself – point out the route landmarks to your newfound friends, make small talk, etc. It's your ride and, within reason, you'll do what you want to do.
- 11. Save Those Waiver Sheets and Extra Route Sheets: Turn these in to a member of the Ride Committee so we can have your work immortalized in our CCC

library (a three-ring binder) for others to behold and use as an actual, or inspiration for a future, CCC ride. The ride committee would appreciate a route copy in electronic form as well, if you have one, and will provide you with a stamped, self-addressed envelope for returning the waiver forms and extra route sheets.

- 12. Enjoy the satisfaction of knowing that you improved your leadership skills while adding to the resources available to Chicago cyclists.

There you have it. Adapt and change this in a way you see fit to enable you to be an effective ride leader (or to improve your life, help you achieve perfect oneness with nature, etc.). But above all else, volunteer, relax and have fun and you will have done your part to keep this club the best cycling club in Chicago.



METRAcycling

BY GREG VALENT

A portmanteau or, blended word, that I introduced to describe bringing your bicycle on a METRA train. I've Googled METRAcycle and received no hits, but I can't copyright an individual word. Oh well, there go the royalties.

Anyway, here's my story. In the mid 1980s, I regularly used a motor vehicle to transport my velo to invitational rides and triathlon competitions. After about a decade of this, I realized that one should not have to drive somewhere to ride a bicycle. I then gravitated to the CBF Bikes on Transit committee, whose project director was CCC's own Karen Shinnars. Our goal was bicycle access on CTA trains and buses, PACE buses and, of course, METRA trains. I can't say that we failed, but we didn't immediately succeed.

In 1999, the CTA began allowing bicycles on their trains, just over one hundred years after a predecessor had done the same*. Next came PACE, with bus-mounted bicycle racks, just prior to the introduction of the racks on CTA buses. Finally, in June of 2005, we received access to METRA trains, with a little help from the Lt.

Governor and the state legislature.

I was an early adopter of bikes on transit, realizing that I didn't have to drive somewhere to ride. I had already embarked on long, out of town day trips directly from my Logan Square apartment. No more driving to Elgin or Libertyville. With the advent of the first Bikes on CTA service, my bike and I could now take the L to 95th St. That was a LOT of Western Ave. traffic to avoid. Soon, I was able to throw

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.

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Officers

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Treasurer: Alice Kroman
Secretary: Jennifer Richards
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Education: TBD
Newsletter: Justin Sondak,
Karmen Lei

Treasurer's Report

February 2007

Beginning Balance	\$8,066.50
Income	\$ 83.00
Expenses	\$ 970.04

Ending Balance (2/28) \$7,179.46
Prepared by Alice Kroman

it onto the front of the Western Ave. bus to Blue Island, then PACE to 145th St. Still more deadly traffic skipped. Finally, I rolled my Waterford onto the METRA Electric at Randolph St. and rolled it off in University Park, south of US Rt. 30, right at (comparatively) traffic free Governor's Highway. Kankakee was no longer a destination. It was a SAG stop on the way to further adventures.

As you may have read in last month's Steering Committee minutes, I proposed more club trips utilizing the Bikes on METRA service. However, since the METRA rules are many and varied, these excursions may best be described as tentative. For a list of do's and don'ts, I suggest you check out the website: http://metrarail.com/Special_Promotions/bikes_on_trains.html

Hopefully, METRAcycle trips can develop as interesting alternatives to established CCC rides rather than replacements for longtime favorites. I will be scheduling them on Saturdays, as it'd be a bummer on any day to miss a train and have a long ride home at 10:00 pm. All should be considered Social Rides, with the possible exception of the trip to Milwaukee. A \$5.00 METRA Weekend Pass is good for your bicycle and you, both days. Boarding at a downtown station gives you a

better chance of finding room. And, **DON'T FORGET YOUR BUNGEE!** Some ideas:

Milwaukee and back, in one day. METRA UP North, to/from Kenosha. 30 mile ride to/from Milwaukee on road and paved lakefront trail. Ride around Suds City, rail-trails, lighthouses, eat at brewpubs or Milwaukee-Mexican. First train out, 6:35 am. 12 bikes.



Kenosha and Racine area. Tentatively August 11. Days of Discovery and Tall Ship Fest. Museums covering the natural and industrial history of the Kenosha area. Mammoth skeletons and the red Rambler convertible used in the Third Rock from the Sun TV show. Lakefront, Root River, North Shore trails. Kenosha has a lakefront fountain/shower to rinse off.

Long Prairie and Stone Bridge Trails, Rock Cut State Park. Road and paved/hard-pack trails. METRA UP Northwest, to/from Harvard.

First train out 8:30. 12 bikes. Invasion of the Fox River Valley. METRA UP, Milwaukee and BNSF, to/from Crystal Lake, Elgin, Geneva, Aurora. Groups hit the Fox Valley Trail at four points and converge / diverge along the route. Lots to see, lots to ride, lots to eat and drink. Think The Wild One without Brando. Mostly paved trail. First trains out between 6:30 and 8:40. 39 bikes.

Wauponsee Glacial Trail, Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, Kankakee River State Park. METRA Rock Island, to/from Joliet. Road and paved/hard-pack trail. First train out 8:30. 9 bikes.

And, of course, Jim Adgate's I & M Canal Ride can also be METRAcycled, as is noted in his ride description. Thanks to Michael, Jennifer, Marci, Duane, Alice, and Joe for their assistance with this article. Please contact me at gjvalent@ameritech.net with ideas, comments, or concerns.

* The South Side Elevated Railroad began allowing bicycles in 1897, but the service had a short lifespan. The SSER became part of the CTA system and is now known as the South Branch of the Green Line. From, The L. The Development of Chicago's Rapid Transit System, 1888-1932, by Bruce G. Moffat. Page 33.



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
 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 2007



CCC Mid-Season Picnic Ride

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CHICAGO CYCLING CLUB

DERAILLEUR
MAILLEUR

April 2007

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