

DERAILLEUR MAILLEUR

May 2009

Winter Cycling In the Sunshine State

By Rick Pavia

I usually try to get away to at least one "warmer" environment each winter though I don't always succeed. My parents rent a condominium in the St. Petersburg area (Florida, not Russia) and invite people to come down and stay for a few days. I took advantage of that opportunity and, on the second week of February, I took a few days off of work to stay with them. The last few times I've done this, I decided to rent a bicycle for a day or two. This year, I decided to rent one for the entire week. The condo is on an island so one has to bike over causeways to get to the mainland. The last time I rented a bicycle in Florida was in 2003 and I rode along the Pinellas trail in Pinellas County (St. Petersburg, Clearwater, Dunedin) from St. Pete to Clearwater. This year, I took one day and decided to ride the entire trail, all the way to the county line, just north of Tarpon Springs. The Pinellas trail follows an old railbed and goes through several business districts with old converted train stations, similar to Sparta-Elroy and other rail trails around the country.

My rental bike wasn't fancy at all but was extremely light for a hybrid and I flew along with very little headwind going or returning. I was concerned about getting back before dark as the bike did not come equipped with a light and the days are still fairly short in February, so I minimized stops.

I spent about 20 minutes pedaling around a state park about 15 miles into the trail. On the way back, I noticed a long black snake crossing the bike path. A man standing at the side of the trail must have seen my surprised look and motioned that it was a harmless snake. I got back just before the last of the daylight faded. All totaled, I cycled 80 miles on that particular day. Though it had been several months since I had cycled such a distance, I barely noticed any soreness the next day.

The only part of the trail that I did not enjoy was the portion that passes through downtown Clearwater. There are no stoplights for either the cars or the bikes at the cross streets and it was difficult if not hazardous to cross in these places. Remembering this, on the return trip, I took one of the city streets that ran parallel to the trail for about a mile or two and cut back over to the trail after I got past the business district. I also wish I'd had more time to stop and check out some of the many shops and restaurants nearby.

I did take the bike out on a few other occasions as well but the day on the Pinellas trail was by far the longest. Right before I was due to head back to Chicago, I rode out to Fort DeSoto State Park. There's only an off-road trail for about half the distance, with the remainder on some fairly busy roads. All together, I put in well over 100 miles on that segment and nearly 200 in the month of February, by far the most cycling I've done in any winter month.



NAMI Racine's 2009 Bike 'n Hike

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Bike 'n Hike will take place on Sunday, September 13, 2009. The NAMI Bike 'n Hike is more than a fundraiser; it's a day for the community to join with individuals and family members whose lives are touched, briefly for some and a lifetime for others, by mental illness. Since 2002, by taking part in the NAMI Ride, participants have raised over \$70,000 to help those in Racine County whose lives are affected by mental illness.

Again this year walkers can enjoy a 4 kilometer (2.5 mile) hike through Waterford High School's wooded Ecology Center and Cross Country course. Bicycle riders will be able to travel the beautiful rolling hills of the Southeastern Wisconsin countryside. The bike tour offers your choice of 10, 35 or 60-mile routes. Families will especially enjoy the 10-mile route along a protected bike trail to historic Col. Heg Park. The 35 and 60-mile tours run along paved country roads with rest stops along the way. Bike and hike options start and finish at Waterford High School, where lunch and entertainment are provided.



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PREZ SEZ

By Anne Alt



Why do you love to ride your bike? For me, it started when I was six years old, at the point where I could balance and say goodbye to training wheels. I discovered a sense of freedom like no other, the next best thing to flying. Soon I was exploring new parts of the neighborhood and riding to the lake.

In high school and college, I took it to a new level, checking out new neighborhoods and other towns. It was like those wings had gotten a turbo boost. After college, I gradually got into distance riding and learned to climb hills, a humbling lesson. One of the most humbling lessons was coming down to earth, on occasion unintentionally.

We all fall sooner or later. With any luck, it's a rare occurrence. Some of my best lessons about falling had nothing to do with the bike. I studied ju-jitsu for a while in college. While that discipline did not become a long-term practice, some of its lessons did, especially trusting my body and learning to relax when falling is inevitable.

I've been riding long enough that the bike is like an extension of my body when I ride. That level of comfort and familiarity makes it much easier to deal with difficult traffic situations and crises. Immersion in challenging conditions can greatly sharpen one's powers of observation and ability to read and predict the actions of different types of vehicles.

One day while riding I was startled by a dog and thrown off balance.

I discovered that letting go of that moment of panic and fear of falling helped me to regain control of the bike. It was a truly liberating experience. When I started learning to ride with clipless pedals, a certain number of falls were part of the process. I found there were times when I could relax and slow the fall, or even gently veer towards the curb and flop on a lawn instead of crashing in the street. Even this degree of comfort is no guarantee against injury, but it improves the odds.

If you have not been riding long, one good summer of frequent riding can help enormously in boosting your comfort level and riding skill. If you are comfortable with your bike but new to riding in the city, club rides are great ways to learn about new neighborhoods and improve your city riding skills. Jim Kreps' bike handling skills ride on May 3 is a good opportunity to gain some useful tips.

See you on the road!



Champagne Ride - Take One

By Steve Kramer

The CCC's 13th Annual Champagne Ride was unlucky in terms of weather. A triple threat of rain, wind and cold prompted a late postponement of this annual toast to the new riding season. After watching the radar and forecast and deciding to cancel the ride via the web and ride line, I rode down to the Clock Tower to notify those who might not have gotten the word and were stalwart enough to venture out of their houses that morning. I ducked under the Clock Tower's awning to escape what was becoming sleet and was soon greeted by three smiling faces belonging to ladies ready to ride.

(Continued on page 3, col. 2)

May Club Meeting

The Chicago Cycling Club will hold its Tuesday, May 12 meeting at REI, 1466 North Halsted Avenue, Chicago. Help the Club celebrate 15 years of riding around Chicagoland, have a slice of cake, and see a presentation by Ed Barsotti, Executive Director of the League of Illinois Bicyclists. The social gathering starts at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.

Ed Barsotti has been LIB's Executive Director since 2001. As the head of the non-profit bicycle advocacy organization, Ed serves as a liaison between government and cyclists seeking better biking conditions in Illinois. He has promoted more trails and bike-friendly roads along with the education of cyclists, motorists, and local officials. Ed has served as bicycle planning consultant for more than ten Illinois communities and as advisor for many others. He is certified by the League of American Bicyclists as a bicycling safety instructor. A resident of Aurora, IL, Ed bikes around 3,000 miles per year for transportation and recreation.

Come celebrate 15 years of the Chicago Cycling Club with your two-wheeled friends. The May meeting promises to be a fun (and sweet) time for everyone.



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

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

Portable Quotes

"City riding is a continual lesson in feminine principles, in particular the art of being vulnerable. A confrontational, macho aesthetic spells calamity. You must learn to yield, to dodge, to seek harmony. You are obliged to mind the web of interrelations, that complicated mesh of interests, conflicts, intentions."

-Chip Brown, "A Bike and a Prayer"



Reading Online?
Print this newsletter out and take it with you.

Champagne Ride (continued from page 2)

I told Sue, Kat and Barb the good and bad news that the ride was cancelled and they understood and reverted to a Plan B of a hearty breakfast at Toast. Ride Chair Jim Adgate also stopped over to double check the status of the ride and agreed that it was wise to postpone.

So join us for Champagne Ride 13 dot 2 on Sunday May 10th at 8:30 a.m. Avoid the scramble to get brunch reservations and bring Mom along for champagne with the CCC!



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

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.

NAMI Ride (continued from page 1)

Pre-registration discounts are available, please visit www.namiracine.org/bikenhike for details or call NAMI Racine at (262) 637-0582. Online registration is available.



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 May 2009



Riders postpone the 13th annual Champagne Ride

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CHICAGO CYCLING CLUB

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