

THE CueSheet

April 2008

The newsletter for affiliated organizations of the League of American Bicyclists



League of
American
Bicyclists

MORE:

National
Bike Summit
Wrap-Up

Technical:
Brake
Adjustments

National
Bike Rally
July 11-13
Fryeburg, Maine

Tools for
Building a
Bicycle Friendly
Community

Clubs of the Year

The League is delighted to announce the 2007 Clubs of the Year. Each year we present the award to one club or advocacy group in each of our six board regions – and the clubs are chosen by the regional board member. Congratulations to the following clubs who have achieved outstanding growth and/or development in membership, rides and/or programs in the past two years; made significant contribution to their community; improved conditions for bicyclists in their community; and made the most of their affiliation with the League of American Bicyclists.

Region 1. Granite State Wheelmen (New Hampshire)

This club has been a long-time League supporter with a big, active membership. They very recently spun off a statewide advocacy group that has already introduced legislation.

Region 2. Jersey Shore Touring Society (New Jersey)

This newly incorporated club has 220 members and supports numerous charity rides and activities.

Region 3. Kickin' Asphalt Bicycle Club (South Carolina)

This is a new club with 60 members and a very active ride schedule (with a great name) in Hilton Head.

Region 4. Schaumburg Bicycle Club (Illinois)

This group has very active members, a strong embrace of the League's Bicycle Friendly Community program, and often serves as a host for League programs

Region 5. Helena Bicycle Club (Montana)

This very active club has been a long-time supporter of the League.

Region 6. Yaquina Wheels Bicycle Club (Oregon)

This club vocally and strongly supports the League on the Oregon coast, and has a busy ride schedule while staying involved in local bicycling issues.



The Granite State Wheelmen (top) and the Yaquina Wheels Bicycle Club (above) are awarded their Club of the Year certificates during the 2008 National Bike Summit.

Cycling Education Comes of Age

As long as cycling education concentrates solely on teaching children and adults to ride safely on the road, there is a major portion of the cycling education equation missing. The League is broadening the scope of the League Cycling Instructor program to include community members who will be able to teach at the most basic level. We are creating opportunities for more experienced instructors to spend more time teaching non-cycling adults about cycling safety.

continued on page 2

National Bike Summit

The eighth National Bike Summit concluded on Capitol Hill Thursday, March 6 with a rousing call to action from Representatives James Oberstar (D-MN) and Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), and with the announcement that Congressional staff themselves will benefit from a pioneering bike-sharing program later this spring.

Advocates, industry leaders, and retailers joined together for a record attendance of more than 500, workshops with standing room only, and more than three hundred meetings scheduled with elected representatives.

The goal of the Summit was to present a comprehensive, actionable, national bicycling agenda to Congress, get 160 House members to join Congressional Bike Caucus and forge a new national consensus on the value of getting more people riding bikes more often.

Rep. Blumenauer (D-OR) introduced H. Con. Res. 305, supporting the creation of a national bicycling strategy, immediately prior to the Summit with the co-sponsorship of Rep. Oberstar. Hundreds

of visits with Congressional offices by the record number of Summit participants yielded immediate results with several new cosponsors coming on board, including the influential Rep. John Duncan, (R-TN).

In their Senate visits, Summiteers urged support for Senator Harkin's (D-IA) newly introduced Complete Streets Act of 2008 (S. 2686), and welcomed Senators John Kerry and John Sununu to the ranks of the Senate Bike Caucus. The caucus also gained new leadership with Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME) agreeing to co-chair the group with Senator Durbin (D-IL).

One of the loudest cheers of the three-day Summit greeted the announcement of a Capitol Hill bike-sharing program by House Chief Administrative Officer Dan Beard. Staff and members will be able to use a fleet of bikes to get between House office buildings, to run errands and get exercise. Beard was recognized by the League of American Bicyclists for his leadership in promoting bicycling as part of his Greening the Capitol initiative. More than 70 local bicycle

To date we can confirm that the following members were added to H.CON.RES 305 during the National Bike Summit hill visits.

Bishop (D-Ga.)
Boswell (D-Iowa)
Braley (D-Iowa)
Doggett (D-Texas)
Doyle (D-Pa.)
Duncan (R-Tenn.)
Gilchrest (R-Md.)
LaHood (R-Ill.)
Michaud (D-Maine)
Moran (D-Va.)
Olver (D-Mass.)
Snyder, V. (D-Ark.)
Woolsey (D-Calif.)
Wu (D-Ore.)

dealers, the CEOs of the biggest brand names in bicycling, on- and off-road bicyclists all join together at this unique event to speak up for bicycling.

Make plans for your club to be represented at next year's National Bike Summit.

Education (continued)

The League is working to expand the instructor base to include many people who can competently teach some aspect of cycling safety without having to be experienced cyclists. At the most basic level we will train non-cyclists to fit helmets, inspect bicycles for safe operating condition and work with local citizens to conduct community safety events like Rodeos. We also are working to expand the programs that have been developed in some states to provide school

teachers with curriculum and training to teach children in the classroom and on school parking lots.

Our objective is to create a local cadre of people who can teach the most basic materials and allow our most experienced instructors and coaches to be able to concentrate on working with the vast group of non-cyclists that impact the culture and conditions that affect cyclists and cycling safety. We will be creating two additional new levels of Instructor

that recognizes the work that our more experienced instructors do in state and local advocacy organizations. We will recognize the work they do in organizing and running clubs and we will also keep track of the education programs they conduct that are not part of the League curriculum. The Cycling Education program of the League has truly come of age with new materials, new instructor programs and new ways to reward instructors for non-classroom efforts.



CLUB CONFERENCE CALL

Join us for the first quarter club conference call on Wednesday, April 9th at 5pm eastern time. Call-in number 218-936-1200 and the pass code is 7989.

CLUB INSURANCE

By now you have probably noticed that not only are club insurance rates down this year, there is also a 5 percent reduction in the per member rate for general liability. We have added Director and Officer Liability insurance to the existing option of liability and accident/ride insurance. Coverage is now available for purchase.

If you have additional questions, contact Mandy Berghoff at American Specialty at 800-245-2744 or MBerghoff@amerspec.com.

TECHNICAL: Brake Adjustments

Brake adjustments can be simple or become incredibly confounding. With a little bit of patience, it is easy to keep your bike stopping well. More than most any other adjustment, please double-check your adjustment before you set out for your ride. The middle of a long downhill is the wrong time to discover that your brake adjustment wasn't as good as you considered it to be.

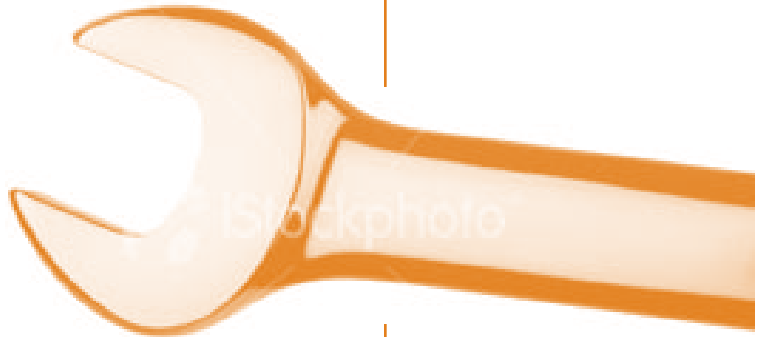
Regardless of the type of brakes, there are a couple of different brake adjustments to be made to keep your brakes performing. Pad position is the most important item to consider. As any rim brakes wear, the pad material is worn away. This will change the pad alignment slightly and should be watched. When you look at your brake pads on the rim, the entire height of the pad should make contact with the middle of the braking surface of the rim. If the pad sits too high, it will begin to wear into the tire and could cause a blow out, ruining your tire. If the pad sits too low, it will begin to wear unevenly around the shape of the rim and brake inefficiently. If left unchecked the pad could catch itself on the spokes and cause the wheel to come to an instant stop.

On caliper brakes that are on most road bikes, this is about the only pad adjustment that needs to be made. On cantilever brakes, including V-Brakes, attention needs to be paid to the "toe-in" of the pad, which is the angle that the pad contacts the rim. If a flat brake pad contacts the rim, it sets off a vibration, which is the squeal that you hear when the brakes are applied. Correctly set-up, brake pads should angle inward at a slight angle. The direction of the angle should

have the front of the pads contacting the rim before the back of the pads. Roughly a 3-5mm difference between the front and rear of the pad is recommended. Too much toe will not allow the brakes to stop effectively, as not enough pad material will contact the rim.

Once your pads are at a proper setting, you should pull the brake lever to see if the pads are contacting the rim evenly. If one pad touches the rim before the other, you will want to adjust them to have each pad touch the rim at the same time. With all pad adjustments you will want to first make sure that you wheel is sitting evenly in the drop outs, or else your adjustments will need to be re-done.

For some older road caliper brakes, there is no adjuster. To center the brakes, the caliper needs to be re-adjusted by loosening the attachment and repositioning the brake to the proper angle. Many newer road caliper brakes have a small bolt that allows you to change the angle of the levers without having to loosen the brakes from the bike. This bolt is usually a small allen (hex) bolt that sits on top of the brake when you are looking down on it. Simply turn the bolt until the pads are contacting the rim evenly when the brake lever is pulled. For cantilever brakes, including V-brakes, there are tension-adjusting bolts that sit at the base of each brake arm. The bolts increase and decrease the amount of tension on the return springs for each brake arm. Making a quarter turn on each side can make a significant difference, so use small adjustments and take your time. Loosening the tension on the spring will bring the pad closer, and tightening will pull it away. It is possible



to back the bolt all the way out and lose it, so make small adjustments and seek the advice of your local shop if you are unsure of yourself.

Once the pads are well adjusted and touching the rim evenly, then adjust the cable that controls how far the brakes have to travel to your preference. Most brakes on road or mountain use a simple 5mm allen bolt to hold the brake cable to the brake. On a road bike, many prefer to set up the pads as close as possible to the rim, so that a light touch is all that is needed to slow. On a bike that is used off-road, others prefer to pull the levers closer to the handlebar before the brakes work. Although this can feel disconcerting at first, this allows you to reduce the strain on your forearms when braking on rough terrain.

NATIONAL BIKE RALLY

July 11-13
Fryeburg, Maine

Please put this in your next club newsletter.

The League has chosen the Maine Bike Rally as the 2008 National Bike Rally. This three-day event features more than 30 rides to choose from, off-road and on-road, some as short as five miles, others 100 miles long. They wind along country lanes, on forest trails and through scenic valleys in western Maine and the White Mountains of New Hampshire. To register visit www.bike-maine.org/store/mbr_register_select.htm

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

2008 Maine Bike Rally
July 11-13, 2008
Fryeburg, Maine
www.bikemaine.org/mainebikerally/

Bicycle Friendly Communities

Tools for Building a Bicycle Friendly Community

The League's Bicycle Friendly Communities Program (BFC) is more than an awards program. Sure, a big part of it is the recognition given to communities for all of their great efforts to accommodate cyclists and promote cycling. More significant are the assessment tools and technical assistance that communities receive by participating in the program.

In a recent survey of Bicycle Friendly Communities 94% of respondents said that the BFC program has been useful as a tool to improve conditions for bicycling in their communities. The most consistent piece of feedback that we receive on the BFC program is how valuable it is for a community to use the application to do a self

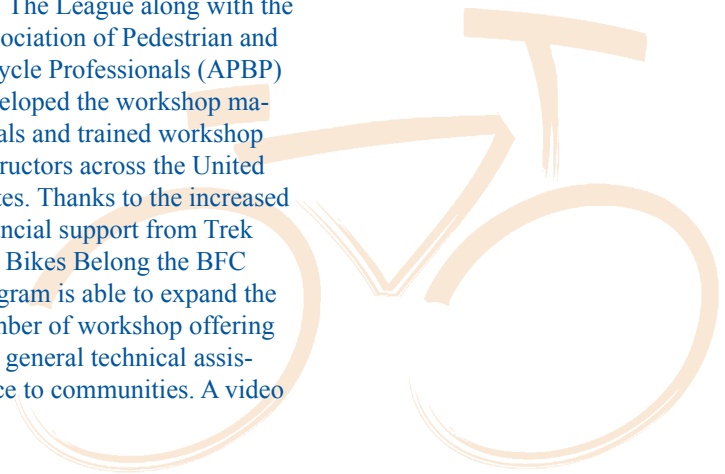
assessment. Even the highest ranked BFCs have reported the application criteria, which is divided into the Five Es (engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation/planning), showed them things that they were unaware of. This combined with the feedback communities receive from the BFC application review are useful in action planning.

Another great way that the BFC program can help you improve conditions for bicycling in your community is for you to host a BFC Workshop. One way to build or solidify the commitment to becoming more bicycle friendly is to educate and inform elected officials, city staff, and other local stakeholders on the BFC

program and begin to work together to create an action plan. The BFC Workshop is a half-day workshop that introduces community leaders to the basic elements of a Bicycle Friendly Community. The workshop includes a practical walkabout or bike ride and concludes with the creation of a short-term action plan to get things moving. The League along with the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) developed the workshop materials and trained workshop instructors across the United States. Thanks to the increased financial support from Trek and Bikes Belong the BFC program is able to expand the number of workshop offerings and general technical assistance to communities. A video

from a workshop offered last fall in Plano, TX is available at: http://www.bikeleague.org/news/images/plano_bfc_workshop_report.mov

We can assist you in making your community a better place for cycling. Email us at info@bicyclefriendlycommunities.org for more details about the BFC program.



Survey SAYS! 2007 Club Survey

We thank the clubs who took the time to complete the 2007 Club Profile and Technology Survey. We congratulate the Knickerbikers of San Diego County, who were randomly selected among clubs who completed the survey, to win a free ad in *American Bicyclist* and a complimentary registration to a League event.

Your feedback is important to us. Responses from the survey are of great assistance to the League in determining in what areas to improve benefits and provide value to clubs.

The survey says that clubs are continuing their membership with the League and have a need for increased technology tools. Here is some more detail on what we learned from club responses to the 2007

Club Profile and Technology Survey.

Twenty-nine percent of clubs have been League members for over sixteen years, 14 percent have been members for 11–15 years and 25 percent have been members for 1–5 years. Sixty percent of clubs have League Cycling Instructors (LCIs) in their ranks.

Most frequent issues that clubs face include: lack of volunteers, an aging (but growing) membership, some hostility towards rides, and poor road conditions.

How do Clubs get the word out to members about rides: 85 percent of clubs use their website, 74 percent use the club newsletter, and 21 percent use the League of American Bicyclists website.

Forty percent of respondents said they visit the League website monthly. Seventy-four percent would be interested in the League offering a web tool to blog or connect with other clubs, and 79 percent of clubs said they would use a web tool that would improve communication about rides.

What lessons do clubs offer? Of the clubs that responded, 33 percent offer safety/skills lessons, 30 percent offer maintenance skills, and 25 percent offer riding lessons.

Thanks to those clubs who took the time to complete the survey, your feedback is important to us! Responses will help shape future content in the club newsletter, phone calls and other services we provide to club members.

Success Stories

According to our membership survey, issues ranked most frequently by clubs were lack of volunteers, an aging membership, hostility towards public rides, and poor road conditions. If your club has a success story in addressing any of these issues email tiffany@bikeleague.org. Your solution could be featured in an upcoming issue of the League's *Cue Sheet*.