

DERAILLEUR MAILLEUR

October 2008



Cycling the San Juan Islands

(A plug for tandems and S & S couplers)

By Joann Umeki

When I tell people that I went cycling in the San Juan Islands, many people react with a “Wow!” much the way they would if they had heard “Puerto Rico,” or other tropical destination. Then they stop to think about it and ask, “Where are they?” Most are surprised to hear that they are in the inland sea off northwest Washington and southwest British Columbia between Vancouver and Seattle. The islands are known for near guaranteed whale sightings because of their three resident pods of Orcas, sea kayaking, and great cycling.

My husband Bruce, 4 year old son Nicholas, and I went to the San Juans as part of a tandem rally organized by Santana Tandems. Although we've been riding our Burley tandem on and off for about 5 years now, this vacation was our first foray into both tandem culture and organized bike vacations. Although the tandem rally was organized and run by Santana founder/owners, Bill and Jan McCready, and you did have to be on a tandem to participate, you didn't have to own a Santana.

Even so, the majority of the bikes were Santanas. It was quite a sight to see 45 tandem teams lined up to get on or off a ferry. Among the bikes, all but four of the tandems were captained by men and had women stokers, two had female captains with men stokers, and there were two father-son teams. Three Santana quad bikes joined numerous triples (including titanium Litespeed); a handful of Co-Motions, Cannondales, and Burleys; two Rans recumbents and one Calfee tandem made from smoked bamboo!

This was also our first opportunity to make use of the S & S couplers on our tandem. Our frame breaks down into three parts, and with handlebars, pedals, cranks, and seat posts removed, the bike fits nicely into two hard plastic cases that meet airline size limits. Bruce was able to break down and pack the bike in about an hour, and re-assembly also took him about an hour. When we bought our bike, our hope was that the investment in the extra cost of the couplers and the cases would eventually make up for not having to pay charges for oversize baggage, freight, or rental charges. Since Southwest still allows two bags per person, we were able to bring our tandem along without any extra charges. I have to admit though that I was holding my breath at the baggage carousels, fearing the gorilla baggage handlers had still somehow managed to smash our ride.

While Bruce had visited the San Juans and told me of their beauty, I was still amazed at the landscape. Coastal roads made for miles of views of indigo seas and rugged shores. Away from the shore, lush forests of cedar and fir towered over emerald ferns. On clear days, we could see Mt. Baker in the Olympic range across the archipelago, and sprinkled throughout the islands were fields of lavender and pastures of cows and alpacas. The 5 day, 4 night rally accommodations were luxurious by TOMRV and Hilly Hundred standards, but the rally was still much cheaper than a Backroads tour.

Our group was based in Friday Harbor on San Juan Island, the largest of the San Juans. We did one ride on Orcas Island (the hilliest), and one on Lopez Island, which was described as “less hilly than Orcas.” I now know that “less hilly” does not mean Illinois flat! Every morning after a buffet-style breakfast, Bill McCready gave the group a route talk while we followed along with our cue sheets and maps. We were told what time frame we would have to make a lunch buffet or when to be in line for a ferry, and that was it. It was nice to be able to choose our own pace and make breaks as long or short as we liked. We crossed paths with a Backroads group a few times on one of the islands, and from what I saw, it seemed like the extra cost of one of their tours might be built in for less self-sufficient riders. While we were at a county beach, a Backroads truck pulled in and set up a Gatorade cooler.

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Cycling the San Juan Islands

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In another spot, an employee stood on a corner to make sure that people didn't miss a turn. While our tour did not have a SAG vehicle, course marshals, or manned rest stops, we did have access to an excellent mechanic (on a Rivendell) who rode the course with us and serviced bikes at rest stops along the way.

On paper, all of the rides looked pretty easy, with nary a 40-mile day in sight. After encountering some large hills on the first day, however, I was a bit worried about what was in store for the second day on Orcas that was declared "hilly." Not too worried though, as that is the beauty of a tandem! With Bruce as my captain, I knew that he would rather have me unclip my feet and pedal on alone than walk up a hill. Although Bruce's GPS bike computer did not capture all of our miles, in the 110 miles that it did record, our total accrued elevation was 11,340 feet.

When we were feeling sorry for ourselves for having to pull Nicholas uphill in his Burley, we just had to look at the couple from Oregon that was pulling a tag-along bike, a Burley, and two much bigger kids. While others thought we would rocket down hills with the extra weight, we didn't break 40 mph. I'm not sure if this was due to my screaming or the open Burley that was akin to a parachute.

We met a lot of nice people on the tour, and Nicholas was lucky enough to have other kids to run around with during down times. Couples with older children were sympathetic as we chased Nicholas around and tried to keep him entertained and contained during meals.

Younger couples without kids told us that they thought it was great that we were able to continue cycling with Nicholas. Unfortunately, we weren't able to go sea kayaking, but we did spot a few Orcas from the shore. My only complaint about the biking vacation is that we didn't have enough time on the islands off the bike. Maybe we'll lead a CCC contingent there someday. It is definitely on our list of places to visit again.



Chicagoland Bicycle Federation Presents: Sunday Parkways

Discover what happens when your streets turn into parks Oct. 5 and 26 for Sunday Parkways!

Car traffic will be closed along a linear route from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on these days for you and your family to explore Chicago's beautiful neighborhoods in fun and active ways.

Bring your bikes, scooters, strollers or just yourself for **Sunday Parkways** a first-ever event in Chicago when Chicago's historic and beautiful boulevard system are transformed into vibrant and physically active scenes. Dance, play and exercise at activity stations in Palmer Square, Humboldt Park, Garfield Park, Douglas Park and Tepochcalli School throughout the morning.

Participants, with the help of traffic control aides, obey traffic signals of cross streets. These cross streets remain open to car traffic, meaning that Sunday Parkways does not affect the surrounding street network or traffic flow. The Bike Federation seeks your help make this happen. To volunteer, call (312) 427-3325 or email volunteers@biketraffic.org



15 Miles for 15 Years

By Kathy Schubert

Joey Schnauzer celebrated her 15th birthday on a September club ride by riding 15 miles with some of her biggest fans. Shale Lapping brought Chanel decked out in tiny pink bows and sunglasses. Seamus, the large dog next to Barry Feinberg, but owned by Brenda O'Connor, did not ride, but wanted to attend the party. He was chauffeured by Eileen Conroy-Gilhooly, who also took the photo.

Others appearing in the photo are Pam Olichwier, Pat Haneline, Susan Feinberg and yours truly. After enjoying breakfast in the garden, we did a tour of sites where Joey has won Canine Costume Contests, including several dog parks. We rode down streets some participants had never seen.



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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October Club Meeting

We will have a team from the Chicago Fire Department's Paramedics on Bikes at our Tuesday, October 14 meeting to be held at Sulzer Library, 4455 N. Lincoln Avenue at 7 p.m. Elvis Falbo and Daniel Bomben will explain how they help save lives and show us the equipment they carry on their vehicles.

Please spread the word, invite friends, acquaintances, neighbors, and coworkers, as we have a large auditorium this month that can accommodate a large crowd. After the meeting (around 9 p.m.), we will visit one of the many restaurants or watering holes up the street.

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.

Portable Quotes

"I thought of that while riding my bike"

-**Albert Einstein**, on the theory of relativity

"Bicycling is a big part of the future. It has to be. There's something wrong with a society that drives a car to work out in a gym."

-**Bill Nye**



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 October 2008



Moonlight Pedal and Paddle June 2008

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CHICAGO CYCLING CLUB
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